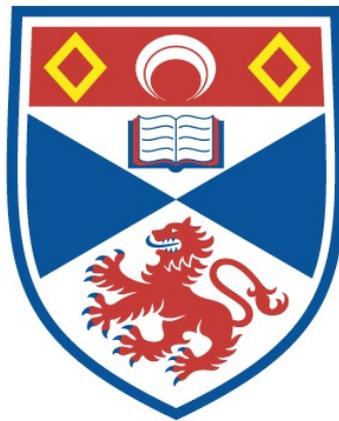


SCRIBAL COMPOSITION: MALACHI AS A TEST-CASE

Sheree Elizabeth Lear

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2014

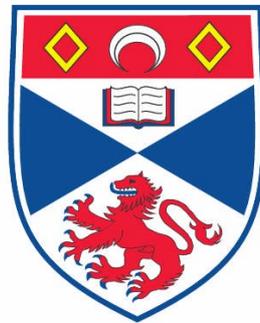
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Scribal Composition: Malachi as a Test-Case

Sheree Elizabeth Lear



This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews

20th February 2014

Abstract

The Hebrew Bible is the product of scribes. Whether copying, editing, conflating, adapting, or authoring, these ancient professionals were responsible for the various text designs, constructions and text-types that we have today. This thesis seeks to investigate the many practices employed by ancient scribes in literary production, or, more aptly, scribal composition. An investigation of scribal composition must incorporate inquiry into both synchronic and diachronic aspects of a text; a synchronic viewpoint can clarify diachronic features of the text and a diachronic viewpoint can clarify synchronic features of the text. To understand the text as the product of scribal composition requires recognition that the ancient scribe had a communicative goal when he engaged in the different forms of scribal composition (e.g. authoring, redacting, etc.). This communicative goal was reached through the scribal composer's implementation of various literary techniques. By tracing the reception of a text, it is possible to demonstrate when a scribal composer successfully reached his communicative goal. Using Malachi as a test-case, three autonomous yet complementary chapters will illustrate how investigating the text as the product of scribal composition can yield new and important insights. Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16 focuses on a particularly difficult portion of Malachi (2.10-16), noting patterns amongst the texts reused in the pericope. These patterns give information about the ancient scribe's view of scripture and about his communicative goal. Chapter 3: Wordplay surveys Malachi for different types of the wordplay. The chapter demonstrates how a poetic feature such as wordplay, generally treated as a synchronic element, can also have diachronic implications. Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah investigates the reception of Malachi as a finished text. By tracing backwards a tradition found throughout later Jewish literature, it is evident that the literary techniques employed by the composer made his text successfully communicative.

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Acknowledgments

The study to follow, though typed with my own fingers, with my own words, exists because of so many other people. These people, who provided me love, support, encouragement and stimulation during the time I wrote my PhD thesis, must be thanked.

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Abbreviations:

ABD	ed. D. N. Freedman. <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . 6 vols. New York, 1992.
BDB	F. Brown, S. R. Driver, S. A. Briggs. <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford 1907.
GKC	A. E. Cowley. <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar as Edited and Enlarged by the Late E. Kautzsch</i> . Oxford, 1910.
HALOT	L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, J. J. Stamm. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . trans. M. E. J. Richardson. Leiden 1994-2000.
HB	Hebrew Bible
IBHS [WO'C]	B. K. Waltke and M. O'Connor. <i>An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax</i> . Winona Lake, Indiana, 1990.
Joüon	P. Joüon. <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</i> . Translated and enlarged by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. <i>Subsidia biblica</i> 14/1-2. Rome, 1991.
LAB	<i>Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum</i>
OG	Old Greek
PRE	Pirke de Rabbi Eleazar
RGG	ed. K. Gallig. <i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> . 7 vols. 3d ed. Tübingen, 1957-1965.
Str-B	H. Strack and P. Billerbeck. <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i> . 6 vols. Munich, 1922-1961.
TDOT	ed. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Translated by J.T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 8 vols. Grand Rapids, 1974–
T. Ps.-J.	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Hebrew Bible is the product of scribes.¹ Whether copying, editing, conflating, adapting, or authoring, these ancient professionals were responsible for the various text designs, constructions and text-types that we have today. This study seeks to investigate certain compositional practices used by ancient scribes to create texts. What mechanical procedures did they employ to construct a text? What were the assumptions of ancient composers about how texts conveyed meaning? What structural features did they implant to fashion a communicative text? Is there evidence that their compositional techniques were successful in conveying meaning to the subsequent ancient reader? Can the answers to these questions help us better understand ancient texts? Unfortunately, there is a paucity of information concerning ancient scribes and their practices. Much like the situation at Qumran, as noted by Tov “[t]he only information available regarding the many aspects of scribal activity is . . . culled from the texts themselves.”² To investigate these questions, I have chosen to examine the book of Malachi. From this book, I will draw three individual test-cases for this study. Each chapter is a test-case. Each test-case can stand alone as an independent study, but the three together give a holistic view of scribal composition in the HB. These case studies will demonstrate the far-reaching effects the study of scribal composition can have on (normally) disparate disciplines within biblical studies.

Below, I will first describe the ancient scribe. Second, I will define what I mean by “scribal composition.” Third, I will justify my choice of Malachi as a test-case, and fourth, I will present an overview of the three chapters in this study.

¹ From here onward “Hebrew Bible” will be “HB.”

² Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 9.

1.2 What is a Scribe?

The word “scribe” is used in various ways in biblical studies. The designation is used most often in relation to the function of the ancient professional as he is seen to relate to specific biblical sub-disciplines (e.g. in textual criticism a “scribe” is a copyist). Sometimes a “scribe” is understood as a redactor and/or a compiler of older portions of texts. As De Jong argues:

The biblical prophetic books in their final form are the work of scribes. This does not imply that everything within in [*sic*] these books are the product of scribal activity. Critical scholarship has ascertained that the prophetic books had a history of development. The books have developed into their final forms through a series of successive stages. This process of development, referred to as the redaction history or composition history, was a scribal process Because scribes were involved in the production of the prophetic books, any element within these books *might* be affected by, or come from, their hands.³

According to this view, a scribe was responsible for the shape and message of the biblical books in their final forms, but not necessarily for the material that came before redaction and compilation.

Schniedwind has explained the term “scribe” in different terms. His definition is (logically) based on how he understands that the texts of the HB were written. He argues:

The scribes were first of all administrators or bureaucrats; they were not authors. The Classical Hebrew language does not even have a word that means “author.” The nearest term would be *sofer*, “scribe,” who was a transmitter of tradition and

³ Matthijs J. de Jong, “Biblical Prophecy—A Scribal Enterprise: The Old Testament Prophecy of Unconditional Judgement considered as a Literary Phenomenon,” *VT* 61 (2011): 41.

text rather than an author. Author is a concept that derives from a predominantly *written* culture, whereas ancient Israelite society was largely an *oral* culture.⁴

Thus, because Schniedewind's understanding of the primacy of orality in the production of the Bible as a written text, there is no room in his definition for authors. The text became a text through the transcription of oral tradition. From evidence that we have, his assertion that scribes were administrators is correct. There is also no doubt that transcribed oral tradition is indeed the source of certain portions of the HB. The book of Jeremiah itself depicts transcription as a scribal activity in the creation of texts (see for example Baruch in Jer 36.4). But, even if this was one way that texts could come into existence, does that preclude any form of creative composition; were there no authors? Other scholarship has found evidence to the contrary. In his book *Kunder oder Schreiber?: eine These zum Problem der "Schriftprophetie" auf Grund von Maleachi 1,6-2,9*, Helmut Utzschneider has discussed Malachi as written prophecy that did not have an oral genesis.⁵ If his evaluation is correct, then one must also account for creative composition.

⁴ William M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 7. Compare with Van der Toorn: "The gist of the present chapter can be summed up in one phrase: authors, in antiquity, were scribes." Interestingly, Van der Toorn affirms Schniedewind's assertion that "author" as we as moderns understand this word is anachronistic. Van der Toorn instead differentiates between the modern "author" and the ancient "author." "The difference between authors then and authors now has more to do with the conditions of literary production, on the one hand, and the perception of authorship, on the other. Both affected the nature of the texts that have come down to us in writing. When reading them, it is necessary to be aware of those differences so as to put the texts in the proper interpretive perspective." Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 48.

⁵ Helmut Utzschneider, *Kunder oder Schreiber?: eine These zum Problem der "Schriftprophetie" auf Grund von Maleachi 1,6-2,9* (BEATAJ 16; Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1989).

The most common designation for the “scribe” of the ancient world is that of “copyist.” But, as noted by Tov, “[t]he assumption underlying the description [of scribe as copyist] is based on the realia of the scribes of the Middle Ages who worked within so-called scriptoria. One wonders whether scribes of this type existed at all in antiquity.”⁶ Instead, he notes that at least at the time of the writing of the Qumran manuscripts, “most scribes occupied themselves with all aspects of scribal activity, that is, the copying of existing documents and literary compositions, as well as the writing of documentary texts . . . and the creative composition of new literary works. In addition, some scribes were involved in various aspects of administrative activity.”⁷ This use of the term “scribe” is echoed (concerning the scribes of the HB) by Van der Toorn’s assertion that

[t]o properly appreciate the role of the ancient scribes, it is necessary to take leave of the common conception of the scribe as a mere copyist. The traditional distinction between authors, editors, and scribes is misleading because it obfuscates the fact that authorship and editorship were aspects of the scribal profession. In the words of James Muilenburg, scribes ‘were not only copyists, but also and more particularly composers who gave to their works their form and structure, and determined to a considerable degree their wording and terminology’.⁸

⁶ Emanuel Tov, “The Scribes of the Texts Found in the Judean Desert,” in *The Quest for Context and Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders* (ed. C. A. Evans and Shemaryahu Talmon; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 131.

⁷ Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 8.

⁸ Van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 109; See also James Muilenburg, “Baruch the Scribe,” in *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwynne Henton Davies* (ed. J. I. Durham and J. R. Porter; London: SCM, 1970), 215-38.

Both Tov (in recent publications) and Van der Toorn have a holistic understanding of “scribe.” This also accords with the view of Schmid, who considers a scribe to be anyone in antiquity involved in literary production.⁹

Amongst the various opinions on the function (and definition) of a scribe, how should one differentiate between the different definitions for the word? The answer to this question hinges on the question of who in the ancient world had the correct skills for text production. As a word of caution, Schmid has noted, “[o]ur historical knowledge about scribes and scribal schools in ancient Israel is very limited.”¹⁰ But, he argues: “the texts were produced and received within a comparatively narrow circle that was adequately familiar with reading and writing and existed within a largely illiterate society.”¹¹ Schmid identifies this “narrow circle” as the ancient scribes.¹² From the little evidence that we have (comparative, epigraphic

⁹ Konrad Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History* (trans. L. M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 34-35.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 32. Carr similarly argues: “The biblical narratives of writing and reading generally presuppose or are consistent with pictures elsewhere of ancient cultures where the majority of the population does not read and relies on literate professionals in those instances where writing is required.” David Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 120.

¹² See Konrad Schmid, “Schreiber/Schreiberausbildung in Israel,” *RGG* 7:1001. David Carr argues: “Literacy, however, was hardly confined to those labeled as sopherim (‘scribes’) or *shoterim* (‘literate officials’). Both epigraphic and other evidence testifies to more widespread literacy, especially among kings, priests, and other officials” (118). But, he concludes: “Yet this evidence must be interpreted with caution. Though these texts present pictures that authors and audiences found plausible, many narratives are almost certainly not historically reliable. In addition, it is sometimes unclear precisely what is meant when a text asserts that a given king or other figure ‘writes’ or ‘reads.’ For example, Jeremiah 36:2 describes Jeremiah as receiving an order to take a book scroll . . . and write down God’s words. Jeremiah himself, however, does not write down these words but calls Baruch, who writes down the words dictated by Jeremiah on a book roll (36:4).

and biblical) the only people in the ancient world capable of the various observable modes of literary production (transcribing, editing, copying, collating, authoring, etc.) were the scribes.¹³ This understanding of “scribe” is thus very broad. In this study, I use the term “scribe” in much the same way as described by Tov, Van der Toorn and Schmid. I mean a type of person who was responsible for—or at least capable of—all forms of literary production.¹⁴

I have chosen to use the broad term “scribe” for several reasons. First, this designation assumes no ideological affiliation with any ancient “school” of thought (e.g. “wisdom,” or “priestly”). Rather, a scribe is simply someone who possessed the education and skills for text production. Second, by including all activities of literary production as part of the scribal profession, one emphasizes the continuity between the different modes of text production. For each type of production, the scribes drew from “a conventional stock of ancient Near Eastern scribal practices and vocabulary.”¹⁵ Thus, many of the same scribal practices can be found, for example, in both the activities of editing and of copying. As Van der Toorn has argued, the separation of “scribal modes of text production . . . is, to some degree, artificial in the sense that it separate methods and techniques scribes normally used in conjunction. Adaptation and expansion, for instance, will often go hand in hand, just as one

Examples like this—however fictional—out of putative reading/writing versus ‘actual’ reading/writing raise questions about other instances in which a king . . . other major figure . . . or group of people . . . is described as writing or reading” (120). Carr, *Writing on the Tablet*, 118, 120.

¹³. See for example Van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 9-142.

¹⁴. Throughout this study I refer to the ancient scribe with the masculine pronoun. This is simply because the probability of the ancient scribe being a male is much greater than being a female and Malachi gives no indication of being written by a female.

¹⁵. Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 31-32.

text might well be the fruit of both transcription and compilation.”¹⁶ Third, “scribe” is a term that is useful for both diachronic and synchronic aspects of textual study. As will be demonstrated below, the evaluation of composition involves, at the same time, diachronic and synchronic elements. Using the term “scribe” frees me to identify scribal practices in every layer of a text, without necessarily having to identify whether the text-element(s) were produced by an author or a redactor. This of course leads to the question of what is meant by *composition*?

1.3 What is Scribal Composition?

The word composition is most often used in biblical studies in one of two ways. First, “composition” is used in the sense of “the result of authoring”—creative writing without an oral or textual precursor. Second, “composition” is used in the sense of the result of “the mosaic-like joining of individual parts to form a great whole.”¹⁷ Both these views assume that the resulting text is a new creation—either because of its creative genesis or because of its new juxtaposition with other materials. But as scholarship has shown us, the creation of new, uniform and complete texts can involve many different and possibly combined modes of text formation. For example, in his essay “The Evolution of the Pentateuchal Narratives in the Light of the Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic,” Tigay has demonstrated that ancient texts were often the result of the collation and editing of many disparate smaller texts. These texts were artfully placed together and the repeated revision resulted in a text “containing few inconsistencies.”¹⁸ Thus, a new composition was created through the innovation of scribes

¹⁶ Van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 141.

¹⁷ Georg Fohrer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (trans. David Green; London: SPCK, 1976), 116. See also Reinhard G. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (trans. John Bowden; London: T&T Clark, 2005).

¹⁸ Jeffrey H. Tigay, “The Evolution of the Pentateuchal Narratives in the Light of the Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic,” in *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (ed. J. H. Tigay; Philadelphia: University of

spanning a long range of time. Similarly, in his article “The Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Its Textual History,” Tov has demonstrated that the MT and the LXX of Jeremiah represent two different editions in the literary history of the book. The two editions are identifiable by the difference in length and order of material. The ancient scribes responsible for both versions of Jeremiah composed through arrangement, editing and addition to older texts.¹⁹ Alternatively, at times, a redactional insertion was so large it would more aptly be called an original composition. This is evident, for example, in Tooman’s analysis of the Gog Oracles (Ezek 38-39). Tooman concluded that these oracles were inserted into what is now the book of Ezekiel at a late stage in its literary history.²⁰

Another method used to create texts was through the interpretation and reuse of older texts. In his book *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, Fishbane demonstrated that this technique of text production can be found throughout the HB. And, as mentioned above, Utzschneider’s small monograph *Kunder oder Schreiber?* examines the book of Malachi as an example of *Schriftprophetie*, or original writing.²¹ In light of the vast array of methods for creating coherent texts, as well as the undeniable overlap between different methods of text production (e.g. at what point is a redactional insertion considered “original writing?”), it is prudent to define “scribal composition” in broad terms. Thus, scribal composition is the

Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 51.

^{19.} Contrary to the view espoused by Tov described above, in this article he works under the designation of scribe as “copyist,” emphasizing that that it was not a scribe who made changes to the text, but rather an editor. Emanuel Tov, “The Literary History History of the Book of Jeremiah in Light of its Textual History” in *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (ed. J. H. Tigay; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 216.

^{20.} William A. Tooman, *Gog of Magog: Reuse of Scripture and Compositional Technique in Ezekiel 38-39* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe 52; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

^{21.} Utzschneider, *Kunder oder Schreiber?*

procedures used by the ancient scribes to create communicative texts. Text creation ranged from an individual scribe writing down his own unique composition, to using older material in his new composition, to the compilation of older material into one whole work, to the rearrangement and editing of material.

This broad designation for scribal composition is important to this study for several reasons. First, the term “composition” takes seriously that texts are communicative acts. It implies intentionality on the part of the composer. A scribe had a communicative goal when creating his text. He implemented various compositional mechanics and literary techniques to achieve this goal. As De Beaugrande and Dressler observed, the cognitive steps involved in the producing of a text are very much the same steps taken (in reverse order) by the receiver of the text to comprehend a text.²² But, as noted by Dawson, “if the connection between the author/work and either the topic or the reader is inadequate in some way, then the author’s purpose will not be accomplished in a satisfactory way.”²³ In other words, the skill of the scribe in creating a composition directly bears on a reader’s ability to form meaning. Thus, when a scribe failed to create a cohesive or coherent text, for example, the communicative act is broken (a problem investigated in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**).²⁴

^{22.} Robert-Alain de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler, *Introduction to Text Linguistics* (London: Longman, 1981), 38-45.

^{23.} David Allan Dawson, *Text-Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew* (JSOTSup 177; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 11.

^{24.} Cohesion: “[C]oncerns the ways in which the components of . . . the actual words we hear or see, are *mutually connected within a sequence*” (3). Coherence: “concerns the ways in which the components of the TEXTUAL WORLD, i.e. the configuration of CONCEPTS and RELATIONS which *underlie* the surface text, are *mutually accessible and relevant*” (4). De Beaugrande and Dressler, *Introduction*, 3-4. Note that textual coherence and cohesion might instead be a result of editing. As Tigay noted in reference to the composition of the Gilgamesh Epic: “Indeed, the extensive revision characterizing the evolution of the *Gilgamesh Epic* explains why it contains so few inconsistencies in comparison with the Torah, and this

Each chapter in this study investigates the act of composition from the viewpoint of either the scribal composer or from the viewpoint of the reader. Accordingly:

Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16 investigates the scribal composer of Malachi's reuse of older texts. The mechanical procedures the scribe used to incorporate various texts gives a window into how the scribe read and interpreted his texts. These observations in turn will provide some clarity to the awkward grammatical and lexical incongruities of Mal 2.10-16: because of the scribes's interpretive reuse of texts, elements of the older texts were awkwardly integrated into the new composition. Although an examination of his reused locutions demonstrates compositional logic, the surface of the text does not always reflect this logic.

Chapter 3: Wordplay demonstrates how the scribe manipulated the phonological, visual and semantic aspects of words to build a composition. Nearly every case of wordplay exhibits the scribe's compositional strategy in his use of lexemes. The chapter seeks to explain how each case of wordplay constructs meaning. There are several instances where I argue that the potential for wordplay directed the scribe's choice of wording in following locutions.

Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah focuses on the reception of Malachi by later readers/authors. It illustrates that later readers identified and interpreted elements of Malachi as verbal clues, concluding that Phinehas and Elijah were the same person. This conclusion of later readers was a result of the recognition of reused texts the scribal composer planted in Malachi that acted as literary allusions to both the story of Phinehas and of Elijah. The composer of Malachi used these locutions from both stories in the description of one person, namely the Messenger of the Lord.

suggests what the Torah might have looked like had it undergone similarly extensive reformulation in the course of its compilation and transmission." Tigay, "The Evolution," 51.

Each chapter interacts with at least one facet of the study of scribal composition, expounding the mechanical procedures and cognitive steps involved in composition as well as the techniques for evoking meaning in the mind of a reader.

The second reason that “scribal composition” is an important designation is that the term “composition” encompasses both the synchronic and diachronic aspects of text production and evaluation. It can accommodate the reality that some texts are composed from older portions of texts but still be part of a coherent whole of a new text.²⁵ This study is synchronic in that it investigates the interaction of each text-segment with the whole composition and the responses this interaction evokes in the reader. In particular, this study begins with the final form of MT Malachi and examines it as a finished and complete composition. As argued by Steck, before one makes diachronic assumptions,

[t]he book must . . . be read in sequence, logically and precisely, from beginning to end. One must investigate textual contexts that extend across the book, and even across books! The task is more precisely a historically inquiring synchronic reading of the entire book. It seeks to investigate signals that show how this entity

²⁵ Compare Groenewald: “The fact must thus be recognised that Old Testament scholarship, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, is faced methodologically with a fundamental challenge, namely to combine synchronic and diachronic textual reading. It is thus no longer a question of either synchronic or diachronic reading of a specific text. Synchronic reading can no longer regard historical refinement as a redundant endeavour—the same can be postulated for the opposite.” Alphonso Groenewald, *Psalm 69: Its Structure, Redaction and Composition* (Altes Testament and Moderne 18; Münster: LIT Verlag, 2003), 9. See also Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 26-27. Joachim Schaper, “Rereading the Law: Inner-Biblical Exegesis of Divine Oracles in Ezekiel 44 and Isaiah 56,” in *Recht und Ethik im Alten Testament: 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* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004), 136.

was intended to be adopted in its time. The historical framework for this inquiry remains vague at first.²⁶

Once this synchronic evaluation is finished, according to Steck, one can inquire into the diachronic aspects of the text.

Unfortunately, the neat division between synchronic and diachronic is not always tenable. In **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, I will evaluate textual incongruities which are at the same time diachronic and synchronic. For, as noted by James Barr, the study of “synchronic” can itself be profoundly historically conditioned. He writes: “It struck me . . . that the synchronic meanings were also the historical meanings, in one sense of the word. If we could say that this was the meaning within (say) New Testament times, seen synchronically, then the same was obviously the historically correct and valid meaning. Historically it meant what it meant synchronically in the relevant biblical time.”²⁷ The scribe involved in the composition of Malachi utilized historically-conditioned literary mechanisms to build a cohesive and coherent text. In consequence, even when I look at the text synchronically, it is from an historically situated viewpoint. This paradox is perhaps even more evident in **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**, where I argue that rabbinical authors responded to subtle literary clues that link to the story of Phinehas and of Elijah. These clues were deliberately placed by the composer to facilitate this link.²⁸ Modern day readers miss these same literary

^{26.} Odil Hannes Steck, *The Prophetic Books and Their Theological Witness* (trans. J. D. Nogalski; St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 20.

^{27.} James Barr, “The Synchronic, the Diachronic and the Historical: A Triangular Relationship?” in *Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis* (ed. J. C. de Moor; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 2.

^{28.} See James Barr’s note of the irony for those who espouse a form of the ‘intentional fallacy’: “Incidentally, at a time when we are being told that authors as such are quite insignificant, it is odd that we are being urged to admire the incredible skill of these same authors in their placing chiasmus and such things.” Barr, “The Synchronic,” 10 n. 12.

devices because of a break in shared literary and hermeneutical assumptions.²⁹ Thus, this study is diachronic in that the methods, assumptions and intentions of the ancient scribal composers cannot be assumed to be analogous with those of modern authors—even when I look at the text as a whole, synchronically. The literary techniques employed by the composer might not evoke the same responses in the modern reader as they did in the ancient reader.³⁰

This study is also “diachronic” from the viewpoint of compositional techniques. A well-known scribal compositional technique that will be evaluated in every chapter is the reuse of older texts in the composition of newer texts.³¹ As noted by Van der Toorn in discussing Qohelet:

One of the characteristics that mark Qohelet as a *scribal composition* is the citation of proverbs. It is not the use of proverbs, specifically, that was current practice among scribes, but *the use of material extant in other written sources*. A text by a Babylonian scholar illustrates the practice. In the hymn to the goddess Gula, the author Bulluṣa-rabi makes extensive use of names and epithets from existing lists and texts . . . The procedure of using texts to produce new texts is a phenomenon of scribal culture attested in a variety of cuneiform compositions. It also occurred in Israel.³²

Van der Toorn’s argument is affirmed on manifold levels by a plethora of current studies on inner-biblical-exegesis, inner-biblical-allusion, scriptural reuse and intertextuality.³³ Any

^{29.} These observations supports Steck’s criteria of seeking in historically closely-situated interpretations of the text for support of one’s own historically oriented synchronic reading of the text. See Steck, *Prophetic Books*, 16.

^{30.} Ibid.

^{31.} Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*; Tooman, *Gog of Magog*.

^{32.} Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 117; italics mine.

investigation into these aspects of composition presupposes a diachronic element: one text must be older than the other for a text to be “reused.”

Third, the broad designation “scribal composition” is important because the person who was educated enough to be responsible for the different forms of text production could, usefully, be called the scribe. To be able to speak about the scribe and the composition without specifically designating the exact functional activity of the scribe (editor vs. copyists, etc.) opens the door for inquiry into common scribal compositional practices and hermeneutical assumptions found in all forms of textual production. This study will thus throughout refer to the “scribe” or “composer” as the active literary producer. This does not mean it is unimportant to differentiate between the different scribal activities (redaction vs. copying, etc.), but it enables the inquiry to cross boundaries in order to detect literary techniques and hermeneutic assumptions common in all forms of literary production.

Thus, as noted by Sailhamer, the evaluation of composition “attempts to describe the literary strategy of a book . . . [and it] seeks to explain the types and ways the biblical writers fashioned literary units into a complete literary whole.”³⁴ I will examine Malachi as a product of scribal activity, shaped by the hermeneutic and literary skill of the ancient scribe. I will assess the composition of Malachi in two different facets: the mechanics employed by ancient scribes to create texts and the techniques used to evoke meaning in their readers.³⁵ This will

^{33.} The term “intertextuality” is a slippery one. Unfortunately, the term coined by Julia Kristeva has been reappropriated to mean a variety of things in biblical scholarship. For a survey of all of these see Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 10-14. Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 6-31.

^{34.} John Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: a Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 98. See also Georg Fohrer, *Exegese des Alten Testaments: Einführung in die Methodik* (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1973), 142.

^{35.} When I say “evoke meaning in the reader” I understand reading as outlined by Wolfgang Iser. He argues that in the act of reading, meaning is formed within the reader. The formation of meaning in the reader is

be done with an eye simultaneously to the diachronic and the synchronic aspects of text production and reception. In both facets of inquiry, a level of creativity and flexibility is essential. Although a certain compositional mechanism might be identified, as Alter noted “very few literary conventions are treated by writers as invariable and hence obligatory without exception.”³⁶ Thus, one must evaluate the employment and function of each individual instantiation of any mechanical procedure or technical practice. Through this inquiry, I hope to demonstrate how attention to all features of composition can help enlighten various aspects of our own engagement with these ancient texts.

1.4 Why Malachi?

I chose the book of Malachi as a test-case primarily because of its “literary” nature. That Malachi is foremost a written work as opposed to a record of an oral presentation has a widespread consensus. Kessler notes:

The opinion that the text of Malachi was a written composition from the outset can, in my estimation, already be deduced from the analysis of the *Hauptgattung* and of the overall structure of the book. Above all else, the new point of view was triggered through the observation that in Malachi there are countless intertextual references to other texts of the Hebrew Bible. Indeed, this affirms in the highest degree the theory of the writtenness of the text of Malachi.³⁷

not haphazard, but rather is guided by the ‘read’ composition. Thus, each new clause and sentence read by the reader serves to form a sharper image of meaning within the reader. Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: a Theory of Aesthetic Response* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).

³⁶. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 103.

³⁷. “Die Auffassung, dass die Maleachi-Schrift von vorneherein schriftlich konzipiert ist, lässt sich nach meinem Dafürhalten bereits aus der Analyse der Hauptgattung und des Gesamtaufbaus herleiten. Ausgelöst wurde die neue Betrachtungsweise allerdings vor allem durch die Beobachtung, dass es in Maleachi zahllose intertextuelle Bezüge zu anderen Schriften der Hebräischen Bibel gibt. In der Tat bestätigt dies in hohem Maß die These der Schriftlichkeit der Maleachi-Schrift.” Rainer Kessler, *Maleachi: Übersetzt und*

It is exactly this literary rather than oral genesis that makes Malachi an ideal locus for studying scribal composition. Plus, as observed by Kessler, the book is known to be full of reused material from older texts which, as Van der Toorn correctly noted, is a major compositional technique.³⁸

I also chose the book of Malachi because it is a generally under-appreciated book. In 1987, Beth Glazier-MacDonald noted that “in the plethora of commentaries and articles that have appeared [on the book of Malachi] . . . old material [has been] simply garbed in new language with few new insights offered.” She cited “indifference” as the cause of this “unanimity.”³⁹ The outlook has become a little less bleak since her observation. In 1989, Helmut Utzschneider wrote a short monograph using Malachi as a test-case to support the notion of *Schriftprophetie*. He makes several observations concerning the composer of Malachi’s reuse of older texts in Mal 1.6-2.9. In 1998 Andrew Hill produced the Anchor Bible Commentary on Malachi. His work is particularly helpful as a repository of information on previous Malachi scholarship. Karl William Weyde produced a book on Malachi entitled *Prophecy and Teaching: Prophetic Authority, Form Problems and the Use of Traditions in the Book of Malachi* in 2000.⁴⁰ He also sought to uncover the reuse of older traditions in Malachi. He differentiated himself from Utzschneider (and Fishbane) in that his analysis covered the whole book of Malachi and that he also inquired into the reuse of forms.

ausgelegt (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament; Freiburg: Herder, 2011), 55. See also Utzschneider, *Künder oder Schreiber?* Julius Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten: übersetzt und erklärt* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter), 203-204. For a survey of earlier views on the composition of Malachi see: Kessler, *Malachi*, 54.

³⁸ Van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture*, 117.

³⁹ Beth Glazier-MacDonald, *Malachi: the Divine Messenger* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 1.

⁴⁰ Karl William Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching: Prophetic Authority, Form Problems, and the Use of Traditions in the Book of Malachi* (BZAW 288; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000).

Most recently, in 2011, Rainer Kessler produced the *Herders Theologischer Kommentar* on Malachi. Kessler does an excellent job of including observations on textual reuse as well as paying attention to verbal cues within the book of Malachi. All of these more recent studies have explored extensively the scribal compositional technique of reuse, and I will make frequent recourse to their observations throughout this study.

The last reason that the book of Malachi was an ideal test-case is that the book presents a difficult text, full of grammatical, lexical, and exegetical difficulties.⁴¹ These difficulties are rarely solved but tend to be glossed over by commentators and translators. Part of this inquiry is to see if attention to compositional techniques employed in the book of Malachi can help solve textual difficulties.

1.5 Thesis

The purpose of this study is to provide a preliminary investigation into the benefits of examining the text as scribal composition. The text will be evaluated as the product of scribal composers who shaped the text into its final form. Whether there was one or more scribes will not be addressed (although the possibility/probability of multiple hands involved in the composition of Malachi will not be forgotten). Instead, the study will start with a synchronic reading of MT Malachi and evaluate how this initial reading can supplement our understanding of the diachronic aspects of composition. I will demonstrate that these two viewpoints should not be separated as often as they are. The synchronic viewpoint can help explain diachronic features of the text and a diachronic viewpoint can explain synchronic features of the text. The three chapters will each focus on different aspects of scribal composition.

⁴¹ See for example Petersen who notes “In Malachi, I have found it necessary to formulate a reading other than the MT in the following verses: Mal 1:1, 9, 11, 12; 2:2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17; 3:5, 13.” David L. Petersen, *Zechariah 9-14 and Malachi: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 34.

The first chapter focuses on a particularly difficult portion of Malachi (2.10-16). Through detailed evaluation of the reuse of older texts in this pericope, patterns emerge that not only evidence the composer's communicative goal for his text but also reveal his hermeneutic—how he understood older texts to relate to each other. This chapter interacts with issues of poetics, reuse, and textual-criticism.

The second chapter surveys Malachi for different instances and types of wordplay. The chapter is broken up into three sections: semantic wordplay, visual wordplay and phonological wordplay. It demonstrates how a poetic feature such as wordplay, generally treated as a synchronic element, can also have diachronic implications. I demonstrate how wordplay at times was influential in the shaping of the text, how wordplay was the result of textual dependence, and how wordplay was used in the interpretation and incorporation of older texts. This chapter further demonstrates that similar assumptions about semantics can be seen throughout a large range of scribal activities (copying, editing, and authoring).

The third chapter investigates the reception of Malachi as a finished text. The tradition that “Phinehas is Elijah” is found throughout rabbinic literature. This rabbinic tradition is the result of the reception of the book of Malachi. The chapter explores the affect of the literary device of textual reuse. I argue that these instances of reuse act as “allusions” on readers serving to evoke the characters of Phinehas and Elijah. It demonstrates that the composition of Malachi was successfully communicative to the rabbinic audience.

Excursus: The Reuse of Antecedent Texts

Because each chapter deals extensively with the reuse of older texts in composition, it is prudent to make a few explanatory remarks concerning textual reuse from the outset. To evaluate the likelihood of dependence between two texts and to determine the direction of this dependence I have relied heavily upon Tooman's systematization of criteria for this purpose in his book *Gog of Magog: Reuse of Scripture and Compositional Technique in Ezekiel 38-39*. As Tooman argues: “Implicit reuse of Scripture is marked by demonstrable

repetition of some element or elements of an antecedent text. An ‘element’ can be a word, phrase, clause, paragraph, topos, or form. The key is that its origin is ‘demonstrable.’ There must be some verification that the element originated from an identifiable source.”⁴² Tooman then lists five “principles” by which reuse can be demonstrated which I have marked in italics below:

1. *Uniqueness*: When a certain element only occurs in one other text (besides the borrowing text) it makes it likely that the element is a borrowed one. The infrequency of the word indicates the element is an ideal element for a composer to cite in order to evoke that specific text.
2. *Distinctiveness* is when an element occurs throughout the HB, but appears predominantly or with a specific semantic value in a particular text. The element can be said to be distinctive of that text. Thus, when that element is used, it immediately evokes the text where that element is distinctive.
3. *Multiplicity* indicates the amount of elements two texts share. When there is extensive correlation between two texts, it increases the likelihood that there is some sort of dependence between the two texts.
4. To define *Thematic Correspondence* Tooman wrote: “Second Temple authors also show a remarkable penchant for drawing on texts that share a similar subject, theme, or argument with the text they are composing.”⁴³ This phenomenon is particularly relevant in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**.
5. *Inversion* relates to Seidel’s Law. This is when a locution in one text is found in inverted order in a borrowing text. It is a way ancient scribes consciously marked literary dependence.⁴⁴

⁴² Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 27.

⁴³ Ibid., 29.

⁴⁴ For further detail on each of these criteria see Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 27-31. See also Jeffery M. Leonard,

Of course none of these criteria are foolproof. When a combination of two or more of these criteria are found between texts, the likelihood that one of these texts has reused the other text is increased.

Though these criteria are helpful in determining textual dependence between two texts, they do not help one to evaluate which text is older and which is newer. To determine direction of dependence, Tooman again lists five criteria or “clues” (highlighted through italics):

1. The *Volume of Use* of a certain element in different texts can help determine direction of dependence. If an element occurs frequently in one text as opposed to only one time in another text it is most likely that the single occurrence is part of the newer text. Tooman is careful to note that there have been cases where the opposite has been proven true and the text with the single occurrence of an element was grossly influential on another text in which the element is found multiple times. Thus, as warned by Tooman, caution and careful reflection must be taken when applying this criteria.

2. The *Modification* of elements from one text to suit better a new context can also indicate which text is the new text. This criteria is particularly pertinent in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, Semantics** where I identify reused texts where the composer has replaced words in the reused locution drawn from the older texts with synonyms to suit better the context of his own composition. Sometimes the modification takes place to clarify perceived difficulties in an older text. For example, in **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah** I argue that when reusing an older text, the scribe of Malachi reproduced difficult syntax found in the older text but expanded it to clarify the difficulty found in the original text—resulting in a clearer text.

“Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case” *JBL* 127 (2008): 241-65.

3. In contrast to the last example, poor *Integration* of older materials can also be an indication of the direction of dependence. As Tooman notes “[d]angling pronouns may appear, poetic images may appear without identifiable referent, syntax may be disrupted, and so forth.”⁴⁵ In other words, the scribe transfers the elements into his new text “as is” without effort to smooth over the reused portion to integrate it better into its new context.

4. *Conceptual Dependence* is when the newer text depends on the older text to provide meaning for itself. In other words, the new text with the reused elements does not make sense without importing some semantic freight from the text from which the elements are borrowed.

5. The last criteria listed by Tooman, *Known Scribal Practices of Reuse*, is a list of criteria established by Carr in his analysis of “4QpaleoExod^m, the Samaritan Pentateuch, 4QReworked Pentateuch (4QRP), and the Temple Scroll (11QT).”⁴⁶ Carr (and Tooman) writes:

“A text tends to be later than its ‘parallel’ when it:

1. Verbally parallels that text and yet includes substantial pluses vis-à-vis that text.
2. Appears to enrich its parallel (fairly fully preserved) with fragments from various locations in the Bible (less completely preserved).
3. Includes a plus that fills what could have been perceived as an apparent gap in its parallel.
4. Included expansive material in character speeches, particularly theophanic speech.

⁴⁵ Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 33.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

5. Has an element which appears to be an adaptation of an element in the other text to shifting circumstances/ideas.
6. Combines linguistic phenomena from disparate strata.”⁴⁷

All of these criteria listed by Tooman and Carr are guidelines. There are of course instances (as noted above) where the opposite of the listed criteria is actually the case. Because of this, the interpreter must remain flexible and carefully evaluate all data. In the end, every evaluation of direction of dependence is one of probability. The more data included in one’s evaluation increases the probability of arguments for direction of dependence. Throughout this study, I depend heavily on these guidelines to evaluate whether or not Malachi is dependent on older texts. In cases where I am unsure, I discuss my evidence in footnotes.

1.6 Goals of this Study

Through these chapters I hope to demonstrate first, that my definition of scribal composition is a helpful one to biblical scholarship; second, that the study of scribal composition and the melding of different sub-fields in biblical studies can be helpful in the study of ancient texts. And third, I hope to give new insights into the interpretation and literary development of the book of Malachi.

The three chapters in this study are in many respects preliminary inquiries into scribal composition in general and the composition of Malachi in specific. Each topic was chosen for two different reasons. First, the topics were chosen to demonstrate the various aspects of scribal composition described above. Second, they were chosen because they explore important initial questions that can serve as a basis for even further study of scribal composition. The chapters examine the work of the scribe as a generic producer of texts.

⁴⁷. David Carr, “Method in Determination of Direction of Dependence: An Empirical Test of Criteria Applied to Exodus 34,11-26 and its Parallels,” in *Gottes Volk am Sinai. Untersuchungen zu Ex 32-34 und Dtn 9-10* (ed. M. Köckert and E. Blum; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag, 2001), 126. Tooman, *Gog of Magog*, 34.

They investigate composition from both the viewpoint of the scribal composer and the reader. All three chapters interact with both synchronic and diachronic observations as interlocking and mutually dependent perspectives. They examine the text as a shaped communication designed for a (historically conditioned) reader. Further research into scribal composition and the book of Malachi as a the result of scribal composition are still in order.

Chapter 2: Malachi 2.10-16

Do not intermarry with them . . . for they will turn your sons from me and they will serve other gods. Then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you and he will destroy you quickly. -Deut 7.3a, 4

2.1 Introduction¹

Malachi 2.10-16 is probably the most debated pericope in the book of Malachi. Part of this fascination is most likely due to its perceived subject matter, marriage and divorce, a topic that the HB does not often address.² Another part is due to the cryptic and seeming unintelligible character of parts of the text.³ As Torrey notes, “The text of the passage is, unfortunately, very corrupt (in vs. 15.16, beyond all remedy).”⁴ Because of the difficulty, a plethora of theories and solutions have been suggested in attempt to elucidate the text. Many have suggested that the text is corrupt and have proposed emendations to the MT, either through repointing or through the adding, subtracting or replacement of consonants. Others have argued that the text’s inscrutableness is due to redactions. I will demonstrate that the difficulty of the text is due not to scribal accidents or later changes (at least not only), but

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1. The format and goal of this chapter is similar to that of Karl William Weyde’s book *Prophecy and Teaching*. In the places where our opinions overlap I make careful note.
 2. See for example Gordon Paul Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant: A Study of Biblical Law and Ethics Governing Marriage Developed from the Perspective of Malachi* (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum LII; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 1. Hugenberger presents an excellent overview of previous scholarship on these verses throughout his book, and is recommended for a more rigorous survey of grammatical and referential difficulties.
 3. “But nothing definite can be said about Verses 15 and 16, the text being completely unintelligible in these.” Flemming Friis Hvidberg, *Weeping and Laughter in the Old Testament: A Study of Canaanite-Israelite Religion* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1962), 123.
 4. C. C. Torrey, “The Prophecy of ‘Malachi’,” *JBL* 17 (1898): 9.

rather to the compositional techniques employed by the composer.⁵ The scribal composer created Mal 2.10-16 as a tapestry of interwoven material—both verbal and thematic—borrowed from older texts. The borrowing, or “reuse,” is demonstrably a result of the composer’s interpretation of antecedent texts. Each instance of reuse is in consequence somehow related to the other.⁶ The composer imperfectly integrated the antecedent material, at times producing unintelligible elements.

In this chapter, I will adopt the style of a commentary to discuss the interrelation of the various instances of reuse. When identifying the composer’s reuse of antecedent material, I take into consideration not only matching locutions, but also the thematic coherence of the

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5. I will refer to the creator or creators of Mal 2.10-16 throughout as “the composer.” This implies a scribe (or scribes) who was (were) responsible for the composition of Mal 2.10-16.
 6. This distinction is important for this chapter. Unless otherwise noted, I will not argue that reuse in this pericope is always allusive. Rather, I think the composer created a new text based on his interpretation of older texts. Throughout this chapter, I will continuously point out the elements in the texts read by the composer that enabled his interpretation of these texts. This interpretation resulted in the composition of a new text, Mal 2.10-16. This is essentially an example of Fishbane’s “inner-biblical exegesis.” As Fishbane argues, “[I]nner-biblical exegesis starts with the received Scripture and moves forward to the interpretations based on it.” (Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 7). He rightly cautions with relation to this exegesis: “On the one hand, external historical determinants provide the social context for exegesis; on the other, exegesis arises from such purely internal factors as textual content and the ‘issues’ perceived therein by the tradents” (Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 18). The composer’s interpretation and composition is seemingly simultaneously affected by elements in his texts and by the conceived message he wants to communicate to an historically situated people. Fishbane further has noted: “This fundamental task [of exegesis] is achieved either by deriving new teachings from old—through one exegetical technique or another—or by legitimating existing social customs and laws (religious or civil) by means of secondary connections to Scripture. In this way, tradition assumes religious dignity through its exegetical association with revealed Scripture” (Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 3). In Mal 2.10-16 there are examples of both methods of exegesis.

borrowed locution's context with the message of Malachi. Thus, in cases where two texts contain the same locution as Malachi, I will argue that the composer reused the text which thematically coheres with the message of Malachi. Thematic coherence can range from an identical addressee (e.g. both texts address Edom), to similar metaphors (e.g. idolatry as prostitution), to the mutual use of keywords (e.g. נָבֵר). In this chapter, I trace the interpretative logic of the composer, whose methods must be allowed to demonstrate creativity. Therefore, "thematic coherence" as a concept must remain fluid. Additionally, I will take into account how the context of borrowed locutions cohere verbally and thematically with each other. If two contexts of potentially borrowed locutions contain similarities (verbally or thematically), it increases the likelihood that the composer understood that these texts interpreted each other, and thus, that they belonged together.

Regarding direction of dependence for the different cases of reuse in this chapter, I generally assume Malachi to be the receiving and the younger text for two reasons. First, because of the fragmented and vague compositional nature of this pericope, it is unlikely that it would be a text borrowed from. Instead, its compositional character gives every indication of it being the borrowing text.⁷ Second, the sheer volume of reused material suggests that textual reuse was the compositional strategy of the composer, thus increasing the likelihood of every individual case of parallel lexemes to be a result of reuse by the composer of Malachi. In cases concerning direction of dependence where I am unsure, I will present detailed discussions of the issues in footnotes.

Each instance of reuse and other pertinent exegetical observations will be discussed in the order it appears in Mal 2.10-16. I will then give a synopsis of my argument, bringing all the elements together and highlighting my understanding of this pericope through tracing the

7. As Carr notes: "one prominent mark of relative lateness . . . was the tendency to conflate materials found in disparate parts of the Pentateuch into one location," or in the case of Malachi, the conflation of material from disparate portions of the HB. Carr, "Method in Determination," 124.

composer's interpretive and compositional techniques. In conclusion, I will discuss the ramifications of my observations for a better understanding the book of Malachi as a whole.⁸

2.2 Malachi 2.10-16 Translation

10. Do we not all have one father? Did not one God create us? Why do we⁹—each against his brother—act treacherously by defiling the covenant of our ancestors? 11. Judah has acted treacherously and abomination has been done in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah has defiled the holy [people] of the Lord whom he [the Lord] loved because he [Judah] married the daughter of a foreign god. 12. May the Lord cut off from the man who does this Er and Onan (the offspring of Judah's foreign wife) from the tents of Jacob—including the one who brings an offering to the Lord of Hosts. [OR: May the Lord cut off the man who does this from the tents of Jacob—with a witness who answers—including the one who brings an offering to the Lord of Hosts.] 13. And this you do a second time: you cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning. He no longer turns to the offering to take favor from your hand. 14. And you say on what grounds? Because the Lord is a witness between you and the wife of your youth—against whom you have acted treacherously—for she is your companion and the wife of your covenant. 15. For did not One create? A remnant of spirit is his. What does the One require? The offspring of God. Therefore be on guard on penalty of

8. For an examination of textual-critical issues in this pericope see Russell Fuller, "Text-critical problems in Malachi 2:10-16," *JBL* 110 (1991): 47-57. Fuller concludes in all but one case that either the MT contains the original reading or the original reading is indeterminable.

9. I opted here to translate נבגד as a Qal 1cp instead of a Niphal 3ms. As Eddinger argued: "The pointing of the text is identical to a Niphal *qatal* 3ms form. The text allows for translating the verb in this clause as a third masculine singular form, with אִישׁ as the subject—'why does a man act treacherously against his brother?' However, נִבְגַּד does not occur in the Niphal stem (BDB, 93). This, combined with the frequent first common plural pronominal suffixes in this verse, makes this translation [with Niphal] unlikely." Terry W. Eddinger, *Malachi: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text* (Waco: Baylor University Press: 2012), 57.

your spirit lest it [your spirit] act treacherously against the wife of your youth. 16. For he [the Lord] hates to divorce,¹⁰ says the Lord God of Israel, but violence covers his garment, says the Lord of Hosts. Therefore, guard in your own spirit and do not act treacherously.

2.3 Commentary by Verses

2.3.1 Malachi 2.10

Do we not all have one father? Did not one God create us? Why do we—each against his brother—act treacherously by defiling the covenant of our ancestors?

Malachi scholars generally agree that there is a switch of addressee in verse 10. From Mal 1.6 until 2.9 the addressees have been the priests. In verse 10, the composer changes his address from second person plural to first person plural. The identity of the first person plural addressees is brought to light in Mal 2.11. There, the text accuses “Judah” who is arguably part of the addressed “we” in Mal 2.10.¹¹ The name “Judah” normally would include more than only the priesthood.¹²

10. This is a verbal complement. Compare Jer 50.33; Gen 8.10; Deut 22.29.

11. I argue below that Mal 2.11 expounds the “defiling of the covenant.” I accordingly think the two verses are directly connected.

12. Originally, I thought that this pericope continued the address to the priests begun in Mal 1.6. This is for several reasons. First, if I am correct and the composer reused a portion of Ezek 44.7, then it could imply a concern not only with foreigners in the temple, but foreigners participating in the cult as opposed to the lazy Levites. Second, the phrase “Holy of the Lord” could be seen as referring to Ex 39.30, where the priests’s headdress is to have the inscription “Holy to the Lord.” Third, as I will show below, Mal 2.12 specifically addresses the one who brings the offering to the Lord. This phrase is mirrored in Mal 3.3, which addresses the sons of Levi. There, because of the coming of the Messenger and the Lord to his temple, the sons of Levi will be purified and in opposition to Mal 2.12, will belong to the Lord again and offer offerings in righteousness. If this assessment were correct, the parallels between Mal 2 and Neh 13.23-31 are striking: offspring from the priesthood’s intermarriage with foreign women results in the defilement of the covenant with the priests (see **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah** for a discussion of the covenant in these passages). Reynolds notes: “Given that the context of this whole section has to do with a ‘covenant with Levi,’ it is

difficult not to interpret v. 10 as a reference to ‘Levi.’ While the possibility of ‘God’ or even ‘Abraham’ may have some merit . . . what better candidate is there for this mysterious ‘one father’? Here the rhetorical appeal is to unity, and the previous pericope has had to do with a covenant with the ultimate ancestor of all priests: Levi. True, the composer does broaden the basic common denominator in the subsequent reference to God as creator, but the subject is quickly swung back to the cult in vv. 11ff., where intermarriage with the ‘daughter(s) of a foreign god’ are said to ‘profane the sanctuary.’” Carol Bechtel Reynolds, “Malachi and the Priesthood” (PhD Diss. Yale University, 1993), 83-84. Eddinger also understood this pericope to address the priests (see Eddinger, *Malachi*, 54). In personal correspondence, he clarified his position to me: “The argument that 2:10-16 is for the priests is speculative but there are good reasons for it. 1) The previous oracle addressed the priests specifically. There is no transition statement that indicates the audience has changed (although one is not necessary). 2) Some of the language suggests priests as the audience such as ‘flood the Lord’s altars with tears’ and ‘no one any longer looking at offering and taking pleasure from your hand’ (v. 13). Who has access to the altars? Only the priests. However, this could be more figurative than literal and indicate a larger audience. 3) Verse 11 speaks of ‘marrying the daughter of a foreign god.’ Malachi is full of irony and the prophet loves using it. The wording of this statement would be particularly poignant if it is address to the priests (who supposedly serve Yahweh only). The one who serves Yahweh marrying someone who serves a different god. Furthermore, the priests are leading the people astray. It makes sense that the people are following the actions of the priest, in that they all are marrying foreign women. That has been the general argument in Malachi, that the people are following the priests and the priest are to blame. 4) Also, the ones who should be most interested in ‘covenant’ are the priests (v. 10). There is no definitive answer but after working through Malachi and paying particular attention to the irony he employs, I think the audience here is the priests.”

Tiemeyer also identifies the addressees of this pericope to include the priests, although she acknowledges that it appears more than just the priesthood is addressed in this pericope. Her reasons include “references to the altar [Mal 2.13], the temple [קדש יהוה] and its personnel [Mal 2.12].” (19-21). She also notes common vocabulary between that used in Mal 2.10-16 and in the sections preceding which explicitly address the priesthood and the use of specifically priestly language. She points out the similarity of Mal 2.10-16 with other texts outside of the book of Malachi who also address priests as an indicator of the pericope’s likely referent. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage: Post-Exilic Prophetic Critique of the Priesthood* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe 19; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,

This verse initially appears to make universalistic claims. Every person has one father and there is one creator of everyone. Because everyone has these two elements in common, humans should not act treacherously against their brothers. But, this interpretation takes into account only three out of the four uses of the 1cp person in this verse. The fourth use of the 1cp is a pronominal suffix attached to the word “ancestors.” This fourth reference restricts the other three references to only those whose ancestors had a covenant with Israel’s God.¹³ Consequently, this passage only claims one Father and one creating God for the *children of Jacob*, the addressees of this pericope.¹⁴ This conceptualization of God as creator of his people is not new in the HB.¹⁵ As Eddinger notes “Isa 43:1,7, 15 indicates God created *only* Israel among the nations, giving Israel elected status.”¹⁶ In other words, Isa 43 uses God’s

2006), 18-23.

The problem with understanding this pericope as a continuation of the reprimand of the priests is of course Mal 2.11’s address referring to *Judah’s* profanation. It is difficult to explain why the priesthood would be addressed as “Judah.” Additionally, Meinhold’s argument about Mal 2.10-16’s ideological dependence on Deut 7 (see below) is compelling—particularly because of its reference to God’s people as “Holy.” Thus, I have decided that there is indeed a change in addressee in this pericope, but could easily be convinced (and am convinced on occasion) otherwise.

13. Hill argues “The general quantifier *kōl* indicates that the prophet understands his audience to be the entire community of Yehud.” This is not necessarily so. “All” here simply refers to each member of the group of the addressees (plus the narrator), who up to this point have been the priests. Hill, *Malachi*, 225.

14. Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 86.

15. Wellhausen noted the concept of God only creating Israel as a problem: “Dass er auch ihrer aller Schöpfer genannt wird, is für die Zeit charakteristisch (Gen. 1), aber sachlich eigentlich unpassend; denn geschaffen hat Jahve nicht bloss die Juden, sondern auch die Ausländerinnen, mit denen hier die Ehe verboten wird.” Wellhausen, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 207.

16. Eddinger, *Malachi*, 56, italics mine. Tosato argues that this can not therefore be a reference to “primordial creation,” but rather ברא must refer here to election. Angelo Tosato, “Il ripudio: delitto e pena (Mal

status as creator of his people as a claim to election. This election sets them apart from the other nations. A very similar argument is made here in Mal 2.10, but is extended to include God as a father.¹⁷

2.3.1.1 Deuteronomy 6.4

In light of the ideology of God as creator and father of his people, the double use of the word “one” in Mal 2.10 does not emphasize disunity between brothers (“why do we act treacherously, each against his brother?”), as is often argued.¹⁸ Rather, this designation for

2,10-16),” *Bib* 59 (1978): 550. Compare also Deut 32.6-9, Jer 10.16.

17. There are several reasons why “one Father” should be understood as “God” (as argued by René Vuilleumier, *Malachie* [Commentaire de l’ancien Testament XIc; Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé Éditeurs, 1981], 238) rather than “Abraham” (as argued by Joyce Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary* [Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1972], 237). First, Mal 1.6 already established God as father through a rhetorical question. Second, as Eddinger notes concerning Mal 2.11’s “daughter of a foreign god”: “Most likely, בַּת is antithetically paralleled to אֱלֹהִים in the first question in 2:10. The people of Judah have one father in Yahweh . . . but they are marrying daughters that are of a foreign god” (Eddinger, *Malachi*, 60; This is also argued by Henning Graf Reventlow, *Die Propheten Haggai, Sacharja und Maleachi: Übersetzt und erklärt* [Das Alte Testament Deutsch 25/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993], 148). Third, Mal 2.15 parallels both אֱלֹהִים phrases conceptually: 2.10a God as father, 2.10b God as creator, 2.15a God as creator (did not one create), 2.15b God as father (the one is seeking the offspring of God). Compare Baldwin: Baldwin argues: “The context [of Mal 2.10] must be allowed to determine the meaning of this question. Mention of the *covenant of our fathers* indicates that the *one father* could well be one of the patriarchs, with Abraham or Jacob (Israel). There is scriptural precedent for ‘Abraham your father’ (Is. 51:2), an interpretation favoured by Jerome and Calvin, and Malachi makes frequent mention of Jacob (1:2; 2:12; 3:6), from whom the twelve tribes (fathers) descended.” Baldwin, *Haggai*, 237.

18. As Hill writes: “In this case the numeral [אֶחָד] also marks ‘specific indefiniteness’ (WO’C [IBHS] § 13.8a). Israel owes its existence and identity to a single source, Yahweh and his covenant The prophet calls for unity in postexilic Yehud because the community springs from a single cause; Israel’s corporate identity or

God suggests that the composer was familiar with the paramount text where God is identified as “One,” Deut 6.4: שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד “Hear Oh Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.” The close affinity of the vocabulary of Mal 2.1-2 with vocabulary from Deut 6 (see **Appendix A**), as well as the distinctive language that identifies God as “One” increases the probability of the composer’s dependence on this passage. In light of this, the double use of “One” creates a contrast between the One God as opposed to other gods.¹⁹ This contrast becomes more apparent in light of the composer’s reuse of other texts addressing the worship of other gods and idolatry.

2.3.1.2 Ezekiel 44.7

In Mal 2.10, the composer also reused locutions from two other texts. The first involves Malachi’s phrase לחלל ברית “to profane the covenant.” There are six verses in the HB that contain ברית + חלל: Isa 56.6; Ezek 44.7; Mal 2.10; Ps 55.21; 89.35, 40.²⁰ While Ps 55.21 and 89.35 closely match the syntax found in Mal 2.10 (“covenant” as object of the verb “defile”), I will demonstrate that the composer drew instead from Ezek 44.7:

When you bring in the sons of foreigners (בני־נכר), uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh to be in my sanctuary with the result that my house is defiled (להיות במקדשי לחללו את־ביתי): when you bring in my house my food, the fat

personality is rooted in Yahweh alone.” Hill, *Malachi*, 224.

19. This “one god versus many gods” element is also an essential part of the argument in Isa 43. See Isa 43.10-14.

20. It is probable that Ps 89 is dependent on Isaiah for its use of this phrase. Also, it would appear that either Isa 56.6 or Ezek 44.7 is responding to the other. Schaper has argued that Ezek 44:6-9 is dependent on Deut 23:2-4 and that Isa 56:6 is dependent on both Deut 23:2-4 and Ezek 44:6-9. Schaper, “Rereading the Law,” 125-144.

and the blood, you break my covenant (בריתי) with all your abominations (כל-תועבותיכם).

First, there are additional lexical parallels between Ezek 44.7-8 and Mal 2.10-13 beyond חלל + ברית. Both use the word תועבה “abomination.” The phrase בני-נכר “sons of foreigners” is similar to the phrase בת-אל נכר “daughter of a foreign god” that is found in Mal 2.11. Additionally, Mal 2.11 contains קד”ש, which is used in Ezek 44.8. In this chapter, I will argue that all these additional lexical similarities between Mal 2.10-11 and Ezek 44.7-8 that I just highlighted are evidence of the reuse of texts besides Ezek 44.7-8. Because of this, the concentration of locutions in Ezek 44.7-8 that are similar with Mal 2.10-13 make it likely that the Ezekiel text was an impetus to gather locutions from other texts containing similar locutions. Thus, Ezek 44.7-8 provided a guiding influence on the material chosen to construct Mal 2.10-16. Second, Ezek 44.6-9 and Mal 2.10-16 are thematically similar: both are concerned with defilement due to foreigners (see Mal 2.11, 13). Third, there is additional evidence that Ezekiel’s temple vision influenced the book of Malachi. Malachi 1.7 and 1.12 identifies the altar as “the table,” a title only known from Ezek 40.41, 41.22, 44.16.²¹ This cumulative evidence raises the probability that the composer knew and reused Ezekiel’s vision. In light of this evidence, it is likely that the composer was dependent on Ezek 44.7 for the phrase לחלל ברית. In his reformulation of Ezek 44.7, the covenant is defiled rather than the temple.

2.3.1.3 Deuteronomy 4.31

The third reused locution in Mal 2.10 is ברית אבותינו “the covenant of our ancestors.” This phrase occurs elsewhere only in Deut 4.31 where it is a reference to God’s covenant with the patriarchs.²² In Malachi, it is uncertain if the composer meant the same covenant or if

21. See also Ps 78.19.

22. Blenkinsopp, arguing for a late monarchial core in the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 4.44-28.68: D1) and a

he borrowed the locution and used it for his own purposes (i.e. another covenant). As Hill has explained:

There is disagreement, however, as to the identity of the covenant Malachi has in mind. J.M.P Smith . . . represents those who interpret the covenant as a figure ‘denoting the general obligation of loyalty to one another.’ Others understand ‘the covenant of our ancestors’ more specifically as the Abrahamic covenant (e.g., Baldwin . . .), the covenant at Sinai (Redditt . . .), or in context, the covenant of Levi (so Mason . . .).²³

later exilic redaction (Deut 4.1-40 and 29-30: D2), notes: “In D1, the core of the work, the fathers are referred to on numerous occasions as the beneficiaries of a promise and oath dealing primarily with the land and secondarily with numerous descendants. For the most part these fathers are unnamed, but on three occasions (Deut 6:10; 9:7, 27) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob stand in apposition to ‘fathers’ . . . We find much the same situation in D2, the exilic expansion, in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are also named (Deut 29:12 [29:13]; 30:20), in a context identical to that in which unnamed father are referred to (4:37; 30:5, 9; 31:7, 20).” Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 115. Similarly, without recourse to (controversial) theories of the literary history of Deuteronomy, Weinfeld writes concerning this verse: “God shows his grace to the sinners of Israel by virtue of his promise to the Patriarchs of Israel. Compare Moses’ prayer after the sin of the golden calf: ‘Give thought to your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and pay no heed to the stubbornness of this people’ (9:27; cf. Exod 32:13; Lev 26:42, 45).” Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11: New Translation with Commentary* (Anchor Bible 5; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 210.

23. Hill, *Malachi*, 227. See also J. M. P. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah* (International Critical Commentary 2; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1912), 48. Baldwin, *Haggai*, 237; P. L. Redditt, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi* (New Century Bible Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 170; Rex Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 149. Actually, Hill misunderstood Mason at this point. Mason says “as the priests had broken their special covenant by their faithlessness, the people as a whole had violated the covenant by their faithlessness in their marriage relationships.” Mason, *Books of Haggai*, 149. But, Hill’s general list is still valid. Reynolds argues that the covenant in Mal 2.10 is the same as the covenant of Levi. See

In light of the rest of Mal 2.10-16, it is most likely that ברית אבותינו refers to the covenant with the patriarchs. This will be confirmed in the discussion of verse 11 below. The phrase ברית אבותינו appears in Deut 4, a whole chapter that warns against idolatry. According to Deut 4, the worship of idols breaches the covenant and will result in the dispersal of the people throughout foreign lands. When they are there, it predicts, they will worship other gods (Deut 4.28), but God will have mercy on them when they turn back to the true God. He will not forget his covenant with the forefathers.

2.3.1.4 Summary of Reused Texts and Their Significance in Malachi 2.10

In Mal 2.10, the composer depended on several texts for his new literary product. These texts share with each other several pertinent topics. For example, Deuteronomy 6.4 and Deut 4.31 share a common theme: the worship of other gods as opposed to the one God. This use of materials that address a common theme is the first indication of the rhetorical goal of Malachi's composer. He drew from texts that address the worship of God as opposed to other gods/idols. This topic will continue to appear in the matrix of texts from which the composer borrowed for this pericope. Another example of the composer drawing from texts that address a specific topic is his reuse of Ezek 44.7 and Deut 4.31. These passages (or their surrounding contexts) both discuss forgotten or broken covenants. In Deut 4, the covenant was broken through the worship of idols. In Ezek 44.7, it was through the profaning presence of foreigners in God's sanctuary. These topics, foreigners in relationship to God, his cult and his people, and the effect that these foreigners have on the covenant, set the stage for the remainder of Mal 2.10-16.

Malachi 2.10 addresses those whose fathers were given a covenant, claiming one Father and one Creator for all of them. This singles them out as elect. Through the composer's reuse of texts, the composer's rhetorical goal for the pericope becomes evident.

Reynolds, "Malachi and the Priesthood," 83-84.

The people's defamation of the covenant that God made with the patriarchs is a result of their involvement with foreigners and/or the worship of other gods. This defamation of covenant ultimately wrongs their brethren and denies the oneness of God.

2.3.2 Malachi 2.11

Judah has acted treacherously and abomination has been done in Israel and in Jerusalem for Judah has defiled the holy [people] of the Lord that he [the Lord] loved because he [Judah] married the daughter of a foreign god.

2.3.2.1 Jeremiah 3.8, 11

Malachi 2.11 further elucidates the defilement of the covenant. The verse begins: בגדה יהודה “Judah has acted treacherously,” Judah being the subject of a *feminine verb*. As is often noted, this is discordant with 11b: כי חלל יהודה קדש יהוה “for Judah has defiled the holy [people] of the Lord.” Here, Judah takes a *masculine verb*.²⁴ This variance in verb gender is easily explained when one realizes that בגדה יהודה was taken from another text and was imperfectly integrated into its new context. Although seven verses in the HB contain the two words בגד and יהודה, it is most likely that the composer was dependent on Jer 3.8 and/or 11.²⁵

24. O'Brien has enumerated a few other possible explanations for this phenomenon. She writes: “The grammatical gender shift in 2:11 rarely receives *significant* scholarly attention, and the few who bother to comment on it usually minimize its significance. The editors of BHS opt for an easy solution: they emend the feminine בגדה to the masculine בגד. Attempting to account for the text as is, Glazier-McDonald suggests that ‘when Judah is the name of a country, it is feminine, while when it refers to the people, it is masculine.’ . . . A standard response to such a gender shift is that of GKC, which explains that since the name Judah is itself grammatically feminine and since countries were often considered the mother of their inhabitants the feminine verb is not surprising [GKC 122].” Julia O'Brien, “Judah as Wife and Husband: Deconstructing Gender in Malachi,” *JBL* 115 (1996): 247. Italics mine. See also Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 89.

25. “Der Kontext in V 11a spielt zurückhaltend, aber deutlich—die Metaphorik der Ehe zwischen JHWH und »Juda« ein, wie sie auch hinter Jer 3 zu erkennen ist . . . Hier muss also »Juda« weiblich konstruiert werden.” Kessler, *Maleachi*, 195.

Only in these verses does the form of the locution (feminine verb followed by Judah) match exactly that of Mal 2.11.²⁶ Jeremiah 3.1-11 is a narrative-poem that depicts God as husband to the unfaithful and treacherous wives, Israel and Judah.²⁷ Jerermiah 3.8 says נאפה משבה ישראל “backsliding Israel committed adultery, so I divorced her and I gave her a certificate of divorce. But, treacherous Judah, her sister, did not fear, but went and she also prostituted herself.” Like many of the other texts in the HB where Judah/Israel is the wife and God is the husband, the adultery and prostitution of Jer 3.1-11 are analogous with the worship of other gods.²⁸

The reuse of a locution from the context of Jer 3 in Mal 2.11 indicates that the composer was still drawing from texts concerning the worship of other gods for his composition. The concepts found in Jer 3.1-11 are pertinent to the rest of this passage in Malachi. These concepts are, namely, the worship of other gods, which is likened to prostitution, and God divorcing his people. Below, in my discussion of Mal 2.12, I will demonstrate that the composer borrowed from another text that, like Jer 3, correlates the worship of other beings with prostitution. This is another example of the composer’s compositional technique of drawing from texts with similar themes. I also argue in my discussion of Mal 2.16 below that it is this passage (Jer 3) that influences the parenthetical

26. 1 Kgs 22.10; Jer 3.8, 11; 5.11; Zech 14.14; Mal 2.11; 2 Chr 18.9.

27. Holladay and Carroll view verses 6-11 as a later addition. William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah I: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 1-25* (Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 116; Robert P. Carroll, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1986), 145.

28. See Holladay, *Jeremiah I*, 118; Sharon Moughtin-Mumby, *Sexual Marital Metaphors in Hosea, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 106-11.

remark concerning divorce. In fact, in order to understand Mal 2.16, I argue that it is imperative that this reuse of Jer 3.8 and/or 11 in Mal 2.11 be recognized.²⁹

2.3.2.2 Deuteronomy 17.4

The next clause in Mal 2.11, ותועבה נעשתה בישראל “and abomination has been done in Israel,” parallels Deut 17.4b נעשתה התועבה הזאת בישראל “this abomination has been done in Israel.”³⁰ Similar to the reuse of Jer 3.8, 11, the form of the locution, noun (singular) and verb (niph'al) + location, corresponds with what is found in Malachi. The only difference between the locutions is the definiteness of the abomination and the word order. Significantly, the abomination to which Deut 17.4 refers is the worship of other gods:

For if there is found inside one of your gates (that the Lord your God is giving you) a man or a woman who does evil in the eyes of the Lord your God—to transgress his covenant—by going and serving other gods and worshiping them—whether the sun or the moon or the hosts of the heavens—that which I commanded not to do (Deut 17.2-3)

Deut 17.2-3 defines the serving and worshiping of other gods as an act that transgresses the covenant. This message matches the argument in Mal 2.10 that is implied by the texts the composer reused. The worship of other gods has direct negative bearing on covenant.

29. The exact replication of the locution from Jer 3.8, 11 (word order and form) along with its imperfect integration into its new context (feminine form versus masculine form later in the verse) suggest that the composer intended בגדה יהודה to be an *allusion* that drew the reader's mind back to Jer 3.

30. Weyde identifies Deut 17.4 as a possible option for reuse in this passage: “It thus seems that the clause ‘abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem’ can be taken as an allusion to an actualization of traditions in Deuteronomy.” Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 226.

2.3.2.3 Leviticus 19.8/Deuteronomy 7.1-8

Malachi 2.11 next says *כי חלל יהודה קדש יהוה אשר אהב* “for Judah has profaned the *holy of the Lord* that he loved.” Scholarship has not reached a consensus as to what “the holy of the Lord” is. Hill effectively encapsulates the essence of the debate as follows:

The noun *qōdeš* may refer to the sanctuary or Temple of Yahweh, perhaps as a symbol of Yahweh’s holiness in postexilic Yehud The word may also connote more ambiguously something ‘holy to Yahweh’ like his covenant . . . his people Israel . . . or even the covenant of marriage Finally, the expression *qōdeš* YHWH may denote the very character of Yahweh, ‘holiness’ as the supreme essence of his being.³¹

The phrase “holy of the Lord” appears to be a locution drawn from Lev 19.8, where it occurs in reversed order, *קדש יהוה חלל*. As noted by Weyde, “*קֹדֶשׁ יְהוָה*” occurs only in these two places [Mal 2.10 and Lev 19.8] in the Hebrew Bible.”³² In Lev 19.8, the “holy of the Lord” is the people of God (cf. Ex 19.6; Num 16.3 and Deut 7.6). Leviticus 19 begins with the injunction: “Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them ‘You will be holy because I the Lord your God am holy’” (Lev 19.2). The passage then gives stipulations about honoring parents, keeping the Sabbath, not worshiping idols and presenting the peace offering. Leviticus 19.8 continues “the one who eats of it [the three day old peace offering] will bear his iniquity for he has defiled the holy of the Lord and his life will be cut off from the people.” In other words, the person who was to be holy (because of the Lord’s holiness) has become defiled through the ingestion of a three day old offering. Because he is defiled, his life is required to be cut off from the people. By reusing this locution in particular, it is

31. Hill, *Malachi*, 230. Here in Hill’s commentary is a listing of scholars who have argued for each position.

32. Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 227.

probable that the composer of Malachi thought that the “holy of the Lord” was a people. This people has been defiled through Judah’s action. It does not appear that the composer was concerned necessarily about eating old offerings, but rather was interested in the title “Holy of the Lord” for the people of God.³³

Meinhold also considered the “holy of the Lord” to be the people of God. He has argued that Deut 7.1-8 was a backdrop to Mal 2.10-16, noting three topical similarities: intermarriage, the distinction of being a holy people, and that the people owe this distinction to God’s love.³⁴ Meinhold’s reasoning is convincing. Considering the great thematic overlap between Mal 2.10-16 and Deut 7.1-8, it is probable that Deut 7.1-8 was influential on the composer.

If I (and Meinhold) am correct, and the “holy of the Lord” is the people of God, another problem in Mal 2.11 can be explained. The next clause says: **אשר אהב** “whom he loved.” It is uncertain who the agent of this verse is. The relative clause could be translated either “whom Judah loved” or “whom the Lord loved.” If “the holy of the Lord” is the people of God, it makes more sense to understand the clause as “whom the Lord loved” rather than “whom Judah loved.” As Kessler argued: “Through the relative clause ‘whom he loves’ the [phrase ‘holy of the Lord’] becomes clearer.” He has noted that this small clause recalls the

33. As will become apparent in the discussion of the next locution in this verse, the designation “Holy of the Lord” appears to be used analogously with “the holy seed” as seen in Ezra 9.2: “For they took their [foreigners] daughters for themselves and for their sons and they mixed the holy seed with the peoples of the land.”

34. “Da Dtn 7,1–8 alle drei, in V.11b angesprochenen bzw. anklingenden theologischen Topoi in einem einzigen zusammenhängenden Text, wenn auch nicht in derselben Reihenfolge, aufweist—Mischehe (V.1–4) als Beeinträchtigung des »heiligen Volkes« (V.6), das sich göttlicher Liebe verdankt (V.7f.)—, dürfte es sich dabei um einen maßgeblichen Hintergrund text handeln.” Arndt Meinhold, *Maleachi* (Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament XIV/8; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2006), 207.

introduction of the book of Malachi (Mal 1.2-3), where God claims his love for Jacob (but not for Esau). Kessler also advances Meinhold's argument that Deut 7 is in the background of this text and confirms that "holy of the Lord" must mean God's people.³⁵ Thus, the verse claims that Judah has essentially defiled himself (Judah meaning an entire people), the very "person" whom God loved. This restates the assertion of Mal 2.10 that the people have acted treacherously against each other.

2.3.2.4 Genesis 24

The last clause of Mal 2.11 explains *how* Judah defiled the holy people of the Lord: **ובעל בת־אל נכר** "because he married the daughter of a foreign god." The phrase **בת־אל נכר** is an ironic pun, a phonetic parallel to Gen 24.47, **בת־בתואל בן־נחור** "the daughter of Bethuel, son of Nachor."³⁶ Bethuel son of Nachor was a relative of Abraham and the father of Rebekah. In Gen 24, Abraham sends his servant to find a non-Canaanite wife for his son amongst his (Abraham's) own people. The servant travels to Abraham's old land and asks God to reveal to him the correct wife for Isaac. By passing Abraham's servant's test, Rebekah is identified by God as the correct wife for Isaac. In consequence, according to God, Bethuel presented the correct lineage to provide a wife for the child of God's promise and covenant, Isaac.³⁷ The composer of Malachi understood this as well. In Gen 28.2, Bethuel appears again as the father of Laban. Like Isaac, Jacob seeks the correct wife: one from his own family. He finds Rachel, daughter of Laban, son of Bethuel. Twice in Genesis the correct wife for the patriarchs is found amongst the descendants of Bethuel.

35. Kessler, *Malachi*, 195.

36. Weyde, on the other hand, sees a connection to Deut 32:12: **יהוה בדרך ינחנו ואין עמו אל נכר**. Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 231-232.

37. This most likely suggests that the composer of Malachi interpreted the patriarchs' unwillingness for their sons to marry amongst the Canaanites to apply to all foreigners.

By redividing and changing slightly the letters that constitute Bethuel's name, the composer of Malachi created an ironic contrast. Rather than correctly marrying someone from the correct family, the "daughter of Bethuel son of Nachor," the men of Judah have married foreign women, "the daughter(s) of a foreign god" (cf. Tobit 4.12-14).³⁸ See **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.3.4** for further discussion of this pun.

This allusion through pun to the patriarchal narratives demonstrates a compositional impulse found elsewhere in Malachi. It is apparent that the composer viewed the patriarchal narratives as paradigmatic for the people and their morality. The composer frequently used

38. The book of Tobit understands the narrative in Gen 24 in a similar way. Tobit sees the narrative as paradigmatic for the securing of a proper bride. As noted by Moore, "the similarities between the book of Tobit and Isaac's quest for a bride are . . . striking: close to death (Tob 3:6, 4:2//Gen 24:1), both fathers send a trusted loved one on an all-important mission (Tobiah to get money from Gabael [4:1-2, 20] and Eliezer to secure a wife for Isaac [Gen 24:3-4, 37-38]). *Both fathers felt strongly about their only child marrying within the family* (Tob 1:9, 4:12-13; 6:10-12, 15; 7:10, 12; 8:7//Gen 24:3, 4, 7, 38-40). A trusted person played a major role in securing each bride (Tob 5:3-16; 6:10//Gen 24:2-66). In both accounts an angel played a role (Tob 3:16-17; 6:4-5; 12:14//Gen 24:7). Neither negotiator for the bride's hand would eat until the marriage was agreed upon (Tob 7:11//Gen 24:33). Each family of the bride offered her freely and blessed her (Tob 7:11-12, 15//Gen 24:51, 60). The love of each groom for his bride was almost instantaneous (Tob 6:8// Gen 24:66-67). Each bride willingly left her homeland to live with her in-laws (Tob 7:13; 10:7-12// Gen 24:58-59)." Carey A. Moore, *Tobit: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Bible Commentary 40A; New York: Doubleday, 1996) 8-9, italics mine. *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* also ascribes importance to Bethuel. Pseudo-Philo chapter 51 (*LAB Commentary*, Jacobson) says: "Speak, speak, Hannah, do not be silent. Sing praise, daughter of Batuel, about your miracles that God has performed for you. Who is Hannah that a prophet is born from her? Or who is the daughter of Batuel that she should bear a light to the people? Rise up, you also, Elkanah, and gird your loins. Sing praise about the wonders of the Lord." In Pseudo-Philo, Hannah gives birth to a promised prophet who would save the people. Thus, identifying her with Bethuel aligns her with the matriarchs, giving her the correct lineage to bear the promised child. Howard Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum: With Latin Text and English Translation* (Vol 1; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 177.

“Jacob” to designate “Israel” as a whole people and used “Esau,” Jacob’s brother, as representative of those not loved by God. In this same verse, “Judah” represents the addressees. It is not surprising then that the composer would use Bethuel’s name to designate a group of people, in this case, foreign women.³⁹

Through this allusion to the story of Gen 24, the “covenant of our forefathers” in Mal 2.10 is further defined.⁴⁰ In Gen 24.7, Abraham gives the task of finding a wife for his son to his servant. As a guarantee of the task, Abraham evokes the words God promised to him in Gen 12.7, 15.18 and 17.8: לזרעך אתן את-הארץ הזאת “to your *offspring* I will give this land.” What is pertinent to the Gen 24 story and especially to Mal 2.10-16 is not as much the land as the offspring.⁴¹ According to Gen 24, the offspring of promise can only come through the correct wife.⁴² The composer of Malachi extends this notion of the correct wife producing the

39. As demonstrated by **Appendix B**, this is not the composer’s only reuse of locutions from the patriarchal narratives. The composer also borrowed extensively from Gen 31-32.

40. I would not necessarily call the pun a “reuse” of older texts. Rather it is a wordplay meant to evoke a specific story. Because a pun is designed to be recognized, it will always act allusively—drawing to mind the word/person/story it is playing upon. This will also be true for the pun on Er and Onan I discuss below.

41. Although methodologically differing from my analysis, Van Seters has made a similar argument. He wrote: “[t]he inference in 24:7 is that for the patriarchs (and Israel) to intermarry with the Canaanites would be a rejection of God’s promise to give all the land of the Canaanites to them.” According to Van Seters, this is because “it is primarily a preservation of the people as descendants of Abraham—racial purity—so that the land promised, which has become the covenant between Israel and Yahweh through Abraham [Gen] 15:7-21, can be upheld. This concern with ethnic descent and racial purity becomes increasingly important in the exilic and post-exilic periods because it goes hand-in-hand with the patriarchal promises.” John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 227-78.

42. This understanding of the Gen 24 narrative is supported by the story’s surrounding material. The search for a wife for Isaac is sandwiched between references to the death of Isaac’s mother (see Gen 23 and Gen 24.67), who was the woman through whom God’s covenant with Abraham was to be fulfilled (the promise

correct offspring for the patriarchs to all the men of Judah. This mutual concern in Malachi for wife and offspring is revisited in Mal 2.14-15, which I will discuss below.

2.3.2.5 Summary of Reused Texts and Their Significance in Malachi 2.11

At the beginning of Mal 2.11, the composer continued his pattern of borrowing locutions from texts that address the worship of other gods: Jer 3.8 or 11 and Deut 17.4. Similarly, much like the contexts of Deut 4.31 and Ezek 44.7, which the composer reused in Mal 2.10, Deut 17.4 also addresses the transgressing or forgetting of a covenant. Ezekiel 44.7, reused in Mal 2.10, critiques the allowance of foreigners into the cult. This is paralleled by the accusation in Mal 2.11 that Judah has married the daughter of a foreign god. The composer's reuse of locutions drawn from various types of thematically paralleling texts suggests intentionality. He chose and read texts. He then reused locutions from those texts because he understood those texts to be relevant to each other.

Thus, in verse 11 the composer reasons that the defilement of the covenant is a result of Judah's treachery. He defiled the people, the holy of the Lord, when he married the daughter of a foreign god. This last phrase "daughter of a foreign god" not only indicates he married the wrong woman (not the daughter of Bethuel), but indicates that to marry a foreigner is to join oneself to a foreign god (cf. Ex 34.16; Deut 7.3-4). For the composer, this concern to marry the correct wife is directly connected to the desire to fulfill the covenant properly through having offspring. This concern will come to the forefront in Mal 2.15 below.

2.3.3 Malachi 2.12

May the Lord cut off from the man who does this Er and Onan (the offspring of Judah's foreign wife) from the tents of Jacob [Or: May the Lord cut off the man who does this from the tents of Jacob—with a witness who answers—including the one who brings an offering to the Lord of Hosts.]

of offspring; cf. Gen 17.19-21).

2.3.3.1 Leviticus 17.9

Malachi 2.12 is syntactically difficult. The concept of cutting someone off from his people as a punishment is relatively common in the Pentateuch, but in Malachi the phrase is unusually worded.⁴³ This is because the composer drew the locution from a specific context and then conflated it with other allusions. Leviticus 17.9 says **וְאֵל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֹא יָבִיאנוּ** “and he does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it to the Lord, that man will be cut off from the people.” Leviticus’ rare use (for this formulation) of the words **אֵישׁ** and **עָשָׂה** in conjunction with the phrase “cut off from” are used in Mal 2.12.⁴⁴ Additionally, Mal 2.13, the next verse, contains the locution **מִזְבַּח יְהוָה**, also found in Lev 17.6. Though the term “altar of the Lord” occurs 21 other times in the HB, the concentration of elements shared by Lev 17 and Mal 2.12-13 strongly suggests a dependence between the two passages.⁴⁵ As noted in my introduction, it is more likely that Malachi is dependent on Leviticus than Leviticus on Malachi.

The context of Lev 17.3-9 is concerned with the place of offering: it must be “before the tent of meeting.” This is to ensure **וְלֹא־יִזְבְּחוּ עוֹד אֶת־זִבְחֵיהֶם לְשַׁעִירִים אֲשֶׁר הֵם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם** “that they do not sacrifice any longer for the ‘*S’eirim*’ whom they prostitute themselves after” (Lev 17.7). Though the context of Lev 17.7 suggests the translation “demon/idol” for **שַׁעִירִים**, the composer of Malachi understood the word through its graphemes rather than through its context. Instead of the composer reading Lev 17.7 as referring to demons/idols, he

43. Compare: Gen 17.14; Exod 12.15, 19; 31.14; Lev 7.20-21, 25, 27; 17.10, 14; 18.29; 19.8; 20.6; 22.3; 23.29; 26.30; Num 9.13; 15.30-31; 19.13, 20; 1 Sam 2.33; etc.

44. The other verse in the HB that contains these elements is Exod 30.38, but its context does not cohere with the context of Malachi as well as that of Lev 17.

45. For the occurrences of **מִזְבַּח יְהוָה** see: Lev 17.6; Deut 12.27; 16.21; 26.4; 27.6; Josh 9.27; 22.19, 28-29; 1 Kgs 8.22, 54; 18.30; 2 Kgs 23.9; Mal 2.13; Neh 10.35; 2 Chr 6.12; 8.12; 15.8; 29.19, 21; 33.16; 35.16.

understood it to refer the people of Seir, namely, the Edomites, Esau's descendants. The use of the word זנה "prostitute" from the context of Lev 17.7 likely linked with the context of Jer 3 in the mind of the composer. Jeremiah 3, alluded to previously in Mal 2.10, depicts Israel and Judah prostituting, which is equated with idolatry.

2.3.3.2 Genesis 38

The enigmatic phrase ער וענה has garnered much discussion.⁴⁶ Weyde, Dahlberg and Kessler have all argued that the phrase is an allusive pun to the brothers Er and Onan.⁴⁷ Er and Onan play a significant role in the narrative of Gen 38. They were the sons of Judah and his Canaanite wife (cf. Gen 46.12 ער ואונן). According to Gen 38, Er and Onan were evil in the eyes of the Lord. Because of their evilness, God killed them. It is likely that the composer was alluding to the story of Er and Onan (in the MT—see discussion below) given his previously demonstrated compositional techniques. In my discussion of Mal 2.11 above, I have already highlighted the punning allusion on the name Bethuel son of Nachor. In **Chapter 3: Wordplay**, I will demonstrate several other examples of this compositional

46. Hill argues concerning ער וענה: "The distillation of scholarly opinion [on this phrase] does yield three premises. First, it seems likely that the two nouns . . . constitute a type of idiom or technical phrase associated with some aspect of community life; for example, 'camp life' in the rousing of families in the morning . . . or even religious life as a prohibition against any representative bringing an offering for an excommunicated person Second, this emphatic insertion is intended to suggest merismus, representing a 'totality' of some sort Third, the meaning of the phrase is best connected with the verb *krt*, either as a qualification of the degree to which the offender is 'cut off' from the community . . . or as an extension of the malediction pronounced against those practicing such divorce." Hill, *Malachi*, 235. McDonald suggests the reading "the aroused one and the lover." Beth Glazier McDonald, "Malachi 2:12: 'ēr wə'ōneh: Another Look," *JBL* 105 (1986): 295-98.

47. See Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 242-45 for a summary of this interpretation along with a survey of other views on this phrase. B.T. Dahlberg, "Studies in the Book of Malachi" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1963), 49-53; Kessler, *Maleachi*, 200.

technique. To find another punning allusion in Mal 2.12 is thus unsurprising. Further, in my analysis of the “daughter of a foreign god” in Mal 2.11 above, I argued that the composer of Malachi characteristically used the proper name of a person to depict an entire group of people. Jacob represents God’s chosen people, Esau represents Edom, Bethuel represents the wife of correct lineage. Malachi 2.11b-12 could be another example of this compositional technique. Malachi 2.11b says that *Judah* (masculine noun) has defiled the holy people of the Lord when he married the daughter of a foreign god.⁴⁸ Like Judah who married a Canaanite in the patriarchal narratives, the people of Judah had married foreign women. The allusive pun to Er and Onan in Mal 2.12 predicts the same outcome for Judah-the-people that befell Judah-the-man. The offspring born by foreign wives would be “cut off.” The story of Gen 38 is thus paradigmatic for the whole people of Judah.

Equally as problematic as the phrase ער וענה is the syntax of this verse: כרת יהוה לאיש אשר יעשנה ער וענה מאהלי יעקב. Is איש the direct object or indirect object of this sentence? As Weyde pointed out, both von Bulmerincq and van der Woude “have contended that ל in the Malachi passage introduces a complement, whereas the object of the verb כרת (hif.) is the phrase ער וענה.” This is ascertained through other uses of ל כרת in the “Deuteronomistic History and in prophetic books where the same phrase occurs.” He notes, “in these texts it is obvious that the word prefixed by ל refers to the evildoer, but he is not the object of the verb; the object is someone else, in most cases the *offspring* of the evildoer.”⁴⁹ In

48. This is also noted by Krieg: “Seine kanaanäischen Verbindungen bringen Juda so oder so Schaden, den Verlust der Söhne, als er die Kanaanäerin heiratet, den Verlust der Ehre, als er zur Kultprostituierten geht. Aus kanaanäischen Beziehungen . . . gehen keine guten Früchten hervor.” Matthias Krieg, *Mutmaßungen über Maleachi: Eine Monographie* (Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments 80; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1993), 185-86.

49. Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 239. Compare 1 Sam 2.33; 1 Kgs 14.10, 21.21; 2 Kgs 9.8; Isa 14.22; Jer 44.7, 47.4.

other words, the *lamed* indicates that “the man” will not be punished, but rather “Er and Onan,” the offspring.⁵⁰

The thematic connections between Gen 38 and Mal 2.11-12, namely, Judah’s marriage to a foreigner, the concern with offspring, and the “cutting off” of the offspring, could suggest that the narrative of Er and Onan is alluded to.⁵¹ Furthermore, the allusive pun to cutting off Judah’s offspring contrasts well with the “offspring of God” that are found later in Mal 2.15 (see discussion below). This understanding of ער וענה also fits well with the larger story of Bethuel, alluded to in Mal 2.11, in which Rebekah’s ancestry is an important component of God’s covenant with Abraham (see Gen 24.3-7).

There is evidence that could negate this understanding of ער וענה. Every other witness apart from the MT (LXX, 4QXII, TJ) reads ער as עד.⁵² With this reading (in Hebrew), familiar legal jargon from the Pentateuch is suggested. For example, in Deut 5.20 (cf. Exod 20.16) it says: ולא תענה ברעך עד שוא “Do not answer against your neighbor an empty witness.” This lexical and syntactical construct is found seven other times in the HB.⁵³ It

50. Weyde also argues: “Although this intermarriage was not the reason for the death of the sons, the similarity between the tradition in Genesis 38 and Mal 2:11 ff, as Krieg, too, has emphasized, could provide a basis for an actualization and application of the former tradition to the latter: Judah, the son of Jacob, married the daughter of a foreign god, just as the men of Judah, the descendants of Jacob, are accused of having done, according to Mal 2:11. . . . Moreover, by the clear allusion to the names ער and אונן in the Jacob tradition the participles ער וענה also bring to mind the punishment of Judah’s two sons and their tragic fate: YHWH put them to death.” Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 246.

51. See my note above in my discussion of Bethuel son of Nachor for why this example has to be allusive.

52. Fuller, in his article “Text-Critical Problems in Malachi 2:10-16,” identifies עד as the most likely original reading in Malachi. Because of my evidence for a pun on the name “Er and Onan” I am not as convinced. Fuller, “Text-critical problems,” 51.

53. See Num 35.30; Deut 19.16, 18; 31.21; Job 16.8; 32.12; Prov 25.18.

could be that עַד וְעִנָּה is shorthand for a legal witnessing requirement, reading עַד וְעִנָּה in Mal 2.12 as “a witness who answers.”⁵⁴ The use of these two words was not drawn from a specific text. Rather, they suggest a familiar legal formula. Of course this reading makes the grammatical construction of Mal 2.12 problematic. “A witness who answers” being cut off from the man (and from the tents of Jacob) who marries a foreign woman does not make as much sense as his offspring being cut off.

Thus, there are three possible readings in his formulation of judgement: one in which there is an allusive pun “May God cut off from the man who does this his offspring (like God did to Judah by killing Er and Onan) from the tents of Jacob.” This reading leaves us with one problem, namely, if עַד וְעִנָּה is a pun meant to evoke Er and Onan, what does the plain reading (without recognition of the pun) of עַד וְעִנָּה mean? In the second possible reading the formulation is shorthand for proper legal procedure. A third option combines the two readings. Rather than the phrase being just a phonetic pun (אויגן/ענה), the composer also played with the analogous shapes of the letters ד and ר. This was picked up by the later versions (not necessarily intentionally). In a plain(er) reading, one reads the ד instead of the ר, and sees in the text a shorthand for a legal witnessing requirement, עַד וְעִנָּה. But, the ר was left in the manuscript so that other readers would pick up on the allusion to the story of Er and Onan at the same time. Because I cannot give another firm example of a composer playing on letter shapes at the same time as semantics elsewhere, this is a tenuous argument.

54. Redditt concludes the similar translation “any to witness or answer” is correct. P. L. Redditt, *Haggai*, 171.

Hill notes “The disputational style and judicial nature of the oracle justify the emendation of the MT ‘*ēr*’ (‘the one awake’) to ‘*ēd*’ (‘witness’). Thus the idiom probably has legal connotations, perhaps related to the juridical procedure requiring two witnesses (a ‘witness’ and an ‘answerer’ [i.e., a corroborating witness], cf. Deut 17:6; 19:15).” Hill, *Malachi*, 235.

2.3.3.3 Genesis 31.33

The phrase at the end of the pronouncement in Mal 2.12, אהלי יעקב, “tents of Jacob,” occurs only three times in the HB: Gen 31.33; Jer 30.18 and Mal 2.12. In light of the rarity of this phrase, it is again likely that this locution is a borrowed one. Because of Malachi’s use of Gen 31-33 elsewhere, it is likely that the composer borrowed the phrase from Gen 31.33.⁵⁵ In this verse, Laban searches for his stolen household gods. Unbeknownst to him and Jacob, Rachel has stolen the idols. Here again we find two compositional impulses previously observed in this pericope. First, the composer reused a locution found in a text related to other gods and/or idolatry. Second, the composer uses elements of the Jacob narratives to apply to the people as a whole. This second compositional impulse serves to highlight the composer’s continued interest in the topic of Mal 1.2-5, where God loves Jacob but hates Edom. In light of the reminder of Mal 2.10 of God’s love for his people, as well as the reuse in this verse of Lev 17 that addresses the *S’eirim*, it seems likely that the composer was trying to infuse his text subtly with reminders of his earlier pronouncement of love for Jacob and hate for Esau.

2.3.3.4 Malachi 3.3

The last clause in verse 12, ומגיש מנחה ליהוה צבאות, is awkwardly placed at the end of this verse. Its translation is difficult, but probably should read “including the one who brings the offering.” The clause is nearly identical to Mal 3.3b: והיו ליהוה מגישי מנחה בצדקה “and they will belong to the Lord, bringing offerings in righteousness.” There, “the sons of Levi” are the subject of the verb והיו. Since both clauses are nearly identical in Mal 2.12 and 3.3, it is probable that the clause in Mal 2.12 has the same subject. In consequence, “the one who brings an offering” in Mal 2.12 should be understood as “the sons of Levi.” When reading the clause in context with the rest of the verse, the whole first clause about “cutting off” is

55. Compare **Appendix B**.

gapped to include the priests also.⁵⁶ Even the priests (sons of Levi) should be cut off from their people for marrying a foreign woman.⁵⁷

2.3.3.5 Summary of Reused Texts and Their Significance in Malachi 2.12

As previously noted, Mal 2.12 is a very difficult verse. The composer reuses a judgment formula from Lev 17, which in its context was meant to deter the people from prostituting themselves to the “*S'eirim*.” The composer of Malachi interpreted these “*S'eirim*” in Lev 17 to be the people of Edom. This interpretation fits well with the topics of the reused material in Mal 2.10-11: worship of other gods and marriage with foreigners.

The judgement formula in this verse could function in two ways: either, to warn that the offspring of the man who marries the foreign woman will be cut off, or, to warn that the man who does this will be cut off in accordance with proper legal procedure. In both readings, the one who is cut off is removed from the tents of Jacob. The name Jacob serves as a contrast to the prostitution to the *S'eirim* from which the judgment formula is drawn (evoking again God’s love for Jacob and hatred for Esau). Lastly, the final clause highlights that even the priests are included in this pronouncement.

2.3.4 Mal 2.13

And this you do a second time: you cover the Lord’s altar with tears, with weeping and groaning. He no longer turns to the offering to take favor from your hand.

56. Similarly, “H. A. Brongers has pointed out that where neighboring lines have nearly identical sense, the waw cannot be copulative but . . . that in some cases it compensates for gapping of the initial verb.”

Compare Isa 44.1. *IBHS* 39.2.4.

57. Compare similar observations made on other HB intermarriage texts in Christian Frevel and Benedikt J. Conczorowski, “Deepening the Water: First Steps to a Diachronic Approach on Intermarriage in the Hebrew Bible,” in *Mixed Marriages: Intermarriages and Group Identity in the Second Temple Period* (ed. Christian Frevel; Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 547; New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 13-45.

This verse has been explained in a variety of ways. It has been used as evidence of foreign cultic practices, as evidence of the mourning of the people so that God will regard their offerings, as evidence of the people's mourning because he does not look at their offering, and as evidence of the mourning of divorced Israelite wives.⁵⁸ I will demonstrate that there is another option that becomes apparent when one examines the texts reused by the composer.

2.3.4.1 Numbers 25.10-13

The first phrase "This you do a second time" is problematic.⁵⁹ This clause would seem to indicate that the people have been weeping before this verse. But, there is no previous act of weeping in the book of Malachi. Because of this, it would seem that the text is referring to an event or text outside of the book. In **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**, I will demonstrate that the Covenant with Levi in Malachi 2.5 is a reference to God's covenant with Phinehas in Num 25.10-13. The story found in Num 25 provides a convincing source of influence for the message in Mal 2.10-16 (and it also compliments Deut 7).⁶⁰

In Num 25, the Israelites come to Shittim, where they begin to prostitute themselves to the house of Moab (Num 25.1). Numbers 25 argues that through this prostitution the people "joined themselves to the Baal of Peor" (Num 25.3). God becomes angry because of the people's actions and orders the chiefs of the people to be killed. Instead, Moses tells the

58. For a synopsis of the positions as well as identification of who has argued for which interpretation see Markus Zehnder, "A Fresh Look at Malachi II 13-16," *VT* 63 (2003): 222.

59. Sometimes translated "This second thing you do." E.g. Hill, *Malachi*, 237.

60. Traces of influence from texts reused in other portions of Malachi is evidenced in Mal 2.10-16. This phenomenon is very similar to my argument below about שלח in Mal 2.16. Although שלח is a very common word in the HB, the specific semantic value of the locution in Mal 2.16 suggests the composer was still drawing from Jer 3, a text reused in Mal 2.11 that also deals with the subject of divorce. See discussion of Mal 2.16 for more detail.

people to kill whoever has joined themselves to the Baal through their actions (Num 25.4-5). *The people then weep in front of the tent of meeting while they watch* a man from the sons of Israel bring to “*his brothers*” a Midianite woman (Num 25.6). The man and the Midianite enter his tent together. Phinehas, a priest, seeing no one take action against this travesty, rises up. He enters the tent and impales the lovers with his spear. Through his actions, Phinehas manages to turn away the wrath of God. This in turn halts a plague sent by God from destroying all the people (Num 25.7-9). Because of Phinehas’ jealousy for God, God gives him a covenant which is peace and a covenant of eternal priesthood.

Numbers 25 is thematically similar to the other texts reused in Mal 2.10-16: it also speaks of intermarriage and idolatry. Because of this similarity, as well as the allusive reuse of Num 25 previously in Mal 2 (See **Chapter 4**), it is likely that Phinehas’ story explains a few details in Mal 2.10-16. First, in Num 25.6, the son of Israel brings to אָחָיו “*his brothers*” a Midianite woman. If I am correct, that the Phinehas story is influential on the composer of Mal 2.10-16, this detail in Phinehas’ story could explain why in Mal 2.10-11 intermarriage is identified as an act where “a man acts treacherously against his brother.”⁶¹

Numbers 25 also influenced the composer’s choice of locution that I am primarily concerned with in Mal 2.13: the problematic clause “this you do a second time: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning.” Numbers 25.6 notes that the people weep “in front of the tent.” Importantly, *the altar* is found “in front of the tent” (compare Lev 17.6). In Num 25.6 the people’s weeping is seemingly empty, as only Phinehas attempts to rectify the situation that caused the weeping. The composer of Malachi equated the first instance of weeping to be that found in Num 25.6. In Malachi, the composer thus accuses the people of a second bout of ineffectual weeping, this time specifying that their weeping is over the altar. Like in Num 25, the people mourn (half-heartedly) their

61. אָחָיו is a common word, so this is not confirmable.

intermarriage and their slip into idolatry. This interpretation of the phrase “this you do a second time” was also noted in Genesis Rabbah XVIII.5 which says:

R. Hannan said: When Nehemiah came up from the land of Exile [to Eretz Israel, he found that] the women’s faces had been blackened by the sun, so that [their husbands] had gone and married strange [i.e. heathen] wives, while these would go round the altar weeping. *Thus Malachi says, And this ye do a second time (ib. 13), i.e. ye actually repeat [the sin committed] at Shittim! Ye cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with sighing (ib).*⁶²

Genesis Rabbah thus regarded Mal 2.13 in much the same way as described above. The first instance of weeping was found in Shittim, in the narrative of Phinehas in Num 25. Accordingly, Malachi evidences the second instance.

The scribal composer of Malachi composed Mal 2.10-16 influenced by Israel’s quintessential narrative of involvement with foreign women leading to idolatry in Num 25. It is evident that the composer of Malachi was addressing what he viewed as a repeat in history: Israel’s marriage to foreign women resulting in idolatry. In Malachi, as in Num 25, the people’s weeping has no effect on God’s favor.⁶³

2.3.4.2 Ezekiel 24.16-17

The three words for crying in Mal 2.13—דמעה “tears,” בכי “weeping,” and אנקה “groaning”—all occur in succession elsewhere only in Ezek 24.16-17: ולא תבכה ולוא תבוא

62. Midrash Rabbah, *Genesis*, (Freedman 145). On the other hand, this text also attributes the weeping to the divorce of the Israelite wives, which I do not think is addressed in this passage.

63. Hill comes to a very similar conclusion. He argues: “The first offense, profaning Yahweh’s sanctuary (outlined in vv 10-12), was the result of foreign marriage among the Hebrews. The ‘second’ offense, a natural consequence of the first, was the desecration of Yahweh’s alter with hypocritical laments (decrying Yahweh’s intransigence over the divorcement of legitimate Hebrew wives due to this intermarriage (vv 13-16).” Hill, *Malachi*, 237.

דַּם דַּמְעַתְךָ הָאֵנֶק דָּם “Do not weep, do not cry, groan silently” (although weep and groan are in verbal form in Ezekiel). The instructions to Ezekiel in these verses are puzzling and disturbing. God takes away the delight of Ezekiel’s eyes, his wife, with a מַגֵּפָה “plague” and he is told not to mourn. This episode with Ezekiel and his wife is supposed to be symbolic of Israel’s future. God will defile his sanctuary, which is the delight of the people’s eyes, and their *sons and daughters*—the offspring—will fall by the sword.

It is not immediately clear why the composer of Malachi would have reused this passage. On the one hand, it does not address idolatry/other gods, intermarriage or foreigners like the other passages the composer has already reused. On the other hand, the passage does depict a wife and offspring who are killed (cf. Mal 2.12 “cut off”), both topics addressed in Mal 2.10-16. Most probably the latter overlap of themes motivated the inclusion of the locution from Ezek 24.16-17.

An additional complication for the possible reuse of Ezek 24.16-17 is that the LXX of Ezek 24.16 does not represent וְלֹא תִבּוֹא דַמְעַתְךָ. With regard to LXX Ezekiel’s textual-history, a variety of scenarios are possible. On the one hand, the translator could have subsumed וְלֹא תִבּוֹא דַמְעַתְךָ with the previous phrase לֹא תִבְכֶּה because he viewed the repetition of phrases for crying to be redundant. On the other hand, the text switches to plene spelling in the phrase וְלֹא תִבּוֹא דַמְעַתְךָ, the word דַמְעָה occurs nowhere else in the book of Ezekiel, and the phrase דַמְעָה + בּוֹא occurs nowhere else in the HB. It could be that the phrase וְלֹא תִבּוֹא דַמְעַתְךָ was added by a later hand, but it is not immediately evident why this would have occurred. These different scenarios suggest three different options for the relationship of Ezek 24.16 with Mal 2.13. First, Mal 2.13 could be dependent on a Hebrew text that is different from the LXX *Vorlage*. Second, the LXX’s *Vorlage* is the same as the proto-MT and the differences between the MT and LXX are a result of translation technique. Third, Ezek 24.16 could have been edited in light of Mal 2.13 on virtue of the shared roots בָּכָה and אֵנֶק and the theme of wives found in both passages. Fourth, there could be no relationship

between the two passages. In light of the fact that Ezekiel is reused elsewhere in Malachi (see discussion of verse 10 above and **Chapter 3: Wordplay, sections 3.3.2 and 3.5.11**) and the large concentration of reused texts in Mal 2.10-16, the first or second option seems more likely, namely, the composer of Malachi was dependent on a Hebrew text of Ezek 24.16-17.

The argument for the reuse of Ezek 24.16-17 is tentative. Because the theme of Ezek 24.16-17 is different from the other verses the composer has drawn from, reuse of this verse does not match with the composer's known compositional techniques. Because of the text-critical uncertainty, the direction of dependence between these two verses is also uncertain.

2.3.4.3 Numbers 16.15

The second portion of Mal 2.13 also contains reused material. It reads: מאין עוד פנות אל-המנחה ולקחת רצון מידכם “he no longer turns towards the offering to take pleasure from your hand.” This verse conflates portions of Num 16.15 and Gen 33.10. In Num 16.1-3, the people (Korah, Dathan, Abriam, and On) question Moses' and Aaron's authority to serve as intermediaries between the people and God. Korah reasons, “All the congregation is holy and the Lord is in their midst. Why do you [Moses and Aaron] exalt yourselves over the congregation of the Lord?” (Num 16.3). Moses responds by claiming that “God will make known who belongs to him, namely, who is the holy person” (Num 16.5). He initiates a test for Korah and his congregation involving the offering of incense to determine who is holy. After this, he summons Dathan and Abriam to come to him. Dathan and Abriam refuse, accusing Moses of bringing them to the desert in order to kill them and of lying to the people. Moses becomes angry with them and asks God אל-תפן אל-מנחם “May you not turn towards their offering” (Num 16.15). Later, all three men are separated from the rest of the congregation for judgment and are swallowed by the earth. Numbers 16 addresses the meaning of being a holy people. Though Korah claimed the whole congregation was holy, God destroys those who rebel, identifying them as not holy and not chosen (cf. Num 16.5).

This story corresponds with what we have seen previously in Malachi. Like Mal 2.11, Num 16 is concerned with the holy people. Like the threat in Mal 2.12, those who rebel are cut off from the assembly—they and their households are swallowed by the earth. Both topics of holiness and judgement in Num 16 made it an ideal passage for the composer of Malachi to draw from. However, the passage does not exactly correspond to Malachi's message. Malachi's passage differs from the Num 16 narrative in that Malachi does not seem to be concerned with rebellion against leadership. Rather, the “rebellion” Malachi addresses is intermarriage with foreign women and the worship of other gods. It could be that the composer interpreted this passage allegorically. In Num 16, the people rebel against Moses and the other leadership proving they are not holy. In Mal 2, the people rebel against the *commandments* of Moses (cf. Mal 2.1-2, Mal 3.22), which also endangers their “holy” status (Mal 2.11). Unfortunately, this interpretive move is not demonstrable. What is demonstrable is that both Mal 2.10-16 and Num 16 address the theme “holy people” and the cutting off of those who rebel—along with their households. These thematic connections are enough to have lead the composer to Num 16 and inspired his reuse of a locution from this passage.

2.3.4.4 Genesis 33.10

The third instance of reuse in Mal 2.13 stems from Gen 33.10.⁶⁴ Genesis 32-33 is the story of Jacob's return to the land God had promised his fathers. On his way back, he encounters Esau. Afraid of Esau's wrath, Jacob sets aside a sizable מנחה “gift/offering” for his brother. In Gen 33.10, Jacob comes before Esau and says to him אל־נָא אִם־נָא מִצְאָתִי חֵן “No, if I find favor in your eyes then take my ‘gift’ from my hand—for therefore I see your face like seeing the face of God—and be pleased with me.” This locution matches elements found in Mal 2.13: מאִין עוֹד: פְּנוֹת אֱלֹהֵי־הַמְּנַחָה וְלִקְחַת רִצּוֹן מִיַּדְכֶם. In Genesis, Jacob is speaking and Esau, whom Jacob says

64. Malachi alludes on several occasions to the Gen 31-33 pericope: See **Appendix B**.

has a face like God, is to receive the מנחה. In Malachi, it is God who is supposed to receive the מנחה, although he will not.

In my assessment of Mal 2.12 above, I argued that the composer drew his judgment formula from Lev 17.9. The stipulations found in Lev 17.1-9 are to ensure that the people of Israel “no long sacrifice to the *S’eirim*” (Lev 17.7). The composer understood the *S’eirim* in this verse to be the people of Esau. In Gen 33.10, Jacob presents an offering to Esau, the very action Lev 17 warned against. It appears the composer reused Gen 33.10 ironically. “Jacob” (reinterpreted by the composer to stand for the whole nation) presents an offering to Esau (Edom/*S’eirim*) in Gen 33.10. It is because of this misdirection of offering (and ultimately loyalty) that God will no longer turn to their offerings. The people addressed in Malachi are not presenting their offerings to God. They are presenting their offerings to Esau, a foreign people and by association to their god. This is one more example of the composer interpreting narratives from the patriarchal stories as paradigmatic of the life of the people.

2.3.4.5 Summary of Reused Texts and Their Significance in Malachi 2.13

Malachi 2.13 evidences some new compositional strategies as well as some that have been previously seen in this pericope. A new compositional technique evidenced is composing due to influence of a text that was reused previously in Malachi. Above, I argued that the story of Phinehas in Num 25 was influential in Mal 2.13. The composer of Malachi understood this narrative to depict the first instance of insincere weeping over intermarriage. The composer accuses his audience of repeating the act of weeping, which again is insincere and ineffectual.

As before, the composer drew from texts with like themes. The composer of Malachi reused locutions from three different texts in Mal 2.13: Ezek 24.16-17, Num 16.15 and Gen 33.10. The context of Ezek 24.16-17 does not provide many clues to what role this passage played in his interpretation of older texts. Perhaps he simply reused locutions from a context that also discussed a wife. It is possible the much larger contextual threat found in Ezek 24 of

the cutting off of offspring also motivated the reuse of these locutions. Conversely, the contexts of both Num 16.15 and Gen 33.10 are relatable to previous topics and compositional techniques already seen in Mal 2.10-12. Numbers 16.15 corresponds to Malachi's designation of the people as "Holy of the Lord." The passage adds further discussion of what it means to be a holy people in relation to obedience. Numbers 16 also evidences the "cutting off" of rebellious people, much like what is threatened in Mal 2.12.

The reuse of Gen 33.10 again displays the hermeneutic of reading narrative as paradigmatic for an entire people. In the Gen 33 narrative, Jacob offers Esau an offering. The composer reused this verse ironically to demonstrate that the people were giving their offering to a foreign people rather than to God. This reuse confirms that the composer of Malachi specifically associated the foreigners with Edom (cf. Mal 1.2-3). The warning of Lev 17.9 (reused in Mal 2.12) to not present offerings to the *S'eirim* is proven to be well-founded. According to the composer's reuse of Gen 33.10, the people are doing precisely this.

2.3.5 Malachi 2.14

*And you say on what grounds? Because the Lord is a witness between you and the wife of your youth—against whom you have acted treacherously—for she is your companion and the wife of your covenant.*⁶⁵

65. This verse could evidence of the tight conflation of reused locutions (much like what is found in Mal 2.5-9, cf. **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**). Below I will present what I consider to be the most likely reused locutions in the text, and then in footnotes I will address possible overlaid words which further could evoke other texts.

2.3.5.1 Genesis 31.50⁶⁶

In verse 13, the people question why God no longer turns towards their offerings. In verse 14, they are answered: על כִּי־הוּא הָעֵיד בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין אִשְׁתְּ נַעֲוִירֶיךָ “because the Lord is a witness between you and the wife of your youth.”⁶⁷ In Gen 31.50 *God (Elohim* as opposed to

66. Genesis 31.50-53 exhibits several text-critical issues. Of most importance to my argument above is that OG does not contain “God is a witness between me and between you” in Gen 31.50. In the OG, Gen 31.51-52a (MT) is found before Gen 31.48b (MT). As noted by Wevers, “This makes the Greek [of Gen 31.50 OG] somewhat difficult. It reads ‘if you shall humble my daughters, if you shall take wives alongside my daughters, behold there is no one with us’ (i.e. there is no human witness). This can only make sense in the light of the expressed wish of v. 49, because, though there is no human witness, ‘may God behold’”(524). Wevers’ discussion of the insertion of 51-52 at verse 48 indicates he understands the OG to be a reworking of the Hebrew text. He writes “Again there is a rearrangement of text. V. 48a had already appeared before v. 47. Now before v.48b Gen [the OG translator] inserted a translation of vv. 52 and 52a. By the rearrangement v. 47 makes sense as interrupting what ‘Laban said to him’ in v. 46b (equaling v. 48a in MT) and v. 48 ‘and Laban said to Jacob’ (v.51a of MT), with all of vv.48-52 now a continuous statement (interrupted only by the *διὰ τοῦτο* statement in v.48b) by Laban” (523). John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* (Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 35; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 523-24. If Wevers is correct and the MT reflects the older arrangement of the text, then it is not problematic to argue that the composer of Malachi drew the locution from Gen 31.50 inspired by its immediate surrounding context.

67. Eddinger notes that the phrase בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין אִשְׁתְּ נַעֲוִירֶיךָ “is remarkably similar to the curse pronounced upon the serpent in Gen 3:15, which reads בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה.” Eddinger, *Malachi*, 65. In fact, the two phrases are so similar and unique (the phrase occurring nowhere else), this could very well be another case of literary dependence. Interestingly, Malachi would have to be applying the pronouncement on the snake to the people. The activation of Gen 3.15 would produce several effects on the reading of Mal 2.14. First, God is not only witnessing to the worship of other gods, but also to the enmity of the people to “the wife of youth.” Second, “the wife of youth” is then associated with the creation narrative. The hapax חִבְרַת (apparently the female version of חֵבֶר), could thus be understood as a synonym for Gen 2.18’s עֵזֶר כְּגֹדֶל (Walter Kaiser suggested instead that “Perhaps there is an echo of the ‘one flesh’ of Gen. 2:24 in the word ‘companion . . .’

YHWH) acts as witness: אלהים עד ביני ובינך.⁶⁸ There are several reasons why it is likely the composer of Malachi drew from this passage for this locution.⁶⁹ First, the phrase עד ביני ובינך occurs three times in Gen 31.31-50 and twice in Josh 22.27-28. One could argue then that the phrase is distinctive of Gen 31.31-50. Of all the occurrences of the phrase, the locution in Mal 2.13 matches more closely Gen 31.50: it differs only in the pronouns used. Also, only in Gen 31.50 is God a witness. Second, I noted above that the composer was acquainted with Gen 31 (see also **Appendix B**). It is thus not unlikely that he reused portions of this chapter again. Third, this locution occurs in the larger sentence of Gen 31.50: אם־תענה את־בנותי ואם־תקח נשים על־בנותי אין איש עמנו ראה אלהים עד ביני ובינך “If you remove my daughters’ support or if you take wives besides my daughters, [though] there is no one with us, God is a

which means ‘united, or joined together.’” Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Malachi: God’s Unchanging Love* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984], 70). Third, Gen 3.15 continues by addressing the offspring of the woman versus her enemies’ offspring, who in Malachi’s reinterpretation is the people. This message accords well with God’s seeking for “the offspring of God” later in Mal 2.16.

68. The switch from Elohim to YHWH might be the result of the composer’s desire to evoke another text. The verb עוד is used six times with YHWH as subject in the HB (Exod 19.23; 2 Kgs 17.13, 15; Jer 11.7; 42.19; 146.9; Ps 147.6). In only 2 Kgs 17.13,15 and Ps 147.6 is the verb third person and the Lord referred to as YHWH and not through a pronoun or implied through the verb conjugation. Considering that 2 Kgs 17.13 is arguably reused in Mal 2.4, it is possible that Malachi reused the verse again here. Additionally, when the context of 2 Kgs 17.13 is taken into consideration, it becomes even more likely. 2 Kgs 17.6 explains how the Israelites were carried away to Assyria, because they had sinned against God and “feared other gods” (2 Kgs 17.7). 2 Kings 8-12 describes Israel’s idolatry and 2 Kgs 17.13 explains the measures God took to turn the people back, but to no avail. Their idolatry is argued to be a result of their complete disregard for the statutes of God and his covenant. If I am correct, then Mal 2.14 does not indicate a change in subject as is often assumed. God is ultimately witnessing to Judah’s worship of other gods through the inclusion of foreigners.

69. See also Kessler, *Maleachi*, 204; Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 215.

witness between me and between you.”⁷⁰ Here, Laban is making stipulations for his covenant with Jacob before Jacob takes leave of him forever. Jacob is not to treat his wives (Laban’s daughters) wrongly, nor is he to take wives *besides the daughters of Laban*.⁷¹ Against the backdrop of the pun on Bethuel son of Nachor in Mal 2.11, and the composer of Malachi’s use of “Jacob” as shorthand for the whole people, it is likely that he would have applied this last stipulation as a prohibition on God’s whole people. They were not to marry anyone besides those women who were descendants of Laban. Fourth, again in light of the pun on Bethuel son of Nachor in Mal 2.11, it is noteworthy that Gen 31.53 evokes the name Nachor: “The God of Abraham and the God of Nachor, may they judge between us—the God(s?) of their father—but Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac.”⁷²

70. Paradise convincingly argues that rather than Laban being concerned about the abuse (as the verb ענה is usually translated) of his daughters he is concerned with their support. See Jonathan Paradise, “What Did Laban Demand of Jacob? A New Reading of Genesis 31:50 and Exodus 21:10,” in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg* (ed. M. Cogan, B. Eichler and J. Tigay; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 91-98.

71. Hamilton notes that this is a possible reading for the preposition על in this verse: “For ‘al with the sense ‘besides, other than’ cf. Exod. 20:3, ‘you shall have no other gods besides me’ (‘al pānāy). See also Gen. 28:9 ‘in addition to his wives’ (‘al nāšātw).” In view of the rest of Malachi’s pericope, I believe the preposition was received by Malachi as “besides.” If the preposition על is read “in addition to” the message would still not change much. Malachi would be chiding the priests for practicing polygyny with foreign women. Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18-50* (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1995), 312. Cf. Hugenberger’s chapter on “Malachi 2:10-16 and the Toleration of Polygyny Elsewhere in the Old Testament” for a discussion of the various views in scholarship on this pericope’s relationship to polygyny. Hugenberger, *Marriage as Covenant*, 84-123.

72. This verse is difficult, as evidenced by most commentators who choose to ignore the plural verb. The verse seems to suggest that Laban acknowledges more than one god—the God of Abraham and the God of

Genesis 31 speaks about a covenant Jacob made in which he promised not to take any wives besides the daughters of Laban (and ultimately Nachor). This could have implications for how one understands the phrase “wife of your covenant.” In light of the reuse of Gen 31.50 in this verse, it seems unlikely that the covenant in Mal 2.14 is a covenant between a man and a woman. Rather, the covenant is one in which a woman plays an essential role, but the covenant is not with her. She is the wife about whom the covenant was made between two men.

There are two options then on how to understand the phrase “wife of your covenant.” The first option is that the covenant referenced is that between Laban and Jacob. The wife is the one(s) Jacob promised not to mistreat, nor to take other wives besides her. If “wife of your covenant” is understood in this manner, then the “covenant” mentioned in Mal 2.14 has nothing to do with the covenant of the fathers in Mal 2.10.

The second option is that the composer reinterpreted the covenant made between Jacob and Laban as a covenant made between Jacob and God (God witnessing his own covenant). The covenant in Mal 2.14 could then be the same as the covenant of the fathers in Mal 2.10.⁷³ The wife is an essential component of the covenant, namely, a stipulation of the

Nachor—namely, the gods of their father (sg!). They are to judge Jacob if he fails to follow through on his covenant with Laban. On the other hand, the composer of Malachi could have easily received the text as being about one God—and that Abraham and Nachor both followed the same God—the God that was a witness. Michael S. Heiser, after an analysis of texts where “elohim” occurs with a plural verb, concludes: “Excluding instances where the grammatical agreement refers to foreign gods or is placed in the mouth of a foreigner, several of these instances allow **אלהים** or **האלהים** to be understood as semantically plural. These passages may, therefore, hint at the presence of the Israelite divine council. However, the evidence does not compel this conclusion, and so a semantic plural must be considered a coherent choice, not the only choice. And while coherent, the translator must decide on what produces the most clarity for his or her intended audience.” Michael S. Heiser, “Should **אלהים** (*’ĒLŌHĪM*) with Plural Predication be Translated ‘Gods?’” *Bible Translator* 61 (2010): 136.

covenant of the ancestors above (Mal 2.10).⁷⁴ This interpretation of “wife of your covenant” is supported by the assertion in Mal 2.10-11 that Judah defiled the covenant of the Lord and the people through his marriage to the “daughter of a foreign god.” I argued above in my discussion of Mal 2.11 that the phrase “daughter of a foreign god” is an allusive ironic pun on the name Bethuel son of Nachor, from whom Isaac finds the proper wife (not a foreigner). Because of the context of the larger pericope, this second option seems more likely. The composer reinterpreted the covenant in Gen 33.50 as being a covenant between God and Jacob, the covenant of the forefathers (Mal 2.10). The wife is a stipulation of the covenant and must be of the correct lineage, not a foreigner.

2.3.5.2 Proverbs 5.18

The next element of reuse in Mal 2.14 is the phrase אִשַּׁת נְעוּרַיִךְ “the wife of your youth.” The title “wife of youth” occurs two other places in the HB: Isa 54.6 and Prov 5.18. I will demonstrate in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.9** that Malachi is dependent on Prov 5

73. Eddinger, *Malachi*, 66. Kaiser notes: “The later phrase [wife of your covenant] made it clear that the wife who was divorced was one of the daughters of Israel, this covenant people; hence a sin against her was a sin against God.” Kaiser, *Malachi*, 70.

74. Zehnder makes a similar suggestion (that the covenant is related to a covenant with God) but thinks this is probably not the main intention of the verse. Zender “A Fresh Look,” 235-236. He argues that “a comparison with Ob. 7, where the syntactically analogous phrase אִשַּׁת בְּרִיתֶךָ is found with reference to two or more human partners, points the same way, namely that אִשַּׁת בְּרִיתֶךָ also refers to a marriage covenant.” Contra to Zehnder, it is not impossible nor implausible for syntactically similar constructions to have different meanings. Eddinger notes: “בְּרִיתֶךָ is parallel to בְּרִית in 2:10 and probably is intended to connect the covenant of Yahweh with the covenant of marriage.” While I do not think the composer addresses “the covenant of marriage,” I do agree with Eddinger that there is a connection between the two uses of בְּרִית. Eddinger, *Malachi*, 66. Though coming from a different viewpoint, Torrey’s assertion that “‘Wife of thy covenant religion’ . . . is plainly contrasted with ‘daughter of a foreign god’” agrees with my argument above. Torrey, “The Prophecy,” 9.

elsewhere. It would thus seem not unlikely that Malachi is also drawing from Prov 5 here. In fact, in both Prov 5.18 and Mal 2.14 the “wife of youth” is determined by the second masculine singular pronoun, adding to their correspondence. Although the interpretation of Prov 5.15-20 is debated, I suggest Malachi received the text in much the same way as Chisholm has explained the consensus view, “see[ing] the springs/streams of water as symbolizing the young man’s sexual potency (perhaps his semen) According to this view the son must reserve his sexual potency for his wife and not spread it throughout” strangers זרים (Prov 5.17).⁷⁵ Further, in Prov 5.20, a contrast is created between “the wife of youth” and “the foreign woman (נכרייה).” The passage can be translated: “Why should you be lead astray, my son, by a stranger or embrace the bosom of a foreign woman?” Proverbs 5.15-20 was received by the composer of Malachi as teaching that a man should be satisfied with the wife of his youth rather than share his “fountains” with foreigners.⁷⁶ Through the composer’s reuse of this text, a contrast is created with “the daughter of a foreign god” (Mal 2.11), further bolstering the argument that only through the correct woman (the אשת נעורייך) can come the correct offspring.⁷⁷ The reuse of Gen 31.50 above indicates that the “wife of

75. Robert B. Chisholm Jr., “‘Drink Water from Your Own Cistern’: A Literary Study of Proverbs 5:15-23” *BSac* 157 (2000): 401. See further Michael Fox, *Proverbs 1-9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (The Anchor Bible 18A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 199-204.

76. I emphasize that the composer received the text as such and not that this was the original intention of Proverbs. Compare Fox: “Nothing whatsoever in any of the lectures indicates that the Strange Woman is a foreigner or even a social outsider. The antithesis of the *zarah-nokriyyah* is not an Israelite woman or a woman of proper social standing, but rather one’s own wife (Prov 5:15-20).” Fox, *Proverbs 1-9*, 140.

77. Many commentators understand this verse as evidence of the people divorcing the “wife of [their] youth” and remarrying a foreign woman, or of polygyny. See for example Torrey “The Prophecy,” 9; and Abel Isaksson, *Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple: A Study With Special Reference to Mt. 19.3-13 and 1. Cor. 11.3-16* (Copenhagen: Lund, 1965), 30.

your youth” is the daughter of Laban, the grand-daughter of Nachor. Additionally, Prov 5.21 warns that “the ways of man are before the eyes of God and all his paths are examined,” which coincides neatly with God’s witnessing about the people of God’s failure towards “the wife of [his] youth.” Through Prov 5, the composer of Malachi understood “the wife of your youth” to be the antithesis of a נכרייה “foreign woman.”⁷⁸

2.3.5.3 Summary of Reused Texts and Their Significance in Malachi 2.14

Identifying reused texts in this verse clarifies various elements. Recognizing the reuse of Gen 31.20 explains the nature of God’s witnessing: the Lord witnessed that Jacob made a covenant that he would take no other wives besides Laban’s daughters (who are thus also the daughters of Bethuel son of Nachor). This reuse is a prime example of the composer’s interpretation of his texts. The composer contrasts Jacob’s covenant made with Laban not to take wives with the action of intermarriage. The wife of Laban’s/Nachor’s ancestry was the one through whom God’s covenantal blessing of many offspring was to be fulfilled. By specifically using the phrase “wife of youth” the composer also interpreted Prov 5, which provided him with a further reiteration of the argument against intermarriage with foreigners. As Kessler notes: “With this designation [wife of your covenant], ‘The wife of your youth,’ ‘your companion’ is set in contrast to the ‘daughter of a foreign God.’ When the Jewish men marry ‘the daughter of a foreign god,’ they defraud the women, who like the men, stand in the

78. There could also be further irony in this verse. As O’Brien notes: “As seen in the examples of Jer 2:2 and Ezek 16:60 . . . a dominant stream of the prophetic tradition describes Judah/Israel’s fall as one from a pure youthful bride to an adulterous wife. In Mal 2:15, however, Judah is accused of acting treacherously . . . against *his* youthful wife These gender shifts within Mal 2:10-16 are not only issue of grammar but also issues of sexual identity. They leave Judah in a liminal state: both male and female, both God’s erring wife and his son who has married someone else’s daughter, thereby falling under the authority of *her* father.” O’Brien, “Judah as Wife,” 248; (Note that I disagree with O’Brien’s assessment of a “father/son” dichotomy throughout the book of Malachi).

same ‘Covenant of our Ancestors.’”⁷⁹ Marriage to the incorrect woman results in a breach of the covenant, from which the entire community suffers (cf. Mal 2.10).

2.3.6 Malachi 2.15

For did not One create? A remnant of spirit is his. What does the One require? The offspring of God. Therefore be on guard on penalty of your spirit lest it [your spirit] act treacherously against the wife of your youth.

Malachi 2.15 duplicates Mal 2.10’s double use of אֱלֹהִים: One father and one creator in Mal 2.15 and one creator and one father (“father” is assumed since the offspring are “of God”) in Mal 2.10. Malachi 2.15 corresponds to the ideological framework established by Mal 2.10: “One” is creator and father of the people of the covenant, Israel. This is an important compositional feature in the interpretation of Mal 2.15, as I will demonstrate below.

79. “Mit dieser Bezeichnung wird »die Frau deiner Jugend«, »deine Gefährtin«, in Kontrast gesetzt zur »Tochter eines fremden Gottes«. Während die jüdischen Männer diese »Tochter eines fremden Gottes« heiraten, betrügen sie die Frau, die wie sie im selben »Bund unserer Vorfahren« steht.” Kessler, *Maleachi*, 205.

2.3.6.1 Malachi 2.10/Leviticus 18.6, 25.49

Malachi 2.15 begins with a question: לֹא־אֶחָד עָשָׂה “Did not One create?”⁸⁰ This restates in shortened form the question in Mal 2.10: הֲלֹא אֵל אֶחָד בְּרָאנוּ “Did not One God create us?”⁸¹ The shortened form in Mal 2.15 removed the interrogative ה, the explicit identification of אֶחָד with אֵל, and the direct object “us.” The composer also used עָשָׂה in place of its synonym בְּרָא. This question, “Did not One create,” provides the ground for the next clause וְשֵׁאֵר רוּחַ לוֹ “a remnant of spirit is his.” This clause is a play on a phrase found in Lev 18.6 and 25.49: שֵׁאֵר בְּשָׂרוֹ “remnant of his flesh,” a phrase that metaphorically describes the relationship between kin, namely, the sharing of flesh. The composer replaced בְּשָׂר with its antonym רוּחַ. By doing so, the composer suggests that through the sharing of spirit, his addressees are related to God. This line of thought is not unwarranted. The connection between God as creator and his spirit in humanity is highlighted in the creation narrative.

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80. Although not marked as an interrogative, because this verse parallels with Mal 2.10’s use of “One,” it is most likely that both “One” clauses in Mal 2.15 are also interrogatives (the next “one” in Mal 2.15 is also part of an interrogative). Joüon and Muraoka note in 161.a that “The omission of the interrogative ה is common after ו introducing an opposition: Jb 2.10.” This is the structure evidenced in the first half of Mal 2.15. Tosato claimed that this case in Malachi is different from what Joüon describes, Tosato, “Il ripudio,” 550. Hugenbergger discusses this point, citing GKC 150.a as further support for this phrase being an interrogative. He cites as evidence 1) a clause introduced with a waw, 2) inverted word order. I agree with Hugenbergger that “Tosato’s citation of Joüon 161a against an interrogative interpretation of 2:15aα is misleading because Tosato fails to give adequate attention to Joüon’s insight concerning inverted word order.” Hugenbergger, *Marriage as Covenant*, 143-45.
81. Hugenbergger alternatively presents summaries of scholarship who understand אֶחָד “to be employed in a pronominal sense (i.e. לֹא־אֶחָד is taken to mean ‘not one,’ ‘no one,’ or ‘nobody’) with ‘one . . .’ understood as the subject of its clause” or אֶחָד to be an allusion to “one flesh” in Gen 2.24. See Hugenbergger, *Marriage as Covenant*, 128-51 and 127 n14.

Although in the creation narrative of Gen 2.7 God places in man “the breath of life,” Gen 6.3 reinterprets this “breath of life” as God’s *spirit*, which is the source of man’s life. In Mal 2.15, the composer understands God as creator of his people (Israel) in much the same way. God as creator placed his spirit in his people. Because of this “remnant” of God’s spirit, they are related to and belong to God.

The second question in Mal 2.15, ומה האחד מבקש זרע אלהים, “What does the One require? The offspring of God,” ideologically parallels Mal 2.10’s “one father.”⁸² Because God is the father and creator of his people, he seeks from his people his own offspring, the “offspring of God.” This contrasts with the *daughter* of a foreign god—the woman who is the “offspring” of a different god. When the people engage in intermarriage, they deny their creator, with whom they are connected through spirit. Through their foreign marriages, their offspring are not the offspring of God, but rather the offspring of foreign gods. This verse in consequence exhibits a complicated blend of the metaphorical with the literal.⁸³

Like Mal 2.10 above, the double use of אחד to refer to God evokes Deut 6.4 and contrasts with “other” gods. The word אחד makes the message of Mal 2.15 particularly potent: one God created you, and one God is seeking the correct offspring.⁸⁴ By marriage

82. Hugenberger makes a similar argument when he writes: “Rather, in the context of Mal. 2:10-16, ‘seed of God’ seems to reflect the imagery established in 2:10 (and 1:6) of God as the ‘one father to all of us . . .’ that is, to his people in virtue of his redemptive acts and covenant, and seems to offer an intentional contrast to the phrase ‘the daughter of a foreign God . . .’ in Mal 2:11.” Hugenberger, *Marriage as Covenant*, 140.

83. Weyde offers the alternative translation: “Not one [not only man] did he [YHWH] make, but flesh with spirit [namely, a woman] for him [man].” Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 262. While tempting, Weyde’s translation does not sufficiently explain why the offspring are “the seed of God.”

84. Similarly, Tiemeyer connects the phrase “offspring of God” with Ezra 9.2 “Holy seed.” She writes: “I suggest that there are racial connotations to the statement in Mal 2:15: the prophet commands the addressed persons, i.e. the priests, not to intermarry but to keep the race, i.e. their seed, free from contamination, thus

with the wrong kind of woman (and thereby the worship of other gods), they are denying that *one* God created them—and indeed that they are related to him through the spirit he put in them. Through the marriage to foreign women, they are denying his requirement of offspring that ultimately stem from him.

2.3.6.2 Jeremiah 17.21 (etc)

Malachi 2.15 ends with an admonition to the people: וּנְשַׁמְרְתֶם בְּרוּחְכֶם וּבְאִשֶׁת נְעוּרֵיכֶם
אל-יבגד “Therefore be on guard on penalty of your spirit lest it [your spirit] acts treacherously against the wife of your youth.”⁸⁵ I will address the phrase “take care on penalty of your spirit” in more detail in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.11**. There, I will show that the composer replaced נפש that is found in a similar idiom in Deut 4.9, Deut 4.15, Josh 23.11 and Jer 17.21 with its synonym רוּחַ for the sake of his larger argument. Here, God threatens the removal of spirit, the spirit which connects the people of God to their creator, if they act

preserving a ‘godly’ race.” Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites*, 245.

85. Many translators understand this phrase as “Guard yourself.” This translation takes a niph'al imperative with ל as the object marker: see Gen 31.24; Exod 10.28; 19.12; 34.12; Deut 4.15; 12.13; 15.9. The cases where niph'al שמר is paired with a ב, the ב takes on various functions depending on context (Deut 24.8: “Guard *against* the plague of leprosy”; 1 Sam 19.2: “Now, be on guard *in* the morning”; 2 Sam 20.10: “Amasa did not guard *against* the sword”; Hos 12.14: “They were guarded *by* prophets”). Jeremiah 17.21 contains a nearly identical phrase to the one found in Malachi (except for the word נפש rather than רוּחַ and the plural “lives”): השמרו בנפשותיכם. BDB suggests that the ב in this instance should be understood as “the price, whether given or received, being treated as the instrumental means by which the act is accomplished, *with, for, at the cost of.*” Thus Jer 17:21 warns “Be on guard at the cost of your lives that you do not lift a burden on the day of the Sabbath.” HALOT similarly suggests “for the sake of your lives take care” or “do not put your lives at risk.” Based on context, the same meaning as in Jer 17.22 this seems to be the likely meaning of the phrase וּנְשַׁמְרְתֶם בְּרוּחְכֶם in Mal 2.15 as well.

treacherously against the wife of their youth. The act of treachery against the wife of their youth, the correct wife, is achieved by marrying the daughter of a foreign god.

2.3.6.3 Summary of Reused Texts and Their Significance in Malachi 2.15

This verse correlates to Mal 2.10 in both structure and ideology. Because Israel has one father and was created by one god, they are a holy people. From this holy people, God requires offspring that stem from him and not from other gods. If Israel does not honor this holiness and acts treacherously against the correct wife, the wife of youth, the spirit that God placed in them at their creation will be removed.⁸⁶ Although there is no definitive context from which the composer drew his wording, he did make creative use of idioms found in other texts. The recognition of the reworked idioms helps elucidate the thrust of the verse.

2.3.7 Malachi 2.16

For he hates to divorce, says the Lord God of Israel, but violence covers his garment says the Lord of Hosts. Therefore, guard in your own spirit and do not act treacherously.

Malachi 2.16 poses considerable problems. Who is the subject of the verb שונא “he hates”? What does it mean that “violence covers his garments”? These problems are solved by examining the compositional techniques used in this passage.

To understand this verse, it is important to note that it is bracketed by the near identical clauses ונשמרתם ברוחכם ולא תבגדו and ונשמרתם ברוחכם ובאשת נעוריך אל-יבגד. This repetition looks like a common compositional technique that has been labeled *Wiederaufnahme*. Normally, a *Wiederaufnahme* was used to mark later insertions in a text. It is possible that most of verse 16 is an insertion. This view could be supported by the compositional structure of Mal 2.10-15. The repeated double use of אהה in Mal 2.15 makes a pleasing *inclusio* with Mal 2.10, effectively marking off a complete argument. The

86. Compare David’s plea that God would not take his spirit from him: Ps 51.13.

information in Mal 2.16 that follows would thus be an added explanatory or expansionary comment by a later hand.

There are several weaknesses with this argument. (1) The compositional nature of Mal 2.16 is very similar to the verses that come before it (particularly Mal 2.15). It is difficult to identify the subject of verbs and referents of nouns and noun-phrases in Mal 2.10-15. Malachi 2.16 exhibits these same compositional tendencies. (2) Most of Mal 2.10-15 was written through the reuse or the influence of older texts. As I will demonstrate below, this is also the case for Mal 2.16. (3) I will argue below that Mal 2.16 is influenced by a text that was already reused in Mal 2.11. (4) Malachi 2.16 contains the agenda against Edom hidden throughout Mal 2.10-15. All of these similarities could be argued to be a result of a talented redactor who effectively mimicked Mal 2.10-15. But, if the later redactor wanted to blend his addition with Mal 2.10-15, why would he have marked his insertion with *Wiederaufnahme*?

Instead, perhaps the (or a) composer used the *Wiederaufnahme* to mark a parenthetical comment. The composer completed his argument in Mal 2.15, but felt an additional explanatory threat (see below) was still needed as a potent finish. Instead of marking a later insertion, the repetition of locutions is thus a literary device to set aside a portion of text to give additional information. It is also possible that the *Wiederaufnahme* marks a later insertion, but at the same time acts as a marker for a parenthetical comment. This would mean that the repetition of locutions has both a synchronic and diachronic function.

In light of this hypothesis, that the *Wiederaufnahme* marks a parenthetical comment, another difficulty in Mal 2.16 can be solved. As noted above, identifying the subject of the verb שׁוּב is problematic. Following Mal 2.15, one would expect the subject to continue to be “your spirit,” “you” being the addressees. This reading makes no sense in context. Below, I will argue that in light of the texts reused in Mal 2.16, “God” as subject makes the most sense of the verse. The unexpected change of subject from spirit to God could be explained by the status of Mal 2.16 as a parenthetical comment. Malachi 2.16 expands on “the One” in Mal

2.15, rather than being a statement that proceeds from the end of Mal 2.15. Malachi 2.16 explains the One's attitude towards the transgressors and warns about his impending judgment. Admittedly, the argument that God is the subject of Mal 2.16 is complicated by the use of the direct speech markers "says the Lord God of Israel" and "says the Lord of hosts." Why would God refer to himself in third person? If God is the subject of the verb in Mal 2.16, the quotation of God would have to be an example of indirect speech. As Goldenberg has noted, "[i]n Biblical Hebrew, the 'semi-indirect' [or 'independent form of indirect speech'] presentation may be not only 'independent' but also marked explicitly as if it were a direct quotation (by *lēmōr* 'saying, —', 'so to say, —', or by some other form of *'āmar* 'say', which from all the *verba dicendi* is the one that normally requires, and is required by, direct speech)."⁸⁷ The composer reports what God said, quoting God almost exactly, but puts the verb forms into third person. This results in a mix between a report of what God said and a quotation of God. This should not be surprising. As Goldenberg has further noted, "[i]t has long been recognized that the logically-ideal distinction between direct and indirect speech is not always clearly discernible, and that some mingling of the two structures appears often to occur, and that in many cases (in some languages more than in others) the use of direct speech forms is extended far beyond the presentation of any real or suppositious speech."⁸⁸ In light of the evidence, I think it most likely that Mal 2.16 is a parenthetical comment, and that the composer quotes God indirectly.

87. Gideon Goldenberg, "On Direct Speech and the Hebrew Bible," in *Studies in Hebrew and Aramaic Syntax: Presented to Professor J. Hoftijzer* (ed. K. Jongeling, H. L. Murre-van den Berg, L. van Rompay; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991): 81-82. Cf. 2 Chron 25.19, Job 35.14.

88. *Ibid.*, 79.

2.3.7.1 Jeremiah 3

Malachi 2.16 continues the tenor of threat found in Mal 2.15, but the subject of the verbs is now God. The verse begins: כִּי־שׂוֹא שֶׁלַח “For he [God] hates to divorce.”⁸⁹ While it is generally undisputed that שֶׁלַח in Mal 2.16 means “divorce,” it is important to emphasize that the common and frequent word שָׁלַח, which most often means “to send,” is used in Mal 2.16 with a distinct semantic value. This is important because the composer already drew elements for his own composition from a text that uses the word שֶׁלַח with the meaning “divorce,” namely, Jer 3 in Mal 2.11 (see Jer 3.1 and Jer 3.8). Because the composer of Malachi already used Jer 3 for his composition, it is likely that Jer 3 would continue to be influential on the composer. Jeremiah 3 addresses Israel and Judah’s unfaithfulness to God, their husband. Because of their unfaithfulness, God divorces them. In Mal 2.16, God does not want to repeat this divorce because he “hates” divorcing his people. God’s reluctance to divorce his people is emphasized by the designation of God as “the God of Israel” in the next phrase. The title “God of Israel” only occurs here in the book of Malachi and is strategically placed in order to emphasize God’s relationship to his people—he is the God that is specifically Israel’s. In addition to the word שֶׁלַח (with a specific semantic value) evidencing the composer’s continued reflection on Jer 3, the word שָׁלַח also stands in ironic opposition to

89. C. John Collins suggests the reading “he hated, he sent.” He suggests that “we . . . [take] *šallah* as a Piel perfect, with a rare but not wholly unattested *a* in the first syllable rather than the usual *i*.” C. John Collins, “The (Intelligible) Masoretic Text of Malachi 2:16: or, How Does God Feel About Divorce?” *Presb* 20 (1994): 37. Collins’ translation assumes the previous verses addressed Israelite divorce from the the wife of their youth. Above, I argued that “wife of your youth” is a term to denote the proper wife through whom the covenant is fulfilled—in contrast to foreign woman. Jones argues for the translation “For one who divorces because of aversion” (cf. Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 82) citing Mal 2.16 LXX as evidence. David Clyde Jones, “A Note on the LXX of Malachi 2:16,” *JBL* 109 (1990): 683-85. Like Collins, this argument necessitates a different understanding of the preceding verses than explicated above.

בעל in Mal 2.11. Through the oppositional terms, God threatens to divorce to those who marry the daughter of a foreign god.

2.3.7.2 Obadiah 10

The clause *על-לבושו חמס וכסה* “but violence covers his [God’s] garment,” also poses a problem. What would violence on a garment have to do with all that has come before in this pericope? Kessler noted that the phrase is very similar to Ps 73.6b: “violence covers them like a garment,” although the composer of Malachi used different vocabulary.⁹⁰ While Kessler is correct that the phrases are strikingly similar, I suggest an alternative (albeit slightly more complicated) source for this phrase based on the larger context of this pericope. Obadiah 10 says: *מחמס אחיך יעקב תכסך בושה ונכרת לעולם* “Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, your shame will cover you and you will be cut off forever.” Both Ob 10 and Mal 2.16 share the locutions *כסה* and *חמס*. Additionally, *לבוש* and *בושה* are very similar in appearance. In Obadiah, Edom is chastised for not helping his “brother, Jacob” and for gloating over his demise. God promises severe punishment to Edom. In light of the use of Lev 17.9 in Mal 2.12 and Gen 33.10 in Mal 2.13, both texts that address Edom, it is unsurprising that the composer would bring up the relationship between Jacob and Edom again in a final threat. How the composer understood this verse becomes clear in his reformulation of it through the influence of Isa 63.

2.3.7.3 Isaiah 63.3

These locutions from Ob 10 were then conflated with the *verbal image* of Isa 63.3, where God comes from *Edom*. God’s garments are stained red because, as God explains, *ויז* *נצחם על-בגדי וכל-מלבושי אגאלתי* “Their ‘blood’[?]”⁹¹ sprinkled on my clothing and [now] all

90. Kessler, *Maleachi*, 210.

91. This word is a *hapax legomenon*. Compare the context of Isa 63.3 to Exod 29.21 and Lev 8.30 for designating this word as “blood.”

my clothing is defiled.” Isa 63.3 is undeniably an image of God with “violence” on his clothing. Through the common subject “Edom,” the composer reformulated Ob 10 to evoke Isa 63.3.

Thus, this last pronouncement “but violence covers his garment” is both ironic and threatening. It is ironic in that God is reminding his people that the foreigners they have married (Edom) have already been designated by God as destined for destruction because of their treatment of Israel/Judah, their brother (compare Mal 1.2-5). It is threatening because if God were to divorce them, they would join the Edomites, in being destined for destruction (compare Mal 3.24). Thus, as Torrey notes, “[t]he theme of the brief introduction ([Mal] 1.2-5), *Israel, God’s peculiar people* [as opposed to the foreign nations], plays a very important part in the book [of Malachi] from beginning to end.”⁹²

2.3.7.4 Summary of Reused Texts and Their Significance in Mal 2.16

In conclusion, the people are reminded one more time to “not act treacherously.” This treachery against the correct wife and against each other through marrying foreign women will result in their own divorce from God. God does not want to divorce his people, a people by whom he qualifies himself: “the God of Israel.” But, if the people continue with their intermarriage, they will be cut off and receive the fate of the very people who oppressed them, Edom.

The reused text from Ob 10 and the imagery from Isa 63 in this verse thematically match with others drawn from contexts addressing Edom. The context of Mal 2.16 suggests that Jer 3, a text the composer reused earlier in Mal 2.11, asserted continued influence on the composer’s conclusion to this pericope.

2.4 Summary Graph of Reused Texts

In summation, below is a graphic representation of the texts that are reused in Mal 2.10-16.

92. Torrey, “The Prophecy,” 2.

Sources		Malachi 2.10-16	
		הלוא אב אחד לכלנו	Mal 2.10
		הלוא אל אחד בראנו	
Ezek 44.7	בהביאכם בני־נכר ערליל־לב וערלי בשר להיות במקדשי לחללו את־ביתי בהקריבכם את־לחמי חלב ודם ויפרו את־בריתי אל כל־תועבותיכם ולא ישכח את־ברית אבתיך	מדוע נבגד איש באחיז <u>לחלל ברית אבתינו</u>	
Deut 4.31			
Jer 3.8,11	בגדה יהודה	בגדה יהודה	Mal 2.11
Deut 17.4	נעשתה התועבה הזאת בישראל	ותועבה נעשתה בישראל ובירושלם	
Lev 19.8	כי־את־קדש יהוה חלל	כי חלל יהודה קדש יהוה	
Gen 24.47	בת־תואל בן־נחור	אשר אהב ובעל בת־אל נכר	
Lev 17.9	לעשות אתו ליהוה ונכרת	יכרת יהוה לאיש אשר	Mal 2.12
Gen 46.12	האיש ההוא מעמיו ער ואונן	יעשנה ער וענה	
Gen 31.33	באהל יעקב	מאהלי יעקב ומגיש מנחה ליהוה צבאות	

		וזאת שנית תעשו	Mal 2.13
Ezek 24.16-17	ולא תבכה ולוא תבוא	כסות דמעה את־מזבח	
	דמעתך האנק דם	יהוה בכי ואנקה	
Lev 17.6	על־מזבח יהוה		
Num 16.15	אל־תפן אל־מנחתם	מאינ עוד פנות	
Gen 33.10	ולקחת מנחתי מידי כי	אל־המנחה ולקחת רצון	
	על־כן ראיתי פניך כראת	מידכם	
	פני אלהים ותרצני		
Gen 31.50	אלהים עד ביני ובינך	ואמרתם על־מה על	Mal 2.14
Prov 5.18	מאשת נעורך	כי־יהוה העיד בינך וביני	
		אשת נעורך	
		אשר אתה בגדתה בה	
		והיא חברתך ואשת	
		בריתך	
		ולא־אחד עשה ושאר	Mal 2.15
		רוח לו ומה האחד	
		מבקש זרע אלהים	
		ונשמרתם ברוחכם	
Deut 4.9, 4.15, Josh	השמרו בנפשותיכם	ובאשת נעורך אל־יבגד	
23.11, Jer 17.21			
(idiom)			
Jer 3.1	לאמר הן ישלח איש	כי־שנא שלח אמר יהוה	Mal 2.16
	את־אשתו והלכה מאתו	אלהי ישראל	
Obad 10	מחמס אחיד יעקב תכסך	וכסה חמס על־לבושו	
	בושה ונכרת לעולם	אמר יהוה צבאות	
		ונשמרתם ברוחכם ולא	
		תבגדו	

2.5 Synopsis of the overarching argument of Mal 2.10-16

As Beth Glazier-McDonald has pointed out, the interpretation of this pericope normally runs in two courses: either, the people of Judah are intermarrying with foreign woman and thus divorcing their Israelite wives, or the entire pericope is a metaphor for Judah's apostasy from God, the wife of his youth, and his new fidelity towards a foreign god. Glazier-McDonald presented another option when she noted: "Malachi was not dealing with a purely social offense, nor was he dealing with a purely religious one."⁹³ Rather, the problem is considered one and the same. The analysis above of the reused texts in the pericope confirms Glazier-McDonald's conclusions.

Malachi 2.10-16 addresses a specific people: the Israelites whose fathers were given a covenant. The text argues that because the people stem from a god who is their father and their creator they are expected to uphold a specific ethic. The double use of אֱלֹהִים (Deut 6.4) in Mal 2.10 highlights that their unique status originates not from many gods, but only the one God. By reusing elements from Ezek 44.7 for the composition of Mal 2.10, the rhetorical goal of the composer becomes immediately evident: the condemnation of the allowance of foreigners in the midst of God's people. Malachi 2.10 announces that the covenant of the forefathers, the covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has been defiled, and verse 11 explains why it has been defiled. Judah has married the daughter of a foreign god rather than the correct woman. The correct woman is the daughter of Bethuel son of Nachor. Though the specific grievance attributed to the defilement of the covenant is intermarriage with

93. Glazier-McDonald, "Intermarriage, Divorce and the *BAT-’ĒL NĒKĀR*: Insights into Mal 2:10-16," *JBL* 106 (1987): 610. See also Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites*, 193-95. She writes: "[N]either the interpretation that Mal 10:10-16 [*sic*] speaks exclusively about earthly marriages nor the alternative interpretation where the text is understood to speak solely about Judah's apostasy does justice to the text. Instead, it is the interrelations between intermarriage and apostasy that give the text its complete meaning: intermarriages lead to unorthodoxy" (195).

foreigners, the composer described this infraction with language drawn from texts that speak against idolatry and the worship of other gods (Jer 3.8 and Deut 17.4). The phrase “daughter of a foreign god” denotes a woman who originates from a god besides the “One.” Her heritage (daughter to a foreign god) is the antithetical image to God’s fatherhood over Israel. This phrase, along with the composer’s choice of other locutions, suggests that the composer understood intermarriage to be synonymous with false worship.

In Mal 2.12, anyone who marries the daughter of a foreign god is threatened with punishment. That person’s offspring is to be cut off (or that person, depending on which way the verse is read) from the tents of Jacob. The composer reuses a judgment formula from Lev 17 to articulate this pronouncement. The context of Lev 17 makes clear that its rules concerning sacrifices were meant to deter the people from prostituting themselves to the “*S’irim*.” The composer of Malachi interpreted “*S’irim*” from Lev 17 as the people of Edom, and thus understood all of Lev 17 to be pertinent to his own argument. This interpretation made by the composer accords with the topics of the reused material in Mal 2.11, namely, the worship of other gods and marriage with foreigners. The judgement formula drawn from Lev 17 could function in two different ways. It could warn that the offspring of the man who marries the foreign woman will be cut off. This is done through a punning allusion to the story of the demise of Er and Onan, the children of Judah’s marriage to a foreigner. Or, through a syntactically problematic but lexically straightforward reading of Mal 2.12, it could warn that the man who transgresses will be cut off in accordance with proper legal procedure. The person who marries the foreigner (or his offspring) is removed from the tents of Jacob—including any priests who commit this fault. The name Jacob is used to designate the entire people. It serves as a contrast to the people’s prostitution with the *S’irim*, or, Esau. This contrast evokes the introduction of the book of Malachi, where God declares his love for Jacob and his hatred for Esau.

In Mal 2.13, it is probable that the composer was influenced by the image of the people crying over the altar from the story of Phinehas in Num 25. There, Moses accuses the people of their wrongdoing. The response from the people is merely weeping, with no action to rectify the wrongdoing. Thus, in Mal 2.13, the people are essentially accused of false penitence. They weep, but they do not stop their misconduct, namely, intermarriage (like in Num 25). Because of this, God does not turn towards their offerings. The lexical choices for the different words for weeping were drawn from Ezek 24.16-17. This passage in Ezekiel addresses a “wife” (more specifically, Ezekiel’s wife and her death). This inexplicit thematic overlap is most likely the reason that the composer reused this passage. Or, it is also possible that the threat of the decimation of offspring found in Ezek 24 motivated the reuse of these locutions. Besides Ezek 24.16-17, the composer also conflated Num 16.15 and Gen 33.10 in this passage. The context of Num 16 discusses what it means to be a holy people. This further interprets the designation of the people God loves as “Holy of the Lord” in Mal 2.11. The reuse of Gen 33.10 thematically parallels other instances of reuse in this pericope. As in Mal 2.12, the foreign people are specifically associated with Esau/S’eir/Edom. The people seem to offer offerings to God, but the reused text (Gen 33.10) suggests the people were actually presenting their offerings to Esau.

Malachi 2.14 further elucidates the grounds for God ignoring the people’s offering. The Lord announces that he is a witness between the addressee and the wife of his youth. For this verse, the composer drew from two different texts: Gen 31.50 and Prov 5.18. The composer interpreted both these verses (and their contexts) to address the concept of the correct wife rather than a foreign woman. In Gen 31, God is a witness that Jacob made a covenant that he would take no other wives besides Laban’s daughters, who are also the “daughters” (granddaughters) of Bethuel son of Nachor. From this family, God’s covenantal blessing of many offspring should be fulfilled. The composer drew the phrase “wife of youth” from Prov 5, where the young man is warned not to mix with foreign woman, but to

remain faithful to the wife of his youth. According to this pericope in Malachi, the “wife of his youth” is the daughter of Bethuel son of Nachor.

The message of the next verse, Mal 2.15, parallels Mal 2.10-11 in both structural aspects and ideology. According to Mal 2.10-11, because Israel has one father and was created by one god they are a holy people. This same argument is assumed and expounded in Mal 2.15. Because the people are related to God through his creator-ship (and spirit placed within them), God requires offspring that are his. Through intermarriage, the people’s offspring are instead that of a foreign god (compare “daughter of a foreign god” in Mal 2.11).

The last verse of this pericope, Mal 2.16, is a parenthetical comment, encased between two nearly identical locutions (“Guard in your own spirit, lest with the wife of your youth it act treacherously” and “Guard your own spirit and do not act treacherously”). The treachery of marrying foreign women addressed in this pericope ultimately will result in their own divorce from God—much like God divorced them in the past (Jer 3). But, because God is the “God of Israel” he does not desire to divorce his people. The verse ends on a ominous image of the garment of God covered in the blood of Edom. The fate of Edom (the foreign people through whom the people are committing idolatry) will be the fate of God’s people if they continue defiling the covenant.

2.6 Summary of Scribal Composition in Malachi 2.10-16

As a composition, Mal 2.10-16 is a complex matrix of reused materials. An overview of the reused texts in Mal 2.10-16 highlights that the composer drew from texts containing at least one of three themes: foreigners (with a subcategory of Edom), wives, or idolatry/other gods. From these texts, the composer formed a new literary creation. Because of the thematic consistency of the texts from which the composer drew, it seems likely the composer was engaging in interpretation as an integral part of his composition.

The composer’s interpretational methods varied. For example, on the one hand, the contexts from which locutions were drawn were meaningful to the composer. I have argued

above that often an entire narrative was important to the composer, even though he only reused one phrase from it. The play on the name “Bethuel son of Nachor” evokes the whole story of the search for a wife for Isaac. On the other hand, the composer was selective about what locutions he reused and often exploited the semantic range of certain words for his own composition. For example, in my section on Mal 2.12, I argued that the context of Lev 17.19 was important to the composer because of the reference to the “*S’eirim*.” In the context of Lev 17, the term has nothing to do with the descendants of Esau, but in the composer of Malachi’s interpretation, the “*S’eirim*” meant the people group. Similarly, although נכרה in Prov 5 most likely refers to an adulteress, the composer of Malachi interpreted it as referring to a foreign woman.

Another interpretational method that can be noted in Mal 2.10-16 is the composer’s understanding that narratives could be paradigmatic for the life of the people. Throughout this pericope, the composer alluded to, reused portions of, and was influenced by narratives. By far the most important to the composer were the patriarchal narratives, but he was also influenced by the narrative of Phinehas. The composer would interpret the narratives analogically—one person in the narrative would stand for an entire group of people. The composer expected that details found in the narratives concerning Jacob and other characters in the narratives were applicable to a group of people.

This interpretation of narratives is related to and yet almost opposed to another observation concerning the composer’s attitude to the older texts. In my sections on Mal 2.13 and Mal 2.16, I argued that the composer viewed himself (and the people he was addressing) as being historically subsequent to the story of Phinehas found in Num 25 and God’s divorce of his people discussed in Jer 3. This attitude is evident elsewhere in Malachi. For example, Ezek 36.23a is reused in Mal 1.11-12. In Ezek 36.23a, God’s name is defiled because of idolatry (cf. Ezek 36.18), but he is going to make his name great in the nations.⁹⁴ In Malachi,

94. Weyde argues that “the antithesis in vv. 11f seems to imply the idea that the profanation of YHWH’s name

God's name is great amongst the nations, but his name is still defiled. The composer addressed the current situation in relation to the prophecy found in Ezekiel—God fulfilled what he said he would accomplish and made his name great amongst the nations, but the people (namely, the priests) were once again destroying his name from within (for further discussion see **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.6**). Thus, the older texts read by the composer of Malachi were understood to be analogical examples to be imitated, but also to be historical realities relatable to the composer's contemporary situation.

This hermeneutic of understanding the details of narratives to be analogical to his addressee's situation, yet at the same time seeing the narratives as historically placed is what Fishbane has described as "inner-biblical typologies."⁹⁵ He defined "inner-biblical typologies" as

a literary-historical phenomenon which isolates perceived correlations between specific events, persons, or places early in time with their later correspondents. Since the latter occur either in the present or in the immediate or envisaged future, there is an implied emphasis on the linear and historical aspects of the correlations.⁹⁶

Fishbane has made two observations that are particularly pertinent to Mal 2.10-16. First, he has noted that often the language of a text will indicate that it is a typological interpretation. He wrote: "A good example of this technique may be found in Isa. 11:11, where YHWH states that 'he will continue *יְוֹסִיף*' to redeem Israel in the future, a 'second time *שְׁנִיית*', just like the first. The language used here marks the typological correlation very well, and explicitly

by the priests (v. 12) is comparable with the idolatry of the people in the past." Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 148.

95. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 350.

96. *Ibid.*, 351.

indicates its two vital features, the new moment and its reiteration.”⁹⁷ This is almost exactly what occurs in Mal 2.13, where it is noted “this you do a second time.” Fishbane’s second observation that is pertinent to this study he labeled as “Typologies of a Biographical Nature.”⁹⁸ This he defined as “[t]he typological alignment in the Hebrew Bible of persons, and the correlation or interfusing of their personal traits and personal behaviours.”⁹⁹ He noted, for example,

[t]he typological reuse of the life and behaviour of the patriarch Jacob also has notable aggadic reflexes in the prophetic literature. For example, in Hos. 12 the sibling rivalry between Jacob and Esau, as well as other instances of Jacob’s deceptions and deeds, form the basis of a trenchant diatribe against latter-day Israel. Thus, as a species of typological exegesis, the historical wiles, deceptions, and treacheries of corporate Israel are represented as a national reiteration of the behaviour of their eponymous ancestor, Jacob-Israel. . . . Indeed, because of the eponymous link between the person Israel and the nation, the parallelism drawn between the actions is not a mere rhetorical trope, but drives deep into the very ‘nature’ of Israel. The nation is not just ‘like’ its ancestor, says Hosea, but *is* its ancestor in fact—in name and in deed. Thus, in this instance, aggadic typology discloses the inner nature of Israel, its rebellious core *ab origine*.¹⁰⁰

This corresponds very closely to the observations I made above on narrative, particularly characters in a narrative, who are seen as paradigmatic for the addressees of Malachi. In

97. Ibid., 353.

98. Ibid., 372.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid., 376-78.

Malachi, either the character's life set the standard for the people, or, the people repeat the mistakes that their analogical representative made.

The composer also used an array of compositional techniques. One technique employed by the composer was to use one text to draw in locutions from other texts. In my discussion of Mal 2.10 above, I argued that the composer reused Ezek 44.7. This is evident because of the passage's lexical similarity to much of what is found in Mal 2.10-11. But most of these lexical similarities I then argued to not be the reuse of Ezek 44.7. Instead they are the result of the reuse of various other texts. Considering the themes found in Ezek 44, I think it is likely that Ezek 44.7 was influential in the composer's composition of the rest of the pericope. The locutions in Ezek 44.7 inspired his reuse of the older texts that contained similar locutions. The lexical similarities drew him to the other texts from which he drew the wording for his own pericope.

Twice in this study I have argued that texts reused in one part of Malachi manifest influence in later portions of the book. The story of Phinehas, alluded to in Mal 2.5 (see **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**), affected the composer's argument in Mal 2.13. Jeremiah 3, alluded to in Mal 2.11, influenced the composer's wording in Mal 2.16. The composer did not reuse a text and forget it, but continued to contemplate the various texts. This contemplation is betrayed in the composer's use of key words, actions and themes found in the texts that he had previously reused. These elements do not make sense alone, but in light of those texts, the elements suddenly are comprehensible.

In my discussion of Mal 2.15, I argued that the composer played on an idiom by switching out the word "flesh" for its antonym "spirit." This play with an idiom indicates that the composer was witty and able to play on a reader's expectations to add meaning to his own composition.

The composer's wit is further underlined by his use of puns. Twice in this study I argued that the composer used a pun on a proper name to evoke an entire narrative context. In

the case of the pun on the name of Bethuel son of Nachor, the reformulation of the sounds of his name to create the pun is ironic. Judah should marry the daughter of Bethuel, but rather has married the opposite, a foreign woman. The second instance is not as certain. It appears that there is a play on the names Er and Onan, but it is difficult to understand what the literal meaning of the pun would be. This (potential) pun on the proper names functions straightforwardly rather than ironically. The fate of Judah's children, Er and Onan, is evoked against the people who marry a foreign woman.

Lastly, the composer repeated a locution to create a parenthetical remark. Because the information within the "parentheses" resembles so closely the style of the rest of the pericope, it is unlikely (although admittedly still possible) that the repetition of the locution acts as a *Wiederaufnahme* as this term is commonly understood. The information within the repeated locutions is not a later addition, but a parenthetical comment to add essential information that did not necessarily fit precisely into the pericope. Understanding Mal 2.16 as a parenthetical comment explains how the verse could change persons and expound on an element of Mal 2.10-16 that does not immediately precede it.

Though there are definitely still questions and uncertainties in the interpretation of this text, an examination of the compositional techniques employed by the composer of Malachi in his composition has given a glimpse into his interpretive logic. By understanding this logic, new exegetical insights become available into seemingly obtuse portions of the text.

Chapter 3: Wordplay in Malachi

The ways of producing a play upon words are numerous and various.

-Immanuel M. Casanowicz, 1894¹

3.1 Introduction

It is well known that the ancient writers of the HB engaged in many forms of wordplay.² Wordplay can be designated as anything from plays on sound (alliteration, assonance, pun, etc.), to plays on meaning (polysemy, synonym, antonym, etc.), to plays on appearance (similar roots, similar-looking graphemes, identical graphemes but different vowel-pointing, etc.).³ The function of each instance of wordplay must be evaluated independently, determined by the context in which it is found. Sometimes, the function of the wordplay is aesthetic; sometimes it is humorous; other times it acts as a structural feature, delimiting the possible parameters of a text; sometimes the recognition of wordplay plays an integral role in the exegesis of a passage. As noted by Glück, “biblical paronomasia [or

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1. Immanuel M. Casanowicz, *Paronomasia in the Old Testament: Dissertation Presented to the Board of University Studies of the Johns Hopkins University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy 1892* (Boston: J.S. Cushing & Co.–Berwick & Smith, 1894), 13.
 2. The word “Paronomasia” is often used synonymously in biblical studies with “wordplay.” As Greenstein notes: “In classical rhetoric, ‘paronomasia’ generally refers to words whose form is similar but whose meaning is different. In biblical studies, it is the term most often applied to perceived wordplay.” Edward L. Greenstein, “Wordplay, Hebrew” in *ABD* 6: 968. For a critique of the word’s misapplication compare with Hans Ausloos and Valérie Kabergs, “Paronomasia or Wordplay? A Babel-Like Confusion: Towards a Definition of Hebrew Wordplay,” *Bib* 93 (2012): 1-2.
 3. See Greenstein, *ABD* 6:968-971 for an overview. See also Gary A. Rendsburg, “Word Play in Biblical Hebrew: An Eclectic Collection,” in *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (ed. S. B. Noegel; Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2000), 137-62. In the matter of the definition of “wordplay” I disagree with Ausloos and Kabergs article: Ausloos and Kabergs, “Paronomasia or Wordplay,” 1-20.

wordplay] seems to be an inseparable part of that word-magic, the subtle eloquence of the Bible.”⁴

Below, I examine various types of wordplay in the book of Malachi from the perspective of the composer and the effect of this wordplay on the reader. I evaluate the function of each case and discuss how recognizing wordplay helps us better understand the composition either at the level of the pericope or as the book as a whole. To facilitate understanding, I have separated Malachi’s wordplay into three categories: phonological wordplay, graphic wordplay, and semantic wordplay. Some examples below could arguably be located in two different categories (e.g. the puns under “Phonological wordplay” could be under “Semantic wordplay” as they play with an interaction between phonemes and semantics).

3.2 Formatting of evidence:

To assist comparison between the composer’s different uses of wordplay, the format of each example will be nearly identical. Each example will contain:

A. Quotation of Texts: The different verses which are involved in the compositional technique employed. In the case of semantic wordplay, the identical lemmata will be underlined, synonymous lemmata will be in grey.

B. Listing of Pertinent Lemmata: Listing of the words and/or phrases which are “played.”

C. Summary: A brief summary of the function of the wordplay in each example.

D. Argument: A detailed explanation of the wordplay. It will address issues of reuse, direction of dependence (if there is reuse), as well as the function of the wordplay as part of a compositional technique. Any pertinent text-critical issues will be addressed in footnotes.

4. J. J. Glück, “Paronomasia in Biblical Literature,” *JSem* 1 (1970): 78.

3.3 Phonological Wordplay

Phonological wordplay is well documented in the HB.⁵ Malachi evidences at least five instances of phonological wordplay. In each instance, the word or phrase that is played is cohesive and coherent with its surrounding context, thus the wordplay is not immediately evident.⁶ As Gevirtz noted:

Most of the biblical Hebrew puns to which modern scholars have drawn attention are readily recognizable because the words on which the play is made are often set in immediate proximity to one another, and the meaning or reference of each of the elements is clear, so that the quip is direct and the allusion is obvious Yet other puns have proved less obvious to recent interpreters, I believe, because the elements of the word-plays have apparently been worked so finely by the author into the fabric of his account that they have been quite overshadowed by other narrative threads, and have become almost imperceptible to the modern audience.⁷

Fortunately, the phonetic wordplays in Malachi are not completely imperceptible. For each of the puns below, I will argue that there is some clue left through a slight textual “bump,” either through an underlying semantic play or through unexpected wording. This “bump,” although not enough to hamper the reading of the passage, is anomalous enough to bring each phonetic wordplay to the forefront. When the pun is recognized, the significance

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5. See for example P. Wernberg-Møller, “The Pronoun *אָתָּמָה* and Jeremiah’s Pun,” *VT* 6 (1956): 315-16; Charles Halton, “Sampson’s Last Laugh: The *שִׁחַן* Pun in Judges 16:25-27,” *JBL* 128 (2009): 61-4. M. Garsiel, “Puns upon Names as a Literary Device in I Kings 1-2,” *Bib* 72 (1991): 379-86; M. Garsiel, “Word Play and Puns as a Rhetorical Device in the Book of Samuel,” in *Puns and Pundits*, 181-204. Andrzej Strus, *Nomen-Omen: La stylistique sonore des noms propres dans le Pentateuque* (Analecta Biblica: Investigationes Scientifical in Res Biblicas; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978).
 6. The one exception could be Mal 2.12. See discussion of text below.
 7. Stanley Gevirtz, “Of Patriarchs and Puns: Joseph at the Fountain, Jacob at the Ford,” *HUCA* 46 (1975): 34.

of the word or phrase is either deepened or given a second meaning. Each instance of phonetic wordplay will be evaluated, demonstrating its phonological similarity to another locution, establishing it is an example of phonological wordplay, and explaining its effect on the message of Malachi.

3.3.1 Mal 1.6//1 Sam 4.21

A. Quotation:

Mal 1.6

בן יכבד אב ועבד אדניו ואס־אב אני איה כבודי ואס־אדונים אני איה מוראי אמר יהוה צבאות

A son honors his father and a servant his lord. If I am father, where is my honor? If I am Lord, where is my fear? says the Lord of Hosts

1 Sam 4.21

ותקרא לנער אי־כבוד לאמר גלה כבוד מישראל אל־הלקח ארון האלהים

And she named the boy Ichabod saying “the glory/presence has departed from Israel” because the ark of God was taken

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

איה כבודי/אי־כבוד

C. Summary: A phrase in Malachi plays on a personal name in another text. The pun on the name serves to evoke the story in which the named character plays a role. The context in which the character is found, rather than the character is important for the allusion.

D. Argument:

Malachi 1.6 is a coherent verse: The Lord of Hosts questions the priests, noting their lack of honor and respect for him as their lord and father. The coherence of this verse artfully obscures an allusive pun to 1 Sam 4.21. In Mal 1.6, God asks the priests “Where is my honor (כבוד)?” The phrase, when read in isolation from its surrounding context, could also be read as “Where is my glory/presence?” This question is found only one other place in the HB in the naming of Phinehas’ son after the capture of the ark in 1 Sam 4.

1 Samuel 4 narrates the story of Israel's downfall to the Philistines, the capture of the ark of the covenant, and the death of Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas. Significantly, the sons' fate had already been predicted, a fate that resulted from their contempt for the offerings of the Lord (1 Sam 2.17) and their lack of knowledge of God (1 Sam 2.12). This is a condition strikingly similar to that of the priesthood found in Malachi. In Mal 1.6-2.9 the priests are accused of offering defiled offerings upon God's altar, for ignoring God's commandments and for not teaching the laws of God. The story in 1 Sam continues with a negative war report being brought to Eli. Eli is told of the capture of the ark and falls over and dies like his sons. Now alone, Eli's daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, hears the news of the capture of the ark and of the death of her family, and goes into labor. She gives birth to a son, and the women attending her tell her not to worry, she has given birth to a boy. She does not heed their encouragement but instead proceeds to name her child before she dies. ותקרא לנער "And she called the boy 'Ichabod' [Where is the presence?], saying 'The presence departed from Israel'" (1 Sam 4.21). This verse contains the only other instance of the construction אִי/אִיהָ כְבוֹד in the HB besides Mal 1.6. By inserting this locution into Mal 1.6 the composer imbedded a hidden allusion to the 1 Sam story of a corrupt priesthood resulting in the loss of the presence of God.

This hidden concern for the location of the presence of God is not unique to Mal 1.6, but is instead part of an underlying message in the book of Malachi. This message is also evident in at least two other places in the composition of Malachi: first, in Mal 3.1 and second, in Mal 3.20. I address both of these verses below, starting with Mal 3.1 because its literary composition is directly connected to 1 Sam 4.21 and thus, to Mal 1.6 (discussed above). Then, I discuss Mal 3.20 as a new entry because it is also an example of phonological wordplay.

Malachi 3.1 says: הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה־דרך לפני ופתאם יבוא אלהי־כבוד האדון אשר־אתם "Behold, I will send my messengers and they will clear the way before me, and suddenly the Lord of hosts will come to his temple, and the Lord of hosts will be in the temple, and you will worship him." (Mal 3.1)

messenger and he will prepare the way before me, and the Lord, whom you are seeking, will come suddenly to his temple and the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in, behold he comes, says the Lord of Hosts.” It is well known that the composer conflated two older verses for the composition of Mal 3.1: Exodus 23.20, הנה אנכי שלח מלאך לפניך, and Isa 40.3.⁸

Isaiah 40.3 says: קול קורא במדבר פנו דרך יהוה ישרו בערבה מסלה לאלהינו “A voice calls out: ‘In the desert prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’” The composer of Mal 3.1 drew the phrase פנו דרך from Isa 40.3, as well as the theme of preparing for the coming of God.

Significantly, Isa 40.3 is part of a larger stanza (Isa 40.3-5) that concludes with the locution: ונגלה כבוד יהוה “And the presence of the Lord will be revealed.” In only two other texts in the HB is גלה used in conjunction with כבוד, namely, Hosea 10.5 and 1 Sam 4.21, 22. In these latter two verses, גלה has the meaning “depart,” whereas in Isa 40.3 the word means “reveal.” As we noted above, 1 Sam 4.21 is concerned with the presence of God that had departed because of the priest’s indiscretions. Because of the shared rare locutions and similar themes between 1 Sam 4.21 and Isa 40.5, it is likely that Isa 40.5 was written in response to 1 Sam 4.21. Whereas the presence has departed in 1 Sam 4.21, Isa 40.5 promises its return.

In light of the punning allusion to 1 Sam 4.21 in Mal 1.6, it is unlikely that the reuse of Isa 40.5 in Mal 3.1 was random choice. Rather, the composer of Malachi recognized the literary connection between 1 Sam 4.21 and Isa 40.5. The composer alluded to the problem of the departed presence of God because of priestly failure from 1 Sam 4.21 in Mal 1.6. He then

8. The locution פנה דרך occurs nine times in the HB: 1 Sam 13.18; 2 Sam 15.23; Isa 40.3; 57.14; 62.10; Ezek 40.44; 43.1; Mal 3.1; Job 24.18. Besides Mal 3.1, only in Isa 40.3 is the way prepared for the Lord. This allusion to Isa 40.3 was also recognized by the composer of the Gospel of Mark 1.2-3. See discussion in Hill, *Malachi*, 265-67.

also alluded to the hope of the reversal of the earlier pronouncement from Isa 40.3-5 in Mal 3.1. Thus, the composer of Malachi alluded to and reapplied in his own composition an allusion through wordplay that he identified in other literature (different meanings of גלה). Consequently, through the surrounding context of the reused texts from which they are composed, Mal 1.6 and Mal 3.1 are connected.

These two verses in Malachi also share some similar vocabulary and themes. First, in Mal 3.1, the “way is prepared” and then “the Lord (האדון) whom you are seeking will suddenly come to his temple.” The use of the word אדון in Mal 3.1 creates a link to Mal 1.6 in the surface text of Malachi. Second, Mal 3.1 identifies the Lord as the one being sought (האדון אשר אתם מבקשים). Seeking the Lord suggests he is not present. This is the exact situation referenced in Mal 1.6 and affirms the question “where is my presence?”

My argument can be further clarified through a visual depiction. In the columns, the underlined portions indicate Malachi’s dependence on older material (Mal 1.6 and 1 Sam 4.21; Mal 3.1 and Isa 40.3, 5). In the rows, the grey material indicates the interplay between locutions (Mal 1.6 and Mal 3.1; 1 Sam 4.21 and Isa 40.3, 5).

<i>Mal 1.6</i>	<i>Mal 3.1</i>
בן יכבד אב ועבד אדניו ואם־אב אני איה כבודי	הגני שלח מלאכי ופנה־דרך לפני ופתאם יבוא
ואם־אדונים אני איה מוראי אמר יהוה צבאות לכם	אל־היכלו האדון אשר אתם מבקשים
הכהנים	Behold, I send my messenger and he will
A son honors a father and a servant his	<u>prepare the way</u> before me and suddenly, the
master. If I am father <u>where is my honor/</u>	Lord whom you seek will come to his temple
<u>glory</u> ? And if I am Lord where is my fear?	
Says the Lord of Hosts to you, the priests	

<i>1 Sam 4.21</i>	<i>Isa 40.3, 5</i>
ותקרא לנער אי־כבוד לאמר גלה כבוד מישראל	קול קורא במדבר פנו דרך יהוה ישרו בערבה מסלה לאלהינו ונגלה כבוד יהוה וראו כל־בשר יחדו כי פי יהוה דבר
And she called the boy <u>Ichabod</u> [<u>Where is the presence</u>] saying the presence has departed from Israel	A voice cries: “In the desert <u>prepare the way</u> of the Lord. Make straight in the dessert a highway for our God.” And the presence of the Lord will be revealed and all flesh together will see. Thus the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

This argument is further supported by another allusive phonetic wordplay found in Mal 3.20 to Ezek 1.24, 25; Mal 3.20 is also primarily concerned with the presence of God.

3.3.2 Mal 3.20//Ezek 1.24, 25

A. Quotation:

Mal 3.20

וזרחה לכם יראי שמי שמש צדקה ומרפא בכנפיה ויצאתם ופשתם כעגלי מרבק

And the sun of righteousness will rise to you—the ones who fear my name—and healing is in its wings. You will go out leaping like a calf from the stall.

Ezek 1.24,25

ואשמע את־קול כנפיהם כקול מים רבים כקול־שדי בלכתם קול המלה כקול מחנה בעמדם תרפינה כנפיהן

And when they moved, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the sound of Shaddai, the sound of a tumult, like the sound of a camp. When they stood still their wings dropped.

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

ומרפא בכנפיה/תרפינה כנפיהן

C. Summary: The composer exploits the phonetic similarity of the word רפה “to let down” from Ezek 1.24 and reads it as רפא “to heal.” He then inserts the phrase from Ezek 1.24 with his reworked word. The composer reinterprets scripture through the phonological similarity.

D. Argument:

Malachi 3.20 is an enigmatic verse. The verse is syntactically cohesive, but its meaning is elusive. What is the “sun of righteousness”? Why does the sun have wings? Most often this image is related to the “icon of the ANE [Ancient Near Eastern] winged sun disk” and thus to an image of YHWH depicted in the mythic language of the ancient Near East.⁹ Hill argued that in using the phrase ומרפא בכנפיה “the prophet intended direct correspondence with the winged feature of the symbol.”¹⁰ It is possible that Malachi used the ancient Near East icon as part of the inspiration for this picturesque locution. It is equally possible that the composer was influenced by various passages in Isaiah. Isaiah 60.1-2 says: “Arise and shine for your light has come, the glory of the Lord has risen upon you! For behold the darkness

9. Hill, *Malachi*, 351-52.

10. Ibid. This is the most commonly accepted argument, stemming from Wellhausen. Van der Woude suggests instead “Het beeld van de vleugelen is ontleend aan de voorstelling van de gevleugelde zonnescijf, die vanuit Egypte via Mitanni over het gehele Oude Oosten verbreid werd. Daarbij omschrijven de vleugelen niet . . . de stralen van de zon, maar de met regenwolken bedekte hemel. Niet ‘onder’, maar «in» (be) de vleugelen van de zon is ‘genezing’, het heil dat in de vorm van regen, die zelf weer een beeld van zegen is (vgl. 3:10), komt. Vgl. voor de parallellie van ‘genezing’ en ‘heil’ Jer. 33:6; Jes. 57:18-19.” A. S. van der Woude, *Haggai Maleachi* (De Prediking van het Oude Testament; Nijkerk: Uitgeverij G. F. Callenbach, 1982), 153-54. For further discussion of YHWH’s association with the sun in the HB see Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 372-76.

will cover the earth, thick darkness the peoples, but upon you the Lord will rise and his glory will be seen upon you.” Isaiah 58.8 says: “Then your light will break as the dawn and your healing will grow quickly. Your righteousness will go before you, the glory of YHWH will bring up the rear.” (cf. Isa 30.26).¹¹ The similarities between both the ancient Near East icon and the verses in Isaiah to Mal 3.20 make it difficult to determine exactly what motivated the composer. In both, divinity is associated with the sun. It is possible that the winged sun disk and the Isaiah passages were both influential in his composition. Whether he used the iconic motif or Isaiah or both, the composer of Malachi reapplied and described his source for the sun imagery with locutions found elsewhere in the HB. Of particular concern in this section is the phrase in Mal 3.20 **ומרפא בכנפיה** “and healing is in its wings.”

Nowhere else in the HB do wings **רפא** “heal.” This construction thus initially seems to be the unique creation of the composer of Malachi. But, four factors point to the likelihood that the unique phrase, “healing is in its wings,” is rather a result of the composer’s reading of Ezek 1-3. First, if Hill (amongst others) is correct, and the image of the winged sun disc influenced the composer’s composition of this verse, it is important to note that the sun disc was the vehicle of divinity.¹² In the HB, the primary text that depicts YHWH in vehicle is Ezek 1-3—or more specifically, the vehicle (throne-chariot) carries **מראה דמות כבוד יהוה** “the appearance of the image of the presence of YHWH.” This fact is relevant in light of the second point, that although **כנף + רפא** occurs nowhere else in the HB, the words **כנף + רפה** occurs in Ezek 1.24 and 25, part of Ezekiel’s vision of God’s presence on his throne chariot.

11. Hill notes “The Qal stem *zrh* means ‘to rise, shine’ . . . and is used to describe the sun . . . a star . . . light in general . . . and *Yahweh’s glory* (Deut 33:2; Isa 60:2).” Hill, *Malachi*, 349, italics mine.

12. This argument could also work if the composer was influenced by Isaiah. In Isaiah, sun imagery is used to depict the presence of God. Ezekiel 1-3 is the primary text in the HB that describes the presence of God in detail.

רפה is phonetically similar to רפא. The composer of Malachi exploited the phonetic similarity of רפה with רפא to freight his depiction of divinity with the trait of healing. Third, as argued above in **section 3.3.1** (Mal 1.6//1 Sam 4.24), the composition of Malachi evidences elsewhere a concern for the location of the presence (כבוד) of God. It would thus be unsurprising if the composer here also in Mal 3.20 referred obliquely to the presence (כבוד) of God. Fourth, Malachi evidences locutions drawn from the book of Ezekiel elsewhere, making it more likely that the composer drew from Ezek 1.24 or 25 for this locution.

Ezekiel 1 is the description of Ezekiel's vision of the כבוד and the throne chariot upon which it rides. The chariot is carried by four living beings who have wings. According to Ezek 1.24, ואשמע את־קול כנפיהם כקול מים רבים כקול־שדי בלכתם קול המלה כקול מחנה בעמדם, תרפינה כנפיהן “And I heard the sound of the wings like the sound of a great water, like the sound of Shaddai, when they walked there was a sound of a tumult, like the sound of an army, when they stood still, their wings dropped.”¹³ The composer of Malachi capitalized on the phonetic similarity between the words רפה and רפא, reinterpreting the wings as benign instruments of the presence of God to bring healing on those who fear the name of God. Thus, in light of the probable influence from either the ancient Near Eastern sun icon or various Isaiah texts in Malachi, the “Sun of Righteousness” is a metaphor for the presence of God (כבוד).

Both these examples of allusive puns (Mal 1.6—see **section 3.3.1** above—and Mal 3.20) do not necessarily add semantic depth to their surrounding contexts. The “healing wings” pun does not change the consensus of scholarship that the “Sun of Righteousness” is a metaphor for God. Rather, both puns add an underlying message to the book of Malachi as a whole concerning the location (or absence) of the presence of God. As mentioned above, the

13. For use of the book of Ezekiel elsewhere in the book of Malachi, see below, **section 3.5.4 and 3.5.6**, as well as **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, comments on Mal 2.11.

circumstances in 1 Samuel that lead up to the naming of the child “Ichabod” are reminiscent of the conditions described in Malachi, namely, corruption in the priesthood. The actions (or lack of action) of the priests are related to the absence of the divine presence. This is then solved in Mal 3.1, where after the Messenger prepares the way, the Lord will come to his temple and purify the sons of Levi (Mal 3.3). The composer then expands the theme of the presence in Mal 3.20, where “the Sun of Righteousness,” the presence of God, rises to those who fear his name in order to heal them.

3.3.3 Mal 1.9//Gen 32.31

A. Quotation:

Mal 1.9

ועתה חל־ונא פני־אל ויחננו מידכם היתה זאת הישא מכם פנים אמר יהוה צבאות

And now, entreat the face of God that he might be gracious with us. This is from your hand.

Should he lift your faces? says the Lord of Hosts.

Gen 32.31

ויקרא יעקב שם המקום פניאל כי־ראיתי אלהים פנים אל־פנים ותנצל נפשי

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, “For I have seen God face to face and my life was delivered.”

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

פני־אל/פניאל

C. Summary: The place-name “Peniel” from Gen 32.31 is evoked in Malachi through the reuse of the proper noun as a meaningful phrase (“entreat the *face of God*”). While the actual place Peniel is unimportant, the actions and speech of the surrounding context in Gen 32 are pertinent to the understanding of the pericope in Malachi.

D. Argument:¹⁴

The portion of interest in this example, Mal 1.9a, is cohesive (the entire verse is not, which will be discussed in **section 3.5.12**): “And now entreat the face of God that he might be gracious to us.” Despite the easy reading, the phrase פני־אל is an anomaly. The phrase “entreat the face of *YHWH* (פני יהוה)” is relatively common in the HB.¹⁵ But, the composer’s unique vocabulary choice in Malachi gives pause to the reader.¹⁶ The construction פנה + אל occurs in conjunction twenty-nine times in the HB, but never with the meaning “face of God.” Pertinently, פניאל “Peniel” (meaning “face of God”) occurs in Gen 32.31 as a place name, its etymology explained as being the place where Jacob saw God face to face (כי ראיתי את־אלהים פנים אל־פנים). Since the composer of Malachi on several occasions draws from Gen 31-33 for his composition, it is not unlikely that Gen 32.31 was the inspiration for this locution in Mal 1.9.¹⁷ In light of the rarity of the phrase, as well as the reuse of Gen 31-33 elsewhere, it is likely that the composer reused the locution from Gen 32.31. Through making a pun on the sound of פני־אל, Malachi alludes to the place פניאל, where Jacob wrestled God and saw him face to face.

This allusion to Gen 32.31 affects the message of Mal 1.9 in several ways. First, it serves to associate further the people addressed in Malachi with Jacob their forefather. This was done explicitly in Mal 1.2-3, where the people demand evidence for God’s love for them.

14. I will also address this verse below in **section 3.5.12**, noting an allusion to Lam 4.16, arguing that פני יהוה from Lam 4.16 was changed to the synonym פני־אל.

15. See Ex 32.11, 1 Sam 13.12, 1 Kgs 13.6, 2 Kgs 13.4, Jer 26.19, Zech 7.2, 8.21, 8.22, Dan 9.13, 2 Chr 33.12.

16. “Sodann gleicht sie dem reinen Konsonantenbestand nach - aber wohl auch phonetisch! - dem פְּנִיָּאֵל in Gen 32,31, bei dem es sich ja um eine ebenfalls singuläre und vor allem ‘wortspielhafte’ Form des Ortsnamens פְּנִיָּאֵל handelt.” Utzschneider, *Künder oder Schreiber*, 50.

17. See **Appendix B**.

God reminds them that he loved Jacob, but hated Esau. This hatred for Esau is demonstrated through *Edom's* destruction (Mal 1.3-4). Upon analogy, if Esau is Edom, then Jacob must be Israel. The allusion to Gen 32 solidifies the association of Jacob with Israel in Malachi. As Gevirtz notes, "The passage (Gen 32.23-33) cannot be dismissed merely as a bit of adopted or adapted folk-lore . . . but is rather to be understood as bearing a distinct and distinctive meaning for the people who claim descent from the eponymous ancestor. Where, when, and how Jacob became Israel cannot have been matters of indifference to the Israelite author or to his audience."¹⁸

Second, the whole of Gen 32.31 reads: ויקרא יעקב שם המקום פניאל כי־ראיתי אלהים פנים "And Jacob called the place Peniel, 'For I have seen God face to face and my life was delivered.'" Rather than understanding Gen 32.31 as Jacob's survival despite seeing the face of God, it is likely that the composer of Malachi understood seeing God's face as the reason for Jacob's life "being saved." Thus, when Malachi instructs the people to "Entreat the face of God" not only is Jacob's wrestling with the divine being to obtain a blessing evoked, but also the idea that seeing God's face will bring deliverance upon Jacob, the people of God.¹⁹

3.3.4 Mal 2.11//Gen 24.47

A. Quotation:

Mal 2.11

בגדה יהודה ותועבה נעשתה בישראל ובירושלם כי חלל יהודה קדש יהוה אשר אהב ובעל בת־אל נכר

18. Gevirtz, "Of Patriarchs," 50.

19. "The construct-genitive *pěné- 'ēl* ('the face of God') calls to mind the patriarchal tradition of Jacob's wrestling match prompting a divine blessing at Peniel . . . because Yehud seeks a similar divine blessing."

Hill, *Malachi*, 182

Judah has acted treacherously and abomination has been done in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah has defiled the holy [people] of the Lord that he [the Lord] loved because he [Judah] married the daughter of a foreign god.

Gen 24.47

ואשאל אתה ואמר בת־מי את ותאמר בת־בתואל בן־נחור אשר ילדה־לו מלכה

And I asked her and said “Daughter, who are you?” And she said “I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Nachor who was born to him through Milkah”

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

בת־אל נכר/בת־בתואל בן־נחור

C. Summary: The phrase “daughter of a foreign god” is a wordplay on phonological elements of the personal name “Bethuel son of Nachor.” Bethuel, a main character in Gen 24, is symbolic of the correct lineage of a wife for Judah. The phonetic transformation of Bethuel’s name to “daughter of a foreign god” is thus ironic. The people have not married a woman from the correct lineage, but rather, they have married a woman who is a descendent of another god.

D. Argument:

The phrase in Mal 2.11 בת־אל נכר “daughter of a foreign god” was identified by Zender as “totally uncommon and ambiguous.”²⁰ It has garnered a lot of attention because of its uniqueness. The debate is whether “daughter of a foreign god” refers to intermarriage with foreign women who serve other gods, or whether the phrase refers to the worship of a foreign goddess.²¹ This problem is solved to some degree if the phrase בת־אל נכר is a pun on the phonetically similar name בתואל בן נחור “Bethuel, son of Nachor.”

20. Zehnder, “A Fresh Look,” 227.

21. See discussion in Glazier-McDonald’s article “Intermarriage, Divorce,” 603-11.

Bethuel son of Nachor plays an important role in the narrative of Gen 24, the story of the servant of Abraham's quest to find a wife for Isaac amongst Abraham's people. The narrative is situated within the story of the death of Sarah (see Gen 23.2 and Gen 24.67). In the story, Abraham desires that Isaac would have a wife from his own kindred. Thus, Abraham sends his servant back to his homeland in order to find a wife for his son. When the servant arrives at the city of Nachor, the servant meets Rebekah, who identifies herself as בת־בתואל בן נחור "the daughter of Bethuel, son of Nachor" (Gen 24.47). Arrangements are then made to bring Rebekah back to Isaac.

Through the phonemic similarity between בת־אל נכר and בת־בתואל בן נחור, Malachi created a link to the story of finding a wife for Isaac. But he reused the phonemes ironically.²² Rather than marrying the "correct woman," the woman Abraham desired for his son, the daughter of Bethuel, Judah has married the daughter of a foreign god.²³ The irony highlights the nature of Judah's sin, namely that he has married the wrong kind of woman, one that is not a descendent from Abraham's people.²⁴ **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16** addresses the exegetical effect this allusive pun has on the pericope as a whole.

22. Good defines "irony" as "criticism, implicit or explicit, which perceives in things as they are an incongruity.

The incongruity is by no means merely mean and contemptible, though it may be willful . . . it may be an incongruity between what is actually so and what the object of ironic criticism thinks to be so." This definition accords well with the use of "Bethuel" here. Edwin M. Good, *Irony in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950), 30.

23. The narrative of Gen 24 is used similarly in the book of Tobit. See footnote in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**.

24. This is not to say that Malachi is not also commenting on the worship of other gods. See **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16** and Glazier-MacDonald, "Intermarriage," 611.

3.3.5 Mal 2.12//Gen 46.12

A. Quotation:

Mal 2.12

יכרת יהוה לאיש אשר יעשנה ער וענה מאהלי יעקב ומגיש מנחה ליהוה צבאות

May the Lord cut off the man who does this from the tents of Jacob, with a witness that answers, including the one who brings an offering to the Lord of Hosts // May the Lord cut off from the man who does this Er and Onan (the offspring of Judah's foreign wife) from the tents of Jacob, including the one who brings an offering to the Lord of Hosts.

Gen 46.12

ובני יהודה ער ואונן ושלה ופרץ וזרח וימת ער ואונן בארץ כנען

And the sons of Judah, Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerach, but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

ער וענה/ער ואונן

C. Summary: The awkward phrase ער וענה in Malachi puns with the two proper names ער ואונן. The pun on the names serves to bring to mind the narrative associated with the names (the death of Er and Onan, Gen 38) and adds a poignant threat to the message of Mal 2.12.

D. Argument:

Like the previous example, בת־אל נכר, the phrase ער וענה found in Mal 2.12 has given rise to much debate.²⁵ This phrase is fraught with difficulties. First, there is a text critical

25. Beth Glazier-MacDonald suggests the reading should be “the one who is aroused (from sexual activity, i.e., the aroused one) and the lover,” based on the possible sexual connotations of both words. “Malachi 2:12: *‘er wə’ōneh*: Another Look,” *JBL* 105 (1986): 297. While her interpretation does fit with the marriage motif in this pericope, considering Malachi's writing-style elsewhere, as well as the more specific message of Mal 2.10-16 (see **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**), a pun is more likely. C. C. Torrey claims “the phrase ער וענה . . . must be equivalent to ‘every individual.’” C. C. Torrey, “ער וענה in Malachi ii.12,” *JBL* 24 (1905): 176.

problem: while the MT attests ער וענה, every other major witness attests עד וענה. From a syntactical perspective, the construction of the whole of Mal 2.12 is problematic: the inclusion of the phrase ער וענה seems disruptive and incongruous. Lastly, the phrase ער וענה is semantically ambiguous. Because of the uncertain nature of the origin and meaning of the phrase, I will only offer a tentative argument.

As the MT stands, ער וענה has phonological similarity to ער ואונן (Gen 46.12), the two sons of Judah and his Canaanite wife. Er and Onan were both killed by God for being evil in his eyes (see Gen 38.7, 10). It is accordingly possible that the phrase ער וענה is an allusive pun to Judah's sons. This is probable for three reasons. First, the surrounding context (in conjunction with the phrase) evokes the Gen 38 narrative. Malachi 2.11 identifies specifically *Judah* (using a masculine verb as opposed to the use of the feminine with Judah earlier in the verse) as the offender who married "the daughter of a foreign god." This detail in Malachi creates a parallel with the story in Gen 38, where Judah marries the mother of Er and Onan, a *Canaanite* woman, a foreigner. Second, as pointed out by Weyde, in the construction כרת ל the ל marks a compliment, not the direct object. The direct object is the item that follows. Thus the sentence כרת יהוה לאיש אשר יעשנה ער וענה could read "May God cut off from the man who does this [marries a foreign woman] 'Er and Onan.'" If the phrase ער וענה is a pun referring to the sons of Judah, the directive further parallels the narrative of Gen 38. In Gen 38 both Judah's sons, Er and Onan, are "cut off" from the tents of Jacob through their deaths.²⁶ Third, by evidence of the four other phonetic wordplays identified above, the use of allusive pun can be argued to be stylistically characteristic of the book of Malachi.

The function of this potential allusive pun is dealt with extensively in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, so I will only summarize here. By implanting an allusive pun, a covert threat

26. Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 239. Compare 1 Sam 2.33; 1 Kgs 14.10, 21.21; 2 Kgs 9.8; Isa 14.22; Jer 44.7, 47.4.

against the offspring of the people who married foreign women is added to the pericope's message. Like the offspring of Judah and the foreign women, the offspring of these new foreign marriages are doomed to be "cut off." In the case of Er and Onan, this means to be put to death by God. Malachi 2.10-16 makes further allusions to texts where offspring or wives die as a result of the worship of other gods and thus could quite possibly be an intentional underlying threat in the text.

3.3.6 Phonological Wordplay Conclusion

From each of the examples of phonological wordplay several conclusions can be drawn. First, as noted by Ausloos and Kabergs, "[n]ot recognizing the presence of the wordplay has often led to its minimization as a 'strange' or 'much discussed' word combination. Nevertheless, it is exactly this linguistic ambiguity that creates the possibility of an enriched exegesis of the Hebrew text."²⁷ The phrases found in **sections 3.3.2, 3.3.4 and 3.3.5** above are all ones that have evoked much discussion because each one stands out as slightly strange to the readers. The recognition of each case of wordplay significantly aids the exegesis of each passage in which they are found. Second, through wordplay that is discussed in **section 3.3.1 and 3.3.2** (in conjunction with Mal 3.1), the composer of Malachi inserted a metamessage behind the text of Malachi that is evident at various points in the book. Third, all but one of the above puns is a play on a proper noun. The composer of Malachi thus stands in a long tradition of HB composers who capitalize on the semantic possibilities contained in biblical Hebrew proper nouns.²⁸

3.4 Graphic Wordplay

The composer of Malachi did not only play on phonemes; he also played on the visual form of words. This section will examine how the author played on what a word looked like,

27. Ausloos and Kabergs, "Paronomasia or Wordplay," 1.

28. Yair Zakovitch, "Explicit and Implicit Name-Derivations," *HAR* 4 (1980): 167-80.

rather than what it sounded like or meant. It is again important to emphasize that the different categories I have chosen to classify different types of wordplay are fluid. Some of the examples above in the phonological wordplay category also could be argued to be a type of graphic wordplay. I separated the examples below into the category “graphic wordplay” because although the words look the same, they are not pronounced the same. The play is on the graphemes that make up the words and does not necessarily include the sounds each syllable makes. Below, I will demonstrate three different cases of visual wordplay: the use of two homographs (which when pointed are not homophones), and one homograph that influenced the transformation of one word to a word it visually resembles.

Visual wordplay is not a new concept in the study of the HB. Jack Sasson’s short article “Word-play in Gen 6:8-9” is an excellent example of the creative lengths employed by some HB composers.²⁹ Sasson has noted how previous scholarship has identified a literary dependence between the description of Enoch (Gen 5.22, 24) and the description of Noah (Gen 6.9). He has pointed out that the composer of Gen 6.9 cemented the interrelationship between the two texts through the backwards spelling of Enoch’s name at the end of Gen 6.9: חנך to התהלך-נח. Thus, the visual wordplay confirms the relationship of the narrative about Noah with the narrative about Enoch.

I am not the first to point out visual wordplay in Malachi. As Mason has argued, “There is probably a play on words [in Mal 3.6]. *Jacob* [יעקב] is related to a word which means ‘to cheat’ [עקב]. The verb ‘to rob’ [קבע]—a word which occurs only one other time in the HB], rendered ‘defraud’ in verses 8-9, is similar in appearance to the word ‘to cheat’, and this is the reading of the Septuagint there. The people have always been ‘cheaters’.”³⁰ This

29. Jack M. Sasson, “Word-play in Gen 6:8-9,” *CBQ* 37 (1975): 165-66.

30. Mason, *The Books of Haggai*, 155. Note that Wellhausen thought the original text of Malachi read עקב which was obscured by a later scribe. Wellhausen, *Die Kleinen Propheten*, 210. See also Hill, *Malachi*, 303.

accords well with Rendsburg's statement concerning wordplay in the HB that "[w]hen a choice of synonyms was available, the writers [of the HB] typically chose the word that procured the greater alliterative [or in this case, graphically similar] effect. This can be seen especially in the cases of rare words, even *hapax legomena*."³¹

3.4.1 Mal 3.10b-11

A. Quotation:

Mal 3.10b-11

ובחנוני נא בזאת אמר יהוה צבאות אִס־לֹא אִפְתַּח לְכֶם אֶת אַרְבוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהִרִיקְתִּי לְכֶם בְּרִכָּה
עַד־בְּלִיַדִי וְגַעַרְתִּי לְכֶם בְּאֹכֵל

“Test me in this” says the Lord of Hosts. “Will I not open for you the windows of heaven?

And will I not pour out for you abundant blessings? I will rebuke for you the eater.”

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

אַרְבוֹת/אֹכֵל

C. Summary: The graphemes in Mal 3.10 אַרְבוֹת meaning “windows” give the composer opportunity to play with its homograph אֹרְבָה meaning “locust-swarm” in Mal 3.11. The meaning of the homograph “locust-swarms” inspires the following topic in Mal 3.11, “eaters.”

31. Rendsburg, “Word play,” 138. Margalit noted the same phenomenon in Ugaritic poetry: “We seek to explain the selection of uncommon words and forms, as well as choices made between synonymous alternatives, as creative responses by the poet and his tradition to the demands of an alliterating poetry” (58). Margalit concludes: “Our aim, as students of Ugaritic literature, should be to discover the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ of the poet’s *art*, the ‘laws’ of *its* expression and the techniques of *its* composition” (78). B. Margalit, “Alliteration in Ugaritic Poetry: Its Role in Composition and Analysis (Part II),” *JNSL* 8 (1980): 58, 78.

D. Argument:

Mal 3.10-11 is part of a matrix of texts in which the composer reuses portions of Deut 28 and elements from the Elisha narratives.³² In Mal 3.10 we find several lexical and root parallels with Deut 28.12:

Mal 3.10 “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse (האוצר), so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open (אפתח) the windows of heaven (השמים) for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing (ברכה).”	Deut 28.12 “The LORD will open (פתח) for you his rich storehouse (אוצרו), the heavens (השמים), to give the rain of your land in its season and to bless (ברך) all your undertakings. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow.”
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There are also parallels with lexemes and roots found in 2 Kgs 7.2:

Mal 3.10 “see if I will not open the windows of heaven (ארבות השמים) for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing (ברכה).”	2 Kgs 7.2 Then the officer on whose hand the king was leaning answered the man of God. He said “Even if the Lord makes windows in the heavens (ארבות בשמים) can this thing be?”
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Hill argued that “[t]he construction *'arubbôt haššāmayim* + the verb *pth* is associated with the heavy rains unleashed as a part of the divine judgment in the great flood in Gen 7:11 and 8:2.”³³ The three word overlap between Mal 3.10 and Gen 7.11 makes Hill’s argument seem plausible. But Hill does not take into account that the occurrence of the phrase “windows of heaven” in 2 Kgs 7.2 has much greater thematic overlap with Mal 3.11. Nor does he notice the dependence of Mal 3.11 on other portions of the Elisha narratives (2 Kgs

32. See Hill’s list of “Intertextuality in the Book of Malachi.” Hill, *Malachi*, 401-12.

33. Hill, *Malachi*, 314.

2.21 and 2 Kgs 4.39; see chart below). In 2 Kgs 7.2, the people of Samaria are under siege and suffering from starvation. Elisha tells the king that “Tomorrow, about this time, a measure of choice meal shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria.” Similarly, Mal 3.10-11 affirms that if the people will obey God’s commandments and bring in the full tithe, God will do the impossible for them: he will open the windows of heaven so that the people can eat (like he did for them in Elisha’s time).

Malachi 3.10 reused Deut 28.12. In Mal 3.11 there are more verbal parallels to Deut

28. Compare:

<p>Mal 3.11 “I will rebuke the eater (באכל) for you, so that it will not destroy (ישחת) the fruit of your land (את־פרי האדמה); and your vine in the field shall not be barren, says the LORD of hosts.”</p>	<p>Deut 28.51 “It [a grim-faced nation] shall consume (אכל) the fruit of your livestock and the fruit of your ground (ופרי־אדמתך) until you are destroyed (השמדך)”</p>
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In this verse there is also a conflation of elements from 2 Kgs 2.21 and 2 Kgs 4.39 (also parts of the Elisha narratives):

<p>Mal 3.11 “and your vine in the field shall not cause barrenness (ולא־תשכל לכם הגפן בשדה), says the LORD of hosts.”</p>	<p>2 Kgs 2.21 “Thus says the Lord: I healed these waters. No longer will there be death or barrenness (ומשכלת) from them.”</p> <p>2 Kgs 4.39 “and he found vines of the field (גפן שדה) and he gathered gourds from them and filled his garment”</p>
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Malachi’s dependence on the Elisha narratives for the phrase “your vine shall not cause barrenness” suggests that God will not allow the curses brought upon the people in the Elisha narratives to be brought upon the people who properly give their tithes.

In reusing Deut 28.51, Malachi made several compositional choices. He chose to use שמד instead of its synonym שחת (cf. Section Semantic Wordplay below) and made the verb

אכל into a substantive.³⁴ In this latter change, further compositional processes are evident. Above I argued that the composer included the phrase ארבות השמים from 2 Kgs 7.2 for thematic reasons. Pertinently, the graphemes of the word ארבה “window” can also mean “locust” if it is given different vocalic pointing.³⁵ The graphic similarity between the two words (which are homographs) gave the composer opportunity to create wordplay in this passage. He reconstructed elements of Deut 28.51 when he reused it in Mal 3.11. The verb אכל became the substantive אכל “eater,” a word used in other texts to denote a stage in the development process of locusts. In doing this, the composer created a tension in the verse. To what does “eater” refer to? A foreign enemy (per Deut 28.51) or a plague of locusts?

In creating this tension, the composer of Malachi evoked a motif found throughout the HB, namely, the foreign army as locusts motif (see Jud 6.5, 7.12; Nah 3.15-17; Jer 51.14; etc.). The proximation of the graphemes ארבה and the substantive אכל serves to enhance the aesthetic tension of the pericope. One understands “locusts” until the recognition of the locutions drawn from Deut 28.51, at which point one recognizes the metaphorical use of “eater.” Interestingly, in this case, the recognition of wordplay serves to create more ambivalence rather than clarity. One is not sure whether to read “locust” or “foreign army.” Creating an intentional tension between “locusts” and “foreign army” is not unheard of in the

34. That the word אכל is part of a borrowed text could help explain the indeterminacy of the exact animal referred to. This could go against Hurowitz when he notes “In light of the Akkadian word *ākilu* and a reconsideration of the biblical text, it is highly possible that אכל in Mal 3:11 is not a general name for unspecified pests or even locusts, but designates a specific stage in the metamorphosis of insects, and in particular a larva or a caterpillar” (330). Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, “אכל in Mal 3:11: Caterpillar,” *JBL* 121 (2002): 327-30.

35. Casanowicz notes instances of word play in the HB where “[t]he consonants are alike and stand in the same order, but the vowel is different.” *Paronomasia*, 35. Likewise, Glück also notes a play on graphemes with alternative pointing. Glück, “Paronomasia,” 55-56, 61-66.

HB. In his article “The Structure and Meaning of the Locust Plague Oracles in Joel 1,2-2,17” Elie Assis argued for the same phenomenon in the book of Joel. He claimed that the tension between referents of “locusts” and “foreign army” was part of an overall compositional technique of the composer of Joel.³⁶

3.4.2 Mal 2.16//Ob 10

A. Quotation:

Mal 2.16

כי־שנא שלח אמר יהוה אלהי ישראל ובסה חמס על־לבושו אמר יהוה צבאות ונשמרתם ברוחכם ולא תבגדו

For he hates to divorce, said the Lord God of Israel and violence covers his clothing, said the Lord of Hosts. Thus, watch on penalty of your spirit and do not act treacherously

Ob 10

מחמס אחיך יעקב תכסך בושה ונכרת לעולם

On account of the violence done to your brother Jacob your shame will cover you and you will be cut off forever.

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

בגד/לבוש

לבוש/בושה

C. Summary: The graphemes of the verb בגד “act treacherously” gave the composer opportunity to play on its homograph, the noun בגד “clothing.” The meaning of the homograph “clothing” inspired the addition of graphemes to the locution בושה “shame” (borrowed from another text) to make the locution לבוש “clothing.”

36. Elie Assis, “The Structure and Meaning of the Locust Plague Oracles in Joel 1,2-2,17,” *ZAW* 122 (2010): 401-16.

D. Argument:

Malachi 2.16 offers an example very similar to the previous one. The graphemes of a word that is used to convey one meaning, suggests the interpretation of later locutions through the possible semantic range of the combined graphemes. The verb בגד “act treacherously” is used five times in Mal 2.10-16. The repetition of the verb serves to hold these verses together as a cohesive whole. The particular locution in which I am interested, “and violence covers his clothing,” is bracketed by this word: the end of Mal 2.15 (אל־יבגד) and the end of Mal 2.16 (ולא תבגדו). The unpointed graphemes בגד gave the composer an opportunity to create a wordplay. Unpointed, the word בגד can be read either as a verb, “to act treacherously” or as a noun “clothing.” This alternate meaning of the graphemes בגד influenced the rearrangement of the letters of one word in a borrowed locution from Ob 10a.

Obadiah 10a condemns Edom saying: מחמס אחיך יעקב תכסך בושה “shame from the violence done to your brother Jacob covers you.” Like Mal 2.16, the verse contains the words חמס “violence” and כסה “to cover,” two words that are found in proximity only seven times in the HB.³⁷ What makes Ob 10a stand out from the other verses is the word בושה, which is visually similar to Malachi’s לבוש. The composer of Malachi transformed בושה “shame” to לבוש “clothing” based on the influence of the homograph בגד “act treacherously/clothing” found throughout the pericope.

By transforming בושה from Ob 10a to לבוש, the composer was able to evoke the imagery of another passage that also addresses the topic of Edom. In Isa 63.2-3, God comes from enacting judgment on Edom (on whom judgement is pronounced in Obadiah). God is asked: “Why is your clothing red and your garment like one who treads the winepress?” And he answers: “I trampled them in my wrath and their lifeblood sprinkled on my garment and I defiled all my clothing” (cf. Mal 2.16). Isaiah 63.2-3 presents an image of God with clothing

37. Isa 59.6; Ob 1.10; Jonah 3.8; Hab 2.17; Mal 2.16; Prov 10.6, 11

covered in violence. This violence was a result of God trampling the Edomites in judgment. It is precisely the imagery found in Isa 63.2-3 that the composer sought to evoke in Mal 2.16. He borrowed locutions from Ob 10a, a passage that pronounces judgment on Edom for what they did to Israel and reformulated elements from that passage to evoke the story of God's destruction of Edom found in Isa 63.2-3. This evocation of Edom's destruction in Mal 2.16 serves as a warning to those in Judah who are acting treacherously against God (cf. Mal 2.10). If they continue to act treacherously, God will bring the fate of Edom upon them. For further discussion of the message of Mal 2.16 see **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**.

3.4.3 Graphic Wordplay Conclusion

My three brief examples above (four when counting Mason's example) of visual wordplay in Malachi serve different functions from the viewpoint of the composer and the reader. From the viewpoint of the composer, I argued in two cases a homograph gave the composer the impetus to reformulate elements from a text he was borrowing. This means that he was consciously shaping his text and reshaping those elements he was reusing in his own text with aesthetics and wordplay in mind. From the viewpoint of the reader, the result of the play with homographs is an aesthetically enhanced and playful reading.

My third example of the change of graphemes to create a new word (לבוש to בושה), from the viewpoint of the composer was a technique to evoke the imagery of one text (namely, Isa 63.2-3) through the reuse of a different text: Ob 10a. The reshaping of Ob 10a allowed the imagery of Isa 63.2-3 to be activated in the message of Mal 2.16. The composer's viewpoint and the reader's viewpoint in this example are basically the same: the evocation of Isa 63.2-3 implanted by the composer was intended to be recognized and applied by the readers.

3.5 Semantic Wordplay

Lastly, the composer of Malachi also manipulated the semantics of words, in particular, synonyms. Building upon observations made by Shemaryahu Talmon on

synonymous readings, through ten examples I will illustrate the composer of Malachi's extensive and creative use of synonyms. I will demonstrate that he manipulated and replaced synonyms for a variety of reasons, ranging from the aesthetic to the theological and ideological.³⁸

3.5.1 Synonymous Readings: Talmon

In his 1961 article "Synonymous Readings in the Textual Traditions of the Old Testament," Shemaryahu Talmon observed a phenomenon which he labeled "synonymous readings." He suggested that:

The phenomenon of *synonymous readings* originates in one of the most characteristic features of the Hebrew Bible, viz., the parallelism of members, a literary device which is based on the alternative use, in the two stichs of a verse, of each of a pair of synonymous expressions. This stylistic custom of repeating the same statement in different words, was not confined to Hebrew, but was also common in other languages of the ancient Near East: Akkadian, Ugaritic and Egyptian. Due to the influence of this phenomenon in all these languages, pairs of words came into being which were pragmatically used as synonyms, even if, etymologically speaking, they actually expressed different shades of meaning.³⁹

38. Noegel and Rendsburg noticed a similar phenomenon they labeled "variation." Their examination of variation in the Song of Songs led them to the conclusion that "(1) the passages [that exhibit variation] typically do not occur in close proximity to one another, and (2) the differences frequently are in the realm of syntax, word order, and lexis (not just morphology)." The variation in lexis is very similar to the phenomenon I will be discussing below. They argued that variation was for the purpose of oral performance of the poem to keep the interest of the readers. They viewed the use of variation as a specific compositional technique. Scott B. Noegel and Gary A. Rendsburg, *Solomon's Vineyard: Literary and Linguistic Studies in the Song of Songs* (Society of Biblical Literature: Ancient Israel and Its Literature; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 109. See also Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 91.

39. Shemaryahu Talmon, "Synonymous Readings in the Masoretic Text," in *The Text and Canon of the Hebrew*

Through a text-critical lens, Talmon spoke of synonymous parallels as “variants in our sources,”⁴⁰ although he admits that “[t]he problem with which we are concerned actually lies on the borderline between two disciplines: the study of biblical stylistics and the study of the Bible text.”⁴¹ Talmon viewed synonymous readings to belong to the realm of copyists.

Talmon defined synonymous readings with four criteria:

- a) They result from the substitution of words and phrases by others which are used interchangeably and synonymously with them in the literature of the O.T.⁴²
- b) They do not affect adversely the structure of the verse, nor do they disturb either its meaning or its rhythm. Hence they cannot be explained as scribal errors.
- c) No sign of systematic or tendentious emendation can be discovered in them. They are to be taken at their face value. Synonymous readings cannot be explained as variants with a clearly defined ideological purpose. They are characterized by the absence of any difference between them in content or meaning.
- d) As far as we can tell, they are not the product of different chronologically or geographically distinct linguistic strata.⁴³

Talmon then listed numerous examples of the exchange of one word or phrase with its synonym within the MT and then also between versions. For instance, Talmon wrote:

Bible: Collected Studies (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 173. Originally published in C. Rabin (ed.), *Studies in the Bible* (ScrHier 8; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961), 335-83.

40. *Ibid.*, 172.

41. *Ibid.*, 173.

42. A comparable phenomenon would be what Michael Klein identified as “Associative Translation” in the Targums. See Michael Klein, “Associative and Complementary Translation in the Targumim” in *Michael Klein on the Targums: Collected Essays 1972-2002* (ed. Avigdor Shinan *et al*; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 77-88.

43. Talmon, “Synonymous Readings,” 172.

The nouns בית//בני(ם) are used as synonyms when they serve in construct with a noun, or proper name to denote a close connection or blood relationship, as in בני ישראל, [sic] or to indicate the possession of a certain quality, e.g. בני מרי (Num 17:25) // בית מרי (Ezek 2:6, 3:9,26,27; 12:2,3; 44:6).” He further gives the examples where “they interchange in parallel expressions . . . in: 2 Kgs 19:12 בני עדן = LXX[;] Amos 1:5 בית עדן.”⁴⁴

In his 1975 article “The Textual Study of the Bible: A New Outlook,” it is evident that Talmon’s ideas had become refined. Rather than talking about “synonymous readings” he instead used the broader term “the phenomenon of ‘interchangeability’,” a phenomenon that is “rooted in pragmatic synonymity which often results from the break-up of word-pairs that sometimes are in the nature of *hendiadys*.”⁴⁵ He explained further:

On the creative-literary level, interchangeability expresses itself in the employment of a word-pair in *parallelismus membrorum*, in a fixed (A-B) or an indiscriminate (A-B or B-A) order, where one component in practice can substitute for the other. Most synonymities are in fact of the pragmatic type and are not necessarily rooted in etymology. They reflect the conditioned meanings which result from the actual employment of two words in parallelistic structures in a given literary context.⁴⁶

The title “phenomenon of interchangeability” thus allowed for slightly more flexibility when discussing synonymous readings. In this article, Talmon’s thoughts concerning synonymous

44. Ibid., 181-82.

45. Shemaryahu Talmon, “The Textual Study of the Bible: A New Outlook,” in *Text and Canon of the Hebrew Bible: Collected Studies* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 29. Originally published in Frank Moore Cross Jr. and Shemaryahu Talmon, eds., *Qumran and the History of the Bible Text* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 321-400.

46. Ibid., 29.

parallels (or the phenomenon of interchangeability) also become clearer. It would appear that he understood that the many examples of synonymous parallels were evidence that the exchange of words for their synonyms was a “literary device.”⁴⁷

While Talmon’s specific definition of “interchangeability” will not quite suit the evidence below (many of my examples of “synonyms” do not occur in word-pairs), his phraseology and basic concept is what lies at the heart of this section. The ancient scribes were able to manipulate and to exchange one set of locutions with locutions that were in some way synonymous. My observations will deviate from Talmon’s study in several ways: first, the evidence I present is a melding of the evidence found by Talmon and the concept of the reuse of antecedent material in the composition of new texts. Also, many of my observations will run contrary to Talmon’s four criteria, the most obvious being that I will demonstrate that the synonymous replacement often took place for literary, aesthetic, or ideological purposes. Talmon’s work serves as an excellent base for further observations on the use of synonyms in the HB.⁴⁸

3.5.2 Scribal Editing: Fishbane

Another scholar who has addressed the replacement of locutions for their synonyms is Michael Fishbane. Fishbane has noted the exchange of synonymous words within parallel readings, a phenomenon that he labeled “lexical revisions.” This was relegated to the domain

47. Ibid., 30.

48. Stead noted the importance of taking synonyms into account when searching for reused texts. He wrote: “a method based on a strict word-search methodology is too narrow an approach for assessing intertextuality . . . not least because it is unable to detect where synonyms or cognates have been used, or where multiple texts have been interwoven.” As my examination below will show, there is definitely validity to Stead’s postulates. On the other hand, at least with my examples below, certainty concerning whether reuse of a text has occurred is increased when there is at least some lexical overlap. Thus, each example will show lexical identicalities between texts as well as their use of synonyms as a literary device. Michael R. Stead, *Intertextuality of Zechariah 1-8* (New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 37.

of editors.⁴⁹ He defined “lexical revisions” as different words and phrases which were replaced in a parallel text with words of similar semantic value for the purpose of updating, simplifying and unifying newer texts. Fishbane’s understanding of these word changes is thus contrary to Talmon’s points (c) and (d) in his definition of synonymous readings. Fishbane based his concept of lexical revisions on analogy with “the scribal copyists of early Ben Sira manuscripts [who] annotated old terms found in their master copy . . . [and] put the updated variants in the margin.”⁵⁰ He admitted “that designating the . . . changes as scribal comments is a loose characterization,” acknowledging that the lexical changes might be a result of the general nature of the updating of a parallel text—the work of a copyist.⁵¹ But, he concludes that “[t]he weight in favour of the interpretation that the foregoing substitutions are independent scribal ‘events’ appears to lie solely in the fact that such rewordings are not systematic, but random and isolated occurrences—much as one would expect from scribal, as against authorial, changes.”⁵² Fishbane understood the exchange of synonyms through the lens of exegesis and text updating. My observations on synonymous exchanges in this study support his assertion that changes were often made for a purpose, not just because two words were so closely connected that the mention of the first immediately evoked the second.

Both Talmon and Fishbane note the phenomenon of nearly identical locutions, containing a synonymous rather than identical portion (a word or a phrase). Talmon understood the phenomenon through the lens of a copyist (copyists with stylistic license), and Fishbane through the lens of an updating editor. Both are demonstrably correct. Using Malachi as a test-case, I will demonstrate that the “phenomenon of interchangeability” with

49. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 56-57.

50. *Ibid.*, 56.

51. *Ibid.*, 57.

52. Here, Fishbane is using “scribal” in the sense of redactors. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 57.

synonymous (or partially synonymous) lemmata was *also* part of a compositional technique of ancient scribes as *authors*. If one's definition of "scribe" includes all three activities (as argued in my introduction), it is not difficult to imagine the same phenomenon would be found in each action. The composer(s) of Malachi creatively exploited the concept of synonymy of various words and phrases for diverse literary reasons, some of which I will explore below.

Nine examples will be presented in descending order, beginning with examples of the use of synonymy within the book of Malachi and ending with the most complex examples in which the reuse of older texts is facilitated by means of synonyms. Where a category is irrelevant, it will be omitted from the evaluation.

3.5.3 Definition of Synonym

There are three different types of "synonymity" employed in the interchange of locutions in Malachi: semantic synonymity, referential synonymity, and "same-type" synonymity.

1) "Semantic" synonymity is defined in modern linguistics as:

A term used in SEMANTICS to refer to a major type of SENSE⁵³ relation between LEXICAL ITEMS: lexical items which have the same MEANINGS are synonyms. For two items to be synonyms, it does not mean that they should be identical in meaning, i.e. interchangeable in all CONTEXTS, and with identical CONNOTATIONS - this unlikely possibility is sometimes referred to as total

53. Sense: "In SEMANTICS, this term is usually contrasted with REFERENCE, as part of an explication of the notion of MEANING. Reference, or DENOTATION, is seen as EXTRALINGUISTIC - the entities, states of affairs, etc. in the external world which a linguistic EXPRESSION stands for. Sense, on the other hand, refers to the SYSTEM of linguistic relationships (sense relations or semantic relations) which a LEXICAL ITEM contracts with other lexical items - the PARADIGMATIC relationships of SYNONYMY, ANTONYMY, etc., and the SYNTAGMATIC relationships of COLLOCATION." David Crystal, "Sense," *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2008), 432.

synonymy. Synonymy can be said to occur if items are close enough in their meaning to allow a choice to be made between them in some contexts, without there being any difference for the meaning of the sentence as a whole. Linguistic studies of synonymy have emphasized the importance of context in deciding whether a set of lexical items is synonymous.⁵⁴

A good example of this type of the synonymy are the words “murder” versus “assassinate.” One word could be substituted for the other in some contexts with no change in meaning: John F. Kennedy was murdered in 1963. John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. But in other contexts the two words are not interchangeable: I can “murder my husband” but I can not “assassinate my husband” unless the killing was motivated by a religious or political ideology and my husband was an important figure. Thus the semantic range of “murder” and “assassinate” overlap, but they are not in all contexts interchangeable.

2) “Referential” synonymy is when two lexemes are interchangeable, not because they contain overlap in their semantic ranges, but because they have the same referent. Thus: “The current President of the United States” and “Barack Obama” are synonymous, not because the lemmata have similar semantic ranges, but because they both refer to the same person—the highest officeholder in the US government at a given point of time. This kind of synonymy is discernible only through contextual knowledge. If I lived in a place with no access to any type of media, I would not know from the lemmata alone that “The current President of the United States” and “Barack Obama” are synonymous.⁵⁵ Therefore this type of synonymy relies heavily on syntactical construction and/or common knowledge. At times it is difficult

54. David Crystal, “Synonymy” in *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2008), 470.

55. Some thoughts from this article helped me make this distinction: B. L. Blose, “Synonymy,” *The Philosophical Quarterly* 15 (1965): 302-16. However, Blose’s concerns are very different from mine.

to distinguish a referential synonym from a semantic one because semantic synonyms also deal with referents.

3) “Same-type” synonymity perhaps should not be called “synonymity” at all, though the concept of interchangeableness is still applicable. “Same-type” synonymity is the interchange of things within the same “category.” One of Talmon’s examples of synonymous readings is a good example of this type:

1 Sam 31.13	1 Chr 10.12
ויקחו את־עצמותיהם ויקברו תחת־האשל ביבשה	ויקברו את־עצמותיהם תחת האלה ביבש

Talmon notes “The terms אשל and אלה designate two sacred trees which in antiquity may not have been distinguished The use of both these trees in the performance of ritual acts caused that they could be interchanged in parallel texts.”⁵⁶ Because these trees both are of the same type, namely, sacred trees, they are interchangeable.

Below, I will be examining the use of synonym as a compositional and exegetical technique. Because of this phenomenon’s less documented nature in HB studies, the argument for semantic wordplay will be more involved than those for phonetic or visual wordplay.

3.5.4 Mal 1.7//Mal 1.12

A. Quotation:

Mal 1.7

ואמרתם במה גאלנוך באמרכם שלחן יהוה נבזה הוא

And you say “How have we defiled you?” When you say “The Table of the Lord, it is despised”

Mal 1.12

ואתם מחללים אותו באמרכם שלחן אדני מגאל הוא

56. Talmon, “Synonymous Readings,” 197.

But you profane it when you say “The Table of the Lord it is defiled.”

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

- 1) בזה/גאל
- 2) גאל/חלל
- 3) שלחן יהוה/שלחן אדני

C. Summary: The synonymous vocabulary (בזה/גאל and שלחן יהוה/שלחן אדני) of Mal 1.7 is inverted in 1.12 to create an artistically enhanced *inclusio*. The only use of the word חלל, synonymous with בזה and גאל, highlights the context of Ezek 36.23 from which the locution was drawn.

D. Argument:

The two verses Mal 1.7 and Mal 1.12 conspicuously mirror each other in both topic and vocabulary. Each address three different objects: the name of God, the table of the Lord, and the food offered upon it. These elements form an *inclusio* surrounding accusations Malachi levels at the priests about their sacrifices.⁵⁷ Despite their similarities, the two verses are not identical. For various reasons, the composer replaced several words he drew from Mal 1.7 with synonyms in Mal 1.12. I will address each case of synonym replacement between these two verses individually below.⁵⁸

57. Verse 13-14 on the other side of the *inclusio* revisits the topic of sacrifices, echoing a few words used within the *inclusio* (חלה, פסח), but then gives a more pragmatic and detailed evaluation of what was said above—almost as a clarification.

58. Glazier-MacDonald noted a high frequency of the use of synonyms in Mal 1.8-10. She wrote: “Adding piquancy to and complementing the progression of ironies, is the multiplication of synonyms. The first group of such words include [נגש] . . . and קרב . . . meaning ‘to bring, to present’ an offering . . . parallel to these two verbs is חל-ינא in 1:9a. . . ‘appease, mollify.’ The use of חנן [in 1:9a] . . . ‘show favor, be gracious to,’ and נשא פנים [in 1:9c] ‘be gracious to, favorable inclined toward,’ makes it abundantly clear that the goal of ‘appeasing, softening’ Yahweh is to induce him to show favor and to secure his good will.

1) גאל and בזה

גאל and בזה function as synonyms in these verses. At first glance, the two words' semantic ranges do not seem to have very much overlap (despise vs. defile). Interestingly, there is closer overlap in meaning when one includes the semantic range of געל (loathe, abhor, defile), a homophone of גאל. It is likely that the composer understood גאל to contain the full range of meaning belonging to געל. The two words גאל and בזה were thus interchangeable. In Mal 1.7, the food is defiled, לחם מגאל, and the table is despised, שלחן יהוה נבזה הוא; in Mal 1.12, the food is despised, וניבו נבזה אכלו, and the table is defiled, שלחן אדני מגאל הוא.

The interchange of גאל and בזה appears to be aesthetically motivated. The alternation of the use of each word creates a pleasing symmetry between the two verses. Additionally, the exchange of the synonym could indicate the totality of the priests' attitude towards God's name, his table and the food offered upon it: they despise them and through their attitude (resulting in their actions) the items are defiled.

2) חלל and גאל

In Mal 1.12, God's name is חלל "profaned." This is the only use of this word in Mal 1.7 and Mal 1.12. As the concept of God's profaned name found in Mal 1.12 is similar to what is found in Mal 1.7, for consistency גאל or בזה would be expected by the reader. The unexpected use of חלל in Mal 1.12 instead of גאל or בזה is easily explainable. It is a result of the reuse of Ezek 36:23a in Mal 1.11-12. Compare:

Moreover, it is precisely the aspect of finding favor or acceptance through the actions described by these verbs ([נגש], קרב, and חלה) that circumscribes the second group of synonyms, cf. רצה . . . and נשא פנים . . . cf. מנחה לא-ארצה מידכם . . . and איז-לי חפץ בכם . . . Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 52-53.

<i>Ezek 36.23a</i> ⁵⁹	<i>Mal 1.11-12</i>
וקדשתי את־שמי הגדול המחלל בגוים	כי־גדול שמי בגוים אמר יהוה צבאות ואתם מחללים אותו

The appearance of חלל where גאל or בזה is expected serves to highlight the reuse of Ezekiel. If the composer did not borrow from Ezekiel, then he most likely would have chosen either גאל or בזה to enhance the aesthetic symmetry of the pericope.⁶⁰ This reuse of Ezekiel adds an interesting dimension to Mal 1.11-12. In Ezek 36.23a, God's name is defiled because of idolatry (cf. Ezek 36.18), but he is going to make his name great among the nations.⁶¹ In Malachi, God's name is great amongst the nations, but his name is still defiled.⁶² This highlights the composer's understanding of the addressed situation in relation to the prophecy found in Ezekiel. God fulfilled what he said he would and made his name great amongst the nations (Ezek), but the people (i.e., the priests) are once again destroying his name from within (Mal).⁶³

3) שלחן אדני and שלחן יהוה

The table of YHWH and the table of the Lord are synonymous through their referentially synonymous *nomen rectum*: יהוה and אדני. That יהוה can also be addressed as

59. Ezekiel 36.23a is the only other place where this concentration of vocabulary occurs in the HB.

60. Because of the unexpected word in Malachi, it is likely Mal 1.11-12 is an allusion to Ezekiel (as opposed to an allusion in Ezekiel to Malachi).

61. Weyde argues that "the antithesis in vv. 11f seems to imply the idea that the profanation of YHWH's name by the priests (v. 12) is comparable with the idolatry of the people in the past." Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 148.

62. Later on in Malachi, this theme is revisited as the priests are again addressed for defiling by means of idolatry (cf. **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**).

63. See below, **section 3.5.6**, and **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16** for a further analysis of Malachi's use of Ezekiel.

אדני is supported by YHWH's self-identification as such in Mal 1.6. The syntax of the phrases באמרכם שלחן יהוה נבזה הוא and באמרכם שלחן אדני מגאל הוא are essentially identical, further demonstrating that both locutions were regarded as synonymous. Additionally, Malachi's ideological message for both phrases is the same: because of the priest's attitude towards this certain table, God is profaned. The composer likely alternated to the name אדני in Mal 1.12 in order to tie in the conclusions of the accusation with the initial accusation in Mal 1.6: "If I am Lord, where is my fear?"

3.5.5 Mal 3.1//Mal 3.23

A. Quotation:

Mal 3.1

הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה דרך לפני

Behold, I am sending my messenger and he will prepare the way before me

Mal 3.23

הנה אנכי שלח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום יהוה

Behold, I am sending to you Elijah the Prophet before the coming day of the Lord

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

מלאכי/אליה הנביא

C. Summary: Embedded in nearly identical contexts, the definite noun מלאכי in Mal 3.1 is replaced by a proper noun אליה הנביא for the purpose of clarification.

D. Argument:

The introductory locutions in both Mal 3.1 and Mal 3.23 are nearly identical in lexical content and syntactical construction with only a few minor deviations. These deviations include: (1) Mal 3.23, unlike Mal 3.1, indicates the indirect object "you" (pl). (2) Mal 3.23 uses the independent pronoun אנכי rather than the suffixed preposition. (3) In place of מלאכי, the composer of Malachi substitutes in את אליה הנביא. Number "(3)" is of primary interest.

In this case, the substitution of one word/phrase for the other has the function of specifying the identity of the messenger. מאלכי, “My messenger,” is אליה הנביא, Elijah the prophet. Casanowicz identifies this as a form of wordplay in which “[t]he meaning in the repetition is qualified, or emphasized.”⁶⁴ This qualification, identifying the messenger with Elijah, was not arbitrary but was supported by an allusion to Elijah (1 Kgs 17.24) earlier in Mal 2.6 (see **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah** and **section 3.5.4** below for a more detailed analysis). This synonym replacement thus also makes clearer an earlier allusion in the book.

3.5.6 Mal 1.3//Ezek 35.7

A. Quotation:

Mal 1.3

ואת־עֵשׂו שְׂנֵאתִי וְאֲשִׁים אֶת־הָרִי שְׂמֵמָה וְאֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ לְתַנּוֹת מְדָבָר

But Esau I hate. I have made his mountains a desolation and his inheritance for the jackals of
the desert

Ezek 35.7

וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־הַר שְׁעִיר לְשֵׂמֵמָה וְשֵׂמֵמָה

And I will make the mountain of S'eir a total desolation

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

הר עשו/הר שעיר

שים/נתן

C. Summary: The composer of Malachi borrows material from Ezek 35.7 for his own composition. In transmitting the material, the composer chooses synonyms in place of several locutions that were originally found in Ezek 35.7. One synonymous change (שים/נתן) is made for no perceivable purpose, and the other (הר עשו/הר שעיר) is made to integrate borrowed material into its new context.

64. Casanowicz, *Paronomasia*, 34.

D. Argument:

Malachi 1.3 shares similar vocabulary and a similar theme with Ezek 35.7.⁶⁵ Both verses contain the words שממה and הַר, and both address “Edom.” The verses are different from each other in their choice of synonymous vocabulary. In Malachi, the synonym עשו “Esau” and the 3ms pronominal suffix affixed to the word הַר is used instead of שַׁעִיר “Seir,” which is found in Ezekiel. Malachi also alternatively uses שִׁים where Ezekiel has נָתַן. Despite these dissimilarities, the two sentences found in Malachi and Ezekiel are nearly semantically identical.

Despite the similarity between these two verses, it is not immediately determinable if Malachi is dependent on Ezek 35.7. A few differences between the Malachi locution and the Ezekiel locution could indicate that the composer of Malachi wrote his locution influenced by other similarly constructed locutions found not only in Ezekiel, but also in Jeremiah and perhaps in Zephaniah. For example, the lexical/syntactical formula שִׁים אֶת + location name + שממה, which is a common formula in Ezekiel, also occurs twice in Jeremiah (see Jer 10.22; 25.12; Ezek 6.14; 15.8; 29.12; 33.28; 35.7 cf. Zeph 2.13).⁶⁶ Malachi uses שִׁים, Jeremiah’s preferential word (Ezekiel uses נָתַן with one exception), and Mal 2.13 mentions “jackals,” a term that is distinctive of Isaiah and Jeremiah (see especially Jer 10.22). But,

65. Weyde has noticed the lexical similarities between these two texts say. He writes: “[T]he affinity between Mal 1:3f and other Edom words, in particular Ezekiel 35, may give grounds for asking whether the text in Malachi alludes to these traditions [punishment against foreign nations traditions].” He further notes (I think correctly) in a footnote: “On the basis of the observed terminological links to Ezekiel 35 it is difficult to agree with J.D. Nogalski . . . who argues that Mal 1:3f alludes especially to Ob 3ff.” Weyde, *Teaching and Prophecy*, 85, 85 n. 68. James Nogalski, *Redactional Processes in the Book of the Twelve* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 218; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 191-94.

66. Talmon suggested that “establishing to destruction” is a common idiom and that “שִׁים and נָתַן can serve alternately in a given idiom.” Talmon, “Textual Study,” 32.

Malachi's construction of the phrase without the *lamed* (לשממה versus שממה) resembles Ezekiel's formulation of the locution. Unfortunately, Ezek 35.7 is the exception to Ezekiel's normal construction of the locution and does not contain the *lamed*. Like Zeph 2.13, Malachi's "designating for destruction" is followed by mention of a "desert," but unlike Ezekiel 35.7, neither of these texts are about Edom. Talmon has argued that שים את or נתן את + location name + שממה was a set idiom, in which synonymous words were able to be exchanged for others.⁶⁷ This is possible, yet, there remains three reasons why I think it is likely Malachi is dependent on Ezekiel in this case. First, the reuse of the word הָר, which occurs in none of the other uses of the phrase. Second, both texts address Edom, who is not addressed in any of the other uses of the "idiom." Third, Malachi reuses Ezek 36 (a chapter that is part of the same argument begun in chapter 35) elsewhere.⁶⁸ Like Mal 1.2-6, Ezek 35-36 creates a contrast between Edom and Israel. In fact, the following verse, Mal 1.4, reuses Ezek 36.10:

Ezek 36.10	Mal 1.4
<p style="text-align: center;">וּנְשָׁבוּ הָעָרִים וְהַחֲרֻבוֹת תִּבְנֶינָה</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">וּנְשׁוּב וּנְבִנָה חֲרֻבוֹת</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">the towns will be <u>inhabited</u>⁶⁹ and the <u>wastes</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>we will return and rebuild the wastes</u></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">will be <u>rebuilt</u></p>	

While in Ezek 36.10 Israel rebuilds from the ruin brought by Edom, in Malachi, Edom will try to rebuild, but will be unable to. This comparison between the fates of Israel/Judah and Edom is similarly seen in Mal 2.16 (see **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**). Still, even though Mal 1.3 is dependent on Ezek 35.7, the similarities of Mal 1.3 with other similar locutions found in Jeremiah and Zephaniah suggest that the composer was influenced by similar announcements

67. Ibid.

68. See Mal 1.4 (compare Ezek 36.16) and Mal 1.11 (compare Ezek 36.23).

69. While not the same word, נִשְׁבוּ and נִשׁוּב are very similar in appearance.

of destruction in these other texts. This influence led to a confluence of material, resulting in a hodgepodge of materials from each of these texts.

Accordingly, although it is evident that the composer was primarily dependent on Ezek 35.7 for constructing this verse, his use of synonyms and additional material suggests he was trying to hide this dependence. Thus the replacement of שים with נתן changes Malachi's locution from one that exhibits Ezekiel's preferences with Jeremiah's. In addition, the change of the synonymous referent from the "Mountains of Seir" in Ezekiel to "his [Esau's] Mountain" in Malachi integrates and hides the reused text into its new context, since Esau has already been mentioned in Mal 1.3.

The reuse of materials from Ezek 35-36 indicates the composer's understanding of Edom's destruction: Edom fell because of its treatment of Israel (see **section 3.3.2 to 3.3.3** above). Ultimately, Edom's fate will be the opposite of Israel's fate.

3.5.7 Mal 3.6//Num 25.11

A. Quotation:

Mal 3.6

ואתם בני־יעקב לא כליתם

. . . and you, O Sons of Jacob, are not annihilated

Num 25.11

ולא־כליתי את־בני־ישראל בקנאתי

. . . and I did not annihilate the sons of Israel in my jealousy

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

בני־יעקב/בני־ישראל

C. Summary: A common way of referring to Israel, בני־ישראל, is replaced by a synonym that highlights a theme of Malachi.

D. Argument:

In Mal 3.6, God announces that he does not change and therefore “you, oh sons of Jacob, are not annihilated.” The phrase from Mal 3.6 לא בלה “not annihilated” occurs ten times in the HB.⁷⁰ Only in Mal 3.6 and Num 25.11 is the agent of the annihilation Adonai, and the object of annihilation the בני־ישראל/בני־יעקב. Except for the interchange of “Jacob” for “Israel” the two locutions are identical. Because Num 25.11-13 was already alluded to in Mal 2.4-5 (See **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**) it is not surprising to see this text again.

The phrase “sons of Jacob” is relatively uncommon, occurring fifteen times in the HB. It is distinctive of Genesis, in which the phrase occurs nine times (seven of which occur in chapters 34-35). This is especially relevant when it is compared to the phrase “sons of Israel” which occurs six hundred and forty times in the HB. The phrase “Sons of Jacob” in Genesis, 1 Kings and 2 Kings is used to refer to the twelve sons of Jacob, or the tribes that derived from the twelve. In Psalms 77, 105 and 1 Chronicles it appears the phrase is used like it is in Malachi for national identity. In Malachi, the phrase “Sons of Jacob” draws attention to a theme in Malachi begun in Mal 1.2-3, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” It is evident that in those verses the dichotomy of brothers is used to represent two different nations or kinds of nations (chosen versus not chosen). As I argued in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, Esau/Edom is alluded to in Mal 2.10-16 to explain the kind of apostasy Israel is involved in, namely, idolatry through mixing with foreigners. God threatens Israel with the punishment given to Edom in Obadiah 10 (alluded to in Mal 2.16): being cut off forever (see **Phonetic Wordplay section 3.3.2 to 3.3.3** above). In Mal 3.6, by alluding again to the Phinehas story (Num 25), the reader is again reminded of Israel’s apostasy through idolatry and intermarriage, and how God spared them on account of Phinehas. The synonym choice serves to create a contrast with what God did to Edom and emphasizes Jacob as the representative of the people of God.

70. Exod 5.14; Lev 19.9; 23.22; Num 25.11; 1 Kgs 17.14, 16; Mal 3.6; Lam 3.22; 1 Chr 27.24; 2 Chr 8.8.

Thus, the use of בני־יעקב instead of בני־ישראל serves a literary and theological purpose by holding the book together as a coherent whole and by emphasizing one of Malachi's themes (Jacob vs. Esau).

3.5.8 Mal 2.5//Isa 8.12

A. Quotation:

Mal 2.5

ואתנם־לו מורא ויראני ומפני שמי נחת הוא

. . . and I gave them to him. Fear and he feared me and he was dismayed before my name⁷¹

Isa 8.12

לא־האמרון קשר לכל אשר־יאמר העם הזה קשר ואת־מוראן לא־תִיראן ולא תִעריצו

Do not call conspiracy everything that these people call conspiracy. Do not fear what they

fear, do not tremble

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

חתת/ערץ

C. Summary: The composer of Malachi reused a portion of Isa 8.12. In transmitting the words, the composer chose the less common phrase ערץ + ירא rather than using the more common synonymous phrase חתת + ירא. Because of a multitude of factors, it is indeterminable what motivated the choice.

D. Argument:

Malachi 2.5 in its present form is not cohesive. The first half of the verse says “My covenant was with him, namely the life and the peace, and I gave them to him fear and he feared me.” This awkward syntax is a result of the composer's imperfect integration of an excerpt taken from Isa 8.12. Isaiah 8.12 shares with Mal 2.5 the unique juxtaposition of the

71. I left this translation purposefully awkward to highlight the nature of the MT. It is an important part of my discussion below.

noun מורא “fear” followed by the verb ירא “fear.” The locutions in both Mal 2.5 and Isa 8.12 are in the same order and are both followed by a third word that has a similar semantic range: חתת “be shattered, dismayed” in Mal 2.5 and ערץ “cause to tremble, tremble (in terror, or awe)” in Isa 8.12. The two passages are different in that Isa 8.12 is a negative injunction: “Do not fear, do not be dismayed.” In Mal 2.5, the phrase is part of the positive characteristics of the Ideal Levite. He fears and trembles before the name of the Lord. Interestingly, these positive characteristics of the Ideal Levite closely match the message of Isa 8.13. There the prophet is instructed: “But the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.” In reusing Isa 8.12, the composer of Malachi made the negative statement in Isa 8.12 a positive one and substituted the word חתת for its synonym ערץ.⁷²

This substitution of the synonym occurred under four possible scenarios:

- 1) An impulsive correction from the influence of the common pairing of the words ירא and חתת (see Deut 1:21; 31:8; Josh 8:1; 10:25; 1 Sam 17:11; Isa 51:7; Jer 23:4; 30:10; 46:27; Ezek 2:6; 3:9; Mal 2:5; Job 6:21; 1 Chr 22:13; 28:20; 2 Chr 20:15, 17; 32:7).
- 2) An intentional conflation of the message of Isa 8.12 with the message of the ירא-חתת pairing that is almost always used in reference to the people of God’s proper attitude towards their enemies (foreign nations, religious taunters, etc.).
- 3) An intentional conflation of the message of Isa 8.12 with an unidentifiable text which contains the ירא-חתת pairing.

72. That Malachi is indeed drawing from Isa 8 is further supported by the chapter’s reuse a few verses later in Malachi. Malachi 2.8 says “‘but you have turned from the way, you have caused many to stumble (הכשלתם רבים) with the *torah*, you have corrupted the covenant of the Levite,’ says the Lord of Hosts.” Isaiah 8.15 says “many shall stumble over them (וכשלו במ רבים).” The combination of “many stumbling” is found only in Isa 8.15, Mal 2.8 and Dan 11.14, 41. Two uncommon locutions drawn from the same text increase the likelihood that Malachi drew from Isa 8 for his own composition.

4) An intentional or unintentional slip to vocabulary found in Isa 8.9, which also contains the word חתת.

Unfortunately, it is not determinable whether the change to ערץ from חתת was intentional or instinctual. Because the ירא-חתת pairing is relatively common, it is impossible to point to a specific case where the composer might have conflated two specific texts. Thus, in this case, the use of synonym at best can be argued to be a result of *influence*.⁷³ The change seems to have little or no function.

3.5.9 Mal 2.7//Prov 5.1-2

A. Quotation:

Mal 2.7

כִּי־שִׁפְתַי כֹּהֵן יִשְׁמְרוּ־דַעַת וְתוֹרָה יִבְקֶשׁוּ מִפִּיהוּ כִּי מִלֶּאֶךְ יִהְיֶה־צְבָאוֹת הוּא

For the lips of the priest guard knowledge, and they seek the *torah* from his lips—for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

Prov 5.1-2

בְּנֵי לַחֲכָמַי הַקְשִׁיבָה לְתִבּוֹנֹתַי הַט־אֲזַנֶּךָ לְשֹׁמֵר מִזְמוֹת וְדַעַת שִׁפְתֶיךָ יִנְצֹרוּ

My son, be attentive to my wisdom and to my understanding; incline your ear in order to guard discretion and your lips will guard knowledge.

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

שמר/נצר

C. **Summary:** נצר is substituted for its synonym שמר based on the composer's word preference.

73. This case meets all four of Talmon's criteria for a synonymous reading. See above.

D. Argument:

Malachi 2.4-9 addresses the Ideal Levite. The pericope contains a concentration of wisdom terms and themes.⁷⁴ It thus is unsurprising to find parallels in this pericope with the book of Proverbs. Malachi 2.7 says: “For the lips of a priest guard knowledge.” Proverbs 5.2 is the only other place in the HB where lips guard knowledge. These two verses share the identical lexemes שפה and דעת (found in conjunction elsewhere in Job 33.3; Prov 14.7; 15.7; 20.15), and both contain synonymous words relating to “guarding or keeping”: שמר in Mal 2.7 and נצר in Prov 5.2.⁷⁵

Initially, it is difficult to determine if Prov 5 is dependent on Mal 2 or Mal 2 on Prov 5. Proverbs 5.1-2 appears to be a syntactically undecided portion, the grammatical structure allowing for multiple readings.⁷⁶ This could suggest that the Proverbs reading is problematic as a result of borrowing. But, the phenomenon of multiple possible readings is well attested in the book of Proverbs, and arguably a stylistic device.⁷⁷ Additionally, language of “guarding

74. E.g. שמר את־דרכי, סרתם מן־הדרך, אמת היתה בפיהו, עולה לא־נמצא בשפתיו, מורא

75. “Lips (שמר) guard” occurs elsewhere only in Prov 14.3.

76. Compare Michael Carasik, “Syntactic Double Translation in the Targumim,” in *Aramaic in Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from the 2004 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar at Duke University* (ed. E. M. Meyers and P. V. M. Flesher; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 217-34.

77. As Fox argues: “The parallel between the infinitive and the finite verb (jussive) seems awkward and is necessarily smoothed over in translation. Various emendations have been proposed, all of them rather distant from the MT. But emendation is unnecessary. Parallelism between infinitives and verbs in the imperfect does appear in similar contexts; for example, in 2:2, 8:21; and 2:8 The contrast is purely formal, as both infinitives and imperfects may head purpose clauses. Such skewed parallelism may be a stylistic fillip to avoid monotony.” Fox, *Proverbs 1-9*, 191.

lips” and “knowledge on lips” is distinctive of Proverbs.⁷⁸ Thematically, it makes more sense that the composer would endow the Ideal Levite with qualities of wisdom from Proverbs, rather than Proverbs, which is an admonition to a generic son, to borrow from Malachi, which is a description of a distinct personage (See **Chapter 4: Phinehas, He is Elijah**). The likelihood that Prov 5.2 is used in Mal 2.7 is further increased by the fact that Prov 5 is used again later on in Mal 2 (discussed in detail in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**).

The words שמר and נצר are often found paired together.⁷⁹ In fact, Prov 5.2 itself contains both words in parallel. It is very possible that the synonym exchange was the result of the composer’s unconscious slip from one word to its frequent companion. But, based on the stylistics of Malachi, it is arguable that the change was intentional.

Throughout the book of Malachi there are patterns of repetition. In some cases, certain phrases are repeated once or twice throughout the book. At other times, a few key-words are repeated multiple times within a small text-segment. This draws the text together into a self-contained unit and highlights the main topic of the pericope.⁸⁰ For example, Mal 2.10-16 repeats the word בגד five times, חלל two times, אחד four times, ברית two times, and רוח three times. All these repetitions hold Mal 2.10-16 together as a distinct unit. Similarly, it seems נצר was replaced by שמר in light of a similar compositional technique. Malachi 2.6-9 is also held together as a unit through repetition. The pericope repeats תורה five times, פה three times, שפה twice, דרך twice and with the synonym choice, שמר occurs twice. Additionally, שמר occurs four other times in the book of Malachi as a whole, while נצר is never used. This suggests שמר is the preferred word of the composer. The composer’s choice

78. Compare: שפה, שמר: Deut 23.24; Mal 2.7; Ps 17.4; Prov 13.3; 14.3; 22.18; דעת, שפה: Job 33.3; Prov 14.7; 15.7; 20.15.

79. See for example: Deut 33.9; Ps 12.8; 105.45; 119.34; 140.5; Prov 2.8, 11; 4.6; 5.2; 13.3; 16.17; 27.18.

80. See Alter, *The Art of Biblical*, 88-113.

to exchange נצר for שמר integrated the borrowed locution into its new context and created an aesthetically uniform whole for his text.

3.5.10 Mal 2.15b, 16b//Deut 4.15

A. Quotation:

Mal 2.15b, 16b

ונשמרתם ברוחכם ובאשת נעוריך אל-יבגד

Therefore guard yourselves on penalty of your spirit lest it [your spirit] act treacherously
against the wife of your youth.

ונשמרתם ברוחכם ולא תבגדו

Jer 17.21

כה אמר יהוה השמרו בנפשותיכם

See also: Deut 4:9, 15; Josh 23.11

Thus says the Lord: guard yourselves on penalty of your life . . .

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

רוח/נפש

C. Summary: The composer chooses to replace the word נפש from an idiom with רוח, a synonym, in order to make a theological point.

D. Argument:

Deut 4.9, Deut 4.15, Josh 23.11 and Jer 17.21 each present the idiomatic injunction to “[carefully] guard yourselves” combining שמר with נפש and a preposition (either ל or ב). The composer replicates this phrase in 2.15 and 2.16, but replaces נפש with רוח. The two words are semantically similar and are often used interchangeably. The composer of Malachi capitalized on the semantic similarities between the two words to transform the idiom to better fit his own argument.

In Mal 2.15a, ולא־אחד עשה ושאר רוח לו, a theological argument is made with the word רוח as a keyword (See **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**). Later in the verse, by switching out נפש from the original idiom with רוח, the verse ends with an ironic jab to those being reprimanded, making them participants in the theological argument through their own רוח. The replacement of the synonym creates a tight connection between the theological argument and the warning, binding the two together. This is an excellent example of a theologically and literarily motivated use of a synonym.

3.5.11 Mal 2.6//1 Kgs 17.24//Ex 13.9

A. Lemmata:

Mal 2.6

תורת אמת היתה בפיהו

The *torah* of truth was in his mouth

1 Kgs 17.24

ודבר־יהוה בפִּיךָ אמת

and the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.

Ex 13.9

למען תהיה תורת יהוה בפִּיךָ

so that the *torah* of the Lord will be in your mouth

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

דבר־יהוה/תורת יהוה

C. Summary: 1 Kgs 17.24 and Ex 13.9 are conflated on the merit of both containing identical and synonymous elements (דבר־יהוה and תורת יהוה). Because of the shared identical and synonymous material, the composer understood 1 Kgs 17.24 to interpret Ex 13.9 and included elements of both in his own composition.

D. Argument:

Malachi 2.6 contains a conflation of elements from two verses in the HB: 1 Kgs 17.24 and Ex 13.9. Exodus 13.9 is part of a list of instructions for the passover. The list concludes with the charge to eat unleavened bread. On the day of eating unleavened bread, the child is to be told the significance of the bread, i.e. that God brought them out of Egypt. In this context, Ex 13.9 seems out of place saying: “And there will be a sign to you upon your hand and a memorial between your eyes in order that the *torah* of the Lord will be in your mouth.” What is to be a sign on the hand and a memorial on the forehead? The same phrase is repeated later in Ex 13.16 in a discussion about the dedication of the firstborn. Again, the child is to be instructed “and there will be a sign upon your hand and upon your forehead.” Both these verses in Ex 13 presuppose Deut 6.⁸¹ In Deut 6, God instructs that “these words I am commanding you today” are to be taught to the children (v. 7) and bound to the hand and forehead (v. 8) so that they do not forget the Lord who brought them out of Egypt (v. 12). Thus, in Exodus, they are learning to commemorate God’s liberation of his people from Egypt. As instructed in Deut 6, the people teach their children in Ex 13, remembering the God who brought them out of Egypt. As commanded in Deut 6, there will be a sign on their hands and a memorial on their foreheads.⁸² The presupposition of Deut 6 helps explain the lack of antecedent for both uses of the phrase “sign upon your hand and forehead” in Ex 13.

81. This is also argued by Shimon Gesundeit, *Three Times a Year: Studies on Festival Legislation in the Pentateuch* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 82; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 192-93.

82. This is further supported by a similar phenomenon found in Mal 2.5, where the composer conflated Num 25.12 and Prov 3.2. Proverbs 3.1-3 is a text which also brings to mind Deut 6 saying: “My son, my *torah* do not forget and my commandments keep in your heart. For they will lengthen your days and the years of your life and they will add peace to you. Do not let lovingkindness and truth forsake you: bind them upon your forehead and engrave them upon the tablet of your heart.” Binding *torah* and commandments to one’s forehead and engraving them again are the key concepts that bring to mind Deut 6 and 11. See **Appendix A**.

Exodus 13.9 then motivated the composer of Malachi to link to 1 Kgs 17.24. Exodus 13.9 contains the string of words: תורה יהוה בפֿיך “The *torah* of the Lord in your mouth.” 1 Kings 17.24 has a nearly identical string of words, except instead of “*torah* of the Lord in your mouth” it says דבר־יהוה בפֿיך “the word of the Lord in your mouth.” Based on the two locutions perceived similarity, the composer conflated these two verses in Mal 2.6, which is part of the description of the Ideal Levite (Mal 2.5-7). The conflation of these two verses account for every element in the clause in Mal 2.6.

The most logical interpretative steps taken by the composer to create this conflation of two verses are thus as follows: (1) Because of the composer’s interest in Deut 6 previously in Mal 2 (see **Appendix A**), he was lead to Ex 13.9. Both of these passages address the topics of foreheads and hands and thus were interpreted to belong together. (2) Through Ex 13.9, the composer of Malachi determined the identity of the keeper of the instructions found in Deut 6. The composer deduced that this person was Elijah by the parallel wording found in 1 Kgs 17.24: “the word of the Lord in his mouth.” Since Elijah had the word/*torah* of the Lord in his mouth as described in Ex 13.9, he must then also be the one who had the sign between his eyes and on his hands as described in Ex 13.9 and Deut 6. This meant that Elijah kept the entirety of the instructions found in Deut 6. (3) The composer conflated the material from Ex 13.9 and 1 Kgs 17.24 in his own composition describing the Ideal Levite. In conflating, the composer choose to retain תורה + היה from Ex 13.9 and בפֿיך אמת from 1 Kgs 17.24. In Mal 2.6, it is the fact that תורה and דבר are synonyms that provided the interpretive catalyst for the composer who then combined elements from both verses into one locution.

Excursus: “Torah of Truth”

The similar phrases תורות אמת and תורתך אמת occur in Neh 9.13 and Ps 119.142. Is Malachi dependent on one of these texts for his own “the *torah* of truth was in his mouth,” are the other texts dependent on him, or is there no relationship between these verses? To

answer these questions, I first will examine Neh 9.13 and Ps 119.142 and then I will relate this examination to Mal 2.6.

Upon comparison of Neh 9.13 with Ps 119, I discovered a preponderance of similar locutions. Nehemiah 9.13 and Ps 119 contain not only the juxtaposition of *אמת* with *תורה*, but also *משפט* with *ישר* (Ps 119.137), *חק* with *טוב* (Ps 119: 68), and *מצוה* with *טוב* (Ps 119:66)—all designations unique (besides Malachi’s *torah* of truth) inside the HB. This could very likely suggest a dependence in one direction or another between these two passages. The language appears to be particularly distinctive and well-imbedded in Ps 119. Compare, for example, all the different items which are truth in this psalm: Word of truth (v. 43), your *torah* is truth (v. 142), you commandments are truth (v. 151), your word is truth (v. 160). Reynolds notes that in Ps 119 attributes ascribed to the Torah perform a specific rhetorical function:

Explicit statements in Ps 119 declare that Torah is true, faithful, righteous, miraculous, good, upright, and without impurities. Such statements apply attributes of God to the Torah. It may seem self-evident that Torah would have these characteristics, since the source of Torah is God. However, the author uses the same vocabulary of both God and Torah in order to make the connection explicit.⁸³

Because this use of language is distinctive to Ps 119, one might suspect that Neh 9.13 is dependent on Ps 119. Considering the late date ascribed to Ps 119 (often placed in the Hellenistic period), this would be unlikely, unless one accepts that Neh 9.6-37, as Joseph Blenkinsopp argues, “was added subsequently” to the Ezra-Nehemiah corpus. He argues that “[a]llusion to political servitude beginning with the Assyrians suggests a date in the Persian period at the earliest . . . but a date between Alexander and the Maccabees would not be ruled

83. Kent Aaron Reynolds, *Torah as Teacher: The Exemplary Torah Student in Psalm 119* (Vetus Testamentum Supplements 137. Leiden: Brill, 2010), 126.

out.” He also notes that Neh 9.6-37 “is, in a sense, a pastiche of biblical phrases” which would further corroborate the likelihood that Neh 9.13 is dependent on Ps 119.⁸⁴

This brings us back to the question of whether there is any relationship between Mal 2.6 and these other two passages. The compositional rationale behind both Neh 9.13 and Ps 119.142 can be accounted for without recourse to Malachi, and the compositional rationale of Malachi can be accounted for without recourse to the other texts. Nehemiah 9 is dependent on Ps 119; Ps 119 ascribes attributes of God to the Torah; Malachi identifies Elijah as the one with the *torah* of God in his mouth. It seems most probable that Malachi used the phrase “*torah* of truth” independently of Neh 9 and Ps 119 and that both these passages were independent of Malachi.⁸⁵

3.5.12 Mal 1.9//Lam 4.16//Gen 32.31

A. Quotation:

Mal 1.9

ועתה חלֹנֵא פני־אל ויחַנְנוּ מִיַּדְכֶם הִתְהַוּהוּ זֹאת הִישָׂא מִכֶּם פְּנִים אִמְרֵי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

And now, entreat the face of God that he might be gracious to us. This is from your hand.

Will he lift your faces? says the Lord of Hosts

Lam 4.16

פְּנֵי יְהוָה חֲלָקָם לֹא יוֹסִיף לְהַבִּיטֵם פְּנֵי כַהֲנָיִם לֹא נִשְׂאוּ זְקָנִים לֹא חֲנָנוּ

84. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary* (The Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1988), 301-303. Williamson notes it is probable “that the prayer is of independent origin. We have seen that it has uncharacteristically little to do with its immediate context, but it was of considerable importance for the final editor’s purpose. It is therefore likely that he himself introduced it from his background knowledge of contemporary liturgy.” H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (Word Biblical Commentary 16; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 309.

85. A more in-depth study would need to be conducted before this argument could be conclusive. This excursus is a tentative argument for why Malachi is not dependent on Nehemiah or Ps 119 for this locution.

The face of the Lord scattered them. He will not look on them again: the faces of the priests

did not lift and the elders did not show favor

Gen 32.31

ויקרא יעקב שם המקום פניאל

So Jacob called the name of the place “Peniel”

B. Pertinent Lemmata:

פני־אל/פני יהוה

C. Summary: In composing Mal 1.9, the composer borrowed a locution from Lam 4.16.

When he was reusing the text, he substituted פני־אל for Lam 4.16’s פני יהוה. The phrase פני־אל is an allusive pun to the place name Peniel in Gen 32.31 (see **section 3.3.3** above). Thus, through the replacement of a word with its synonym the composer evoked an additional context (Gen 32) in addition to Lam 4.16.

D. Argument:

Malachi 1.9 evidences complex compositional methods, containing several reused elements layered through the conflation of various verses. An examination of the reused texts in this verse indicates how the various verses were layered. In these layers there was a primary clause that was reused for Mal 1.9. This primary clause includes the rare combination of locutions found in Mal 1.9 חנן + נשא פנה. This combination is otherwise found only in Lam 4.16 and Deut 28.50.⁸⁶ Between these two verses, it is evident that Malachi is dependent on Lamentations and not Deuteronomy for three reasons: First, the message of Mal 1.9 and Lam 4.16 both address priests. Lamentations 4.13 says “From the sins of her prophets, the iniquities of her *priests*, the ones who poured out in her midst the blood of the righteous.” Lamentations 4.16 again mentions the priests as being the people

86. Between these three verses, there appears to be a genetic thread originating in Deut 28.50, weaving through Lam 4.16, and ending in Mal 1.9.

whose faces “he will not lift.” Second, Mal 1.9 first addresses his audience as “you” 2mp. Halfway through the verse, the person changes to “us” 1cp, then immediately picks up the 2mp again. The inadvertent switch of persons, which “has puzzled scholars, who have offered different interpretations,” is a result of the composer of Malachi imprecisely integrating his borrowed locutions.⁸⁷ In Lam 4.16 the elders have “shown no favor” חננו. The graphemes חננו are reused in Malachi with an added prefix to indicate modality: ויחננו. The imperfect integration of borrowed materials serves to confirm the direction of dependence to be Malachi on Lamentations. Third, Mal 1.9 is similar to Lam 4.16 because of their mutual use of synonymous phrases: פני־אל in Malachi and פני יהוה in Lamentations. The composer borrowed פני יהוה from Lam 4.16, but then chose to use יהוה for its referential synonym אל. This was not done haphazardly, but for the purpose of further expanding the message of Malachi.

The small locution פני־אל, in which the noun פנה is in construct with אל (God) occurs nowhere else in the HB. But, if the two words are combined they result in פניאל, the name of the place that Jacob wrestled with a man/God in Gen 32.24-32. The locution פני יהוה in Lamentations gave the composer of Malachi the opportunity to insert an allusive pun to the story of Jacob wrestling God, resulting in an allusion embedded in a reused text (See Phonetic Wordplay above). Even though פני־אל is a small locution, it is plausible that it is intentionally reused as an allusion for two reasons: it is not a common locution and puns are intended to be recognized.⁸⁸

87. Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 136.

88. Gen 31-33 narrates Jacob’s leave taking from Laban, return to Canaan and his reunion with Esau after working for Laban. Mixed into the narrative is a meeting with “Messengers of the Lord” and a wrestling match with a man who turns out to be the Lord (or at least Jacob identifies him with “the face of God”). Considering Jacob and Esau are mentioned in the introduction to the book, perhaps it is not surprising that a

The replacement of פני־יהוה with פני־אל serves an additional literary purpose. By using the phrase פני־אל, the composer of Malachi imbedded an allusion through pun *within* the reused text of Lam 4.16. The phrase פני־אל is reminiscent of פניאל, the place where Jacob wrestled “a man” who appears to be identified also with God. After wrestling Jacob, “the man” gives Jacob the new name “Israel,” who in turn names the place of wrestling “Peniel”: “For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.” This allusion through pun intensifies the injunction of Mal 1.9 “Now, entreat the face of God, [*remember Peniel!*], that he might be gracious to us” (see **section 3.3.3** above for further evaluation).

3.5.13 Historical Examples of the Use of Synonym

It is not surprising that the composer of Malachi manipulated synonyms for various reasons. The use of synonyms in copying, editing and composing was a practice that can be demonstrated historically much before and much after the composition of the book of Malachi. Jeffrey H. Tigay demonstrated the use of synonyms in the copying of the Gilgamesh Epic, and Alexander Samely’s work showed the exploitation of synonyms in rabbinic exegesis. Though not directly analogous, the following two examples will further support the probability of my arguments above.

3.5.13.1 Gilgamesh: Tigay

In his book *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic*, Tigay made observations on the differences between the Gilgamesh Epic in the Old Babylonian version (2000-1600 BCE) and the late Standard Babylonian version (first millennium BCE). Tigay claimed that “despite extensive revision of the wording, we shall see that enough similarities remain to show that the late version is textually related to the Old Babylonian version . . . the wording of the late

narrative involving both brothers would be in the composition of the book.

Six different verses from Gen 32-33 are reused in Malachi: See **Appendix B**.

version is based on that of the Old Babylonian version.”⁸⁹ Tigay listed several different types of changes in the late text:

- 1) Different Grammatical and Lexical Forms of the Same Word
- 2) *Synonyms or Words Functioning Similarly*
- 3) Added Words or Phrases
- 4) Characteristic and Non-characteristic variants
- 5) Expansion by Parallelism
- 6) Telescoping of Parallel Lines
- 7) Reformulation with Negligible Change in Meaning
- 8) Reformulation with New Idea Added
- 9) Reformulation with Meaning Changed Completely⁹⁰

Tigay then offers four different possible reasons for language change between the Old and the Late versions:

1) Language updating: The exchange of outdated terms that have fallen out of use for more modern words. Interestingly, Tigay also notes “[i]t appears that even when the editor(s) modified their sources, they usually relied upon ancient or ‘classical’ vocabulary.”⁹¹ In other words, updating language to modern usage was not a priority.

2) Textual Corruption or Misunderstanding of Obscure Words: Either the text the redactor was copying from was difficult to read, or the word was so obscure that it was unknown and something completely different was inserted.

89. Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2002), 55.

90. *Ibid.*, 58-65. Italics mine.

91. *Ibid.*, 68.

3) Changing of Religious Ideology: Tigay only identified one possible case of this phenomenon, but the basic premise is that as religious ideology changed over the years, certain texts would become unacceptable and therefore updated for the new time and ideology.

4) Changes Due to the Editor's Taste: Tigay notes, "Variants whose language or style is no less ancient than that of the Babylonian version, which do not add clarity or more familiar words to a difficult passage, or stem from error, or update a passage theologically—in short, variants not attributable to objective factors—*would seem to be based on the subjective artistic judgement or taste of later editors.*"⁹² This option corresponds well with Talmon's definition of synonymous readings (see above in Introduction), as well as his speculation that the replacement of one word with its synonym "may have resulted from deliberate scribal practice."⁹³ What perhaps contradicts Talmon's hypothesis is that it doesn't appear that the language changes in the Gilgamesh epic (much like in Malachi) are necessarily based on words that are normally found in synonymous parallelism.

The use of synonyms in the late Babylonian version of the Gilgamesh epic differs from Malachi's use of synonyms, in that Malachi draws from many different texts, creating a completely new one. The late Gilgamesh epic, as Tigay points out, "represents a revised form of the Old Babylonian version, not a new composition The writers responsible for these changes could well be described as poets or author-editors, as they sometimes are."⁹⁴

3.5.13.2 Rabbinic Exegesis: Samely

At the other end of the time spectrum, we find the manipulation of synonyms in rabbinic exegesis. This is particularly addressed in the work of Alexander Samely. Much of

92. Ibid., 71-72.

93. Talmon, "Synonymous Readings," 173. Italics mine.

94. Tigay, *Gilgamesh*, 55.

Samely's works seeks to describe and catalogue rabbinical (and targumic) exegetical techniques, highlighting the hermeneutical assumptions that motivate these techniques. In his book *Forms of Rabbinic Literature and Thought*, Samely lists a sampling of "interpretive devices" often found in rabbinic literature. He notes:

There is no complete catalogue of rabbinic reading strategies available at present.⁹⁵

What happens in thousands of individual interpretations in rabbinic works has never been systematically collected, compared, and described in modern academic terminology. I offer a selection of midrashic reading devices . . . most of which are found already in the Mishnah . . . this is just a basic selection.⁹⁶

Samely lists:

(i) *On the level of the biblical word a meaning may be chosen or created from:* 1.

The full range of meanings for a word as listed in a dictionary entry, without restriction from a context . . . 3. A word's metaphorical or idiomatic meaning versus its concrete meaning, and vice versa . . . 9. A biblical word taken to refer to a whole class to which it is semantically linked.⁹⁷

All three of these interpretation types were demonstrated above in the analysis of Malachi.

This would suggest that the forerunners to rabbinical exegesis can be found in the HB, as previously argued by Michael Fishbane in his book *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*.⁹⁸

95. By "reading strategies" Samely means how the rabbis read and thus interpreted. What is eventually written down, the interpretation, is a result of their reading of the biblical text.

96. Alexander Samely, *Forms of Rabbinic Literature and Thought: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 90.

97. *Ibid.*, 91.

98. See Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 13-14, 18-19.

3.5.14 Semantic Wordplay Conclusions

From the above examples several observations can be made:

- 1) Talmon's theories about synonymous parallelism are expanded. The concept of reuse moves the "problem" of synonymous parallels from the realm of textual-criticism only, to the realm of composition.
- 2) "Synonym" included words with overlapping semantic ranges (tremble/be dismayed), overlapping semantic categories (branch/root), or overlapping referents (my messenger/Malachi).
- 3) It appears semantic wordplay was characteristic of ancient composers. As demonstrated above, Tigay's study on the transmission of the Gilgamesh Epic and Samely's work on rabbinic exegesis both evidence the manipulation and play with synonymous locutions. The book of Malachi falls chronologically in-between these two bodies of literature and also demonstrates extensive play with semantic similarities. These observations suggest synonyms should be taken into account in the evaluation of the literature of the HB, Qumran literature, and New Testament literature, especially in the search for quotations and allusions.⁹⁹
- 4) The manipulation of synonyms reflects the scribe's hermeneutic. It suggests that the composer understood that a given word contained a semantic range or semantic category, and that the choice of another word from within this semantic range or category was equally as valid as the original word found in the text. Because of this hermeneutic, the scribe had a measure of freedom when rewriting a portion of an older text. His hermeneutic allowed him to choose a word which he viewed as best fitting his context.

99. As Schultz noted: "Talmon's uncovering of this type of intentional variation should alert one to the likelihood of many other kinds of intentional, purposeful alterations. Accordingly, the exactness of linguistic correspondence may be a faulty criterion for determining what is or is not a quotation." Richard Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 77.

5) The exchange of synonymous locutions resides not just in the realm of copyists and redactors, but also in that of authors (assuming that some of my above samples were the result of authoring). This supports my definition of “scribal composition” (see **Chapter 1: Introduction**).

6) Understanding that the exchange of synonymous locutions was a legitimate scribal activity can further aid those working in the field of inner-biblical-exegesis and allusion/quotation to identify cases of reuse more readily. This means that an evaluation of allusion will have to go beyond lexical similarities, to that of semantic and ideological similarities. This in turn will enable a fuller evaluation of ancient documents.

3.6 Wordplay Conclusions

Above I have discussed five cases of phonetic wordplay, three cases of graphic wordplay and nine cases of semantic wordplay. From my observations some conclusions about wordplay in general (as found in Malachi) can be made.

1) The word “play” is perhaps not always the most appropriate of words for the phenomena above. While some plays on words do simply enhance the aesthetic value of the text for the reader, others serve as the hinge for the exegesis of an entire passage.

2) Wordplay can be used for a multitude of purposes that cannot be predetermined in a definition of any specific type of “wordplay.” The function of each wordplay is determined by its context.

3) The composer(s) of Malachi was literate and creative, “playing” with words for a variety of purposes.

4) The composer(s) of Malachi did not feel bound to reproduce reused portions of text as they were found in the original text. The material could be altered, replaced, or changed to suit the composer’s compositional needs within certain boundaries.

5) Wordplay was a relevant literary device evidenced in a large range of activities involved in scribal composition.

Wordplay is consequently an important aspect of scribal composition in the book of Malachi. Not only does attention to various types of wordplay shed light on the meaning of the book as a final product, but it also gives insight into the logic that gave direction to the formation of the text. In conclusion, both of these aspects will be discussed.

Wordplay aesthetically enriches and gives depth to the book as a final product. My first two examples of graphic wordplay in which the composer played with homographs do not add exegetical clarity to the passages they occur in. Instead, they first and foremost create pleasure for the reader who recognizes the wordplay. This creation of pleasure is essentially praise for the creator of the wordplay. Any wordplay that was designed to be recognized, when recognized, pays homage to the creator of the wordplay, who was clever enough to incorporate it. This feature of wordplay is also very evident in the examples of phonetic wordplay.

At times, the composer employed wordplay for aesthetic reasons that were not meant to be recognized. When the composer borrowed the locution **וְדַעַת שְׁפִתֶיךָ יִנְצְרוּ** from Prov 5.1-2 the composer replaced **נֹצַר** with **שָׁמַר** in order to create more cohesiveness in his own text. In this choice, the composer hid his play on synonyms and the fact that he borrowed the locution from elsewhere. The aesthetics of the passage was increased, but the composer was not recognized for his cleverness.

It is also important to remember that wordplay is not only aesthetic. It can give great depth and clarity to passages. Sometimes the recognition of wordplay can provide the interpretive key to an entire pericope. For example, the recognition of the play of “daughter of a foreign god” on Bethuel son of Nachor’s name (discussed in **section 3.3.4** and **Chapter 2**) affects one’s understanding of the entire Mal 2.10-16 passage. Through the recognition of the wordplay, the passage becomes a discussion about the people’s failure to marry the correct woman. Throughout the book of Malachi, the recognition of certain cases of wordplay

reveals an additional metamessage concerning the presence of God. The importance of wordplay for understanding the final form of the book cannot be exaggerated.

Various instances of wordplay also give insight into the formative logic behind Malachi. For example, a word that has a homograph with an alternative meaning gave the composer opportunity to create wordplay in the composition. **אֲרֻבָּה**, when unpointed, can mean either “window” or “locust.” While the context demands the meaning “window,” the composer played with the homograph and transformed his next borrowed locution to discuss “locusts.”

Another way the composer’s compositional logic can be seen is in his interpretation of texts. In **section 3.5.11**, I argued that the composer conflated 1 Kgs 17.24 and Ex 13.9 because they contained similar locutions. Because of their similarity, the composer understood them to belong together. This similarity he found in scripture answered an exegetical puzzle for him. According to Ex 13.9, the *torah* of the Lord was in the mouth of the person who had something written on his hand and forehead. According to 1 Kgs 17.24, Elijah had the word of the Lord in his mouth, and thus, to the composer, must have had something on his head and forehead. The composer knew what that “something” on the hand and forehead was because he was familiar with Deut 6. According to the composer’s exegesis, Elijah had “these commandments” written on his hand and forehead. This meant metaphorically that Elijah guarded carefully “these commandments,” which made him the ideal against which to compare the bad priests (cf. Mal 2.1-9). In order to trace back the interpretive logic for this passage, it is important to understand that it was acceptable to the composer for a synonym to stand in place of a word. Accordingly, he understood “*torah* of the Lord” and “word of the Lord” to be equal and for one locution to belong with the other. Without understanding the composer’s acceptance and use of wordplay, his interpretation of scripture would be untraceable.

Wordplay is accordingly a very important feature of scribal composition. It is relevant to both diachronic and synchronic inquiries. Attention to wordplay can answer questions for different disciplines within biblical studies (e.g. The discussion of Er and Onan in **section 3.3.5** could shed new light on textual-critical and redactional-critical discussions on Mal 2.12). The lifespan of certain types of wordplay (e.g. synonymous replacements) suggests that certain hermeneutics and techniques were relevant to scribes across a large span of time and could cross boundaries between different cultures.

Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah

I do not know from where the Hebrews were inspired to teach that Phinehas the son of Eleazar, whose life admittedly stretched throughout [the time of] many of the Judges, is himself Elias. –Origen, Commentarii in evangelium Johannis 6.14.83¹

4.1 Introduction

Throughout a large span of Jewish literature, a tradition appears that combines the figures of Phinehas, Levitical priest in Num 25, and Elijah, prophet of Israel during the reign of Ahab from 1 Kgs 17–2 Kgs 2. In the HB, the two figures' stories are unique, yet surprisingly similar. Both Phinehas and Elijah condemned Israel's slip into idolatry: Phinehas opposed the Israelites worshipping the Baal of Peor through intermarriage; Elijah's condemnation was aimed against the prophets of Baal and Asherah. Both Phinehas and Elijah violently punished those who practiced idolatry. Phinehas impaled a Simeonite chief and his Midianite lover through their bellies. Elijah, after mocking the prophets of Baal's efforts to entreat fire from their god, had them seized and slaughtered at the Wadi Kishon. The HB noted both Phinehas and Elijah for their intense zeal. Even so, the differences between the two characters are great. Where did this combination stem from?

The search for the origins of the Phinehas-Elijah tradition has resulted in varied and numerous theories. Most scholarship on the topic has searched for the historical impetus that inspired the combination. I will argue that later Jewish authors did not create the combination based on historical circumstance. Instead, it is evident that they were responding to literary devices implanted by the composer of Malachi. Through interpretation of texts available to him,

1. Οὐκ οἶδα πόθεν κινούμενοι οἱ Ἑβραῖοι παραδιδάσκει Φινεές, τὸν Ἐλεαζάρου υἱόν, ὁμολογουμένως παρατείναντα τὴν ζωὴν ἕως πολλῶν κριτῶν, ὡς ἐν τοῖς Κριταῖς ἀνέγνωμεν, αὐτὸν εἶναι Ἡλίαν; Greek text found in C. Blanc, *Origène. Commentaire sur saint Jean* (3 vols.; Sources chrétiennes 3; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1975).

the composer of Malachi combined the figures of Phinehas and Elijah in Malachi 2.4-7, the description of the “Ideal Levite.” Through literary clues left by the composer of Malachi, later Jewish authors recognized this ideology inherent to the book, and by alluding to the text of Malachi, appropriated and developed the Phinehas-Elijah ideology in their own works. After a brief survey of previous scholarship, I will examine the literary techniques used by the composer(s) of Malachi to evoke Phinehas-Elijah to his readers. I will then examine several cases where Phinehas-Elijah appears in later rabbinic literature, demonstrating their reception of these literary techniques found in Malachi.

4.2 Previous Scholarship

In his 1953 article “The Ascension of Phinehas,” Abram Spiro argued that the equation of Phinehas with Elijah “was necessitated by Judaeo-Samaritan polemics.”² He argued that it was important for the ruling priests of the Second Temple period to be able to trace their lineage from Phinehas to their own time because he was the original priest who God gave the covenant of eternal priesthood. To be able to trace their lineage to him, Phinehas had to live long enough to appoint Eli (see 1 Sam 1-4) as his successor. To give him the required long life (according to Spiro) Phinehas’ character was merged with Elijah and taken away on the chariot.

In 1976, Martin Hengel suggested that the Phinehas-Elijah ideology developed within the Zealot movement, inspired by the zeal of both characters (see Num 25.11 and 1 Kgs 19.10-14).³ He argued that the first written attestation to this tradition is found in the *Liber Antiquitatum*

2. Abram Spiro, “The Ascension of Phinehas,” *PAAJR* 22 (1953): 91.

3. Martin Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D* (trans. D. Smith; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), 167. Martin Hengel, *Die Zeloten: Untersuchungen zur Jüdischen Freiheitsbewegung in der Zeit von Herodes I. bis 70 N. Chr.* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 1; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 172.

Biblicarum (*LAB*), a work he dated to 100 CE. He concludes that the combination of the two characters must have been prevalent before *LAB*'s writing.⁴

Robert Hayward argued in 1978 that the person of John Hyrcanus inspired the equation of Phinehas and Elijah.⁵ According to Hayward, Hyrcanus was a man whose personal attributes well suited the equation. He was a priest, who was deemed to have prophetic qualities and who was known for having anti-Samaritan sensibilities (a quality also which—according to Hayward—has been noted to be attributed to Phinehas in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* and Ben Sira).⁶ Hayward argued that Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (which he understood to derive ultimately from the Palestinian Targum) was the first text to record this tradition.⁷

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4. For an additional list of previous scholarship on Phinehas-Elijah see: Hengel, *The Zealots*, 164.
 5. Hayward also argued that later Jewish texts like Yalkut Shim'oni and Numbers Rabba knew the tradition of the combined figures of Phinehas and Elijah without knowing its historical root. Thus, through a “somewhat complicated midrashic process,” the authors then combined texts from Malachi and Numbers 25 to provide scriptural basis for the tradition. Hayward, “Phinehas: the same is Elijah,” 23.
 6. Abram Spiro, “Samaritans, Tobiads, and Judahites in Pseudo-Philo,” *PAAJR* 20 (1951): 311-55; Spiro, “The Ascension,” 91-114.
 7. Robert Hayward, “Phinehas: the same is Elijah: The Origins of a Rabbinic Tradition,” *JJS* 29 (1978): 32. “Pseudo-Jonathan (Ps.-J) . . . is a unique piece of literature, quite different from the other Targums of the Pentateuch. It is different not only from Onq., which, according to the view more commonly held today, received its final form in Babylon, but also from Nf, the Frg. Tgs., and the Genizah Fragments, which represent the genuine Palestinian Pentateuchal Targum tradition. Yet Ps.-J. is closely related both to Onq. and to the Pal. Tgs. of the Pentateuch, for it is essentially a branch of the Palestinian Targumic tradition that has been strongly influenced by Onq.” Michael Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis: Translated, with Introduction and Notes* (The Aramaic Bible 1B; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 1.

Alexander Zeron argued for a textual origin for the tradition. In his 1978 article “Einige Bemerkungen zu M.F. Collins ‘The Hidden Vessels in Samaritan Traditions,’” Zeron argued that Malachi was the source of the combination of Phinehas and Elijah in Pseudo-Philo.⁸ In his later 1979 article, “The Martyrdom of Phineas-Elijah,” he again argued: “In Malachi we find the first definite connection between Elijah and Phineas. The words of Malachi (2:4-7) on God’s covenant with the priestly messenger recall to memory His covenant with Phinehas and his seed in Num 25:12-13. Accordingly, it seems natural to identify this priestly messenger (Mal 3:1) with Elijah (Mal 3:23).”⁹ Both Hayward and Jacobson have critiqued Zeron. Hayward notes: “Zeron . . . *attempts* on the basis of this passage [LAB 28.3] to trace the equation of Phinehas and Elijah back to the prophet Malachi,” concluding that Zeron is stretching evidence.¹⁰ Jacobson observes: “Zeron’s view . . . that LAB is connecting Mal 3:23 and 3:1 is weakened by his statement that in 3:1 ‘die Beziehung zu Pinchas [ist] klar.’”¹¹

In the following, I will present more evidence *supporting* Zeron’s claim, detailing the exegetical choices by the composer of Malachi that brought together the figures of Phinehas and Elijah, and how his composition reflects these choices. Then, I will demonstrate that not only *LAB*, but other later Jewish texts recognized and responded to the compositional techniques

8. Alexander Zeron, “Einige Bemerkungen zu M.F. Collins, ‘The Hidden Vessels in Tradition,’” *JSJ* 4 (1973): 165-68. Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s*, 1060. This was very similarly argued by Strack and Billerbeck. Their argument was different though, because they argued that the combination of Phinehas and Elijah was a result of later exegesis of Malachi, rather than the ideology being inherent in the text itself. Str-B 4.2: 789-90.

9. Alexander Zeron, “The Martyrdom of Phineas-Elijah” *JBL* 98 (1979): 99.

10. Hayward, “Phinehas: the same as Elijah,” 23; italics mine.

11. Jacobson, *Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s*, 1060.

employed by the composer of Malachi and concluded on the grounds of this book that “Phinehas is Elijah.” Careful note will be made of Zeron’s arguments in the section discussing *LAB*.

4.3 Literary Device: Literary Allusion

Because I will argue that the compositional techniques employed by the composer affected the reader in a specific way, it is important to consider exactly how the interaction between composition and reception functions. Here, the article “The Poetics of Literary Allusion” by Ziva Ben-Porat is instructive.¹² Ben-Porat’s definition and demonstration of a functioning literary allusion provides theoretical support on how the composer’s literary strategy affected the ancient reader. In view of its helpfulness, I will summarize her article below.

Ben-Porat’s article begins by pointing out a deficiency in scholarship’s use of the term “allusion” and/or “literary allusion.” Arguing that most scholarship has resorted to an intuitive application and analysis of “allusion” without a precise definition, she demonstrates how the use of both terms has become jumbled and their meaning slippery. Her first task then was to differentiate between an “allusion” and a “literary allusion.” According to Ben-Porat, an allusion is an “indirect or tacit reference” whose referent is contained within the world of the text that is alluding.¹³ In other words, an allusion is only comprehensible within the story (textual world) that makes the allusion because its referent is found within that story. Thus, it is also the context of the allusion that helps us understand the significance of the allusion. This is more comprehensible when one compares it with Ben-Porat’s definition of a literary allusion. She

12. Ziva Ben-Porat, “The Poetics of Literary Allusion,” *PTL* 1 (1976): 105-28.

13. *Ibid.*, 108.

defines a literary allusion as “a device for the simultaneous activation of two texts.”¹⁴ Thus, unlike an allusion, a textual world *outside* of the alluding text is referred to.

The activation [of two texts] is achieved through the manipulation of a special signal, a sign (simple or complex) in a given text characterized by an additional larger ‘referent.’ This referent is always an independent text. The simultaneous activation of two texts thus connected results in the formation of intertextual patterns whose nature cannot be predetermined.¹⁵

In other words, a phrase, a set of vocabulary, a theme or a motif in one text, the alluding text, serves to bring to mind a different text, the alluded to text. Thus two texts are held in the mind of the reader at the same time (“the simultaneous activation of two texts”). This phrase, set of vocabulary, theme or motif not only identifies the other text, but also brings to mind its larger context and begins a process of creating connections (“intertextual links”) between both texts. Ben-Porat presents this process in four steps.

In the first step, the reader notices an allusion, namely, a phrase, set of vocabulary, etc., imbedded in a text.¹⁶ Often a text containing an allusion is completely coherent and cohesive without the recognition of the allusion. Thus, this step, though seemingly obvious, is a necessary distinction to be made. Recognizing that an element of a text is an allusion is closely connected and generally not separable from the second step. In the second step, the reader identifies the text from which the allusion was drawn (the alluded to text). In the third step, the allusion in the

14. Ibid., 107.

15. Ibid., 108.

16. Although what I am describing is defined by Ben-Porat as a “literary allusion,” for the sake of facility, I will simply call it an “allusion.”

alluding text is reinterpreted through its connection with the alluded to text.¹⁷ Ben-Porat notes here that no further interaction between the two texts is necessary; the allusion has achieved its purposes. But, she argues, the affects of an allusion rarely end on step three. Often a fourth step occurs. In the fourth step, the two activated texts (the alluding text and the alluded to text) continue to interact. Connections between the larger contexts of both texts are created and are carried out until no more connections can be made. These new connections, or “intertextual patterns” do not have set rules. Rather in each given literary work, the “nature” of the intertextual patterns is determined by the context of each activated text.

Ben-Porat’s four steps are made from the perspective of the *reader*. Initially, this chapter will be instead interested in the compositional processes of the *composer*. Thus, from the composer’s perspective, the compositional process was: in step one and two the composer selected a locution or theme/idea from a text that was pertinent to his own composition and imbedded it in his own work. Step three was the intended result of the composer’s inclusion of an allusion on the reader. As above, there need not be a step four, the creation of further “intertextual patterns,” or step four might occur despite the intentions of the composer. Alternatively, step four might also be intended by the composer. Below, I will examine the reception of Malachi by later composers. My process for examining the reception of Malachi is initially slightly backwards. I began with the motif of the combination of the figures of Phinehas and Elijah because I knew this was also evidenced in Malachi. Then I examined several instances of the motif. Upon comparison, it is evident that the Phinehas-Elijah motif was always

17. Ben-Porat acknowledges in footnote 9 that the interpretation can go the other way; the alluding text can clarify the alluded to text. Ben-Porat, “The Poetics,” 114. This is something often seen in the HB. Michael Fisbhane’s work on “inner-biblical exegesis” is a prime example of this.

accompanied by references to other elements drawn from Malachi. Below, I will delineate the later readers' reception and interpretation of Malachi and other HB texts.

4.4 Malachi 2.4-7: The Ideal Levite

Malachi 2 begins with an accusation against the priests, charging them with not setting upon their hearts “this commandment” (see **Appendix A** for an evaluation of Mal 2.1-2). They are warned that their blessings will become curses and are threatened with the rebuking of their offspring. Acting as a foil, Mal 2.4-7 presents the ideal antitype of the addressed priests:

‘You will know that I sent this commandment to you to be my covenant with Levi’ says the Lord of Hosts.¹⁸ ‘My covenant was with him, namely, the life and the peace, and I gave them to him; fear and he feared me and trembled before my name. The *torah* of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found on his lips. He walked with me in integrity and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. For the lips of a priest guard knowledge, and they seek *torah* from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.’

This pericope describes a Levite with whom, according to Malachi, the Lord had made a covenant. Verse 7 significantly concludes by identifying this Levite as the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. These verses are composed of a multitude of reused texts (see for example **Chapter 3:**

18. The phrase “I sent this commandment to you” is striking. A commandment is only sent in one other place in the HB—2 Kgs 17.13 which says: “Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, ‘Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the law that I commanded your ancestors and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets’” 2 Kgs 17:13. The context of 2 Kgs 17.13 is about Israel and Judah serving other gods and how the prophets warned them against this service. This topic fits well into the context of Mal 2, which is concerned with the worship of the correct and one God (See further **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**).

Wordplay, sections 3.5.8, 3.5.9, 3.5.11), a few of which allude to both the Phinehas and Elijah narratives. These I will examine in more detail below.

4.4.1 Phinehas in Malachi

In the HB, Phinehas is first encountered in Ex 6.25 at his birth. He is a Levite and the son of Eleazar. He appears several times throughout Numbers, Joshua and Judges and he is mentioned in Ps 106, which recounts and reinterprets the events found in Num 25.¹⁹ In the last mention of Phinehas on his “historical” timeline (if one reads the historical books synchronically), he is noted to be ministering before the ark of the covenant in the days of the decimation of the Benjamites (Jdg 20.28), thus giving Phinehas an incredibly long life-span. Numbers 25 records his most noteworthy deed. There, full of the jealousy of God, Phinehas skewers an Israelite and his Midianite lover. Because of this, God gives him a covenant.

Malachi references a “Covenant with Levi” in Mal 2.4 and “The Covenant of the Levite” in Mal 2.8. Most commentators link the covenant in Mal 2.4-7 with that of Phinehas in Num 25. I will demonstrate the validity of their assumptions below, but before I make this argument, other important evidence demands evaluation. Although there is nowhere else in the HB a reference to a covenant specifically with Levi, one finds in Neh 13.29 the “Covenant with the Priesthood and the Levites” and in Jer 33.21 a covenant with “the Levites of the Priests.” Because of the similarity of language in each of these passages, it is important to evaluate the connection these different covenants have with each other—if any.

4.4.1.1 Nehemiah 13.29

Nehemiah 13.29 occurs in the midst of the disturbing final chapter of Nehemiah, where Nehemiah notices the foreign women married by the Jewish people and the multiple languages

19. Exod 6.25; Num 25.7, 11; 31.6; Josh 22.13, 30-32; 24.33; Jdg 20.28; Ps 106.30 and then in genealogical records in Ezra 7.5; 1 Chr 5.30; 6:35; 9.20

spoken by the children of these mixed marriages. Quoting Deut 7, Nehemiah curses the children, beats them and pulls out their hair. He drives out the son of the high priest who had himself married a foreign woman and then says: זכרה להם אלהי על גאלי הכהנה וברית הכהנה והלויים

“Remember them, oh my God, because they defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.” Which covenant is this verse referring to? It is demonstrable that Neh 13.9 is referring to Phinehas’ covenant in Num 25. First, both Num 25.13 and Neh 13.29 contain the unique locution ברית כהנה “Covenant of the Priesthood” (Neh 13.29 differs only in that it includes the definite article) that does not occur elsewhere in the HB. Because both these texts use unique locutions it is likely that there is a dependence between them. Second, it appears that Neh 13.29 harmonized the locution ברית כהנה from Num 25.13 with the phrase הכהנים והלויים “the Priests and the Levites” a locution that occurs five times in Nehemiah and thirteen times in the Ezra-Nehemiah corpus resulting in the phrase ברית הכהנה והלויים. The covenant in Neh 13.29 is an allusion to Num 25.13 and explains which covenant the composer of Neh 13 referenced. This connection between texts is logical, as the story of Phinehas also addresses the problem of intermarriage and the influence of foreign women. Because one can trace back “the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites” to Num 25, it is unlikely that Nehemiah is dependent on Malachi for the locution or that Malachi is dependent on Nehemiah. Rather, Neh 13.29 and Mal 2.4,8 are similar because they are both dependent on the same text. This will become clearer below in my evaluation of Malachi’s dependence on older texts.

4.4.1.2 Jeremiah 33.21

Jeremiah 33.21 (MT) says: גַּם־בְּרִיתִי תִפָּר אֶת־דָּוִד עֶבְדִּי מֵהֵי־תֵּלוּ בֶן מֶלֶךְ עַל־כִּסְאוֹ וְאֶת־הַלְוִיִּם

“Then also will my covenant with David my servant be broken—that he would not have a son reigning upon his throne and with the Levites, the priests, my ministers.” This verse belongs to a section of the MT that is not found in the LXX. As Holladay notes: “The passage

[Jer 31.14-26a] draws on existing [Jeremiah] passages but adapts them for a fresh purpose.”²⁰ In other words, the pericope gives every indication of being a late addition. Of course even though the pericope was added in later, we cannot necessarily point to exactly when.²¹ It is possible that the composition of Malachi occurred later than this portion in Jeremiah was added. The composer then could have drawn from it for his own composition. Still, there are a few reasons it is unlikely the composer of Malachi reused this passage for his “covenant with Levi.” First, for Jer 33.21 to make sense, the word ברית (along with the verb) has to be gapped to the phrase ואת־הלוים הכהנים “the Levites, the Priests” at the end of the verse. Because of the awkward distance between ברית and ואת־הלוים הכהנים—the two essential elements for reuse in Mal 2.5—Jer 33.21 would not be an ideal source for the composer’s reuse. Second, the subject matter of the Jer 33 pericope does not cohere to the larger context of the pericope in Malachi. Jeremiah 33.21 is primarily about how God’s covenant with David cannot be broken, nor can God’s covenant with the Levites, the priests.²² The passage does not identify what the covenant with the Levites/priests is. Thus, these factors make it unlikely that Jer 33.21 was the source for Mal 2.5’s covenant with Levi.

4.4.1.3 Numbers 25.11-13

Bearing in mind the identification of the covenant as that of one with Levi, the wording of Mal 2.5 helps to identify the referent of the covenant. Malachi 2.5 says “My covenant with

20. William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 26–52* (ed. Paul D. Hanson; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press: 1989), 228.

21. Holladay thinks the passage is from a “postexilic setting.” See Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, 228-31.

22. In my opinion, everything about the Levites and the priests in this section of MT Jeremiah (that itself appears to be a later addition to Jeremiah) were added in later. Notice Jer 33.26 does not finish with reference to the Levites, only David.

him was a covenant of life and peace, which I gave him; fear and he feared me and trembled before my name.”²³ Many commentators have noted a connection between Malachi’s covenant of peace and the covenant of peace awarded to Phinehas in Num 25.12-13.²⁴ Numbers 25.11-13 reads:

Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest turned away my wrath from upon the sons of Israel when he was jealous with my jealousy in their midst so that I did not destroy the sons of Israel in my jealousy.²⁵ Therefore he says: Behold I give to him a covenant which is peace: it will be for him and his offspring after him a covenant of perpetual priesthood because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the sons of Israel.

Upon comparison with Mal 2.4-5, a dense concentration of identical lexemes and similar phraseology becomes apparent as indicated by the underlined words below:

הנני נתן לו את־בריתי שלום והיתה לו ולזרעו אחריו ברית כהנת עולם (Num 25.12-13)

להיות בריתי את־לוי אמר יהוה צבאות בריתי היתה אתן החיים והשלום ואתנם לו (Mal 2.4-5)

The lexemes “My covenant” בריתי and “peace” שלום are the primary points of commonality between the two verses. The expression of “giving to him” a covenant—נתן לו in

23. For an explanation of this verse’s strange syntax see **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.8.**

24. Mason, *The Books of Haggai*, 147.

25. I translated the verb קנא as “jealous” rather than “zealous.” This is because in the MT, Phinehas reacts in the emotion of God, not his own—“When he [Phinehas] was jealous with my [God’s] jealousy.” Whenever the verb קנא is used in relation to God in the HB, it is a reference to God’s jealousy about the worship of foreign gods (see for example Ex 20.5, Deut 4.24; 5.9; 6.15). This understanding of קנא accords well with the context of Numbers 25 since through their prostitution with the Midianites, the sons of Israel yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor (Num 25.3).

Num 25.12 and **וְאַתְּנָם לּוֹ** in Mal 2.5—is a relatively unique expression, occurring elsewhere only in Gen 17.2. Normally, one “cuts” a covenant, a phrase which occurs 77 times in the HB. One can also establish, set, enter and command a covenant.²⁶ Thus, Mal 2.5 and Num 25.12’s mutual use of the same rare expression increases the likelihood that one text is dependent on the other. Similar phraseology is also found between Num 25.12-13 which says “my covenant was for him” (**וְהִיְתָה לּוֹ . . . בְּרִיתִי**) and Mal 2.5’s “My covenant was with him” (**בְּרִיתִי הִיְתָה אִתּוֹ**).

Most importantly, the composer replicates and improves the syntax found in Num 25.12. As in Num 25.12, the “covenant” in Malachi is in apposition to peace. Numbers 25.12 says **הֲנִי שְׁלוֹם** נתן לוֹ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי שְׁלוֹם. The first person preposition added to **בְּרִית** “covenant” breaks up what

26. **ברית + כרת** “Cut a covenant”: Gen 15.18, Gen 21.27, Gen 21.32, Gen 26.28, Gen 31.44, Exod 23.32, Exod 24.8, Exod 34.10, Exod 34.12, Exod 34.15, Exod 34.27, Deut 4.23, Deut 5.2, Deut 5.3, Deut 7.2, Deut 9.9, Deut 28.69, Deut 29.11, Deut 29.13, Deut 29.24, Deut 31.16, Josh 9.6, Josh 9.7, Josh 9.11, Josh 9.15, Josh 9.16, Josh 24.25, Judg 2.2, 1 Sam 11.1, 1 Sam 18.3, 1 Sam 23.18, 2 Sam 3.12, 2 Sam 3.13, 2 Sam 3.21, 2 Sam 5.3, 1 Kgs 5.26, 1 Kgs 8.21, 1 Kgs 20.34, 2 Kgs 11.4, 2 Kgs 11.17, 2 Kgs 17.15, 2 Kgs 17.35, 2 Kgs 17.38, 2 Kgs 23.3, Isa 28.15, Isa 55.3, Isa 61.8, Jer 11.10, Jer 31.31, Jer 31.32, Jer 31.33, Jer 32.40, Jer 34.8, Jer 34.13, Jer 34.15, Jer 34.18, Ezek 17.13, Ezek 34.25, Ezek 37.26, Hos 2.20, Hos 10.4, Hos 12.2, Zech 11.10, Ps 50.5, Ps 83.6, Ps 89.4, Job 31.1, Job 40.28, Ezra 10.3, Neh 9.8, 1 Chr 11.3, 2 Chr 6.11, 2 Chr 21.7, 2 Chr 23.3, 2 Chr 23.16, 2 Chr 29.10, 2 Chr 34.31.

ברית + קום “Establish a covenant”: Gen 6.18, Gen 9.9, Gen 9.11, Gen 9.17, Gen 17.7, Gen 17.19, Gen 17.21, Exod 6.4, Lev 26.9, Deut 8.18, Jer 34.18, Ezek 16.60, Ezek 16.62

ברית + בוא “Enter a covenant”: 1 Sam 20.8; Jer 34.10; Ezek 16.8; Ezek 20.37; Ps 44.18; 2 Chr 15.12

ברית + שים “Set a covenant”: 2 Sam 23.5

ברית + צוה “Command a covenant”: Ps 111.9

and the strange **עבר + בברית** “Go into a Covenant” in Deut 29.11.

initially appears to be a construct chain between “covenant” and “peace.”²⁷ One should rather read “Behold, I am giving to him my covenant, [namely] peace,” “peace” being appositional to “my covenant.” Thus, the substance of the covenant is characterized as “peace.” In Malachi, the composer reproduces the appositional construction. Malachi reads: בריתי היתה אתו החיים והשלום: “My covenant was with him, [namely] the life and the peace, and I gave them to him.” שלום is in apposition to “my covenant.” The composer of Malachi’s construction is an improvement on Num 25.12 because the appositional relationship is more evident.²⁸

4.4.1.4 Proverbs 3.2

There remains the problem of why, in Malachi, the Levite has a covenant that is peace *and life*. “Life” is not part of God’s promise to Phinehas and it is initially puzzling why the composer of Malachi would have expanded the covenant. Upon close examination, it is evident that the composer added “life” as a result of the interpretation of texts. Proverbs 3.1-2 says: “My child, do not forget my teaching (תורתִי), and let your heart keep my commandments (מצותֵי); for length of days and years of life and peace (חיים ושלום) they will give you.”²⁹ The juxtaposition of שלום + חי occurs elsewhere only in Mal 2.5: החיים והשלום. Because of the nearly identical

27. Joüon notes “A possessive suffix [in a construct chain] would form a separation. However, we find the irregular expression Lv 26.42 את־בריתי יעקב *my covenant with Jacob* . . . Jr. 33.20 את־בריתי היום *my covenant with the day* . . . The second noun . . . is virtually in the genitive . . .” Joüon, 434. In contrast, Gesenius argues that “In Nu 25.12 שלום is in apposition to בריתי.” *GKC*, 415

28. In **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.7** I argue that Num 25.11 is alluded to later in Mal 3.6. There I explain the effect of the allusion to the Phinehas story on Mal 2.10-16, verse 13 in particular.

29. Weyde also notes a possible similarity with Prov 3.2, claiming that promises in Deuteronomy are recalled through the use of Prov 3.2. However, Weyde does not identify which texts of Deuteronomy are recalled. Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching*, 186-87.

locution, it is probable that the composer conflated Prov 3.2 with Num 25.12. The conflation suggests that the composer saw a logical connection between these two texts: If one follows the commandments, one is given life and peace (Prov 3.1-2). Phinehas followed the commandments (he stopped the Israelites from committing idolatry) unlike the priests addressed in Malachi (Mal 2.1-3). As a result of his jealous obedience, God gave Phinehas peace. Therefore, according to Prov 3.1-2, God must also have given him life. Interestingly, Prov 3.3, the next verse, contains an allusion to Deut 6 and 11—“tie it to your forehead and write it upon your heart.”³⁰ Below I will demonstrate that Mal 2.6 contains an allusion conflated with Ex 13.9, which also alludes to Deut 6 and 11. This pattern of thematic and allusive reuse further supports the likelihood that the composer was dependent on these texts (compare **Appendix A**). The conflation serves to sharpen the contrast between the Ideal Levite and the priests in Mal 2.1-2, who the text condemns for not keeping the commandments.

Thus, through allusion to Num 25.11 supplemented by Prov 3.2, the identity of the Levite in Mal 2.4 is confirmed to be Phinehas, and the covenant that belongs to the Levite is the one which was given to Phinehas in Num 25.11-13.

4.4.1.5 Further Influences on Malachi 2.4-7

In his book, *A History of Prophecy*, Joseph Blenkinsopp has argued:

30. “Die Kombination von קשר und כתב findet sich innerhalb des Alten Testaments nur in Dtn 6,8; 11,18 und Prov 3,3; 7,3. Dies spricht dafür, dass die Texte auf die Deuteronomiumspassagen Bezug nehmen, wobei lediglich die Zentralbegriffe und nicht etwa ganze Verse oder Halbverse zitiert werden Insofern führen die Proverbientexte eine Form der Unterweisung fort, die sich in Dtn 6 findet. Die Kinder werden durch die Eltern unterwiesen (Dtn 6,7; 11,18), um so das, was Mose vermittelt hat, weiterzugeben (Dtn 6,1; 11,18).” Bernd U. Schipper, *Hermeneutik der Tora: Studien zur Traditionsgeschichte von Prov 2 und zur Komposition von Prov 1-9* (Ed. J. Barton *et al*; Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 432; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 235.

The covenant with Levi to which Mal. 2:4-7 appeals does not go back to the incident of the apostasy at Baal-peor (Num. 25:10-13), as is often assumed, but to the oracle of Moses on Levi in which the latter is praised for having kept the covenant, as a result of which the sons of Levi “shall teach Jacob your ordinances and Israel your law” (Deut. 33:10).³¹

While I disagree with Blenkinsopp’s opinion concerning Malachi’s dependence on Num 25, he is correct that the thematic similarities between Mal 2.5-7 and Deut 33.8-11 are striking. So striking and unique in fact, it seems entirely probable that Blenkinsopp is also correct, and that Deut 33.8-11 influenced the composer of Malachi. Deuteronomy 33.8-11 reads:

And to Levi he said: “Your Thumim and Urim belong to your faithful one whom you tested at Massah, whom you will contend with at the waters of Meribah. The one who says of his father and of his mother ‘I do not know them’ and his brother he did not recognize and his son he did not know. For they guard your word and your covenant they keep. They teach your statutes to Jacob and your *torah* to Israel. They will set incense before your nose and offerings upon your altar. May the Lord bless his strength and accept the work of his hand, shatter the loins of his enemies and keep his adversaries from rising.”

As hinted by Blenkinsopp, Deuteronomy 33.8-11 would explain the connection between “this commandment” in Mal 2.1 and the covenant of Levi in Mal 2.4. Plus, in Deut 33.8-11, the Levites are charged with the teaching of the ordinances and the law—clarifying why “this commandment” (a locution drawn from Deuteronomy—see **Appendix A**) is relatable in particular to the priests. They are supposed to be the guardians of the commandments.

31. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel: Revised and Enlarged* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press: 1996), 212.

Dependence on Deut 33.9-10 would also explain the attribution of teaching and wisdom to the image of the Ideal Levite and it could provide grounds for the priests' rebuke for failing on these counts (Mal 2.8-9). Malachi's dependence on Deut 33.8-11 could also explain why Malachi describes the covenant as being with a Levite, rather than specifically with Phinehas.

Unfortunately, because of the lack of any lexical links the possibility of dependence on or influence from Deut 33.8-11 can only remain speculative.

4.4.1.6 Summary

The evidence above demonstrates that the composer of Malachi did not simply allude to a Phinehas tradition or oral story, he actually read and reused the *text* of Num 25.12-13. This is evident in particular from the duplication of unique phraseology and of the odd syntax found in Num 25.12. In its new context in Malachi, the "covenant which is peace (and life)" is given to the Ideal Levite, identifying the Ideal Levite with the person of Phinehas. The composer of Malachi could have understood this covenant to be intimately connected with the keeping and teaching of the law through the agency of Deut 33.11.

4.4.2 Elijah in Malachi

Thus far then, I have demonstrated that in Malachi, the Ideal Levite is Phinehas. The composer of Malachi also identifies the Ideal Levite with Elijah: first by the reuse of material from *outside* the book of Malachi, and then by compositional strategy *within* the book.

4.4.2.1 Outside material³²

Malachi 2.6 notes that תורת אמת היתה בפיהו "the *torah* of truth was in his [the Ideal Levite's] mouth." The elements בפי + אמת + pronoun occurs elsewhere only in 1 Kgs 17.24 in the HB. 1 Kings 17.24 concludes the story of Elijah bringing back to life the widow's son. Upon

32. This information has also been addressed in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.11.**

his resurrection, the widow declares to Elijah **אמת בדבר־יהוה בפיך** “Now I know that you are the man of God, and the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.” The phrase from 1 Kgs 17.24, **אמת בדבר־יהוה בפיך**, is nearly identical to 2.6a in Malachi, except **דבר־יהוה** is replaced in Malachi with the term **תורה**.

This difference in vocabulary is a result of the conflation of 1 Kgs 17.24 with Ex 13.9.³³ Exodus 13.9 says: “There will be a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead, so that the teaching of the LORD may be in your mouth (**למען תהיה תורת יהוה בפיך**).” Exodus 13.9 does not designate what the sign on the hands and forehead will be, but the verse is reminiscent of Deut 6.8-9 and 11.18-20, where what is on the hand and the forehead is supposed to be “these words” (the given command). This use of a text that alludes to Deut 6 and 11 evidences the same impulse as the conflation of Num 25.12 with Prov 3.1-3 discussed above. Thus, by association with the Deuteronomy passages, the conflation of Ex 13.9 again incorporates into the message of Malachi the Ideal Levite’s keeping of “this commandment” (Mal 2.1). Like the allusion to Phinehas, the description of the Ideal Levite is the locus for an allusion to Elijah.

4.4.2.2 Composition Inside³⁴

The Ideal Levite is identified once more as Elijah within the book through a series of interconnected verses. Mal 2.7 closes the pericope about the Ideal Levite saying **כי מלאך יהוה צבאות הוא** “For he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.”³⁵ This messenger appears again

33. Because of the conflation of two disparate texts, as before, it is much more likely that Malachi is dependent on 1 Kgs 17.24 and not the other way around.

34. Also addressed in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.5.**

35. “In no other passage in the Hebrew Bible is the priest called a *mal’āk*. Prophets are so designated numerous times in passages such as Haggai 1:13, Isaiah 44:26 and 2 Chronicles 36:15-16, and prophetic speech patterns

in Mal 3.1: הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה־דרך לפני “Behold I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me.” Assuming that the “messenger of the Lord of Hosts” is the same individual as “my messenger,” one understands that the LORD will send the Ideal Levite to prepare the way. Then Mal 3.23 says הנה אנכי שלח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום יהוה “Behold, I am sending to you Elijah the prophet before the day of the Lord.” This is a word for word reiteration of Mal 3.1 except that in place of מלאכי, my messenger, Mal 3.23 has אליה הנביא, Elijah the prophet. Through repetition it is clear that the Ideal Levite, or the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts, is Elijah.

Mal 2.7 כי מלאך יהוה־צבאות הוא

Mal 3.1 הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה־דרך לפני

Mal 3.23 הנה אנכי שלח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום יהוה

4.4.2.3 Summary

The text of Malachi through allusion associates the receiver of the covenant of life and peace, Phinehas, with the Messenger of the Lord, Elijah. This is not immediately apparent without a rigorous understanding of the literary techniques used by ancient composers to incorporate older texts into new texts.

Perhaps scholarship has not previously identified Malachi as the origin of the Phinehas-Elijah tradition (except Zeron) because Malachi 3.23 (the verse that explicitly identifies the messenger as Elijah) is widely accepted as being a very late addition. Blenkinsopp and Chapman, for example, argue that it is one of the latest additions to the HB and part of a final redaction, bringing together the Torah and the Prophets.³⁶ Thus, the identification of Elijah with the Ideal

have long been associated with ancient Near Eastern messenger speech.” O’Brien, *Priest and Levite*, 42

36. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Prophecy and Canon: A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins* (University of Notre Dame Center for the Study of Judaism and Christianity in Antiquity 3; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 121; Stephen B. Chapman, *The Law and the Prophets: A Study in Old Testament Canon*

Levite would be viewed as secondary and perhaps irrelevant to the original message of Malachi. But, the reuse of 1 Kgs 17.24 in Mal 2.6 suggests that the equation of Phinehas with Elijah is an integral and intentional part of the message of Malachi. This suggests two possibilities about Mal 3.23. One possibility is that Mal 3.23 is indeed a later redaction, but the redactor identified the allusion to Elijah in Mal 2.6 and made it more explicit: the messenger *is* Elijah the prophet. Alternatively, because of the verse's thematic coherence (Elijah) with the rest of the book, Mal 3.23 might not be a later redaction, but instead is a part of the original composition of Malachi.

4.5 Malachi's Motivation

Why did the composer combine these two figures? Was it his own innovation? Was he prompted by something he saw within his source texts, or both? In **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.11** I began to answer this question. There I argued that lexemic parallels between Ex 13.9 and 1 Kgs 17.24 motivated the use of 1 Kgs 17.24: יהוה בפִּיךָ and the synonyms דבר־יהוה and תורת־יהוה. The composer of Malachi sought to interpret Ex 13.9: “And you will have a sign on your hand and on your forehead because the law of the Lord will be in your mouth.” Through interpretive logic, if Elijah had the word of God in his mouth, he must also have had the sign on his hand and forehead. The language of a “sign on hand and forehead” is distinctive of Deut 6 and 11. This is scripture that the composer already reused in Mal 2.1-2 (see **Appendix A**). Malachi 2.1-2 is particularly concerned with “this commandment” (cf. Deut 6.25; 11.22) that the priests are not setting in their hearts. For the composer of Malachi “this commandment” was analogous to Deut 6.4 and to the worship of one God (see **Appendix A**). Through his interpretation of Ex 13.9, the composer identified Elijah, the Ideal Levite, as the one who kept “this commandment” (contra the priest in Mal 2.1). According to the composer of Malachi, Elijah is therefore the one who kept the worship of the one God.

Formation (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 27; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 133-36.

According to Mal 2.4, “this commandment” was also part and parcel of God’s covenant with Levi, the covenant God made with Phinehas and his descendants. If “this commandment” refers to Deut 6.4 (that there is one God) then it makes sense that the composer would equate “this commandment” with the covenant given to Phinehas. The HB’s depiction of Phinehas in Num 25 is much like the characterization of Elijah as the archetype for the defense of the worship of one God. As mentioned above, Phinehas took violent action against his people for their idolatry through intermarriage with foreign women. Because Phinehas took on God’s jealousy (Num 25.11) against foreign gods, God gave him the covenant. Thus, the combination of Phinehas with Elijah resulted from the composer’s interpretation of Deuteronomy.

It is possible that the composer of Malachi was additionally responding to a phenomenon in his texts that had already connected the two characters. It is evident that the text of Num 25.11 has been modified to match that of 1 Kgs 19.10,14 (the narrative about YHWH appearing to Elijah on the mountain). 1 Kings 19.10 and 14 both put the phrase **קנא קנאתי** in the mouth of Elijah: “I have been exceedingly zealous/jealous.” This phrase depicts common syntactic structure—infinitive absolute plus finite verb—which indicates the intensification of the verb. In comparison, Num 25.11 says **פינחס . . . השיב את־חמתי מעל בני־ישראל בקנאו את־קנאתי בתוכם** “Phineas . . . turned back my wrath from upon the sons of Israel when he was jealous with my jealousy in their midst.” The phrase **בקנאו את־קנאתי** seems slightly discordant in the text. If the infinitive construct **בקנאו** is read as a verb “when he was zealous/jealous” the phrase makes sense, but adds an unnecessary element: **את־קנאתי** “with my jealousy.” If one removes **את־קנאתי** and the infinitive construct is read nominally, “in his jealousy (amongst them),” the discordance is resolved. Because of this discordance, it is likely Num 25.11 has been edited to match 1 Kgs 19.10,14. A scribe inserted the word **קנאתי** and he marked the insertion with a direct object

marker.³⁷ If this editing was done before the composition of Malachi, the composer could easily have picked up on the verbal connection between the two figures and appropriated it for his own use. But, it is equally possible that the insertion in Num 25.11 was made by someone who read Malachi and felt the connection between Phinehas and Elijah should be made more explicit in the Num 25 text, thus, harmonizing the two books, ideologically speaking. Because the composer of Malachi did not use the verb **אָנַק**, it is impossible to ascertain if this verbal connection influenced the composer.

4.6 Later Jewish Literature

Thus far I have examined the compositional technique of the composer of Malachi, arguing that he implanted allusions that he wanted to be recognized. These allusions would lead a reader to conclude that Phinehas is Elijah. Below, I will demonstrate that later Jewish authors did recognize that Malachi was integral to this combination and that the association of Phinehas with Elijah was not the product of “creative exegesis” by the later authors. These authors were either reading Malachi and following the literary clues implanted by the composer or they knew of the tradition that Phinehas and Elijah and the book of Malachi belong together. This is evident because even when Mal 2.4-7 is not cited in relation to Phinehas-Elijah in later literature, texts containing the motif still contain quotations or allusions to other parts of Malachi. To demonstrate later authors’ dependence on/influence from Malachi, I have selected a few texts

37. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 44-55. The insertion could either serve to clarify what kind of **אָנַק** Elijah had—jealousy for God as the only God—or it could serve to answer the question “when was Elijah zealous/jealous?”—when he was a Shittim. If option two is correct, the connection between the two characters would have either already been understood, or was then created. More work would need to be done on the Phinehas and Elijah narratives to determine the affect of this allusion.

commonly known to contain Phinehas-Elijah ideology: Pirke de Rabbi Eleazar, Pseudo-Philo, Yalkut Shim'oni, and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan.³⁸

4.6.1 Pirke de Rabbi Eleazar

One can find examples of the equation of Phinehas and Elijah in Pirke de-Rabbi Eleazar 29 and 47. Both examples quote Malachi. Pirke de Rabbi Eleazar is an “aggadic narrative . . . [in which t]he author made use of the tannaitic literature, the Jerusalem Talmud, the Midreshei Aggadah of the Amoraim . . . the Babylonian Talmud, as well as those Aramaic Targums to the Scripture that originated in the Eretz Israel.”³⁹ Its date of composition has been estimated from somewhere between the 5th and 7th century CE.

38. “Besides these texts, the Phinehas-Elijah tradition appears in Origen [quoted above in the introduction] . . . , Pseudo-Jerome on 1 Sam 2:27 . . . The identification is also implied by the choice of Haftarah for Parashat Phinehas (as 1 Kgs 19) in . . . contemporary annual Torah reading cycle . . . According to Büchler, ‘it is the selection of the Haftarah for Num. xxv.10 which gave rise to the Aggada connecting Elijah with Phinehas’ . . . In addition, based on the Genizah fragments of the 11th or 12th c. found in Fostat, Adler points to the Haftarah of the triennial cycle for Num. 25:1-10, portions from Joel and Amos ending with the phrase: ‘Phinehas son of Ele’azar in the Twelve minor prophets . . . and a verse from Mal. 2:5’ . . .” Rachel Adelman, *The Return of the Repressed: Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer and the Pseudepigrapha* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 191 n. 20. cf. Adolf Büchler, “The Reading of the Law and the Prophets in a Triennial Cycle II,” *JQR* 6 (1894): 37. Ginzberg also identifies Numbers Rabbah 21.3 and Tanhuma Phinehas 1 as containing the figure of Phinehas-Elijah. He thinks the identification is probably presupposed in Sifre N. 131.19. See Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews: VI* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1938), 316 n. 3. Ginzberg identified Num. Rabbah 21.3 as a locus for Phinehas-Elijah ideology because Phinehas is said in the passage to still be alive—a quality of Elijah who did not die, but was translated. Interestingly, immediately after identifying Phinehas as being still alive Mal 2.5 is quoted.

39. Moshe David Herr, “Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 16:182-183.

PRE 29 depicts the eighth trial of Abraham: the covenant of circumcision. The story follows the circumcision of Abraham through Jacob, and the circumcision of the Israelites when they leave Egypt. In this last instance, the circumcision is not performed correctly, and the people are re-circumcised leaving behind a hill of foreskins covered in dust. Balaam appears and, purveying the hill, asks “Who will be able to [stand] [מי יוכל לעמוד] by the merit of the blood of the covenant of this circumcision which is covered by dust?”⁴⁰ After an explanation of the dust, we are informed that when the kingdoms were divided, Ephraim “cast off from themselves the covenant of circumcision.”⁴¹ Thus, Elijah “[stood] and was zealous with a mighty passion” and commanded the rain to stop. This punishment instigated Jezebel to seek to take his life and in response “Elijah [stood] and prayed before the Holy One, blessed be He.”⁴² Thus, in PRE, Elijah responds to the breach of the covenant of circumcision. Why would Elijah be the defender of any covenant except that Mal 3.1 + Mal 3.23 specifically identifies Elijah with the covenant? The PRE 29 narrative continues:

Elijah . . . arose and fled from the land of Israel, and he went to Mount Horeb, as it is said, “And he arose, and did eat and drink” (1 Kings xix.8). There the Holy One, blessed be He, was revealed to him, and He said to him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?” . . . He answered Him, saying: “I have been very zealous [קנא קנאתי]” . . . (The Holy One, blessed be) He, said to him: “You were always zealous! You were zealous in Shittim on account of the immorality. Because it is said, ‘Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, turned my wrath away from the children of Israel,

40. *PRE 29* (Friedlander).

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

in that he was zealous with my zeal among them' (Num. xxv.11). Here also were you zealous. By your life! They shall not observe the covenant of circumcision until you see it (done) with your eyes." Thus the sages instituted (the custom) that people should have a seat of honor for the Messenger of the Covenant; for Elijah, may he be remembered for good, is called the Messenger of the Covenant, as it is said, "And the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in, behold, he comes (Mal. iii.1)."⁴³ *God of Israel, hasten and bring in our lifetime the Messiah, to comfort us and make our hearts new because it says "and he will turn the heart of the fathers to the sons [and the heart of the children to their fathers]" (Mal 3.24).*⁴⁴

Here, PRE 29 follows the dialogue of 1 Kgs 19. Elijah reminds God that "I have been exceedingly zealous!" God agrees, but remembers Elijah's acts at *Shittim*, the location of Phinehas' ordeal in Num 25. The author of PRE 29 picks up on the verbal connections between the mutual zeal (קנא) of both characters. Adelman and Hayward (amongst others) suggested that PRE connected Phinehas and Elijah because of this mutual zeal.⁴⁵ While it is undeniable the author of PRE 29 makes a connection between the two based on the word קנא, the

43. Ibid.

44. עמד אליהו וברח מארץ ישראל ונמלט שנא' ויקם ויאכל וישתה . גגלה אליו הקב"ה ואמר מה לך פה אליהו אמר לו קנא קנאתי אמר לו הקב"ה לעולם אתה מקנא . קנאת בשטים על גלוי עריות שנא' פנחס בן אלעזר וכאן אתה מקנא חייד שאין ישראל עושין ברית מילה עד שאתה רואה בעיניך מכאן התקינו הכמים שיר עושים מושב כבוד למלאך הברית שנאמר ומלאך הברית אשר אתם חפצים הנה בא ונר' אלהי ישראל יחיש ויבוא בחיינו משיח לנחמנו ויחדש לבבנו שנא' והשיב לב אבות על בנים Cited 30 Oct 2013. <http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/v1/tohen.asp?id=293>. "God . . . fathers (Mal 3.24)" is found [also] in MS. Gaster and "the first editions." (See *PRE 29* [Friedlander], 214 note 2).

45. See also Hengel, *The Zealots*, 163. "In other cases, such as the following one [Pirke R. Eliezer], the connection between the two figures was zeal."

identification of Elijah with the covenant suggests also the close connection of Phinehas-Elijah with the book of Malachi. PRE quotes from Num 25.11, remembering Phinehas' (Elijah's) zeal/jealously, but stops short of quoting God's gift of the covenant of peace. Rather, PRE 29 moves from remembering the zeal, to making Elijah the overseer of the completion of the covenant of circumcision by reprobate Ephraim (the people of Ephraim being the referent of "they") who transgressed the covenant. This is because Elijah is the "Messenger of the Covenant." Here it is clear that the author of PRE 29 read literary clues left by the composer of Malachi. The text says that "Elijah is called the messenger of the covenant" because of Mal 3.1, a verse which says nothing about Elijah. As I argued above, because Mal 3.23 mirrors Mal 3.1 in form and content, but replaces מלאכי with אליה הנביא, the reader was supposed to understand that Elijah was the messenger of the covenant.

The last portion of the narrative, added in italics above, is not attested in every manuscript. As Friedlander noted "According to this reading the chapter closes with a rhyme," thus the extra bit could have been "original."⁴⁶ Nonetheless, it is significant that more of Malachi (a modified eschatological hope found in Mal 3.24) was considered a fitting ending for this pericope on the messenger of the covenant at some point in PRE's transmission history—whether original to the manuscript or not.

PRE 47 also references Phinehas-Elijah. This time, he is set in the rewritten narrative of Phinehas as found in Numbers 25. After he pierced through the Simeonite and his Midianite lover he "rose like a spiritual leader and he judged Israel, as it is said, 'Then stood up Phineas,

46. See *PRE 29* (Friedlander), 214 n. 2. See Lewis M. Barth, "Is Every Medieval Hebrew Manuscript a New Composition? The Case of Pirqé Rabbi Eliezer," in *Agenda for the Study of Midrash in the 21st Century* (ed. M. L. Raphael; Williamsburg, VA: 1999), 43-62. Cited 30 Oct 2013. Online: <http://www.usc.edu/projects/pre-project/agendas.html#book>.

and he executed judgement [ויפלל פנחס ויעמוד Ps 106.30]⁴⁷ and then as in Num 25, God gives him the covenant. PRE recounts the giving of the covenant:

רבי אליעזר אומר הסב הקב'ה שמו של פנחס כשמו של אליהו ז"ל מתושבי גלעד שעשה ישראל
תשובה בארץ גלעד שנאמר בריתי היתה אתו החיים והשלום ונתן לו חיי העה'ז וחיי העוה'ב ונתן
לו ולבניו שכר טוב בין צדיקים בין רשעים למען כהנת עולם שנאמר והיתה לו ולזרעו אחריו ברית
כהנת עולם

Rabbi Eliezer said: He called the name of Phinehas by the name of Elijah—Elijah of blessed memory, (who was) of those who repented in Gilead, for he brought about the repentance of Israel in the land of Gilead. The Holy One, blessed be He, gave him the life of this world and the life of the world to come, as it is said, “My covenant was with him of life and peace” (Mal. ii.5). He gave to him and to his sons a good reward, [discernment of righteousness and discernment of evil]⁴⁸ in order that (he might have) the everlasting priesthood, as it is said, “And it shall be to him, and to his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood” (Num. xxv.13).⁴⁹

The two underlined portions in the Hebrew text (both preceded by שנאמר “as it is said”) are direct quotations of scripture. The first quotation is from Mal 2.5, which I argued above alludes to the covenant God gave to Phinehas in Num 25.11-12. The second quotation is from Num 25.12. Thus, when recounting the story of Phinehas, the author of PRE recognized the allusion implanted by the composer of Malachi and incorporated it in his new rendering of the events.⁵⁰

47. PRE 47 (Friedlander).

48. This clause does not appear to have been in Friedlander’s manuscript. See Warsaw 1984 Manuscript. Cited 30 Oct 2013. <http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/vl/tohen.asp?id=293>.

49. PRE 47 (Friedlander).

Thus, it is evident that not only does PRE 47 understand Phinehas to be Elijah, but also that his identity is closely bound to the book of Malachi.

4.6.2 Pseudo-Philo

One can also find the equation of Phinehas with Elijah in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. "*LAB* [is the] conventional ascription and title of a Latin translation of an early Jewish chronicle . . . the chronicle retells the biblical history from Adam to Saul's death . . . [it] is usually dated shortly after 70 C.E."⁵¹ According to Jacobson, "We must recognize that for *LAB*, Pinchas and Elijah are identical, one and the same person."⁵² Within Pseudo-Philo, Phinehas is referred to "in . . . seven passages (23:4; 28:1-3; 46:1-47:10; 48:1-2; 50:3; 52:2; and 53:6)."⁵³ The references to Phinehas follow the storyline of the HB and then continues into the story of Elijah—presenting their story as a continuous narrative. Here I will highlight two passages—28.3 and 48.1:

LAB 28.3:

Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said, "If Cenaz the leader and the prophets and the people and the elders allow, I will speak the word that I heard from my father when he was dying, and I will not be silent about the command that he commanded me

50. As Adelman notes: "The identification between the two zealots here hinges on the assumption that the gift of the 'covenant of peace (ברית שלום)' (Num. 25:12-13) is one and the same as the 'covenant of life and well-being (בריתי היתה אתו החיים והשלום)' in Malachi (2:5)." I agree with Adelman, but I also argue that the author of PRE recognized the *deliberate* allusion made to Numbers in Malachi. Adelman, *Return of the Repressed*, 195.

51. John Strugnell, "Philo (Pseudo-) Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 16:58-59.

52. Jacobson, *Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's*, 1060.

53. Louis H. Feldman, "The Portrayal of Phinehas by Philo, Pseudo-Philo, and Josephus," *JQR* 92 (2002): 316.

while his soul was being taken.” Cenaz the leader and the prophets said, “Speak Phinehas. Does anyone speak before the priest who guards the commandments of the Lord our God, especially since truth goes forth from his mouth and shining light from his heart?”⁵⁴

LAB 48.1:

At that time Phinehas was verging toward death, and the Lord said to him, “Behold you have passed the 120 years that have been established for every man. Now rise up and go from here and dwell in the desert on the mountain and dwell there many years. I will command my eagle, and he will nourish you there, and you will not come down again to mankind until the appointed time arrives and you will be tested at the appropriate time; and then you will shut up the heaven, and by your mouth it will be opened up. Afterwards you will be raised up to the place where those who were before you were raised up, and you will be there until I remember the world. Then I will bring you, and you will get a taste of death.”⁵⁵

54. *Et dixit Finees filius Eleazari sacerdotis: Si precipit Cenez dux et prophete et populus et seniores, dicam verbum quod audivi de patre meo cum moreretur, et non tacebo de mandato quod mandavit mihi dum acciperetur anima eius. Et dixerunt Cenez dux et prophete: Dicit Finees. Numquid aliquis loquitur prior sacerdote qui custodit mandata Domini Dei nostri, presertim cum exeat de ore eius veritas et de corde eius lumen refulgens?* (Latin and Translation: Jacobson, *Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's*, 142).

55. *Et in tempore eo Finees reclinavit se ut moreretur, et dixit ad eum Dominus: Exxe transisti centumviginti annos, qui constituti erant omni homini. Et nunc exsurge et vade hinc, et habita in Danaben in monte, et inhabita ibi annis plurimis. Et mandabo ego aquile mee, et nutriet te ibi, et non descendes ad homines iam quousque superveniat tempus et proberis in tempore, et tu claudas celum tunc, et in ore tuo aperietur. Et postea elevaberis in locum ubi elevati sunt priores tui, et eris ibi quousque memorabor seculi. Et tunc adducam vos, et gustabitis quod est mortis.* (Latin and Translation: Jacobson, *Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's*, 172-73).

Alexander Zeron first argued that Pseudo-Philo drew on Malachi for his description of Phinehas-Elijah. He noted: “[O]bviously Ps-Philo (28:3) knew [Malachi as the source of the tradition], for he describes Phinehas in phrases taken from Mal 2:4-7 (*Dicito Finees. Numquid aliquis loquitur prior sacerdote qui custodit mandata Domini Dei nostri, presertim cum exeat de ore eius veritas*, etc.).”⁵⁶ He focused in particular on the phrase “*exeat de ore eius veritas*—truth goes forth from his mouth”—arguing it was an allusion to Mal 2.6 (interestingly the part of the text that I argued is an allusion to Elijah). Jacobson agreed with him noting “that LAB probably wrote אמת יוצא בפיהו (cf Mal. 2:6; see Zeron . . .).”⁵⁷ Jacobson further agrees with Zeron, showing that the phrase *qui custodit mandata Domini* “who keeps the commandments of the Lord” is also reminiscent of Mal 2.7.⁵⁸

Pseudo-Philo 48.1 attributes significant parts of the Elijah narrative to Phinehas—going up on a mountain, being fed by birds, and causing the rain to stop and to fall.⁵⁹ Jacobson notes that the phrase *vade hinc* “go away from here” comes “from the Elijah narrative (1 Kgs 17:3).”⁶⁰ The actual phrase *cellum . . . aperietur* “heavens opened,” though it does bring to mind Elijah’s command of the rain, is used only in Gen 7.11, Deut 28.12 and Mal 3.10 in the HB. In Mal 3.10, the composer conflated Deut 28.12 with portions of the Elisha narrative. Thus, most likely, this is another allusion to Malachi. Accordingly, in Pseudo-Philo elements from the book of Malachi have been woven into the portrayal of Phinehas-Elijah. This evidence goes against Hayward’s

56. Zeron, “The Martyrdom,” 99.

57. (Pseudo-Philo was originally written in Hebrew) Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s*, 804.

58. *Ibid.*

59. “LAB’s narrative is built on that of IKi 17ff about Elijah.” Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s*, 1061.

60. *Ibid.*, 1060.

claim that “the *LAB* of Pseudo-Philo invokes no . . . scriptural proof texts, and this work, which in its present form dates from the closing decades of the first century AD, almost certainly represents the original state of affairs where Phinehas was identified with Elijah without explicit support of scripture.”⁶¹ While he is correct that there is no *explicit* scriptural support, the interwoven elements of Malachi suggest that the equation of Phinehas with Elijah did stem from scripture in *LAB*.

4.6.3 Yalkut Shim’oni

Yalkut Shim’oni is from the 13th century. It is often called “the Yalkut” of Simeon of Frankfurt.

The aim of the compiler of the Yalkut was to assimilate the bulk of rabbinical sayings at his disposal, following the order of the verses of the Bible. It contains more than 10,000 statements in aggadah and halakah, covering all the books of the Bible, most of its chapters, and including commentaries on a substantial part of the individual verses. He collected material from more than 50 works . . . both early and late.⁶²

Parashat Pinchas says:

Simeon b. Lakish said: “Phinehas is Elijah. God spoke to him: ‘You have made peace in the world between me and my children; in the [messianic] future too you are to be the one who will make peace between me and my children, as it is said (Mal 3.23f = 4.5f): Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet.’”⁶³

61. Hayward, “Phinehas: the same as Elijah,” 23.

62. Jacob Elbaum, “Yalkut Shimoni,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 21:275-76.

63. אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש פינחס הוא אליהו. א"ל הקב"ה אתה נתת שלום בין ישראל וביני בעולם הזה אף לעתיד לבא אתה הוא שעתיד ליתן שלום ביני לבין בני שנאמר הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום ה' וגו' והשיב לב אבות על בנים
Cited 30 Oct 2013. <http://www.tsel.org/torah/yalkutsh/pinchas.html> (Translation: Hengel, *The Zealots*, 163).

Here we see a direct equation of Phinehas with Elijah. Yalkut very obviously understands this equation of Phinehas-Elijah to originate from Malachi. He attributes the prediction of Mal 3.23-24 not simply to Elijah, but Phinehas-Elijah. Yalkut makes no other explanation, but assumes that the reader would already know this from the text of Malachi or from earlier tradition.

4.6.4 Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

Lastly, Phinehas-Elijah ideology is evident in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (T. Ps.-J.). In this Targum, a matrix of interconnected references is commonly related to the Phinehas-Elijah tradition: Ex 4.11-13, Ex 6.18, Ex 40.10 and Num 25.11-12. T. Ps.-J.

is a highly mixed tradition, an amalgam of interpretations from widely different periods. It has been argued that it contains at once some of the earliest and some of the latest dateable targumic material In its final state the collection has been worked over with some care, and in many ways Ps-Y [T. Ps.-J.] is the most literary of the Palestinian targumim.⁶⁴

As a composition in its final form, one can identify thematic and verbal connections between each of these texts, holding all of them together.

The relevant texts read:

Ex 4.11-13 But the Lord said to him, “Who is it that put the speech of the mouth in the mouth of the first man? Or who made one who is dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I the Lord? Now go, and I in my Memra will be with the speech of your mouth, and I will teach you what you are to say.” And he [Moses] said, “I beseech by the

64. Philip Alexander, “Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures,” in *Mikra* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 219.

mercy from before you, O Lord, send your message by the hand of Phinehas, who is worthy to be sent at the end of days.⁶⁵

Ex 6.18 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel; and the life of Kohath the pious was one hundred and thirty-three years. He lived until he saw Phinehas, he is Elijah, the high priest who is to be sent to the exiles of Israel at the end of days.⁶⁶

Ex 40.10 You shall anoint the altar of burnt offerings and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, and the altar will be most holy for the sake of the crown of the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, and of Elijah the high priest who is to be sent at the end of the exiles.⁶⁷

Num 25.11-12⁶⁸ The zealous Phinehas bar Eleazar bar Aaron, the priest, has turned aside my anger from the Israelites because when zealous with my zeal he killed the sinners among them; and because of him I did not destroy the Israelites in my zealousness. In an oath I say to him in my name: Behold, I have decreed to him my

65. ואמר יי ליה מאן הוא דשוי ממלל פומא בפום אדם קדמאי או מאן שוי אילימא או חרשא או פתיחא או סמיא הלא אנא יי וכדון איזל ואנא במימרי אהא עם ממלל פומד ואלייף יתך מה דתמליל ואמר בבעו ברחמין מן קדמך יי שלח כדון שליחותך ביד Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus (Michael Maher, 171).

66. ובנוי דקהת עמרם ויצהר וחברון ועזיאל ושני חייוי דקהת חוידא מאה ותלתין ותלת שנין חייה עד דחמא ית פנחס הוא אליהו Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus (Michael Maher, 176).

67. ותרבי ית מדבחא דעלתא וית כל מנוי ותקדש ית מדבחא ויהי מדבח קדש קודשין מטול כלילא דכהונתא דאהרן ובנוי ואליהו Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus (Michael Maher, 273).

68. Phinehas is also mentioned in T. Ps.-J. Num 21.32. There he works in conjunction with Caleb to “subdue villages.” In this passage he is not associated with eschatology, priesthood, or Elijah. This perhaps could be problematic when reading the T. Ps.-J. as a worked-over whole.

covenant of peace, and I will make him an angel [messenger] of the covenant, and he shall live eternally to announce the redemption at the end of days.⁶⁹

Deut 33.11 Bless, Lord, the possessions of the house of Levi who give a tenth of a tithe and accept with good will the sacrifice from the hand of Elijah, the priest, who offered up at Mount Carmel. Break the loins of Ahab, his enemy, and the joint of the false prophets who arose against him so that there will not be for the enemies of Johanan, the high priest, a foot to stand on.⁷⁰

Each of these passages from T. Ps.-J. have in common either a reference to Phinehas, or to Elijah as a priest (or both). All except the Deut 33.11 passage contain an eschatological expectation connected with the Phinehas-Elijah character: he is the one who is going to be “sent at the end of days.”⁷¹ Within this matrix of interconnected texts, T. Ps.-J. Num 25.11-12

69. פנחס קנאה בר אלעזר בר אהרן כהנא אתיב ית ריתחי מעל בני ישראל בזמן דקני בקינאתי בשבועא אימר ליה מן שמי האנא
Targum Pseudo-Jonathan:
Numbers (Ernst G. Clarke, 265).

70. בריך ייי ניכסוי דבית לוי דיהבין מעשרא מן מעשרא וקרבן ידוי דאליהו כהנא דמקרב בטוורא כרמלא תקבל ברעוא תביר
Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Deuteronomy (Ernst G. Clarke, 99-100).

71. The connection of Phinehas-Elijah to eschatological expectation is difficult to explain in terms of only Malachi. The phrase used by T. Ps.-J. “end of days” is a specific phrase found in MT Gen 49.1, Daniel 2.28 and 10.14 (amongst others) in the HB. “Horst Seebass perceives a development in the use of באהרית הימים. According to Seebass, in most cases a ‘limited future time’ is intended. He places Gen 49.1; Num 24.14; Deut 4.30; 31.29; Jer 48.47; 49.39 in this category. Other texts, he argues, use the phrase to indicate the eschaton explicitly (Jer 23.20 = 30.24; Isa 2.2 = Mic 4.1). In the last stage of development, the phrase comes to be used for the apocalyptic end of history. Dan 2.28 (Aramaic) and 10.14 are the clear examples here. In these last two passages, visions depict the destruction of human political states and the emergence of an indestructible kingdom. Hosea 3.5 and Ezek

specifically references Mal 2.7, attributing to *Phinehas*—not Elijah—the title “messenger of the covenant.”⁷² As I demonstrated above, the equation of Elijah and the messenger of the covenant is evident from the surface of the text of Malachi, and thus is an easy association to make. The identification of *Phinehas* with the messenger of the covenant requires the allusion in Mal 2.5 to Num 25.11-12 to be recognized and associated with the Ideal Levite who is the messenger. But, because of the nature of the references to Phinehas-Elijah in T. Ps.-J. (the developed eschatological expectation of Phinehas-Elijah), the inclusion of this ideology appears to be the result of the knowledge of a previous tradition more than direct exegesis.

4.7 Conclusions

In my introduction to this study, I argued that composition necessitates having a communicative goal. Through writing, the composer of Malachi intended to communicate a message. In order to communicate this message, the composer used various compositional techniques to shape his text. To conclude this chapter, I will explore these two facets, i.e., communicative goal and compositional techniques, in relation to my analysis of Malachi above.

My analysis above indicates that the composer of Malachi hoped to communicate the results of his interpretation of the scriptures that were available to him. This communication was

38.16 may also fall into this last category.” Tooman, *Gog of Magag*, 95. Most likely it is also in this latter sense that “end of days” is understood in this Targum. See H. Seebass, “אחר” *TDOT* 1:211-12. The expectation of the Phinehas-Elijah character at the “end of days” is very similar to the idea expressed in Mal 3.23: “Behold I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.” It is *possible* that Malachi’s ideology (an eschatological function of the Phinehas-Elijah figure) was conflated with phraseology (end of days) from other texts, interpreting “end of days” eschatologically.

72. The reference to his eternal life (חַי) could be a reflection on “the covenant of life and peace” given to the Ideal Levite in Mal 2.5, which would also connect him to Elijah who never died, but was translated. Or it is because he was given an “eternal priesthood” and if it is eternal, he must not die.

directed at the priesthood, pointing out their failures in light of scripture. The composer's interpretation was thus motivated by the desire to address the priests. This undoubtedly influenced which texts he read. In Mal 2.4-9 the composer communicated a specific failing of the priesthood: the priest's lack of success to live up to the standard of the "Ideal Levite." According to Malachi, God had given the Ideal Levite a covenant which was directly connected to "this commandment" (see Mal 2.2, 4). Through allusion, the composer made clear that the covenant was the one that was given to Phinehas in Num 25; the keeper of "this commandment" was Elijah. The composer identified both these characters as being the Ideal Levite, leading readers to the conclusion that these two characters must be the same person. The priest were failing to live up to the standard of Phinehas-Elijah.

The methods that the composer used to compose this pericope about the Ideal Levite, and the methods he used to communicate his message are complicated. The composer chose the locutions that he reused because they belonged to texts that fit the composer's interpretational method (based on themes and keywords), or because of his communicative goal (to shame the priesthood). The composer's interpretational method described above is not different from much of what I have described in previous chapters. The composer chose locutions from texts that he understood to belong together. These texts belonged together because they contained either similar themes or similar/identical locutions. The composer chose locutions from these texts that he could manipulate to create his own message.

The composer also drew from texts that best suited his compositional goals. Because he wanted to address a problem with the priesthood, it is logical that he would draw from a text that highlights the legacy of the priesthood, Num 25. In Num 25, on account of Phinehas' actions, God gave the priesthood a covenant. Malachi 2.1-4 highlights that the priesthood was corrupting the covenant through their misdeeds. What is interesting about the composer's choice to allude to

God's covenant with the priesthood in Num 25, is that there are no stipulations attached to the covenant in that passage. Malachi seems to presuppose that there are stipulations, and that these are not being fulfilled; the priests are failing in keeping the covenant God gave Phinehas.⁷³ By their actions, they are destroying it.

The composer chose locutions that would draw the reader's mind to other texts: he created allusions. By reusing locutions, similar syntactical constructions, and direct references (e.g. "covenant of Levi"), the composer did everything possible (outside of a marked direct quotation) to draw one's mind back to Num 25 and the story of Phinehas. The composer felt that this narrative was important for understanding how far the priesthood had fallen from the ideal.

The reuse of 1 Kgs 17.24 is more difficult to recognize, and thus harder to identify as an allusion. The conflation of 1 Kgs 17.24 with Ex 13.9 obscures the allusion. To remedy the obscurity, a/the composer of Malachi made the allusion explicit in Mal 3.23. It was important for the message of Malachi that it not be missed that the Ideal Levite, the messenger of the Lord, was also Elijah.

Later readers/authors did not miss this message. The examples of Jewish works discussed above demonstrate that the literary cues left by the composer of Malachi were successfully communicative. The later readers/authors understood that Malachi taught that Phinehas was Elijah. Because the allusions implanted by the composer of Malachi were successfully communicative, many theories about the use of allusion in the HB are confirmed. The reception of Malachi by later authors shows that the reuse identifiable in the Malachi was most likely

73. Nehemiah 13.29 suggests that the covenant of the priesthood can be defiled through intermarriage. This is unsurprising because God gave the covenant to the priesthood when Phinehas acted against intermarriage. Phinehas' action could have been viewed as a stipulation for the priestly covenant. Perhaps a similar type of reasoning occurs in Malachi.

intended as allusions that added integral information to the message of the book. To successfully understand Malachi's message, the reader must be aware of the literary techniques employed by the composer (as well as have access and familiarity with the texts the composer alluded to).

Previous scholarship has sought to locate the origin of the Phinehas-Elijah tradition in an historical figure or in concrete political phenomena. Instead, agreeing with Zeron, I have demonstrated that the tradition originated in the book of Malachi. The figures of Phinehas and Elijah were combined through the reuse of Num 25.12-13 and 1 Kgs 17.24 as well as internal connections within the book of Malachi between verses 2.7, 3.1 and 3.23.⁷⁴

74. Because the tradition stems from Malachi does not necessarily negate the arguments of previous scholarship. It is possible that the ideology from Malachi was appropriated by later authors to support the political or religious aspirations of historical figures.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

Scribal composition is any form of literary production implemented by the ancient literatus, the scribe. This study sought to analyze scribal composition by employing a range of critical tools available to biblical scholarship. Each chapter in this study inspected the book of Malachi with the starting premise that the scribe(s) who composed the text had a communicative goal.¹ In order to reach this goal, the scribe had a plan on how to write and/or rewrite the text. This plan utilized various literary techniques used to construct the text of Malachi. From this study on the book of Malachi, several aspects of scribal composition came to light. These aspects can be divided into two broad categories: those aspects concerning the historical scribe, and those concerning literary production.

5.2 The Historical Scribe

In my introduction, I defined a “scribe” as a person who had the education and skills to produce literature in the ancient world. I highlighted that it was a useful term because it did not assume an ideological affiliation (e.g. “priestly” or “wisdom”) or a specific form of literary production (e.g. redaction or copying). This definition of scribe has allowed for an unhampered inductive analysis of Malachi. By identifying patterns in the various literary phenomena in Malachi, I was able to form conclusions concerning the historical scribe as a reader, as an interpreter, and as a composer.

5.2.1 The Scribe as Reader

In every chapter in this study, I have demonstrated that the scribal composer reused older texts to create his own. One can observe through the scribe’s patterns of textual reuse

1. While I will be speaking from here on about “scribe” singular, this does not mean I do not acknowledge the possibility of multiple hands involved in the composition of one text—or in this case, Malachi. This does not necessitate that every scribe who was involved in the composition of Malachi (final form) had the same communicative goal.

that he read the contexts from which he borrowed locutions. These patterns of textual reuse show that the composer found value in an entire narrative or pericope and not simply in the locutions he reused. The locutions he borrowed for his own composition were meaningful to him because of the contexts he found them in.² Thus, in order to understand the compositional logic of Malachi, it is important to understand that the composer was a reader.

5.2.2 The Scribe as Interpreter

These patterns of textual reuse are also evidence of another aspect of the scribe: the scribe as interpreter. The scribe employed different modes of interpretation that best suited his composition. At differing times, depending on the scribal composer's goal, the interpretational methods seem to almost oppose one another. For example, as I noted in the conclusions to **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, in Mal 2.10-16 the scribe drew from texts that addressed specific themes: foreigners (with a subcategory of Edom), wives, and idolatry/other gods. From this observation, one must conclude that the scribe was not only reading (and reusing) older texts, but that he was also interpreting texts in light of other texts that he viewed as being pertinent to each other. By combining locutions from texts that addressed similar topics, the scribe created a new text that addressed all three topics at once. In doing so, he had free reign to choose which locutions best suited his compositional goals from a text that addressed his selected topics. This is perhaps most evident in the scribe's reuse of Lev 17.9 in Mal 2.12. There, although he reused locutions from verse 9, he was concerned with the larger context of Lev 17. The crux of this passage as a whole is found in Lev 17.7.

2. The scribe as reader and 'reuser' of older texts can also give us historical perspective into the shape of the text at the time that the scribe was reading. For example, in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.3.4** I argue that Gen 24.7 is an important impetus that lead the composer of Malachi to that text because of its discussion of covenant. But, Gen 24.7 looks very much like an insertion that is surrounded by the repeated locutions "but do not take my son back there" that mark a later insertion (*Wiederaufnahme*). If I am correct, and the covenant aspect of Gen 24 was important to the composer of Malachi, it would mean that the composer read Gen 24 after Gen 24.7 was inserted.

There, the people were instructed to sacrifice in front of the tent of meeting in order to prevent them from sacrificing to the “‘*S’eirim*’ whom they prostitute themselves after.” As I argued in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, it is evident throughout Mal 2.10-16 that the scribe was concerned with Jacob’s interaction with Edom.³ This increases the probability that the word “‘*S’eirim*,” another name for Edomites, motivated his choice of passages, i.e., Lev 17. But, to compose his passage, rather than taking the locution that involved the *S’eirim*, the composer chose wording from the surrounding context that better suited his own communicative goals.

The example of the *S’eirim* is also an example of a somewhat contrasting interpretational method. The scribal composer could read the meaning of a homograph into the text he was reading even when the meaning of the homograph was out of place in that text’s context. In this case, the author read “Edomite” into “‘*S’eirim*” in the Lev 17 context, even though the context of Lev 17 does not support the meaning “Edomite.” Another example of this method of reading is evident in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.11**. In Mal 2.6 the scribe conflated 1 Kgs 17.24 and Ex 13.9 based on the similar locutions דבר־יהוה and תורת יהוה, two phrases that without context could be viewed as synonymous. But, in the context of 1 Kgs 17.24, דבר־יהוה is not synonymous with תורת יהוה. Rather, דבר־יהוה probably means “a prediction or command to action that stems from God.” This contextual discontinuity did not bother the scribe, who understood the phrase differently in his interpretation. This would suggest that, although context was often important for the composer’s interpretation, the potential meaning of a locution rather than the meaning in context sometimes had precedence for interpretation in the exegesis of the scribal composer of Malachi.

3. Whether he was concerned with literal Edom or rather Edom as the archetypal enemy I was not able to deduce from the small portion of Malachi I analyzed. This answer should be available after an analysis of the book as a whole.

In **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, I also pointed out the composer's typological interpretation of texts. The composer "isolate[d] perceived correlations between specific events, persons, or places early in time with their later correspondents."⁴ Thus, events that were viewed as occurring in the past were also viewed as being paradigmatic for the lives of later people.

The interpretation of texts by the ancient composer then lead to his next step: to express the result of this interpretation. Thus the ancient scribe composed a text.

5.2.3 The Scribe as Composer

In this study, I have argued that a composition is preceded by a scribe having a communicative goal. By this I assumed intentionality: the scribe wanted to communicate with his readers when he composed his text. In order to achieve his communicative goal, he implemented various compositional mechanics and literary techniques. In this study, I addressed the communicative goals of the scribe in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, and in **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**.

In **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16** I addressed Mal 2.10-16. I chose this portion of Malachi because of its notorious difficulty and seeming textual problems. Through an examination of the patterns of reuse in the pericope, the scribe's communicative goal became clearer: he wanted to address the intermarriage with foreigners as an act of idolatry that pollutes the people of God and is deserving of judgment. Whether the author was successful in reaching this communicative goal is debatable; the passage does not lend itself to clarity. Would the ancient reader have picked up on the meaning of some of the scribe's more vague statements? Did the scribe expect his readership to recognize his every instance of reuse? The answers to these questions will require more research not just on Malachi, but also on other ancient texts.

In **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah** I demonstrated an instance where the scribe's writing strategy was successfully communicative. The scribe implanted allusions and

4. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 351.

structured his text in such a way as to combine the figures of Phinehas and Elijah, who is identified as the Messenger of the Lord. It is evident that the scribe was successful in his communicative goals because later readers/composers associated the person of Phinehas-Elijah with the book of Malachi. These observations also strengthen the evidence of other cases of textual reuse acting allusively that are adduced in the other chapters of this study. Because a rabbinic tradition can be traced to a phenomenon that can be observed in a modern day reading of Malachi, it increases the probability that the modern day analysis of the rest of the scribe of Malachi's reused texts and allusions were also correct.

5.2.4 The Historical Scribe: Conclusion

These different observations on Malachi have provided a window into the ancient scribe. The perspectives afforded by this window would not have been possible if one freights the composer of Malachi with a specific ideology or with a specific function of literary production (i.e. copyist versus composer). Starting from almost no presuppositions concerning the scribe who composed the text allowed the text to inform us concerning aspects of the historical scribe that are not frequently considered. What texts did the ancient scribe read? How did he read them? Why did the scribe compose? These questions were answered by examining the product of the scribe as reader, interpreter and communicator: the text. Besides aspects of the historical scribe, the study of the text as a the result of scribal composition gives us insight into the literary production of ancient texts.

5.3 Literary Production: Composition by the Scribes

As already noted, scribal composition is any form of literary production performed by the ancient scribe. The ancient scribe (or scribes throughout the transmission history of the text) had a communicative goal. In order to communicate, the scribe constructed a text through various literary techniques. These literary techniques are often pertinent to both synchronic and diachronic aspects of the text and its production. Below, I will make a few

observations concerning how these aspects of scribal composition were beneficial distinctions in the evaluation of the book of Malachi.

5.3.1 Scribal Composition: Synchronic and Diachronic

This study began the evaluation of scribal composition by looking at the text as a finished whole: synchronically. It sought to determine what kind of literary techniques were used and how the technique functioned. This enabled several types of observations in relation to both synchronic and diachronic aspects of the composition of Malachi. One type of observation identified the elements of the text that held it together and made it a literary whole. For example, the repeated use of a word to create a textual unit demonstrates a synchronic unity to the text. In **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.9** I argued that the composer borrowed a locution and chose to exchange one word for its synonym, a synonym that was one of the composer's preferred words. This change of synonym made the borrowed locution fit seamlessly into its new environment. In this example, I began with a synchronic observation (frequent use of a word), then a diachronic observation (the borrowing of a locution from an older text and the alteration of that locution in its reuse), back to a synchronic observation (the borrowed locution fits into its new environment and is not noticeable).

Another more complicated observation is found in my evaluation of Mal 2.16 in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**. Different interpretations of the text are possible depending on if one looks at the phenomena synchronically or diachronically. In Mal 2.16, I noted a phenomenon that resembled a *Wiederaufnahme*: the repetition of a locution to mark an insertion into a text. In the case of Mal 2.16, the locutions **ונשמרתם ברוחכם ובאשת נעורידך** and **אל-יבגד ונשמרתם ברוחכם ולא תבגדו** frame a small portion of text. In my assessment of this phenomenon, I argued instead that the repetition marks a parenthetical comment, the repeated locutions acting as brackets. I argued that this explained the abrupt shift in person and explained the disconnectedness of the material in Mal 2.16 with what came before. This

analysis views the repetition of locutions synchronically. I noted several reasons why the repetition of the locutions *might* not indicate a later insertion as would normally be assumed. This would suggest that the technique known as *Wiederaufnahme* was not simply a technique that was used to mark later insertions, but was also used to mark parenthetical statements. Of course, the repetition of locutions might serve both purposes: the marking of a later insertion *and* a parenthetical comment. This possibility blends a diachronic argument with a synchronic argument. Malachi 2.16 might be a later insertion, but it has a function to play in the synchronic reading of the Mal 2.10-16 pericope. More research on Malachi will be needed before this question can be answered more definitively, but it serves to highlight the importance of attention to the synchronic before one makes a diachronic evaluation.

Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah also demonstrated a mix of the diachronic with the synchronic. In that chapter, I argued that a synchronic reading of Malachi would lead to the conclusion that Phinehas is Elijah. I then demonstrated several cases of later readers who appeared to have come to this conclusion by reading Malachi. Why has the dependence of the Phinehas-Elijah tradition not been recognized to stem from Malachi? The difficulty in locating the tradition's origin stems from the failure in modern times to recognize the literary technique of allusion. This means that this literary technique was historically and culturally conditioned. The Phinehas-Elijah tradition is only found in Jewish rabbinical works. Among modern scholars, only Zeron identified Malachi as the source of the tradition (although many acknowledge that Malachi is somehow connected). This gap between the rabbinical works and modern scholarship demonstrates that the literary device fell out of use. Thus, the literary device of allusion (in relation to the HB and its interpretation) had a lifespan, recognizable through the tradition that identifies Phinehas with Elijah. The communicative goal of the composer of Malachi evident in the synchronic reading of the book was recognizable for a limited amount of time. For us as moderns, discovering the literary techniques employed by the composers of ancient texts can help us recognize their communicative goals.

5.3.2 Scribal Composition: Literary Techniques

The reuse of older texts is a compositional technique even more prevalent in the composition of Malachi than has been previously recognized. Scholars have pointed out the importance of the technique for Malachi, but as I demonstrated in **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, there are portions of Malachi that are a mosaic of older texts (notably Mal 2.10-16).⁵ From an examination of textual reuse in Malachi, several important observations should be made.

As noted above, the sheer density of reused locutions in portions of Malachi is startling. To incorporate all these locutions, the composer very often layered elements from two different texts into his own text, choosing elements from multiple texts that suited his own message. Because of this, the scribe's reuse of texts is often obscured. This suggests that not every case of reuse in Malachi was intended to be allusive (cf. **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**).

There are cases of textual reuse that do act allusively. For example, in **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah** I argued that the reuse of Num 25.11 and 1 Kgs 17.24 functioned as allusions. The Numbers text is meant to bring to mind Phinehas, and the 1 Kings passage brings Elijah to mind. These two characters are then combined into the figure of the Ideal Levite in Mal 2.4-9. Another example of textual reuse that most likely was intended to act as an allusion was the reuse of Jer 3.8, 11 in Mal 2.11. The locution “בגדה יהודה” is identical in both texts, but in Malachi it was not fully integrated into its new context. The exactness of the locution and the imprecise integration suggest that the composer wanted the reader to take notice of the locution and (most likely) identify where the locution was drawn from (Jer 3.8,11). This is further supported by the fact that it is imperative to recognize Malachi's previous reference to Jer 3.8, 11 in Mal 2.11 in order to understand Mal 2.16. I will further address these issues concerning the recognition of reused locutions in my section on “Further Research” below.

5. See for example Kessler, *Malachi*, 55.

The text of Malachi also exhibits the use of various types of wordplay as a compositional technique. The scribe had the ability to manipulate phonemes, graphemes and semantics for his own literary purposes. Wordplay is the mark of a highly literate individual. The scribe had to be familiar with the semantic ranges of words in order to exchange words with similar meanings; he had to know how words were spelled to play with graphemes; and the scribe had to have a clever ear to create words or groups of words that evoked a place, person or text. The many ways that wordplay can function will be discussed below along with other pertinent observations.

Wordplay can be allusive. In **Chapter 3, sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.5** I identified several different instances of wordplay that evoke another context. For instance, in **sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.2**, it is demonstrable that the scribe was evoking older texts. This is evident in **section 3.3.1** because of the interconnection between elements found in the contexts of these texts. In **section 3.3.2**, where the scribe played with the phrase “and the sound of their wings” from Ezek 1.24, it is likely that the scribe was evoking a text because of the specificity of the small detail he was playing on. The wordplay on a small aspect of the creatures requires intimate knowledge with the text in which they are described. If he had simply made a play on the word “Cherubim,” for example, the image of the Lord’s throne chariot would easily be evoked without recourse to a text. This contrasts with **sections 3.3.3 to 3.3.5**, where it is not clear whether the author was evoking specifically a text or whether he was alluding to a tradition. This is because **sections 3.3.3 to 3.3.5** all play on a name that would easily evoke a whole story, much like the proper noun “Rapunzel” would call to mind the story of a girl with long golden hair locked in a tower. The story would be suggested without evoking a specific text this story is found in.⁶

6. Compare: Devorah Dimant, “Use and Interpretation of Mikra in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha” in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. Martin Jan Mulder and Harry Sysling; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 391-400.

In **Chapter 3, sections 3.4.1 to 3.4.2** I argued that homographs influenced the scribe's choice of later lemmata. The choice of the rare verb קבע in Mal 3.6 was motivated by the scribe's desire to create a wordplay with יעקב.⁷ The use of ארבה in Mal 3.10 meaning "window" suggested the homograph ארבה "locusts" and prompted the scribe to write about "the eater" in the next verse. These types of wordplay mostly function to bring cohesion and artistry to the text. For example, in the case of the wordplay on יעקב, it would not have drastically changed the message of Malachi if the scribe had chosen a more common word for "to rob" than קבע. But, by choosing this verb, the scribe linked more closely the indiscretion reported in Mal 2.6 with "the sons of Jacob" in Mal 2.5. One could perhaps argue that the play on the graphemes suggests that the sons of Jacob are characterized by their robbery through the close association of the graphemes of the verb with the graphemes of the proper noun.

At times the recognition of wordplay seems essential for understanding portions of the text of Malachi, while in other cases, wordplay seems peripheral for understanding. In **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16**, I discuss the relevance of the play on Bethuel son of Nachor's name in Mal 2.11. The recognition of this wordplay is key to understanding much of what comes after this instance of wordplay in the pericope (particularly Mal 2.15). But there are other examples of wordplay that do not seem to change the meaning of the text. For example, in **Chapter 3, sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.2**, I argued that through wordplay the author hid another message into the text that is concerned with the location of the כבוד of God. This message does not seem initially to affect the overall reading of the text. Rather, it adds a level of depth to the book only recognizable through allusive wordplay.

My section on semantic wordplay suggests that the scribe could use wordplay to conceal his literary techniques, particularly his reuse of texts. Normally, wordplay is a literary

7. See Mason, *The Books of Haggai*, 155.

device that desires to be recognized. What is the point of the clever manipulation of phonemes, graphemes or semantics if the cleverness is not acknowledged? But in many of my examples of semantic wordplay in **Chapter 3: Wordplay**, the scribe obscures his textual reuse through his ability to play with semantics. Wordplay in these cases is used to harmonize portions of the reused text with each other or to emphasize a rhetorical goal of the scribe in his new composition.

All of these observations serve to underline that although a certain literary technique might be employed in a text (e.g. wordplay), it is important that one does not prematurely assume how each case functions. One must rather take into account the entire text and determine the role of each case on an individual (although still comparative) level.

Another pertinent phenomenon evident in the scribe's compositional technique of reusing older texts was his ability to exchange words for synonyms in his reuse of older texts (most evident in **Chapter 3: Wordplay, Semantic Wordplay**). This affirms the well-known point that when scribes reused texts they felt free to manipulate the form of the words used, or to expand or reduce borrowed locutions.⁸ What is significant about the changes that I examined in **Chapter 3: Wordplay**, however, is that the change is not an alteration of the locutions, but rather a *replacement* of the locution with a word consisting of similar semantic content. This replacement was done in the best interests of the scribe's new composition.

Excursus: The Importance of Textual-Criticism for Evaluating Reuse

An important observation that became clear in this study is the importance of identifying any textual variants found that might affect the evaluation of a reused locution. It is not guaranteed that we have today the version of the text that was reused by a scribe. It is important to search through all manuscript evidence to find the story that best explains the data we have today. For example, there were several instances where the MT contained a locution that the scribe appeared to have reused that was not found in the LXX. It is

8. See e.g. Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 256.

important in cases like these to consider which text is older, to consider the LXX's translation techniques, and to observe the poetics of the text to attempt to identify any disruptions in cohesion or coherence involved with the locution. Issues like these obviously can have profound effects on arguments of direction of dependence. These issues are evident in my examination of the possible use of Ezek 24.16-17 in Mal 2.13 (see **Chapter 2: Mal 2.10-16, section 2.3.4.2**). It is possible that Mal 2.13 reused Ezek 24.16-17 or that Ezek 24.16-17 reused Mal 2.13 in a later editing (the likelihood of this second possibility is increased because of the missing set of words in LXX Ezek 24). I tentatively solved the problem through examining the overall context in which the common locution is found, concluding it is more *probable* that Mal 2.13 reused Ezek 24.16-17.

5.3.3 Conclusions on Scribal Composition

Understanding a text as the product of scribal composition opens the text up to observations from both diachronic and synchronic points of view. These new points of view offer insights into texts fraught with difficulties and give a window into the communicative plan of the scribe. It draws attention to the vast array of literary techniques available as tools to the ancient scribes as well as their multifarious functional capacities. It further implements a holistic approach to ancient texts, treating them as artifacts of the ancient scribes.

5.4 Further research

In my introduction to this study, I stressed that the three chapters to follow were *preliminary* inquiries into scribal composition in general and the composition of Malachi in specific. The investigation is a foray into scribal composition because it only investigates the text of Malachi. The scribal composition of other ancient Near Eastern and Second Temple texts could provide further insight into the compositional techniques and hermeneutic employed by other ancient scribes. There are surely more literary strategies waiting to be uncovered. Further, a comparison between different scribes' readings of ancient texts would

be enlightening: did they all understand texts to relate to each other in the same way, or does the composition of different books evidence the reading of texts with different assumptions?

Much work remains to be done in evaluating scribal composition in the book of Malachi itself. This study concerned itself with excerpts of Malachi, but a study of scribal composition in the entire book is sure to yield more evidence; there are compositional techniques that have yet to be evaluated. For example, there is a preponderance of repetition (words and phrases) in the book of Malachi. What is the function of this repetition? Does repetition always serve the same function? Is it indicative of diachronic aspects of scribal composition?

Another relevant question that still needs to be addressed is the function of reuse in Malachi. In **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah**, I argued that the scribe's reuse of texts was allusive. But is every reuse in Malachi allusive? Can criteria be developed to determine the varying functions of reuse?⁹ This inquiry would also further inform the investigation of scribal composition in general.

More work needs to be done on how viewing a text as the product of scribal composition can critique or support existing redactional theories of Malachi. This would in turn also relate to Malachi's relation with the other books in the Twelve. An investigation of scribal composition in the book of Malachi as a whole would yield insights on its time of insertion into the Twelve as well as potential redactional additions that harmonize the book with its surrounding material.

5.5 Conclusion

The investigation of the book of Malachi as a scribal composition has yielded many new insights. This inquiry allows one to put aside assumptions about ancient scribes and how certain literary techniques are expected to function. It encourages one to think of the text both

9. Compare: William A. Tooman, "Between Imitation and Interpretation: Reuse of Scripture and Composition in Hodayot (1QHa) 11:6-19," *DSD* 18 (2011): 54-73.

synchronously and diachronically and to look at a text first as a completed work that was intended to communicate. The new insights uncovered by this study encourages more work to be done to expand further what we know about scribal composition and the book of Malachi itself.

Appendix A

The use of Deuteronomy in Malachi 2.1-2:

It is well known that Malachi contains many thematic and verbal parallels with the book of Deuteronomy. Here, I will highlight some important aspects of Deuteronomy's reuse in Malachi 2: the composer's interpretation of Deut 6, 11 and 28 in Mal 2.1-2.

Malachi 2.1-2 says: ועתה אליכם המצוה הזאת הכהנים אם-לא תשמעו ואם-לא תשימו על-לב לתת כבוד לשמי אמר יהוה צבאות ושלחתי בכם את-המארה וארותי את-ברכותיכם וגם ארותיה כי אינכם לשים על-לב "Now this commandment is for you, O Priests! If you do not listen and if you do not set it upon your heart to give glory to my name, says the Lord of Hosts, I will send to you the curse and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them for none of you set your heart."

Establishing Reuse

1) The locution המצוה הזאת is not common in the HB. It occurs five times in Deuteronomy and twice in Malachi (Deut 6.25; 11.22; 15.5; 19.9; 30.11; Mal 2.1, 4). Because the phrase is distinctive of Deuteronomy, it is most likely that Malachi is drawing from Deuteronomy for this locution.

2) The locution על-לב/על-לבב occurs frequently in the HB. It only occurs twice in Deuteronomy: Deut 6.6; 11.18 both verses that are found in texts that also contain the locution המצוה הזאת. Deuteronomy 11.18 specifically says על-לבבכם אלה ושמתם את-דברי אלה על-לבבכם "you will set these words upon your heart." Hill identifies Isa 42.25; 57.1, 11 and Jer 12.11 as possible intertexts for this locution in Mal 2.2. All these verses listed by Hill contain the words על-לב + שים plus a negation. In contrast, Deut 11.18 does not contain a negation, but is rather a command. Thus, it would initially appear, from the evidence of the locutions alone, that either Hill is correct and one of the verses he listed is the source of Malachi's phrase, or the phrase is simply idiomatic and was used by the composer of Malachi without recourse to

another text. But, two more elements should be taken into consideration. First, the verses listed by Hill all address the people not taking to heart punishment already sent by God. In contrast, Deut 11.18 advises the people to set the words of God upon the heart as an act of remembrance and obedience. Deuteronomy 11.18 has closer thematic coherence with Mal 2.1-2 (this commandment = these words). Second, as demonstrated above, the composer already drew a locution from one (or both) of the two texts in Deuteronomy the phrase occurs in. Because of these two further elements, I think it more likely that the author borrowed from Deut 11.18 rather than the verses listed by Hill.¹ Thus, the composer appears to have drawn either from Deut 6 or Deut 11 (or both) for the composition of Mal 2.1-2. As is well known, these two texts in Deuteronomy (Deut 6 and Deut 11) contain a substantial overlap of similar or identical information. Deuteronomy 11 also contains an overlap of information with Deut 27-28. These overlaps of information are pertinent to how the composer of Malachi read Deuteronomy.

How the Composer of Malachi Read Deuteronomy

From the locutions reused in Malachi I will demonstrate that the author was interpreting Deut 6, Deut 11, and Deut 28 upon analogy of their similar material. That the author read these passages (Deut 6, 11, and 28) together is evident by the way by the ways he conflated the material from each passage.

1) First, as mentioned above, Mal 2.1 most likely reuses the locution המצוה הזאת “this commandment” from either Deut 6 or Deut 11. Deuteronomy 11.22 specifically associates “this commandment” with “loving the Lord your God,” the phrase that directly follows the *Shema* in Deut 6.4.

1. Hill, *Malachi*, 402.

- 2) Second, Mal 2.2's phrase **אִם-לֹא תִשְׁמַע** suggests the negative enactment of the message of Deut 6.4, **שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד** "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one." This phrase is mirrored exactly (except for a change in number) in Deut 11.28 and Deut 28.15.²
- 3) Third, the next clause in Mal 2.2 **על-לבב** shares a locution with Deut 6.6: **על-לבב**, but more closely mirrors Deut 11.18: **ושמתם את-דברי אלה על-לבבכם**. This clause in Deut 11.18 follows directly after a warning to the people not to follow other gods, which is the negative variation of the same argument found in Deut 6.4 (your God is one).
- 4) Fourth, the next phrase in Mal 2.2 **ושלחתי בכם את-המארה** is nearly identical with Deut 28.20's **ישלח יהוה בך את-המארה** "The Lord will send against you the curse." This topic of blessings and curses found in Deut 28 is foreshadowed in Deut 11.26-28 which says: "See, I set before you today a blessing and a curse. The blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God . . . the curse if you do not listen to the commandments of the Lord your God."

The multiplicity of locutions drawn from three passages whose material significantly overlaps suggests the composer read the texts as referring to each other. To facilitate comprehension I have provided a visual representation of the reused locutions that are found in each text of Deuteronomy.

2. The exact phrase **אִם-לֹא תִשְׁמַע** occurs often in the HB: Gen 34.17; Lev 26.14; Deut 11.28; 28.15; 1 Sam 12.15; Isa 40.28; Jer 12.17; 13.17; 17.27; 22.5; 26.4; Mal 2.2; Job 36.12. Even though the phrase is common, because of the author's use of Deut 11 and Deut 28 elsewhere in the book, it seems likely this phrase was most likely also taken from these two passages.

<p style="text-align: right;">Mal 2.1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ועתה אליכם המצוה הזאת הכהנים</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Deut 6.1, 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>וזאת המצוה</u></p> <p>וצדקה תהיה לנו כי נשמר לעשות את כל המצוה</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>הזאת לפני יהוה אלהינו כאשר צונו</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Deut 11.22</p> <p>כי אם שמר תשמרון את כל המצוה הזאת אשר</p> <p>אנכי מצוה אתכם לעשתה לאהבה את יהוה</p> <p>אלהיכם ללכת בכל דרכיו ולדבקה בו</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Mal 2.2</p> <p><u>אם לא תשמעו ואם לא תשימו על לב לתת כבוד</u></p> <p><u>לשמי אמר יהוה צבאות ושלחתי בכם את המארה</u></p> <p><u>וארותי את ברכותיכם וגם ארותיה כי אינכם שמים</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>על לב</u></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Deut 6.4; 11.28; 28.15</p> <p><u>שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד</u></p> <p>והקללה אם לא תשמעו אל מצות יהוה אלהיכם</p> <p>וסרתם מן הדרך³ אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום</p> <p>והיה אם לא תשמע בקול יהוה אלהיך לשמר</p> <p>לעשות את כל מצותיו</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Deut 6.6; 11.18</p> <p>והיו הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוה היום <u>על לבבך</u></p> <p><u>ושמתם את דברי אלה על לבבכם</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Deut 28.20</p> <p><u>ישלח יהוה בך את המארה</u></p>

Admittedly, all the locutions above can be explained without recourse to Deut 6. I include the locutions from Deut 6 in the author's interpretative matrix because the text was

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3. It is also likely that the author drew from Deut 11.28 for Mal 2.8's phrase מן הדרך "You have turned from the way."

also influential on Mal 2.10 and 15's designation of God as אחד "One" (cf. Deut 6.4).

Additionally, I think Deut 6.4 holds the teaching that the author associates with "this commandment," namely that there is no other God but the God of Israel.

That the composer was concerned with Deut 6 is also demonstrable through other texts the composer reused which themselves point back to Deut 6 and 11. In **Chapter 4: Phinehas, he is Elijah, section 4.4.1.4 and 4.5** and **Chapter 3: Wordplay, section 3.5.12** I address this phenomenon in more detail, so below I will simply give a visual representation. The single underlined text indicates how the text was reused in Malachi. The double underlined text indicates how the text reused in Malachi makes use of distinctive elements from Deut 6.8-9.

Mal 2.5 <u>בריתי היתה אתו החיים והשלום</u>	Prov 3.2-3 כי ארך ימים ושנות חיים ושלום יוסיפו לך חסד ואמת אל-יעזבך <u>קשרם</u> על-גרגרותיך <u>כתבם</u> על-לוח לבך	Deut 6.8-9 (compare Deut 11.18-20) וקשרתם לאות על-ידך והיו לטטפת בין עיניך וכתבתם על-מזוזת ביתך ובשעריךך
Mal 2.6 <u>תורת אמת היתה בפיהו</u>	Ex 13.9 והיה לך לאות על-ידך ולזכרון בין <u>עיניך</u> למען תהיה תורת יהוה בפיןך	Deut 6.8-9 (compare Deut 11.18-20) וקשרתם לאות על-ידך והיו לטטפת בין עיניך וכתבתם על-מזוזת ביתך ובשעריךך

From this chart it is demonstrable that the author included texts that alluded to Deut 6 and/or 11 as part of his interpretive matrix. These observations are even more convincing when one realizes how closely together these elements occur in the book of Malachi: Mal 2.1-6, 10, 15.

Appendix B: The Use of Genesis 31-33 in Malachi

Mal 1.9 ועתה חלו־נא פני־אל ויחננו	Gen 32.31(30 in English) ויקרא יעקב שם המקום פניאל כי־ראיתי אלהים פנים אל־פנים
Mal 2.12 מאהלי יעקב	Gen 31.33 באהל יעקב
Mal 2.13 מאין עוד פנות אל־המנחה ולקחת רצון מידכם	Gen 33.10 ולקחת מנחתי מידי כי על־כן ראיתי פניך כראת פני אלהים ותרצני
Mal 2.14 כי־יהוה העיד בינך ובין אשת נעורֶיך	Gen 31.50 ואם־תקח נשים על־בנתי אין איש עמנו ראה אלהים עד ביני ובינך
Mal 3.20 וזרחה לכם יראי שמי שמש צדקה	Gen 32.32 ויזרח־לו השמש כאשר עבר את־פנואל
Mal 3.24 והשיב לב־אבות על־בנים ולב בנים על־אבותם פן־אבוא והכיתי את־הארץ חרם	Gen 32.12 פן־יבוא והכני אם על־בנים

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