Anger Management and Biblical Characters: A Study of "Angry Exchange" among Characters of Hebrew Narrative*

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ABSTRACT

The study of Hebrew narratives has generally shown in modern scholarship the intriguing artistry of the biblical stories. However, the apparent simplicity of the angry scenes has not generated significant engagement of its representations. Against this backdrop, the present study describes the consistent literary patterns in the representation of angry scenes in Hebrew narrative, and particularly identifies the different stages in biblical angry exchange scenes. These discerned stages include the description of provocation, the presence of anger-designated markers, the expression of questioning/conversation, and the consummation of the angry scene by a reference to an action plan, the pacification of the angry character or the resolution of the angry process. In this emotionally-heightened space, the study also underscores the stylistic features of the biblical angry exchange scenes as directly seen in the intentional quest to exploit, manipulate, and manage anger by biblical characters in the angry exchange scenes.

Keywords: Anger, provocation, designation, point of view, manipulation, characterization, narrator, plot.

A INTRODUCTION

Anger perhaps is one of the most powerful and complex of all human emotions.[1] According to Zoltán Kövecses, it is a "basic-level" and a "prototypical emotion category" which occupies a central importance in the mapping of human emotions.[2] While the intensity of anger may vary from one person to another, anger itself is supra-individual entity, which exists in every

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[1] Betty P. V. Ho, Mark Carter and Jennifer Stephenson, "Anger Management Using a Cognitive-Behavioural Approach for Children with Special Needs: A Literature Review and Meta-Analysis," *IJDDE* 57/3 (2010): 245-265.

[2] Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture and Body in Human Feeling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 3.

human being in different measures.[3] In psycho-neurological terms, J. M. Ramírez and J. M. Andreu have described anger as a "psychobiological" and "subjective experience" that is frequently "accompanied by autonomic nervous system arousal" which manipulates perceived realities through "cognitive distortions and deficiencies" and affecting "socially constructed and reinforced scripts."[4] More specifically, anger negates our humanness, and subconsciously transports the angry person to the dark region of unconscious repressions where the remaining dormant animal self is forcefully brought back to life.[5] In this excited phase, anger directly breaks through our fenced self, the civility of our charming personalities, conditioned temperaments, cultured inhibitions, and transforms one into an animal-like entity with facial, vocal and other bodily changes that individually take one back into the borderland of savagery/insanity.[6]

In biblical narratives, angry expressions are also very common.[7] While many studies on the centrality of anger in the HB have been under-

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[3] Jean-Marc Dewaele, "Expressing Anger in Multiple Languages," in *Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experience, Expression and Representation* (ed. Aneta Pavlenko; Clevedon, Ohio: Multilingual Matters, 2006), 118–151; Judy Woon Yee Ho, "The Language of Anger in Chinese and English Narratives," *IJB* 13/4 (2009): 481-500.

[4] Jesus M. Ramírez and Jose M. Andreu, "Aggression and Some Related Psychological Constructs (Anger, Hostility, and Impulsivity): Some Comments from a Research Project," *NBR* 30 (2006): 280.

[5] There are several modern studies which suggest a close connection between anger in human and animals. For this type of study see John Archer, "The Nature of Human Aggression," *IJLP* 32 (2009): 202-208; Allan Siegel and Jeff Victoroff, "Understanding Human Aggression: New Insights from Neuroscience," *IJLP* 32 (2009): 209-215; D. Caroline Blanchard and Robert J. Blanchard, "What Can Animal Aggression Research Tell us about Human Aggression," *H&B* 44 (2003): 171-177.

[6] In this state, anger is particularly responsible for war and violence, the destruction of lives and properties, animosity, rivalry, crimes and other social vices. While anger is often seen as a human emotion, the human race did not have complete monopoly of this emotion since the same emotion is also found among animals. See Pavel Linhart et al., "Being Angry? Singing Fast? Signalling of Aggressive Motivation by Syllable Rate in a Songbird with Slow Song," *BP* 100 (2013): 139-145; Joseph E. McEllistrem, "Affective and Predatory Violence: A Bimodal Classification System of Human aggression and Violence," *AVB* 10 (2004): 1-30; Jesus M. Ramírez and Jose M. Andreu, "Aggression's Typologies," *IRSP* 16 (2003): 145-161; Naomi J. Weinshenker and Allan Siegel, "Bimodal Classification of Aggression: Affective Defense and Predatory Attack," *AVB* 7 (2002): 237–250.

[7] The study of anger in literature has also become common. For example, see John L. Griffith, "Anger and Community in the Knight's Tale," *FJS* 42 (2008): 13-45. Study of anger in Jewish literature has also become popular. See Solomon

taken, the representational elements of the angry scenes, its literary effects, its role in characterizations and plot progressions have not been studied.[8] The reason for this neglect partly comes from the preoccupation with divine anger, and its pacification in mainstream Christian theology which had not clearly allowed the proper engagement with the literary features, techniques and representations of characters within the angry scenes.[9] Quite reasonably, the emotion of anger appears to take one into the dark alleys of biblical landscape with the deity Yahweh often represented for better or worse in the extreme expression of this said emotion.[10] In this regard, like any other character in the biblical world, Yahweh is often provoked and engaged in divine angry feats.[11] In fact, Yahweh has more references to been angry than any other characters in the biblical narratives.[12] Not surprising then, a study in this area directly constitutes an indictment of the character of Yahweh particularly when anger is viewed as a negative and unwanted

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Schimmel, "Education of the Emotions in Jewish Devotional Literature: Anger and Its Control," *JRE* 8/2 (1980): 259-276.

[8] For example, while the studies of Robert Alter, Meir Sternberg and Shimon Bar-Efrat have enriched the studies of biblical narratives, the defining place of angry scenes in biblical narrative is not directly engaged. See Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004 [repr. 2008]). In recent times, the importance of "prototypical scenario" of anger in biblical narratives has also become common. On this study see Ellen van Wolde, "Sentiments as Culturally Constructed Emotions: Anger and Love in the Hebrew Bible," *BibInt* 16 (2008): 1-24.

[9] Zacharias Kotze, "Humoral Theory as Motivation for Anger Metaphors in the Hebrew Bible," *SALALS* 23/2 (2005): 205-209.

[10] Eliot B. Gertel rightly observed that in the Bible "There is a very real and legitimate Divine anger that is at once terrifying and reassuring. It is terrifying in its intensity and power, and reassuring in its pure righteousness, both indignant and just, and in the possibility of atonement bringing God's forgiveness." See Eliot B. Gertel, "Divine and Human Anger and Grace: Scroll of Esther and Exodus 32-34," *JBQ* 40/3 (2012): 153.

[11] Paul A. Kruger, "A Cognitive Interpretation of the Emotion of Anger in the Hebrew Bible," *JNES* 26/1 (2000): 181-193.

[12] One of the common words for anger is חרה. It occurs most of the time in the HB with Yahweh as its subject. Concerning this word, Van Wolde notes, "Remarkably, of the 714 occurrences of these words in the Hebrew Bible, 518 usages have a divine subject and express divine anger, whereas merely 196 cases have a human subject, thus expressing human anger." She added, "One may even challenge the view that YHWH (or Elohim) in the Hebrew Bible exemplifies control over his feelings, for more than 500 times he is represented as subjected to the explosive force of fury and aggression leading to violence." See Van Wolde, "Sentiments," 8, 9, 14.

quality. On the other hand, even when the study of this type is undertaken, the diachronic commitment of modern scholarship until now did not allow the treatment of the angry scenes as a coherent literary construct.[13] To this end, the present paper seeks to understand the representation of angry exchange, its significance in characterisation, and the triggering of narrative plots.[14] It also seeks to underscore the artistic elements in the expressions, representations and dialogues of the angry scenes.[15] More tellingly, it provides additional insights into the emotional representations of biblical narratives in the manipulation, exploitation and management of anger by characters situated in this narrative space.

B ANGRY EXCHANGE SCENES IN BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

In modern fiction, angry scenes are very common in the mapping of the narrative world. They are primarily conveyed by the representation of charac-

[13] In the field of psychology, in spite of development in the studies of anger, yet as late as 2004, Eckhardt, Norlander and Deffenbacher observed, "lack of theoretical progress in achieving a basic understanding of anger as a socially and clinically relevant emotion" has made difficult the study of anger. They speak of a "theoretical confusion" in the study of anger. See Christopher Eckhardt, Bradley Norlander and Jerry Deffenbacher, "The Assessment of Anger and Hostility: A Critical Review," *AVB* 9 (2004): 18. See also Dominic J. Parrot and Peter R. Giancola, "Addressing 'The Criterion Problem' in the Assessment of Aggressive Behavior: Developing of a New Taxonomic System," *AVB* 12 (2007): 280-299.

[14] The use of "angry exchange" in this paper is to describe angry dialogue or conversation among characters with the expressed designation of anger by the narrator. In biblical narrative, there are perceived angry conversation that lacks a designation from the narrator. For example, in Gen 3, the narrator refuses to describe the exchange between Yahweh and Adam in terms of anger rather he described the scene in terms of fear (v. 10). The anger in this pericope is implicit and lacks the designation of the narrator. Consequently, the concern of the present paper is with conversations which have an expressed designation by the narrator rather than the ones where the sense of the character's anger is merely implied.

[15] Fay Bound described the general state of the emotion of anger in historical works thus, "The experience of anger, as other emotions, is increasingly the focus of historical attention. Benefiting from research in anthropology, sociology and psychology, historical investigation into the meanings and standards of emotions in the past continues to develop the interest in the self and the subjective characteristic of recent social and cultural history. Yet much of the historiography of anger has been subject to comparative analysis between early modern and modern affective standards, with rather less analysis given to the difficulty of accessing emotions in the past, or to emotions as lived experiences." See Fay Bound, "'An Angry and Malicious Mind'? Narratives of Slander at the Church Courts of York. C.1660-c.1760," *HWJ* 56 (2003): 59.

ter or characters in high emotional state.[16] For example, characters in anger are often seen as yelling, slamming doors, pounding objects, squeezing their brow, stamping their feet, with panting and accelerated heart's pulse. They could also be represented with raised voices, pointing fingers, ragged breathing, scowling eyes, and trembling hands.[17] Similarly, the anger of characters in modern fiction could be represented by describing them as slapping, kicking, beating, or engaging in verbal abuse and violent acts which could directly cause physical and emotional injuries to others characters in the same narrative space.

In biblical narrative, however, angry scenes are chiefly represented by the designation of the narrator via the means of any of the many angry verbs without the superfluous necessities of the preceding descriptive markers. Yet, in spite of this reticent character of the narrator in his description of the angry scenes, he conveyed nonetheless the vivid emotional character of this scene.

With greater simplicity, the narrator often crafts a scene of anger which precisely communicates the same level of angry emotions as the preceding modern counterparts. In doing this, the biblical narrator takes a difficult path rather than the easier path of representation of the angry scenes because with economy of words he directly creates and impresses on the reader the emotional content of the angry scene. In fact, using sometimes a single verb or at most two verbs of anger together, he creates in conjunction with certain artistic features the feeling of anger that is consciously felt by the reader of the angry scenes.[18] To convey this scene of anger in biblical

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[16] In modern fiction, anger itself often lies at the heart of an entire work which defines directly its origin and different representations in the novel. For example, Linda M. Grasso describes "anger as a mode of analysis, and anger as the basis of an aesthetic." She notes the "anger paradigm" employed by black and white female writers against oppression. See Linda M. Grasso, *The Artistry of Anger: Black and White Women Literature in America, 1820-1860* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 5. On this defining importance of anger especially in the work of Virginia Woolf see Jane Marcus, *Art & Anger: Reading like a Woman* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1988); Robert E. Stein, "Fear's Anger: Virginia Woolf's Psychology and Deliberative Democracy," *NPS* 31/3 (2009): 319-335.

[17] There is also the presence of gestures in the HB. On the use of gestures in the HB see Victor H. Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," *BTB* 42/1 (2012): 18-29.

[18] According to Van Wolde, "[i]n biblical Hebrew, nine pairs of terms (representing related verbs and nouns) are used to designate anger. These words are not merely synonyms, but define anger in a different way. They select a distinctive base on which anger is profiled and construe, therefore, this sentiment differently. The terms אף and אנף, חרה and חרון, and יחם and חמה highlight anger

narrative, the narrator crafts and heightens four closely related elements which are often found in angry exchange scenes. These elements of the angry scenes together collectively convey the emotional mapping of the scene, and thereby bringing this scene into a significant focus. While not all of the four stages appear in every angry exchange scene, but basic features of provocation, narrator's designation, questioning/conversation, and a concluding turning point often consummates the angry process in biblical narrative. The following are the descriptions and engagements of these four important stages in the representation of angry exchange scenes in biblical narrative:

1 The Provocative Stage in Angry Exchange Scenes

The first stage in an angry scene is the narrator's description of provocation.[19] In this phase, the narrator gives the rationale or reasons which lie behind the anger of the character. In all cases of designated anger, the anger expressed by the characters was primarily based on some forms of provocations. In fact, there are no characters in biblical narrative who are said to be angry without some forms of provocations. Considering this, Ellen van Wolde rightly observed, "In all occurrences of verbs and nouns designating anger in biblical Hebrew, this sentiment is always defined as having an

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on the base of [heat], whereas כעם and כעם relate anger to [humiliation]. Conversely, the terms זעף and זעף and רגז and רגז relate anger to the base of [agitation] and [shaking]. The terms זעם and זעם, on the other hand, use [noise] and [stammering of the tongue] as the conceptual base of anger. In contrast, the terms קצף and קצף construe anger from the point of view of its revengeful action, and, finally, the terms התעבר and עברה take the metaphor of an overflowing container as the base of their conceptualization. Thus, the nine pairs of words profile in biblical Hebrew aspects of anger on distinctive bases." Noting the implications for the narrator's use of any of these words or pairs, she observed, "In choosing one of these terms out of the language paradigm in order to describe someone's anger in a text, a writer presents anger on a certain base and from a certain perspective. Perspective is, therefore, more than point of view only; it is also a reflection of the selection an author makes out of biblical Hebrew language's conceptual possibilities, and this selection is as determinative for textual meaning as focalization is." See Van Wolde, "Sentiments," 8.

[19] In studies of aggression, there is a close connection between aggression and provocation. To this end, Anne Campbell said, "Although anger may not be a necessary prerequisite for some forms of instrumental aggression . . . it is a common emotional response to provocation." See Anne Campbell, "Sex Differences in Direct Aggression: What are the Psychological Mediators?" *JAVB* 11 (2006): 239. See also Leonard Berkowitz, "Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis: Examination and Reformulation," *PB* 106 (1989): 59-73; B. Anne Bettencourt and Norman Miller, "Gender Differences in Aggression as a Function of Provocation: A Meta-analysis," *PB* 119 (1996): 422-447.

object."[20] The designation of anger is used "in reaction to some previous provocation or if the person believes there has been a provocation."[21] Consequently, in the world of biblical narrative, there is no neutral anger that has no immediate causation.

In situating the cause of anger in provocation, biblical angry scenes also suggest that "anger comes from a clash in perspectives."[22] For example, the narrator reported that Balaam was angry only after his donkey refused to continue with him on their journey to Moab (Num 22:21-41). In this case, Balaam's point of view clashed with the one of the donkey. He wanted to go to Moab, the donkey refused to go, because unlike Balaam, the donkey saw an angel standing with a drawn sword in the middle of the road. To this end, Meir Sternberg notes "Balaam quarrels with his ass because he is insensible of the angel blocking their path."[23] Interestingly, the donkey's extrasensory eyes directly clashed with the limited perception of the prophet Balaam in the same way that his desires to proceed to Moab also clashed with the point of view of donkey seeking to frustrate this journey. Consequently, the narrator placed Balaam and his donkey in two different visual perceptions that inevitably clashed with each other, thus resulting to Balaam's anger.

Similarly, the narrator described Cain as angry because his offerings were rejected and the one of his brother Abel was accepted by Yahweh.[24] Concerning Cain's provocation, Patrick Gray observes, "Cain's anger and God's preference for Abel's sacrifice cause Cain to murder his younger brother (Gen 4:1–10) . . ."[25] Similarly, Samantha Joo notes, "On account of God's perceived preferential treatment, Cain became angry."[26] Robert L. Webb also says, "Cain murders his brother Abel out of anger and jealousy because God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's."[27] On the other hand, Pamela T. Reis observes that the anger of Cain creates a "scenario of vengeful brooding; Cain indulges his hostility toward Abel until rage

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[20] Van Wolde, "Sentiments," 8.

[21] Van Wolde, "Sentiments," 11.

[22] Jeffrey Berglund, "Face the Fire: American Indian Literature and the Pedagogy of Anger," *AIQ* 27/1&2 (2003): 88.

[23] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 172. See also Alter, *Art*, 105-7.

[24] See also Mark McEntire, *The Blood of Abel: The Violent Plot in the Hebrew Bible* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1999).

[25] Patrick Gray, "Brotherly Love and the High Priestly Christology of Hebrews," *JBL* 122/2 (2003): 347.

[26] Samantha Joo, "שׁוּמָה (2 Sam. xiii 32): Lot (*šiāmu/šamu/šīmtu*)?" *VT* 58 (2008): 263.

[27] Robert L. Webb, "The Use of 'Story' in the Letter of Jude: Rhetorical Strategies of Jude's Narrative Episodes," *JSNT* 31/1 (2008): 53-87.

results in murder."[28] In fact, T. A. Perry went even further to note "that Cain's jealousy, resulting in the murder of his brother," arose "from his fear of an upset of fraternal roles and loss of birthright to his brother."[29] However, even though the MT does not clarify to whom the anger was directed, it appears the anger was directed at Yahweh because Yahweh's subsequent interrogations aimed at addressing Cain's anger.[30] In this case also, the provocation of Cain came from clash of perspectives between Cain and Yahweh. It appears Cain refused to share the expressed sentiments of Yahweh towards Abel's sacrifice, thus leading to his anger.

In the story of the golden calf, the narrator reported that Moses was angry (Ex 32:19). Concerning Moses' anger, Dmitri Sliviniak notes that while the anger of Moses was provoked by the golden calf, it is a bit strange that "Moses' anger is directed, first of all, against the tablets and not against the calf."[31] In this case also, the anger of Moses was primarily provoked by the clash of perspectives between Moses and the makers of the golden calf (Ex 32: 1-35). In this pericope, Moses shared the same point of view as Yahweh as readily seen in the shared emotion of anger by Yahweh in v. 10 and Moses in v. 19.[32] However, this Yahweh/Moses' perspective clashed with the point of view of the Israelites who took part in the worship of the golden calf particularly as seen in the description of the golden calf as the "god who brought you out of Egypt."[33] This statement goes contrary to Yahweh's past declarations as the one who brought Israelites out of Egypt in the preceding narratives of Exodus (e.g. 22:2; 29:46 cf. 32:1, 4).[34] In

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[28] Reis also notes, "Cain's acrimonious speech and brooding thought intensify into furious savagery over time. The act of murder, unthinkable at one stage, becomes inevitable at another." See Pamela T. Reis, "What Cain Said: A Note on Genesis 4.8," *JSOT* 27/1 (2002): 107, 112.

[29] T. Anthony Perry, "Cain's Sin in Gen. 4:1-7: Oracular Ambiguity and How to Avoid It," *Proof* 25 (2005): 259.

[30] Joo, "שׁוּמָה," 263.

[31] Dmitri Slivniak, "The Golden Calf Story: Constructively and Deconstructively," *JSOT* 33/1 (2008): 27.

[32] According to John I. Durham, Moses' "anger is thus paralleled with the anger of Yahweh's response" in vv. 7-14. See John I. Durham, *Exodus* (WBC; Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1987), 430.

[33] See also for example the use of the "possessive" pronouns "these people," "your people" in the speeches of Yahweh in vv. 7-10 and Moses in vv. 11-13, and the final use of "his people" to describe the Israelites in v. 14 after Moses' intercession. On this stylistic use of the possessive pronoun in this passage see Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 213-4.

[34] The scene here is greatly charged with emotion as readily seen in Yahweh's description of Moses as the one who brought Israelites out of Egypt. Concerning this unusual incidence, Savran observed, "The paradox of Israel's actual liberator addressing Moses as the one who brought up Israel from Egypt (Ex 32:7) and

addition, Yahweh/Moses' perspective clashed with the point of view of the golden calf's worshippers directly causing the shattering of both the two religious objects namely the tablets of the ten commandments and the golden calf.

Similarly, the narrator reported that David was angry because Yahweh killed Uzzah (2 Sam 6:1-11). Unlike Moses and Yahweh shared anger in Exodus 32, David's anger in v. 8, differs from Yahweh's anger in v. 7. Thus, the provocation of David directly comes from Yahweh's killing of Uzzah (v.8). In this story also, the anger of a character was the result of a clash of perspectives; Yahweh's killing of Uzzah for impiety appeared harsh from the point of view of David (vv.6-7), hence a reference to his anger (v. 7) and the abandonment of the procession halfway to the original intended destination (v. 10). Interestingly, both Yahweh and David are angry (v. 7 and v.8), and both anger comes as a result of clashed perspective; Yahweh clashed with the point of view of Uzzah who seeks to help the falling ark of covenant, and David clashed with Yahweh's sense of justice in punishing Uzzah.

In addition, in the angry exchange scene between Jacob and Rachel (Gen 30:1-6), the demand of Rachel to Jacob, "Give a child or I die" in v. 1 expressed a clash of point of view between Rachel and Jacob, thus leading to the Jacob's angry response, "Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?" in v. 3. Describing the background of this provocation, Robert Alter notes, "With an alertness to echoes, we might observe that this the second time Jacob has been confronted by someone who claimed to be on the point of death unless immediately given what he or she wanted, the first instance occurring in the request of lentil pottage by his ravenous brother Esau."[35] Claus Westermann also notes "To think that after the beautiful, gentle love story of 29:1–20 this angry exchange is our first and only experience of their marriage!"[36] Concerning this provocation, Alter further observes,

> Until this point, we have been told absolutely nothing of Rachel's feelings as Jacob her kinsman first embraced her and wept over her at the well, as her father set her aside to make Leah Jacob's first wife, as she received Jacob's love but her sis-

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quoting the people praising another, *false* image of a redeemer from Egypt (32:8), sets up the central issue of the ensuing argument: When Israel is irresponsible, who will be responsible for Israel?" See George Savran, *Telling and Retelling: Quotation in Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University press, 1988), 42.

[35] Alter, *Art*, 187.

[36] Claus Westermann, *12–36* (vol. 2 of *Genesis*; trans. John J. Scullion; London: SPCK, 1986), 474.

> ter brought forth his children. Now, to motivate not only the action at hand but also the whole subsequent story of the two sisters and their offspring, the narrator at least give us access to Rachel's feelings and tell us that she was jealous of her sister.[37]

The anger of Jacob, according to Alter, is triggered by Rachel's jealousy of her sister which is here reflected in an Esau-like demand from Jacob for a child.[38] Similarly, Rachel's demand is weird because most barren characters in biblical narrative, like Hannah, Sarah or Manoah's wife, direct or confront Yahweh with their predicaments rather than their spouses.[39] In this case too, Rachel and Jacob expressed a different perspective.[40] Possibly as suggested by Alter, the point of view of Rachel clashed with the one of Jacob, thus resulting to his angry outburst of v. 3 because Jacob perceived an echo of Esau's demand in Rachel's request.

In other scenes of designated anger, the element of provocation could take other interesting forms. For example, Saul became angry at David because he was provoked by the songs of the Israelite women (1 Sam 18:6-15). In this story also, Saul's point of view clashed with the views expressed by the singing women. This clash of perspective inevitably led to Saul's anger. In Ahab's case, he was designated as angry because Naboth refused him the sale of his inheritance in exchange for a garden (1 Kgs 21:1-16). Naboth and Ahab expressed two different points of views which are pitched against each other. Ahab wants the vineyard for a vegetable garden, Naboth refused to sell this piece of land because it is an important ancestral property. Consequently, it seems in biblical narrative angry exchange scenes are usually introduced by the reference to provocation which directly comes from the clash of perspectives between biblical characters.

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[37] Alter, *Art*, 186.

[38] Gordon Wenham also describes the desperation in Rachel's demand of a child from Jacob. See Gordon Wenham, *1-15* (vol. 1 of *Genesis*; WBC; Dallas: Word, 1987), 244.

[39] Alter, *Art*, 188. Gordon Wenham adds, "To blame her husband for her plight also smacks of impiety, for the OT regards children as the gift of God, not of man (e.g., Ps 113:9). Prayer, not protest, should have been Rachel's reaction, as Jacob implies in his heated response, 'Am I in God's place, who has prevented your womb from bearing fruit?'" See Wenham, *Genesis 1*, 244.

[40] For Alter, the provocation of Jacob directly comes from the expression of jealousy by Rachel which is the outcome of the rivalry between the two sisters. The "rivalry in turn is linked through analogy with the whole series of struggles between younger and elder brothers in Genesis, and the repeated drive of the second born to displace the firstborn, as Jacob himself had contrived to displace Esau." Alter, *Art*, 186.

2 The Designative Stage in Angry Exchange Scenes

The second stage in the representation of angry scenes is the presence of an expressive designation pointing to the anger of the character by the narrator. In biblical narrative, the aftermath of provocation naturally leads to a clear designation by the narrator that the earlier provocation is now transformed into anger. In the designation of angry scenes, the narrator points to the angry mood of the character by directly connecting the character to any of the verbs of anger in the HB. In some cases, the narrator appends the adverb מאד to the verb in order to describe the intensity of the said anger. Wolde notes, "when the adverb מאד, 'very,' is added to the verb, the impact is further stressed."[41] Concerning the adverbial מאד in description of Cain's anger, Gordon Wenham observes מאד "indicates the intensity of Cain's passion."[42] Similarly, the narrator could also add descriptive markers in order to underscore the intensity of the anger. For example, after the rejection of the sacrifice of Cain, the narrator immediately described the anger of Cain thus, ויחר לקין מאד ויפלו פניו ("So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast").[43] In this sense, the additional description, ויפלו פניו in the company of מאד helped to underscore the intensity of Cain's anger and displeasure at his rejection.[44] On the other hand, Mayer Gruber has suggested that the phrase ויפלו פניו describes depression rather than anger itself because "anger [is now] turned inward upon the self."[45]

In contrast, the narrator describes the anger of Ahasuerus thus, יקצף המלך מאד וחמתו בערה בו ("Then the king was very angry and his anger burn within him"). In this scene of anger, the two verbs of anger (יקצף and בערה) were further complemented by the presence of מאד and the additional noun of anger (וחמתו) and thus suggesting the intensity of the anger felt by king Ahasuerus. The narrator's designation of anger here suggests a character in feat of rage whose feeling of self-importance is challenged or

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41 Van Wolde, "Sentiments," 14.

42 Wenham, *Genesis 1*, 103.

43 Reis surmises the "absence of provocation" particularly when the story is viewed from the perspective of Abel. See Reis, "What Cain Said," 107-113.

44 Mayer Gruber, "The Tragedy of Cain and Abel: A Case of Depression," *JQR* 69 (1978): 25-41. However, Aurin has observed that the "fallen face" of Cain implies the denial of somebody's request as made clear by its antinomy "to life someone's face." See Hans-Christoph Aurin, "Your Urge be for your Husband? A New Translation of Genesis 3:16b and a New Interpretation of Genesis 4:7," *Lectio Difficilior* 1 (2008): 12.

45 Gruber, "Tragedy," 92; See also Mayer Gruber, "Was Cain Angry or Depressed? Background of a Biblical Murder," *BAR* 6/6 (1980): 35-36; Paul A. Kruger, "Depression in the Hebrew Bible: An Update," *JNES* 64/3 (2005): 187-192.

undermined by the refusal of Vashti to come to him when he summoned her.

In the story of Jacob, the narrator designates the anger of Jacob thus, ויחר־אף יעקב ברחל ("and Jacob was hot with anger at Rachel"). In this scene of anger, the narrator deployed a compound word to describe the anger of Jacob namely the verb "burning" (חרה) and the noun "anger" (אף). In several cases in biblical narrative, the narrator results to this use of compound words in highlighting the intense anger involved in the angry scene. In the case of Balaam, the angry scene is further underscored by the use of the same compound words (חר־אף) for anger employed also by the narrator in the description of Yahweh's anger against Balaam (Num 22:22 cf. 27). Similarly, in the story of the golden calf, the narrator describes the anger of Moses with the same words he had earlier used to describe the anger of Yahweh (Ex 32: 19 cf. 10). Consequently, the anger of Moses is seen as an extension of Yahweh's earlier anger. In this designated scene of anger, Moses's anger mirrors and conveys the anger of Yahweh. This designation by the narrator provides justification for the anger of Moses in the breaking of the tablets, and helps in the overall characterization of Moses in the long run.

In the story of Jonah, the narrator designated his anger thus, וירע אל־יונה רעה גדולה ויחר לו ("and it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry") in 4:1. In this intense angry scene, the description of Jonah's angry is preceded by the verb רעע and followed by the phrase רעה גדולה (a great evil/displeasure).[46] Consequently, the various preceding modifiers help to underscore the intensity of Jonah's anger. In the only angry scene between Saul and David (1 Sam 18:8), the narrator represents this scene by means of the verb (חרה) with the adverb (מאד), and followed by the verb (רעע). Together, this grammatical construction describes the intense anger felt by Saul over the growing popularity of David.

3 The Conversational Stage in Angry Exchange Scenes

In a biblical angry scene, another important element in angry scenes is the stage of questioning/conversation. Interestingly, in all cases of angry scene, the designation of anger is often immediately followed by a question or series of questions whether by the character that is angry, his proxy or the

[46] Douglas Stuart notes that Jonah's anger is described by means of "paronomasia," which underscores "Jonah's dissatisfaction about" Yahweh "as strongly as would be possible to say it in Hebrew." In fact, "Jonah hated what God had done. It made him furious." See Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah* (WBC 31; Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1987), 501.

object of the anger.[47] In the story of Cain, for example, the questions following the anger was voiced by Yahweh himself. He says: "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it" (Gen 4:6-7) In this case, the questions are confrontational and seek to deter Cain from a dangerous course of action. They also have the undertone of pacification.

In the story of Rachel, it was simply, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" (Gen 30:2). In Jonah's case, immediately after the narrator's designation of his anger, he prayed, "Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my *own* country?" (Jonah 4:2). After the narrator's designation of Saul's anger against David, Saul said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" (1 Sam 18:8). In the only scene of David's anger against Yahweh in the HB, a question also resurfaces and places David's anger in parallel to anger's Yahweh against Uzzah (2 Sam 6:7 cf. v. 8). In this case, rather than indicating David's anger against Yahweh alone, a reverent fear is added to the scene, hence the text reads:

> The Lord's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God. Then David was angry because the Lord's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah. David was afraid of the Lord that day and said, "How can the ark of the Lord ever come to me?" (2 Samuel 6:7-9)

In this pericope, Yahweh's anger is unleashed against Uzzah, and killing him. In response, David became angry at Yahweh for his anger against Uzzah. The narrator here spiced the anger of David with the indication of fearful reverence, but reported the expression of David's anger in terms of a sober reflective question which appears to be inwardly directed at himself. In the scene of Abner's anger, the text reads: "Abner was very angry because of what Ish-Bosheth said and he answered, 'Am I a dog's head – on Judah's side?'" (2 Samuel 3:8).

[47] There are times when the expected stage of conversation in angry scenes swaps places with the narrator's designation, that is, the narrator's designation comes immediately after the conversation rather than preceding it. For example see the placement of the narrator's designation of the anger of Potiphar immediately after the conversation he had with his wife in Gen 39:19 rather than the usual order. The inversion of the order here is to emphasise the inciting character of the speech of Potiphar's wife to her husband. On the manipulative character of the speech of Potiphar's wife in this angry scene (39:7-20) see Sternberg, *Poetics*, 392, 423-28.

In some cases, however, rather than a mere question expressed by the angry character, his proxy or the character that caused the provocation it could take the form of a conversation with manipulating tendencies. In the studies of characters in biblical narrative, it has been shown that characters could engage in acts of deliberate distortion or manipulation of other characters. Concerning this representation of biblical characters, Savran has described the possibility of biblical characters engaging in a "deliberate deception" through "misquotation" or misrepresentation of each other.[48] Similarly, Sternberg has also shown that characters in biblical narrative could engage in "downright distortion" or providing another character with a "twisted account of what happened" which deliberately "manipulates a few points" in a story in order to assert a particular agenda.[49] Significantly, Shimon Bar-Efrat says: "It is, of course, possible for" characters "to be mistaken about themselves too, or even to distort things deliberately . . ."[50] In this regard also, the angry conversation appears to share the preceding pattern of representation with characters seeking to manipulate, pacify, manage or exploit the emotion of the angry scenes. For example, in Ahab's case, Jezebel his proxy asked,

> "Why are you so sullen? Why won't you eat?" He answered her, "Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, 'Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.'" But he said, "I will not give you my vineyard." Jezebel his wife said, "Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite" (1 Kgs 21:5-7).[51]

Jezebel, acting in the best interest of Ahab her husband, inquired of the reason for his anger, and the conversation took the form of question and answer with Jezebel asking the question and Ahab providing the answers. In this scene of anger, the questions of Jezebel reflect a similar concern like the question of Yahweh to Cain in Gen 4:6-7. However, while Yahweh seeks to deter Cain from dangerous course of action, Jezebel, on the other hand, wants to pacify the anger of her husband by getting for him Naboth's piece of land.[52] Here too, we see a quest by Ahab to manipulate Jezebel by

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[48] Savran, *Telling and Retelling*, 63-65.

[49] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 216.

[50] See Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 62.

[51] For the study of this pericope see Patrick T. Cronauer, *The Stories About Naboth the Jezreelite: A Source, Composition, and Redaction Investigation of 1 Kings 21 and Passages in 2 Kings 9* (LHBOTS 424; New York: T&T Clark International, 2005).

[52] Jezebel avoided the details of the stoning and just centered her message on the death of Naboth. In this sense, she seeks to pacify her husband by omitting the gruesome details of Naboth's death. Also reinstating this, Sternberg notes, "Hav-

his anger because he did not quote Naboth properly. He said Naboth told him, "I will not give you my vineyard" in v. 6. The reply of Naboth is actually given in v. 3 which reads: "But Naboth replied, 'The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.'" The strong tone of Naboth's reply and the basis for his refusal is omitted. Ahab's version of Naboth's answer did not give any reason for the refusal of Naboth. It is possible that in the feat of anger Ahab omitted these details, and thereby suggesting that the reason provided by Naboth did not count as sound reason from his angry point of view. Concerning further omissions in Ahab's speech here, Bar-Efrat also adds,

> When he recounts all this to his wife, Ahab omits to say that he explained to Naboth for what purpose he wanted the vineyard and that he also offered him a better one. He does say that he gave Naboth the possibility of choosing either money or another vineyard, but he reverses the order (first the money, then the vineyard), and instead of the polite form "if it seems good to you," he uses the simple phrase, "if you wish." These changes indicate that when Ahab spoke to Naboth he degraded himself, but when he recounted the episode to his wife, who was the daughter of the king of the Sidonians, he tried to conceal this.[53]

Whatever the intention of Ahab, he downplayed Naboth's answer, and presents to his wife Naboth as a stubborn person who just refuses to give his land away without any good reason. The presence of manipulation in angry scene could take the form of pacification whereby a character seeking to pacify an angry character may omit details in order to achieve this end. For example, after the narrator's designation of anger in the story of the golden calf, the text reads:

> He said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?" "Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to evil. They said to me, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.' So I told them, 'Whoever has any

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ing already done the dirty work on her husband's behalf, Jezebel continues to spare his tender conscience by watering down the brutal 'Naboth had been stoned and he died' into the generalized 'Naboth is not alive, but dead.' Interested in results not details, Ahab swoops on the vineyard with the same alacrity as Jezebel displayed in inviting him to take possession of it . . ." See Sternberg, *Poetics*, 408. Alter also added, "What Jezebel of course omits strategically from her report is the ugly fact of the manner of death–by stoning as the verdict of a trial she has trumped up against Naboth." See Alter, *Art*, 78.

[53] See Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 76.

> gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!" (Exod 32:21-24).[54]

Evading his defining role in the making of the calf, Aaron lamely said, "and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!" The omission is glaringly when one compares his statement with the original description of the making of the calf by the narrator in vv. 3-5. There, the narrator said: "So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool." The narrator also added, "When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, 'Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord.'" In his quest to pacify the anger of Moses, however, Aaron omitted these details and just said, "and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!"[55] George Savran rightly observes, "Aaron's defense of his own behavior in the episode of the golden calf (Exod. 32:21-24) is at odds with the narrative description of his involvement in its creation in 32:1-6."[56] Speaking of the emotional tone in speech of Aaron, Bar-Efrat notes, "the polite speech" of Aaron "indubitably reflects the speaker's feelings of guilt towards his brother and the desire to appease him."[57] In the story of Naaman, the designation of the angry scene is also followed by the expression of anger by Naaman in series of questions (1 Kgs 5:1-14.cf. see v. 12). In this incident also, the servant, with polite differential address, describing Naaman as his father, and seek also to pacify the anger of his master by rephrasing and reordering the words of Elisha differently. He said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed!'" (2 Kgs 5:13). The original words of Elisha read: "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed" (v.10). The servant, seeking to pacify the anger of his master, focuses Naaman's attention on the simple character of the task required from him by the prophet. In fact, he summarized the requirement

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[54] On the significant place of this pericope in Pentateuch see James Watts, "Aaron and the Golden Calf in the Rhetoric of the Pentateuch," *JBL* 130/3 (2011): 417-430.

[55] Rather than an incident of "autogeneration," John I. Durham notes that Aaron's claims that he put the gold in fire and behold out came the calf is a technique by the "master narrator" in this pericope to show the absurdity of Aaron's reply. He observes "Aaron's response is begun in a manner quite similar to the beginning of Moses' response to Yahweh in v 11, but there the parallel ends… [he] attempts to call attention away from his own involvement by putting the blame for what has happened on the people. He succeeds thereby only in appearing absurd . . ." See Durham, *Exodus*, 430.

[56] George Savran, "The Character as Narrator in Biblical Narrative," *Proof* 5/1 (1985): 2.

[57] See Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 67.

of the prophet as merely "wash and be clean." In this rephrased version of Elisha's words, the servant omitted the "seven times" and the "river Jordan," and by doing so, he turns the attention of his master from the ethnocentric feelings towards "river Jordan" and redirects him to the simple acts of washing in order to get well.

Similarly, angry characters could be in group, and in this case, the questions will express the combined anger of all the members of this group. However, even when anger takes place among a group against another character, the possibility of manipulation will also be present. For example, after the designation of anger by the narrator, the philistine lords in group expressed their anger against Achish and their displeasure of David with streams of questions. The narrator of 1 Samuel said,

> But the Philistine commanders were angry with him and said, "Send the man back, that he may return to the place you assigned him. He must not go with us into battle, or he will turn against us during the fighting. How better could he regain his master's favor than by taking the heads of our own men? Isn't this the David they sang about in their dances: 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands?'" (1 Sam 29:4-5).

The philistine commanders appear to deploy a favorite song about David in order to manipulate, influence or won over Achish to their point of view. They asked, "Isn't this the David they sang about in their dances: 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands?'" Interestingly, this song cited by these Philistine commanders was the same song that triggered the anger of Saul against David in the first place (1 Sam 18:7-8). The exact citation of the song here to express their anger suggests a deliberate quest by the narrator to show that the anger of the philistines in this passage directly mirrored the original anger of Saul.[58] In this scene of

[58] In manipulating this angry scene further, David seeks to pacify the anger of the Philistine commanders through Achish by saying, "What have you found against your servant from the day I came to you until now? Why can't I go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" (1 Sam 29:8). Concerning this reply, Ralph Klein notes, "He professed amazement that he would be disbarred for any reason from fighting the enemies of 'my lord, the king.' To Achish that may have sounded like very good news, but David may have intended to refer to *Saul* with the words 'my lord the king' . . . To fight against Saul's enemies would mean Achish and his Philistine colleagues! The word 'lord' is used three times in this chapter (vv 4, 8, 10) to designate David's relationship to a superior, and in each case the person indicated is probably Saul. This double entendre was lost on Achish." See Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC 10; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983), 277.

anger, the Philistine commanders deployed and manipulate the sentiments of a song in order to express their displeasure of David.[59]

Similarly, we see the same plot to manipulate a character's anger in Esther 1:12-22. After the designation of Ahasuerus's anger in v. 12, and the description of the customary practice of the king reporting serious issues to the chief administrative cabinet of the Persian king in vv. 13-14, the narrator reported in v. 15, "'According to law, what must be done to Queen Vashti?' he asked. 'She has not obeyed the command of King Xerxes that the eunuchs have taken to her.'" Interestingly, the question here reveals the anger of the king by the way he mentioned his own name and title in the question. Usually if one is speaking he does not mention his name or title when he is actually referring to himself. Consequently, the emphasis here is to point to the angry feeling of king Ahasuerus that his office and his ego have been hurt by Vashti's refusal to come when he summoned her. In a sense, his question projects his hurt and pain, and Memucan cashed on this hurt and further manipulates the same emotion in order to bring about a wide political reform. The exaggeration of Memucan's response to the king in vv. 16-20 reveals a crafty character who explores the immediate anger of the king in order to bring about wider family reforms in the world of the story.

In addition, an angry character may also participate in an elaborate plan to deceive. In the story of Gaal and Zebul in Judges 9:26-41, we see the elaborate plan to deceive and even frustrate another character by an angry one. Gaal boasted against Abimelech in vv. 28-29, thus making Zebul angry. After the narrator described the anger of Zebul against Gaal in v. 30, the narrator reports how Zebul in anger secretly asked Abimelech to come to Shechem and to confront Gaal in vv. 31-35. Reporting this manipulative scene, the narrator said,

> When Gaal saw them, he said to Zebul, "Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountains!" Zebul replied, "You mistake the shadows of the mountains for men." But Gaal spoke up again: "Look, people are coming down from the center of the land, and a company is coming from the direction of the soothsayers' tree." Then Zebul said to him, "Where is your big talk now, you who said, 'Who is Abimelech that we should be subject to him?' Aren't these the men you ridiculed? Go out and fight them!"

[59] In addition, Bar-Efrat notes the "element of flattery" particularly in his exaggerative description of David as the "angel of the Lord" in 1 Sam 29:9. Bar-Efrat observes "It is no small matter to compare someone to an angel of God." For Achish, according to Bar-Efrat, "is concerned David is as honest and upright as the angel of God." See Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 58.

In this story, the angry character misled another character into feeling safe and secured only to bring to the surface his engineered plot when it is already too late. There is in this pericope the presence of false reassurance and manipulation because the character Zebul kept reassuring Gaal that he has mistaken the shadow of the mountains for men, and then later confirmed to Gaal that what he had described earlier to him as shadows are actually soldiers coming from the foot of the mountain to attack him.

Similarly, there seems to be elements of manipulation in Jonah's psalm-like prayers to God after his designation of anger by the narrator in Jonah 4:1. The narrator reported of Jonah thus, "He prayed to the Lord, 'Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my *own* country? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.'"[60] Ironically, while the narrator points to Jonah's anger in v. 1, Jonah himself referred to God as being "slow to anger" in v. 2. It appears Jonah's anger stands in the face of Yahweh's slowness in anger. For Jonah, even though Yahweh's slowness to anger seemed good or does make sense to him as per a good theology, he is not buying this "divine slowness" at this moment.[61] In anger, he wanted Yahweh to act against the inhabitants of Nineveh. Consequently, Jonah's staged anger scene has some inherent manipulative tendency.[62]

There are times when the conversation preceding a designation of anger is not manipulative but rather to speak sense to the angry person. In the scene of anger between Balaam and his donkey, the same question and answering conversation is also present, but the donkey's reply to Balaam was to pacify his anger and to help him so that he could see the limitations of his sight. Savran notes "the ass tries to provide some perspective to assuage her master's anger . . ." and "Balaam's monosyllabic response seems to indicate that he is persuaded by her reasoning."[63] In this scene of anger, there is also the apparent quest to ridicule Balaam because even though he is a prophet, he did not see beyond his nose. In fact, while he continually beats his donkey in anger, the donkey intelligently presents a

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[60] Jonah appears to quote or echo the central teaching of the HB on the character of Yahweh. The words of Jonah on Yahweh's graciousness, compassion and slowness to anger appeared in "Exod 34:6 and thereafter occurs in Num 14:18; Pss 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Nah 1:3; Neh 9:17." See Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 502.

[61] As suggested by Stuart, "Jonah did not want Yahweh to do what was right and proper according to his merciful nature." See Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 502.

[62] For the study of other aspects of this "rich and subtle artistry" within or even outside of the book of Jonah see Paul Kim, "Jonah Read Intertextually," *JBL* 126/3 (2007): 497-528.

[63] Savran, "Beastly Speech: Intertextuality, Balaam's Ass and the Garden of Eden," *JSOT* 64 (1994): 38.

persuasive appeal which drew Balaam's attention to his distinguished records of faithful service to him, and the need to see this present strange occurrence as something beyond his immediate control. Consequently, the reply of the donkey is to calm the angry Balaam in order to prepare him for the message of the angel in vv. 31-35.

In some cases, the questions in angry scenes actually could help to express the ridicule by angry characters rather than just a character. In narrating the anger of Sanballat and his comrade Tobiah, the text reads:

> When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, "What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble--burned as they are?" Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, "What they are building – if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!" (Neh 4:1-3).

In this scene of anger, the two characters express their contempt for the building project embarked upon by Nehemiah. While Sanballat expresses his anger in question, Tobiah answered and sought to pacify his friend's anger by telling him not to worry because the project is doomed to fail since even if a "fox" runs over the wall, it will throw down the stones from the wall. Concerning Sanballat's anger, H. M. G. Williamson said, "Sanballat uses ridicule as a means of avoiding loss of face in the presence of his supporters and subordinates."[64] He also added, "his extreme anger indicates the start of desperation on his part that Nehemiah may, after all, succeed."[65] In this sense, the words of Tobiah seek to pacify the anger of Sanballat which, in spite of its ridiculing tone, conceals a worrisome perception of the building project.

On the other hand, an angry character in a feat of rage could also misconceive or misinterpret realities around him. In this angry scene, the angry question could show this misconception of things by the angry character, and hence suggesting the distorting power of anger. For example, king Ahasuerus asked, "'[w]ill he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?' As soon as the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face" (Esther 7:8). Earlier describing this angry scene, the narrator reports: "The king got up in a rage, left his wine and went out into the palace garden. But Haman, realizing that the king had already decided his fate, stayed behind to beg Queen Esther for his life" (Esther 7:7). In anger, king

[64] Hugh M. G. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC; Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1985), 215.
[65] Williamson, *Ezra*, 215.

Ahasuerus mistakes Haman's begging of Esther and his "falling on the couch where Esther was reclining" as a quest to molest Esther, thus sealing the doom of Haman. In this particular case, the angry character in the angry scene perceives and interprets differently the action of another character. In fact, he misunderstood the "begging" of the queen by Haman as a molestation of the queen. The pericope describes the blinding effect of anger, and suggests the possibility of a character's misreading or misinterpreting the action of another character because of anger.[66]

In addition, a character in a scene of anger could use foul language or howl insult at the object of his anger in order to fully express his anger. For example, on the anger of Saul against his son Jonathan, the narrator said, "Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, 'You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you?'" (1 Samuel 20:30). Here, Saul's anger is expressed by the means of insult and foul language which has no hint of politeness or respect for Jonathan, and they clearly show Saul's contempt for his son's relationship with David.[67] In his anger, Saul blamed Jonathan's mother for his friendly disposition and excessive show of support for David since Saul himself has no place for this sentiment, and particularly exhibited the opposite of this disposition by wanting to kill David (v. 31). Situated in its patriarchal milieu, Saul also appears to suggest that Jonathan has become emasculated and turned into a "woman" by his expression of culturally perceived "femi-

[66] In the story of the dying Elisha and king Jehoash, the king failed to properly read the prophet's intention and thereby leading to the prophet's anger. The story describes how Elisha ordered the king to open the east window and shot "arrows of victory" against the Aramean army. However, the prophet was disappointed when the king shot the arrows three times and then stopped. The character's anger here was preceded by his feeling of disappointment because another character did not properly understood or read his prophetic intention. "The anger of Elisha," according T. R. Hobbs, is because he lacks determination and has a "tendency to think small." See Raymond Hobbs, *2 Kings* (WBC 13; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1985), 170]. In this particular scene, however, the prophet's anger is not conveyed by questions as is the general norm in biblical angry scenes rather it is expressed by a prophetic statement underscoring the three times victory of Israel over Aram (See 2 Kgs 13:14-20). It seems the absolute clairvoyant/prophetic characterization of Elisha in the immediate cycle of stories possibly influenced the absence of the expected questioning aspect/motif in biblical angry scene.

[67] Describing Saul's contempt for his son, Klein notes "Jonathan was accused of forsaking his father to whom, as son and subject, he owed allegiance. While Jonathan had repeatedly referred to Saul as 'my father,' Saul referred to him neither as 'my son' nor by his name." In fact, "Saul accused Jonathan of being a comrade or ally of David, a friendship that should be embarrassing to him as it was embarrassing to the nakedness, or genitals, of his mother." See Klein, *1 Samuel*, 208, cf. 210.

nine virtues" of love for David, his father's enemy, rather than seeking to kill him as his father and the societal norms of the ancient world expect him to do.[68] Consequently, with verbal insults, Saul in anger blamed Jonathan's mother as being responsible for the sentimental attachment of Jonathan to David.[69] In these various ways, angry exchange scenes show conversational features with tendency for manipulation, abuse and exploitation of the emotion of anger by biblical characters situated at the angry scenes.

4 The Consummative Stage in Angry Exchange Scenes

In biblical scenes of anger, another important element of this scene is the presence of a significant course of action whether by the angry character, his proxy or the character who is the object of the anger. The significant action may be a turning point, a quest to pacify, a tragic end which naturally consummate the angry process. For example, in the story of Saul's anger against David, the angry scene initiated an important turning point in the relationship between David and Saul. In fact, it begins the process of rivalry and distrust between these two characters. In the story of Jacob's anger against Rachel, she suggested the marriage of Jacob to Bilhah which added a new important element in the story of rivalry between Rachel and Leah (Gen 30:1-24). In the story of Jonah, Yahweh taught Jonah an important lesson through the shrub and helped Jonah also to see the futility of his ethnocentric thinking, and Yahweh's compassion for the Ninevites (4: 5-11). In Cain's story, Cain's anger led to murder (Gen 4:8-16) and Ahab's anger led also to the same tragic end, the murder of Naboth (1 Kgs 21:8-29).[70]

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[68] Concerning the nature of Jonathan's love and attachment to David see Markus Zehnder, "Observations on the Relationship between David and Jonathan and the Debate on Homosexuality," *WTJ* 69 (2007): 127-74; Orly Keren, "David and Jonathan: A Case of Unconditional Love?" *JSOT* 37/1 (2012): 3-23.

[69] In response to his father, Jonathan inquired from Saul the reason for his wanting to kill David (v. 32). However, without a reply, Saul hurled a spear at Jonathan in order to kill him (v. 33). It is interesting to note that the scene of Saul's anger against David in 2 Sam 18:6-8 is also immediately followed by Saul's throwing of his spear at David (vv. 10-11). Significantly, these are the only characters in the HB that Saul directed his spears against them. In short, by throwing his spears at Jonathan, he appears to suggest that Jonathan has now become like David to him because by siding with his enemy Saul obviously conceived Jonathan also as an enemy. On the other hand, humiliated by these disrespectful verbal and physical treatments of his father, Jonathan left the table in "fierce anger" (v. 34).

[70] To this end, Wenham observes in biblical narrative "being 'very angry' is often a prelude to homicidal acts (cf. 34:7; 1 Sam 18:8; Neh 4:1; cf. Num 16:15; 2 Sam 3:8)." See Wenham, *Genesis 1*, 103.

However, in the story of Balaam, Yahweh opened Balaam's eyes to see the angel of death that was standing in front of him, and thereby leading to an important moment of epiphany or the self-realization of Balaam's limitations as a prophet (Num 22:31-41).[71] In the story of the Philistine commanders, Achish pacified their anger by sending David back from the battle, thus helping to remove the awkward situation of David fighting with the Philistines against Israel. On the other hand, David's anger against Yahweh resulted in his decision to temporally abandon the ark in the house of Obed-Edom and not to bring the ark to the palace area as originally intended (2 Sam 6:6-11). In the case of Sanballat's anger, Nehemiah leads to an important moment of prayer whereby Nehemiah presents the ridicules of Sanballat and his comrades to Yahweh. In Abner's case, the angry scene triggered a major quest by Abner to turn the kingdom of Israel over to David (2 Sam 3:6-21).[72] In the expression of Saul's anger against Jonathan, it immediately led to the course of events that finally severed David's relationship with Saul and later thrust him out into living among the Philistines. In the angry scene involving king Ahasuerus, the king in anger commanded Vashti to be replaced (Esther 1:9-22), and Haman to be executed (Esther 7:1-10). In all the preceding examples, angry scenes appears to help in moving the story forward and have also attending impact on plot progression of biblical narratives.

C THE REPRESENTATIONAL PATTERNS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ANGRY EXCHANGE SCENES

Drawing from the preceding scenes of anger in biblical narratives, some characteristics of the angry scenes clearly emerged. Five characteristics of this scene could be readily highlighted. First, the scenes of anger in biblical narrative aid in the narrator's characterization. In fact, the way a character responds to or behaves in a scene of anger tells the reader a lot about this character. The narrator carefully places appropriate speeches on the lips of characters in an angry exchange scene in order to help with this objective of characterization. Secondly, angry scenes reveal the masculinity of anger in biblical narrative.[73] It is strange that no female character in the entire HB is designated with any of the many verbs of anger. It is only male characters that are usually angry. Interestingly, female characters are placed in con-

[71] Savran describes Balaam's self-realization in terms of "reeducation." See Savran, *Telling and Retelling*, 91.

[72] Describing the drastic effect of Abner's anger, A. A. Anderson said, "the open rebellion declared by Abner seems a very drastic step in comparison with Ish-bosheth's accusation, which even Abner himself considered as based on a trifling incident." According to Anderson, the anger leads to a "surprising volte-face." See Arnold A. Anderson, *2 Samuel* (WBC; Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1989), 55, 56.

[73] On the study of female aggression see Catharine P. Cross and Anne Campbell, "Women's Aggression," *AVB* 16 (2011): 390-398.

texts which could have triggered anger, but consistently the narrator denies all the female characters of biblical narratives the emotion of anger. In contrast, he consistently attributes anger to the male character. One would have expected the expression of anger by Delilah when Samson kept postponing to tell her the secret of his strength (Judges 16:4-22), or Rachel's demands to have a child or even Jezebel's desire to kill Elijah after the incident at mount Carmel (1 Kg 19:1-3). Even in cases of rape where one expects the emotion of anger, the female characters were never said to be angry or designated by the narrator with this emotion (Gen 34:1-31; 2 Sam 13:1-22). While one may say that anger is implied, it is noteworthy that the narrator consistently denied female characters the designation of anger. To this end, Wolde observed, "[t]he conclusion to be drawn, therefore, is that none of the verbs designating anger are conceptualized with a female subject."[74] She further said,

> Anger, wrath, curse, being hot of anger, burning of anger, melting of anger, shaking of anger, or outbursting of anger are not sentiments attributed to a woman. This might be explained by the fact that biblical texts, because of their origin in patriarchal society, pay limited attention to women's behaviour, so that we are also not given access to female sentiments of anger. It might also be the result of social conventions, which provided women at the time with limited ways of communicating their anger . . .[75]

Thirdly, angry scenes are often confrontational and they directly help plot progression. In this sense, angry exchange helps in most cases to move the plot forward because angry emotion provides important drive for self-expression and action. Similarly, angry scenes are intense emotional moments in narrative representation. They are one of the highest points of emotional expression in biblical narrative because they provide emotional template for the representation of biblical characters. In fact, angry scenes directly take us into the emotional world of biblical narrative with characters expressing passionately their anger and displeasure against the point of view of other characters. In this state of fierce emotion, characters in angry exchange seek to exploit, manipulate and pacify the anger of other characters within the same narrative space. Consequently, angry scenes directly

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[74] Van Wolde, "Sentiments," 12.

[75] She added, "the language of anger is never used in the Hebrew Bible with a female subject. Women are conceptualized as having and expressing sentiments directed to their inner parts, such as grief, sadness or joy, but biblical Hebrew and the biblical texts do not give access to women's sentiments of anger. The fact that anger is conceived as uncontrollable aggression addressed to some other person makes it probably an unsuitable characteristic for a woman. An attribution of anger to women might also have suggested the possibility of female control over a man through angry aggression." Van Wolde, "Sentiments," 12, 14.

reveal the artistic commitment of the biblical narrator in his representations of characters in these various stylistic frames. Lastly, angry scenes help to enhance the mimetic quality of the biblical narrative particularly in the presentation of characters, who like real persons, engage and exploit the emotion of anger. In biblical narrative, we meet angry kings, angry husbands, angry prophets, angry commanders, angry brothers, and angry friends who immediately resonate with individuals and persons in the real life of the reader. In the heightened emotion of anger, characters cease to be mere representation or just a creation of ink on paper, but they are seen as "real" entities who, in these scenes, engage in a very important emotion shared by all sentient beings.

D CONCLUSION

In the studies of biblical narratives, the literary features of angry scenes had not been pursued in spite of its significance in the overall rhetoric of the HB. This rhetoric is clearly seen in the writing of the HB. For example, the Deuteronomist appears to have written his entire history from the defining position of anger.[76] In several places in Deuteronomistic history, there are consistently references to Yahweh's anger against Israel and a reference also to this emotion as particularly responsible for the exile.[77] At the end of the Deuteronomistic history, for instance, the Deuteronomist wrote: "It was because of the Lord's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence" (2 Kgs 24:20). Rather than blaming Yahweh for the exile, the Deuteronomist presents rebellious characters after characters, and events after events in his story which justify

[76] There are various issues in the composition of the Deuteronomistic History. For these historical and ideological issues see Robert Polzin, *David and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History. 2 Samuel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993); Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, ed., *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism* (JSOTSup 268; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Raymond F. Person, *The Deuteronomic School: History, Social Setting, and Literature* (StBL 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2002); Kurt L. Noll, "DtrH or Deuteronomic Debate? (A Thought Experiment)," *JSOT* 31/3 (2007): 311-345; Anthony F. Campbell and Mark O'Brien, *Unfolding the DtrH* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000); Thomas Römer, *The So-Called DtrH: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2005).

[77] The Deuteronomistic History appears to be a kind of an angry historiography or an angry description of the events of history. This is clearly seen in the consistent reference to divine anger against kings in its history and the attending assumption that the writer also is angry at these persons (1 Kgs 14:9, 15, 22; 15:30; 16:2, 7, 13, 26, 33; 21:22, 53; 2 Kgs 13:317:11, 17; 21:6, 15; 22:13, 17; 23:19, 26; 24:20). In this way, Deuteronomistic history is synonymous or closely related to contemporary "angry literature." For a sample of this angry literature see footnote 16.

Yahweh's anger in allowing Israel to go to exile. In addition, Deuteronomistic history seeks to justify Yahweh's anger, and to also address the general anger felt by the various exilic communities against Yahweh for allowing the exile to have taken place in spite of Yahweh's eternal covenant with the nation of Israel. In the centrality of anger in Deuteronomistic History, therefore, one may consider anger as an imposing "meta-emotional template" which informs and guides the writing of Deuteronomistic History (2 Kgs 17:17-18). Seen from this angle, the scenes of anger scattered through the Hebrew narrative, particularly in Deuteronomistic history, help us to re-enter even though temporally into the overall emotional template which directly gave rise to the writing of the Deuteronomistic history in the first place.

Beyond this rhetoric of anger in the HB, according to this paper, the individual representation of the angry scenes in biblical narrative reveals common literary patterns of provocation, narratorial designation, conversation/question, and a consummating action which often closes the last stage of the angry scenes. Significantly, in angry exchanging scenes, the narrator stylistically presents the characters as seeking to manipulate, manage, and pacify characters in this volatile space. Even though biblical characters in angry exchange scenes are rarely represented with angry gestures of yelling, screaming, clenching of fist or other bodily manifestations of anger, the narrator gives appropriate speeches, acts and point of views to characters situated in angry exchanging scenes. Consequently, while the biblical narrator is pre-modern, and historically imprisoned in the socio-political milieu of ancient Israel, his representation of the angry scenes and the attending characterization appear truly modern, since like his characters in the angry scenes, people in modern times also engage in the same habits of manipulating, pacifying and management of anger when confronted with similar circumstances. In doing this, the narrator offers to both ancient and modern readers the aesthetic beauty, intrigues and complications of the angry scenes.

By this same token, the representation of characters at the angry scenes clearly showcases a rudimentary understanding of the psychology of human anger by the narrator as clearly reflected by his intentional deployment of dialogues, point of views, and characterization at his representation of the angry scenes. Armed with this psychology and knowledge of human nature, however, the narrator did not merely make reference to human anger as an important driving force in the plotting of his stories, but he deliberately attempted a replication of this complex human emotion on ink and paper through the description and placement of angry exchange scenes at significant crisis points of his stories. In this way, the narrator significantly adds to the general complexity of the Hebrew narrative as well as its artistic beauty.

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