

Quails, Elders and Prophesying through Compound Eyes: A Pluriform analysis of Numbers 11

1. Introduction

Numbers 11 is like fly-paper. It attracts scholars, preachers and lay people alike, gently swaying in the breeze, glistening, o-oh so tempting. We all just can't resist touching it . . . just, just a little bit. But when we do, its sticky surface traps us. We can't just touch, use/abuse and then pull away. First our legs, then our wings, ultimately our wondrous compound eyes. . . .

Two of "our kind" did just that. One knowing the thin air of the mountains atop Baguio City¹ and the other in that oh so distant mid-west mecca.² They both thought they saw a sparkle of a Pentecostal truth: "initial physical evidence," in a layer of Numbers 11. Looking at the temporarily prophesying seventy, one proclaimed:

. . . prophesying was perhaps one of the best phenomena which includes objectivity, demonstrability as well as its cultural acceptability among the Israelites. This visible demonstration of the spirit's presence was probably intended to provide an objective sign of God's authentication upon the seventy elders to the people.

The sign served not only the recipients, that is, the seventy, and Moses himself, but also the people to whom the seventy would eventually administer by assisting Moses. The election authenticated by the coming of the spirit (with the prophetic sign), in a sense provided God-given authority upon God's chosen sub-leaders in the presence of the people. Although in a less significant way, this reaffirmed the leadership authority of Moses when God affirmed his choice of the seventy.³

The other triumphantly claimed that this chapter of Numbers was "the foundational Charismatic/Pentecostal passage in the Old Testament."⁴ In fact "Numbers 11 strongly supports a concept of initial observable evidence of the empowering of a believer to fulfill God's purpose for him or her as a witness for the Lord."⁵

Two more scholars, of a little different "species," got themselves snared when they argued that

¹ Wonsuk Ma, "'If it is a Sign': An Old Testament Reflection on the Initial Evidence discussion," *AJPS* 2, no. 2 (1999): 163-75.

² Roger D. Cotton, "The Pentecostal Significance of Numbers 11," *JPT* 10, no. 1 (2001): 3-10.

³ Ma, "'If it is a Sign': An Old Testament Reflection on the Initial Evidence discussion," 167. Note however that Benjamin D. Sommer, "Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11," *JBL* 118, no. 4 (1999), 606 counters that, "the point of gathering them is not to introduce them to the burden of leadership for the first time Rather, it is to allow those who already share Moses' political burden to experience prophecy."

⁴ Cotton, "The Pentecostal Significance of Numbers 11," 3.

⁵ Cotton, "The Pentecostal Significance of Numbers 11," 8.

this prophesying must have been some sort of ecstatic behavior, maybe even glossolalia.⁶ However they were only victims of the scholarly myth that the hitpa'el form, הִתְנַבֵּיָא was synonymous with prophetic ecstasy.⁷

Although cursory acceptance of the fact that the immediate context of the prophesying seventy is recognized, neither the synchronic approach of Cotton, nor the diachronic presupposition of Ma sufficiently deals with the external contextual flow of the book of Numbers, nor internal issues such as the "desire," "manna," "Moses' expostulation," "quail," "Eldad & Medad."⁸ Although the trumpeted bivouac has just started with Moses and the Ark leading the way . . . in the two aforementioned articles the Ark is no where to be found! If prophesy⁹ is so important in Num 11,

⁶ Gordon J. Wenham, *Numbers: An Introduction & Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981), 109 and Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, "Prophecy as a Sign (Numbers 11:24-30) - A Biblical Theological Consideration," *Exegetica* 9 (1998), 10, concludes "Also, in the Old Testament, there is no one word that represents "glossolalia," however from the purpose and the behavior of the 72 elders' prophesy, we may speculate that they were speaking in tongues." [my translation from the Japanese] See also W. Mills, "Early Ecstatic Utterances and Glossolalia," *PRSt* 24 (1997), 34.

⁷ See John R. Levison, "Prophecy in Ancient Israel: The Case of the Ecstatic Elders," *CBQ*, 65, no. 4 (2003), 503-21. Levison categorically denies the out of controlled frenzy portrayal of the Elders by: 1) denying the 1 Sam 10-19 are not parallel to Num 11; 2) focusing on the verbs אִצַּל and נָחַ rather than נִבְּא; 3) and following a different sociological understanding of the role of ecstasy in society. He argues that the prophetic phenomena that the elders experienced was visionary. Obviously this destroys the sign/evidence element. Benjamin Uffenheimer, "Prophecy, Ecstasy, and Sympathy," *Vetus Testamentum Supplements* 40 (1988), 263, writes, "the argument concerning the Hitpa'el form *hitnabbē'*, which has been raised by scholars as evidence of prophetic madness, is untenable. The philological investigation into this form reveals that its semantic field covers all shades of meaning from "to behave enthusiastically" to "to be made" (1 Sam xviii 10) - the exact meaning in each case being determined by the context." Robert R. Wilson, "Prophecy and Ecstasy: A Reexamination," *JBL* 98, no. 3 (1979), 336, concludes his study of the hitpa'el verb with the following summary: "This survey of the use of the hithpa'el of *nb' suggests that this form was indeed used to describe characteristic prophetic behavior. However, this behavior seems to have varied from group to group within Israel and also changed over the course of Israelite history. The term sometimes designated types of ecstatic or trance behavior, but this was not always the case. Increasingly the term was used to describe characteristic prophetic speech, until finally the hithpa'el of *nb' became synonymous with the niph'al." Several other important studies should also be mentioned: Simon B. Parker, "Possession Trance and Prophecy in Pre-Exilic Israel," *VT* 28, no. 3 (1978), 271-85; David L. Petersen, *The Roles of Israel's Prophets*, JSOT Supplement Series 17 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1981), 25-34; Daniel E. Fleming, "The Etymological Origins of the Hebrew *nābî'*: The One Who Invokes God," *CBQ* 55, no. 2 (1993), 217-24; Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

⁸ Conrad E. L'Heureux, "Numbers," *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Volume 5, (London: 1990), 27 writes, "The acknowledgment of Eldad and Medad's prophetic charism by Moses against the objection of Joshua, serves to protect the independence of the prophetic office [perhaps a better phrase would be "prophetic *role*"] from those who would subject it to institutional control."

⁹ Carroll Stuhlmueller, "Would that all were Prophets!" in *Preaching Biblical Texts*, ed. Fredrick C. Holmgren and Herman E. Schaalman (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 132 gives an interesting definition of prophesy. "Prophecy was a unique calling from God, to speak out or to act forcefully in the name of the ancient covenant (particularly with northern prophets) or in the name of decency and honesty (with southern prophets); a fearlessness in standing up against any human authority, even though it be divinely validated as priest or king, and not only correcting it but also declaring its demise, should it not reform."

why the deathly silence about the next chapter¹⁰ with propheticism and revelation mixed with an all too common sibling rival setting the stage for a great "Pentecostal" soap-opera.

Ma's quick reference to the E-source, teleported him back in scholarly time to the assured source critical consensus days.¹¹ However the last serious defense of the Elohist source was published in 1977, and even then Jenks had to admit that after the supposed P interpolation from Exod 35 through Num 10.28, that "in the remainder of Numbers the P material is easily distinguished, but J and E are often impossible to separate."¹² A 2008 assessment of E and J sources would be even more problematic. The excellent collection of recent SBL essays that delved into this terrain, *A Farewell to the Yahwist?* has only a few moderating voices that speak in behalf of an older perspective.¹³ For convenience and hoping that you will not "fly away," I will summarize just two of the most

¹⁰ Martin Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions*, trans. Bernhard W. Anderson (Chico: Scholars Press, 1981), 128-9, notes that chapters 11 and 12 are literarily united and should be dealt with together in spite of the fact that Num 12 was a later "insertion" motivated by the story of the elders.

¹¹ The older standard source critical studies on Numbers 11 divide the text into two intertwining narratives from two different sources. Specifically J, represented by 11.4-15, 18-23, 31-35 and E with 11.1-3, 16-17, 24-30. See S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1913), 62. However even the early source critical scholars seem to vary in detail. For example J. Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der Historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1963, vierte unveränderte auflage), 99, has the E material as 11.14-17 and 24b-29. The most radical is that of H. Seebass, "Num. XI, XII und die Hypothese des Yahwisten," *VT* 28 (1978), 214-223. See the summary on pages 219-20, where he divides the text into: a) the J source (establishment of the seventy) in 11.4a, b α , 10b-11, 14-16a α , b, 17, 24b-25a, 30, 33b-34; b) a pre-Deuteronomiac source (the quail plague) in 11.4b β , 10a, 12-13, 18a α , 19-20a, 21-23a, 24a, 31-33a; c) a Deuteronomiac source (the people's revolt against Yahweh) in 11.5-9, 16a β , 18a β , b, 20b, 23b; d) a postexilic redaction (ecstatic prophecy of Eldad and Medad) in 11.25b-29. Volkmar Fritz, *Israel in der Wüste: Traditionsgeschichtliche untersuchung der Wüstenüberlieferung des Jahwisten* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1970), 16-18, divides the sources into the E-source at 11.11, 12, 14-17, 24b-30, while the J-source is found in 11.4-6, 10, 13, 18-25a, 31-35. Aaron Schart, *Mose und Israel im Konflikt: Eine Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie zu Wüstenerzählungen*, OBO 98 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 162-63 divides the text into a early J source focusing on the quail story with 11.4-6, 13, 18-24a, 31-35 and a D gloss in 11-12, 14-17, 24b-30.

¹² Alan W. Jenks, *The Elohist and North Israelite Traditions*, SBL Monograph Series 22 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), 54. Jenks has to argue that Num 11 has parallels to Exod 33, so it must be E. See however Ernest Nicholson, *The Pentateuch in the Twentieth Century: The Legacy of Julius Wellhausen* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 237-48 for a positive reassessment of the standard source critical analysis of E and J.

¹³ Thomas B. Dozeman and Konrad Schmid, ed. *A Farewell to the Yahwist? A Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation*, Symposium Series, 34 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006). It is important to note that the major shift that is taking place in source critical and redactional studies of the Pentateuch is the general abandonment of an overarching documentary thesis. Instead, critical research has been focusing on individual books of the Pentateuch and their own unique growth. When it comes to the book of Numbers, the recent work of Reinhard Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2003), is the most recent major work on the subject. See also his "Die Erzählung von der gescheiterten Landnahme von Kadesch Barneas (Numeri 13-14) als Schlüsseltext der Redaktionsgeschichte des Pentateuchs," *ZAR* 9 (2003), 56-123. Furthermore Horst Seebass, "Zum stand der Pentateuchforschung das Buch Numeri," in *Perspectives in the Study of the O.T. and Early Judaism; a Symposium in Honour of Adam S. van der Woude on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. Florentino Garcia Martinez and Ed Noort (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), 109-121, where he argues that the research in the redaction and composition of the book of Numbers is exemplary of the critical research on the Pentateuch as a whole.

outstanding, recent attempts to follow this critical - diachronic path, when analyzing Num 11.

The first, is the 1999 *JBL* article by Benjamin Sommer, entitled "Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11." Sommer divides the pericope, Num 11.4-35 into a simplified two source weave. The first strand he sees as Num 11.4-15, 18-24a, 31-35 and he dubs it "Moses, the people, and plague," or simply "the A narrative." Num 11.16-17, 24b-30 comprises the second strand, with either "Moses, the elders, and prophecy" or "the B narrative" as its nomenclature.¹⁴ With a tongue-in-cheek irony he claims that these two plot lines align with the older standard division between J and E, but since scholarship has become too skeptical of this identity, he has renamed them.

For Sommer, the two plot lines depict two different characterizations of Moses. The "Moses, the elders, and prophecy" plot shows a humble, vulnerable and all-around exemplary Moses. This "B narrative" version is where both Cotton and Ma have focused their primary attention. Sommer has further expanded the parameters of this positive characterization of Moses by adding Num 11.1-3 and chapter 12 to his mix.¹⁵ Therefore Sommer sees three stories about Moses the prophet who was humble and an effective intercessor. On the other hand, the "Moses, the people, and plague" plot line depicts Moses as self-centered, vindictive, and even lacking in faith that God could provide meat for the entire Israelite community. Doubts not only about God's abilities, but also that the people would be satisfied with what God did provide is a nagging possible interpretation of this unit. Moses seems to have just overheard the complaints of the people and then became a "snitch" to God (11.10, but see vs. 13). Maybe as Marc Brettler has explained it, Moses' solution to the problem of leading such a large population was to have its size "drastically reduced" via a plague.¹⁶ Sommer does not provide a full background for this negative characterization of Moses although the Num 20.2-13 pericope may have leaned in this direction.

Sommer moves beyond a compartmentalized interpretation of different sources when he reflects on the effect of the redaction of these two supposed plot lines. This means that in the redacted text, the imparting of Moses' spirit that causes the seventy to prophesy should be viewed as a possible

¹⁴ Sommer, "Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11," 604. Although Sommer claims his division is an "older analysis" in reality the

¹⁵ See both David Jobling, "A Structural Analysis of Numbers 11-12," in *The Sense of Biblical Narrative: Structural Analyses in Hebrew Bible*, Volume 1, JSOT Supplement Series 2, 2nd edition (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 31-65 along with Jacob Milgrom, "The Structures of Numbers: Chapters 11-12 and 13-14 and their redaction. Preliminary Gropings," in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 49-61. Jobling and Milgrom both presuppose that Num 11-12 is a redactional unit that needs to be considered together.

¹⁶ See Sommer, "Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11," 614 and Marc Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 69.

negative outcome of the people's desiring and complaining and not a positive one.¹⁷ Furthermore, the desire of Moses to diffuse prophesy among the *hoi polloi* in 11.29b is read contextually so that everyone can shoulder his or her own burden. Although when read in isolation, Moses does not seem to lose any of his "spirit," in the redacted text, Sommer argues that there is a "zero-sum transaction: if the elders gained, then Moses lost."¹⁸ Having presented this perspective, Sommer does not want to argue that the text has been co-opted to this new reading alone. The context of Num 11-12 still speaks loudly for him along with the fact that some verses just do not seem to collapse to a negative overall interpretation. So he summarizes, "We are left with several ways to evaluate Moses as he appears in this redacted story. Crucial verses exhibit ambivalence of meaning: how we interpret them depends on the context in which we choose to read them."¹⁹ I would say we need to use our compound eyes.

The *magnum opus* of Reinhard Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch* is the second work that I would like to summarize, especially in terms of his take on Num 11. Basically Achenbach argues for a 2+1 model of the redaction of the book of Numbers. Unlike the "documentary hypothesis" approach of Sommer, Achenbach's work is an example of the growing trend toward a "fragmentary hypothesis." The first redaction must have occurred during the first half of the 5th century B.C.E. in which the story line of the Hexateuch (Hexateuchredaktor - HexRed) pulled together many diverse narrative fragments. Here Israel's constant apostasy was emphasized. The second redaction took place in the later half of the same century and Achenbach calls it the Pentateuchal Redaction (Pentateuchredaktion - PentRed), which had a very high view of Moses as can be exemplified in Num 12.6-8. The final stage is called the Theocratic Revision (Theokratische Bearbeitung - ThB), which is not a true redaction per se, but a spotty revision. He proposes that this

¹⁷ Sommer, "Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11," 615-6 realizes that Martin Buber, *Moses: The Revelation and the Covenant* (New York: Schocken, 1958), 163, 166-7 had earlier noted the negative aspect of the seventy prophesying in light of his reading of the combined plot lines.

¹⁸ Sommer, "Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11," 616. Sommer shores up this reading by noting the John Calvin had similar views and citing Jacob Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publishing Society, 1990), 377, who support this reading via his structural analysis.

¹⁹ Sommer, "Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11," 617. ריח in 11.31 and its earlier appearances provide Sommer with another point of comparison, which Cotton, "The Pentecostal Significance of Numbers 11," 5 recognizes.

revision occurred in the 4th century B.C.E. with a strong priestly emphasis.²⁰

Within the schema of the HexRed, Num 11.1-3 functions to re-interpret the quail narrative of 11.4-34 and give the following post-Sinaitic desert narrative its framework and theme.²¹ This was accomplished by following a "murmuring narrative" form introduced by an itinerary formula. Parallels to this form may be seen in Num 11.1-3; 11.4-35; 12.1-16; (20.1-13); 21.4-9,²² while Num 11.4-35 went through a rather complex redactional history, beginning with a positive "quail miracle" parallel to that found in Exod 16. This aspect may be labeled as a non-priestly fragment. This was then redacted via a rebellion against Yahweh theme that runs from Num 11.4 through 20.33f. Here it is the HexRed that has been at work. The next stage is that of work of the PentRed who has added the story of the seventy elders.²³ The Eldad-Medad episode in Num 11.26-29 is however considered secondary even to this schema.²⁴

What does this all mean? Achenbach leaves us in the dark when it comes the significance of the original quail miracle narrative. Although differing from its Exod 16 counterpart in several areas, we are not told the so-what of the story. It is only in the redaction of this material with an emphasis on the constant short-comings of Israel that Achenbach wants to begin his analysis. Focusing on the hapax legomenan מְרִמְרִים, Achenbach reasoned that this "mixed group" was none other than those referred to in Neh 13.1ff.²⁵ The allowing of these foreigners within the midst of Israel set the stage for the post-Sinaitic murmuring tradition which centers on a basic unbelief. The purpose of the

²⁰ Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 629. Lester L. Grabbe, "The Law, the Prophets, and the Rest," *DSD*, 13, no. 3 (2006), 321, argues, ". . . the Pentateuch is a product of the Persian period. It is not likely to be earlier than that because the Jewish community at Elephantine does not appear to have known it, even though they clearly maintained many religious practices attested in the Pentateuch." Focusing in on post-exilic historiographic literature in Lester L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, Volume 1 (London & New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2004), 337, states that "*the present text of Ezra-Nehemiah wants us to understand that Ezra's law was the complete Pentateuch*. We cannot absolutely demonstrate that it had in mind the Pentateuch precisely as we know it today, but it is a fair assumption that something quite close was in mind." It is important to note that Grabbe understands the Ezra-Nehemiah texts to be from the early Hellenistic period. Niels Peter Lemche, "The Old Testament - A Hellenistic Book?" in *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, JSOT Supplement Series 317 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 312, argues that "a more worldly and realistic assessment of facts suggests that the Persian period was not the time when the Old Testament could have been written down. Hardly any parallels exists to such a development, but a lot of evidence that says that the Hellenistic Age was the formative period of early Jewish thought and literature as witnessed by the Old Testament itself."

²¹ Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 203, 219.

²² Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 208-9.

²³ Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 219-20, 266. The detailed breakdown is as follows: early quail narrative (Num 11.4b β , 5, 6a, 13, 16a α , 18a α , 18b, 19, 20a α , 21-23, 31-32); a HexRed via the murmuring narrative (Num 11.1-3, 4a, 4b α , 6b, 10b α , 18abg, 18b, 20a β , 20b, 33-35); a PentRed (Num 11.10a, 10b β , 11-12, 14-15, 16a β , 16b, 17, 24-30); while Num 11.7-9 is ThB.

²⁴ Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 262.

²⁵ Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 223.

redactional addition of the prophesying seventy was to then, legitimize a 70 elder institution, whose task was to establish a genuine Torah. This institution would necessitate a "spirit" of Moses along with genealogical authentication.²⁶ It was to be via this Torah and further Prophetic literature that the people would be able to observe God's Torah itself.

Needless to say, Achenbach's interpretation of Num 11 has been highly influenced by a Persian period background to the redactional process, an idea that is coming in vogue. However it is quite instructive to note that he has bypassed an ecstatic interpretation of the Elders' prophesying and has tried to account for the quail narrative as well as the murmuring motif.

These excavative works on the pre-history of the text of Num 11 is a fascinating adventure that ultimately cannot be solved. These studies do indicate that the texts have traveled and it is now expedient to continue the journey into *terra firma*.²⁷ I would argue that dealing with the *Nachleben* of the text is an important further step in understanding its significance. The *Nachleben* as can be pieced together from manuscript evidence and the development of textual traditions or trajectories help illuminate how the texts continued to be used and re-used in different believing communities.²⁸

2. A Compound Eyed Look at Numbers 11, or Pluriformity in all its glory:

Throughout the history of biblical exegesis the issue of multiple possible readings and the

²⁶ Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 264.

²⁷ Niels Peter Lemche, "The Old Testament - A Hellenistic Book?" in *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, JSOT Supplement Series 317 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 294, states, "although it has become a standing procedure in the study of the Old Testament to begin where we know the least and to end at the point where we have safe information in order to explain what is certain by reasons uncertain and from an unknown past, it is obvious to almost everybody else that this procedure has not claim to be called scientific. We should rather and as a matter of course start where we are best informed. Only from this vantage point should we try to penetrate into the unknown past."

²⁸ James A. Sanders, "Text and Canon: Concepts and Methods," *JBL* 98, no. 1 (1979), 13, writes, "All versions are to some extent relevant to the communities for which translated (sic): it was because the Bible was believed relevant that it was translated. Much of the so-called Septuagint is midrashic or targumic. But even biblical Hebrew texts are to some extent, greater or less, adapted to the needs of the communities for which they were copied."

pluriformity of textual traditions²⁹ has been an issue that on the one hand refuses to disappear and on the other hand, a problem that is embarrassing to those who would like the Bible to be radically univocal. The rabbinic tradition of multiple readings that are reflected in the Halakhs, Tosefta and Talmuds are only one example of an early history of interpretation that was polyvalent.³⁰ Recently Walter Brueggemann, dealing with the contrast in Jewish and Christian interpretations, concludes that ". . . because the text is endlessly polyvalent and because its Subject is endlessly elusive and beyond domestication, it is impossible, in my judgment to pretend a monopolistic reading."³¹

Augustine, attempting to do apologetics for the LXX translation when it differed with the Hebrew textual tradition wrote:

But, if scribal error is not involved, it must be believed that, where the sense corresponds to the truth and proclaims the truth, they [i.e. the seventy translators], moved by the divine Spirit, wished to deviate [from the Hebrew original], not in the manner of interpreters [translators], but in the freedom of those prophesying. Consequently, the apostles, in *their* authority, when they appealed to the Scriptures, quite rightly utilized not only the Hebrew, but also their own - the witness of the Seventy.³²

This quote shows that the pluriformity of the textual traditions was recognized even in early Christian interpretation, one which Origen's *Hexapla* may well have confronted.

In the following section, I would like to present a glimpse of several different interpretations of Num 11 in a period of textual pluriformity, realizing that this peek may be overwhelming to some.

2.1 The Masoretic Textual Trajectory of Numbers 11

The Masoretic textual trajectory of the book of Numbers is far from the well worked-over text of

²⁹ In modern times it has been the work on the biblical materials found in the Judean Desert that has crystallized our understanding of the development of the Hebrew-Aramaic Bible. The first major articulation of an early fluidity of the text that was later stabilized in the first century C.E. was M. Greenberg, "The Stabilization of the Text of the Hebrew Bible, Reviewed in the Light of the Biblical Materials from the Judean Desert," *JAOS* 76 (1956), 157-67. Note the important essays in F. M. Cross & S. Talmon, ed., *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975) and the monograph, D. Barthélemy, *Les Devanciers d'Aquila* (Leiden: Brill, 1963). Recently Grabbe, "The Law, the Prophets, and the Rest," 337, concludes with these words: "The situation before the Maccabean revolt . . . a large collection of biblical books was already accepted as having religious authority by the end of the Persian period, but there was a variety of texts, with no evidence that the existence of multiple versions or texts was seen as a problem."

³⁰ James A. Sanders, "The Integrity of Biblical Pluralism," in *"Not in Heaven" Coherence and Complexity in Biblical Narrative*, ed. Jason P. Rosenblatt and Joseph C. Sitterson, Jr. (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), 155, writes, ". . . the early Jewish literature of the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods emerged forthrightly and "honestly" out of the pluralism of the First Testament itself."

³¹ Walter Brueggemann, *The Book that Breathes New Life: Scriptural Authority and Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 151.

³² Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XV:14 as quoted and translated by Robert Hanhart, "Introduction," in *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon*, Martin Hengel (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 17.

Genesis or the meticulously preserved book of Leviticus.³³ It is instead known for its over twenty *Sebirin* notes³⁴ and the unique *inverted-nuns* of Num 10.35-36, which outside of the two found here is only attested seven other times. The **א**, which claims fifteen cases of the *punta extraordinaria*, has four occurring in the book of Numbers.³⁵ Furthermore, the textual problems within the poetic portions of chapters 21-24 are notoriously problematic. More specifically looking at Num 11, the manuscript evidence to the proto-Masoretic tradition is poorly attested with only fragments of 11.4-5, 16-22 from 4QLev-Num^a.³⁶ In spite of this "poorer" showing overall among the Pentateuchal books, the **א** of Num 11 shows signs of rich aesthetics,³⁷ rhetorically significant style and structure, and intertextual sensitivity.

First, Num 11 utilizes a system of *leitwörter* that fuses the supposed fissures of earlier sources.³⁸ The root **אספ**, which first appears in the word, **אספספ**³⁹ has been described by Baruch Levine as a "reduplicative form of the verb 's-p 'to gather in.'"⁴⁰ This root then appears in 11.16, 22, 24, 30, 32 (x2). It is interesting that the root also appears in Num 12.14, 15 tying these units together with

³³ George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers*, The international Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1903), xxxix, views the text more positively when compared with the books of Samuel and the Minor Prophets.

³⁴ BHS has the *Sebir* notes at Num 4.3, 19, 36; 7.3; 8.4, 16; 11.10, 21; 13.22; 14.25; 18.23; 22.5, 12; 23.18; 26.51; 31.50, 52; 32.23, 25, 32; 33.8; 34.2; 35.5. Ernest Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1979), 17, relying on Ginsburg claims that there are about 350 *sebirin* in different manuscripts. Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis & Assen/Maastricht: Fortress Press and Van Gorcum, 1992), 64, reduces this number to "between 70 and 200 cases." Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. E. J. Revell, Masoretic Studies 5 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1980), 63 states that "the note *sevirin* does not show that the consonantal text does not indicate the form to be read, or that the text is in any way in doubt. It presents a reading which seems to avoid a difficulty in the text, but the purpose is to warn that this reading is not correct. It is thus given as a support for the received reading. There is no basis for the common suggestion that the *sevirin* notes are a way of correcting the received text."

³⁵ See: Num 3.39; 9.10; 21.30; 29.15.

³⁶ Eugene Ulrich, Frank Moore Cross, James R. Davila, Nathan Jastram, Judith E. Sanderson and Emanuel Tov, ed. *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, XII, Qumran Cave 4, VII Genesis to Numbers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 169-70. Ulrich suggests that there was a "short interval" between 11.19 and 11.20 which is not attested in either the **א** or the **א**, however this is hard to prove either way.

³⁷ Pamela Tamarkin Reis, "Numbers XI: Seeing Moses Plain," *VT* 55, no. 2 (2005), 228, states that, "puns, wordplay, and repeated expressions are unifying techniques that weave Numbers xi together. . . ."

³⁸ See Reis, "Numbers XI: Seeing Moses Plain," 229-31, who argues long with A. Berlin that the "compositional and rhetorical features" of Num 11 argues against the redactional and source critical analysis of the pericope.

³⁹ David J. A. Clines, ed., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, Volume 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 350, cites 4Qcat^a 7.5 as reading, **אספספ** **אנשי בליעל וכול האספסוף** *men of Belial and all the rabble*."

⁴⁰ Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1-20: a new translation with introduction and commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 320. The *Targum Onkelas* has **אספספ** which mimics the reduplication. Levine has proposed an interesting possibility that he does not follow: "The verb 'asap often connotes the assembling of fighting forces (1 Sam 17:11). So it remains unclear whether reference here is to auxiliary fighting forces, or to camp followers and other non-Israelite hanger-on." (p. 320-1) It is important to note that in Num 10.25 the root appears in the Piel participle form, which is understood as meaning "rear guard." See Joshua 6.9, 13 for this same usage. Num 10.25 has the tribe of Dan as this rear guard. In the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, the tribe of Dan is identified as those whom had to be destroyed because of having an idol in 11.1.

broad stitches. The root נשא also appears crossing the JE divide. It is found in Num 11.11, 12 (x2), 14, 17 (x3).⁴¹ Like אסף, נשא ties the present pericope together and even reaches out to Num 13-14, where the root's semantic field is played on.⁴² אכל is the third root of significance that runs throughout the chapter: Num 11.1, 4, 5, 13, 18 (x2), 19, 21. Two further occurrences, one in 12.12 referring to Miriam's punishment and the second in 13.32 in a significant quote by the ten scouts is once again informative.⁴³ The stitching together of the entire chapter via the *leitwörter* system would argue for an interpretation that does not isolate a specific plot line. Furthermore the possibility that the chapter is part of a unit that extends at least through chapter 12 and may be even including chapters 13-14 should warn against highlighting the story of the prophesying elders.

Second, Num 11 contains wordplays that tend to move the pericope forward. The evil (רע) in 11.10 has a counterpart in Moses complaint in 11.11. The great (מאד) anger of Yahweh in 11.10 finds fruition in the exceedingly great plague (מכה רבה מאד) of 11.33. The placing/putting (לשום) of the burden of the people in 11.11 is countered in 11.17 where the Yahweh puts (ושמתי) Moses' spirit on the elders. The often noted play between Yahweh's spirit (רוח) and the wind (ורוח) is of similar style (see 11.29, 31),⁴⁴ while the use of "went out" (נסע) with the aforementioned wind links with 11.35 where it is the people who are setting out.⁴⁵

Third, the structure of Num 11 has been investigated by both David Jobling and Jacob Milgrom. Both have found that chapters 11 and 12 should not be isolated because 11.1-3 and 12.1-15 are parallel panels that frame 11.4-34.⁴⁶ For Milgrom, the center portion, Num 11.4-34 is a conflated

⁴¹ Reis, "Numbers XI: Seeing Moses Plain," 218, follows Milgrom's idea of a special significance attached to "septenary repetitions." See Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*, xxxi.

⁴² See Num 13.23; 14.1, 18, 19, 30, 33, 34.

⁴³ Although the *בכה* occurs five times (11.4, 10, 13, 18, 20), it refers to the same quail storyline. However the re-appearance of the term in Num 14.1 is a significant link.

⁴⁴ Pentecostal and Charismatic Old Testament scholars have tended to overemphasize the importance of the noun *רוח* and have distorted their studies by artificially isolating certain usages of the term while neglecting the full semantic field. The 14 usages of *רוח* in the book of Numbers varies widely including an attitude of jealousy (5.14 (x2), 30), divine empowerment to prophesy (11.29, 24.2), wind (Num 11.31), divine gifting (11.17, 25 (x2), 26), an attitude of faith (14.24; 27.18?), an immaterial aspect of "all flesh" (16.22; 27.16).

⁴⁵ It is to be noted that 89 out of the 146 occurrences of *נסע* are found in Numbers.

⁴⁶ Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*, xxvii; Milgrom, "The Structures of Numbers: Chapters 11-12 and 13-14 and their redaction. Preliminary Gropings," 50-1; Jobling, "A Structural Analysis of Numbers 11-12," 42-3.

two complaint text that has been arranged in a single-centered, concentric pattern⁴⁷ with "God's answer to both complaints" in verses 16-24a at its center. Milgrom concludes from his analysis that the chapters now "attempt to demonstrate that Moses was punished by the diminution of his spiritual powers (the story of the elders) for failing to intercede for the Israelites when they craved meat (the story of the quail) and for failing to believe that God could provide it."⁴⁸

Although I would agree with Milgrom's structural analysis of chapters 11-12, I would disagree with his interpretative conclusion. First Num 11.1-3 and 12.1-15 have not been included in his interpretation. These panels would indicate that Moses did intercede with effectiveness before and after the quail and elders stories. In fact, Num 12.6-8 argues for a special level of Moses' revelatory and prophetic stature, bringing Moses' supposed diminution into question. Second, Milgrom's interpretation may be distorted by his isolation of Num 11-12 from its present context. The fact that Num 10.35-36⁴⁹ contains the call to the Ark by Moses and a possible enveloping structure by mentioning the Ark in Num 14.44 may indicate that chapters 13-14 should also be taken together.⁵⁰ In these chapters, ironically once again, Milgrom's structural work is helpful. He has identified another concentric pattern with the "People's Response" in Num 14.1-10a at its center.⁵¹ This stands diametrically opposite to the center of chapters 11-12 where Yahweh answers both Moses and the people.

Is there some interpretative crux that can be brought to bear on the whole unit? I would argue that there is. Chapter 11 allows for a modicum of revelatory receptivity on the part of the people.⁵² Chapter 12 safeguards Moses' uniqueness in this area and his intercessory role. These two presuppositions become a foundation for chapters 13-14, where the people, with a possibility of

⁴⁷ See Jerome T. Walsh, *Style & Structure in Biblical Hebrew Narrative* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001), 13-26. Walsh notes on page 14 that: "The turning point regularly, though not always, is found in the central subunit(s). These are generally, therefore, the most important part of the whole structure (though often not the longest). The importance of the center is more marked in concentric narrative than in chiasmic There are other points of emphasis as well, though this is less consistent than the emphasis on central subunits. The first and last subunits of a reverse symmetry often receive stronger emphasis than other subunits. Sometimes, in a concentric pattern, there is an explicit or implicit link between these outermost subunits and the central one. . . ."

⁴⁸ Milgrom, "The Structures of Numbers: Chapters 11-12 and 13-14 and their redaction. Preliminary Gropings," 51.

⁴⁹ N.B. the *inverted-nun* indicates some problem in the text. It is important to observed that the **⚡** has a different order of the verses whereby guidance by the cloud in the decampment leads into chapter 11.

⁵⁰ Scharf, *Mose und Israel Im Konflikt*, 160, also argues that Num 10.33-36 and 14.39-45 come from the same textual layer.

⁵¹ Milgrom, "The Structures of Numbers: Chapters 11-12 and 13-14 and their redaction. Preliminary Gropings," 55-8; Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*, xxvi.

⁵² Although the word **נַעַן** with the definite article occurs too frequently to be used as a *leitwort* with any significance. It is still interesting that 31 out the total 55 occurrences of the word appears in chapters 11-14. In fact Num 11.1 is the first time that it appears in Numbers.

revelatory receptivity choose against Yahweh's offer of a fruitful land (13.27). It is interesting to note that the crucial central portion in these chapters begins with a link to chapter 11 with the people weeping (14.1c).

Intertextuality has become an important component in Old Testament exegesis in the last 20 years or so.⁵³ James Sanders has noted that "there is hardly a passage in the Bible outside of reports or court or temple (civil or cultic, even wisdom) records which does not build upon older traditions, and invariably they are fluid in reference and citation (except for Mic. 3:12 in Jer. 26:18, which is almost verbatim).⁵⁴ Num 11 is no exception to this observation.⁵⁵

⁵³ The use of intertextuality as a exegetical method comes in two basic forms. One which Heinrich Plett, "Intertextualities," in *Intertextuality*, ed. Heinrich F. Plett, Research in Text Theory 15 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), 3-29, describes as the "progressive intertextualists," who may be understood as postmodernist or deconstructionalist, while the "traditional intertextualists" deal more with quotations and allusion. The "progressive intertextualists in biblical studies utilize the theories of Julia Kristeva or more importantly Mikhail Bakhtin. Some recent works in this area are: L. Juliana Claassens, "The God Who Feeds: A Feminist-Theological Analysis of Key Pentateuchal and Intertestamental Texts," (Ph.D., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2001); L. Juliana Claassens, "Biblical Theology as Dialogue: Continuing the Conversation on Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Theology," *JBL* 122, no. 1, (2003), 127-144; Barbara Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship: An Introduction*, Semeia Studies, No. 38, (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000); Carol A. Newson, "Bakhtin, the Bible, and Dialogic Truth," *JR* 76, No. 2, (1996), 290-306; Dennis Olson, "Biblical Theology as Provisional Monologization: A Dialogue with Childs, Brueggemann and Bakhtin," *BibInt* 6 (1998), XX-XX; Walter L. Reed, *Dialogues of the Word: The Bible as Literature According to Bakhtin*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). The more traditional intertextualists in biblical studies have started with Michael Fishbane's, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) and some of his others works following this milestone. See: Lyle Eslinger, "Inner-Biblical Exegesis and Inner-Biblical Allusion: The Question of Category," *VT* 42, no. 1 (1992), 47-58; Michael Fishbane, "Inner-Biblical Exegesis: Types and Strategies of Interpretation in Ancient Israel," in *The Garment of Torah* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 3-18; Michael Fishbane, "Inner-Biblical Exegesis," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; the History of Its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Saebø (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 33-48; Michael Fishbane, "Types of Biblical Intertextuality," in *Congress Volume Oslo 1998*, ed. A. Lemaire and M. Saebø (Leiden/Boston/Köln: E. J. Brill, 2000), 39-44; Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, "Intertextuality: Allusion and Vertical Context Systems in Some Job Passages," in *Of Prophets' Visions and the Wisdom of Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. H. A. McKay and D. J. A. Clines (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 257-80; Kristen Nielsen, "Intertextuality and Hebrew Bible," in *Congress Volume Oslo 1998*, ed. A. Lemaire and M. Saebø (Leiden/Boston/Köln: E. J. Brill, 2000), 17-31; Benjamin D. Sommer, "Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A Response to Lyle Eslinger," *VT* 46, no. 4 (1996), 479-89; Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 6-31; Ellen van Wolde, "From Text Via Text to Meaning. Intertextuality and Its Implications," in *Words Become Worlds: Semantic Studies of Genesis 1-11* (Leiden/NewYork/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1994), 160-99; Ellen van Wolde, "Intertextuality: Ruth in Dialogue with Tamar," in *A Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies*, ed. Athalya Brenner and Carole Fortaine (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 426-51.

⁵⁴ Sanders, "The Integrity of Biblical Pluralism," 160.

⁵⁵ See Jobling, "A Structural Analysis of Numbers 11-12," 63-5. Jobling has included references to the "tent of meeting" tradition in Exod 33.7-11. See my discussion on this tradition in David Hymes, "Numbers 12: Of Priests, Prophets, or 'None of the Above,'" *AJBI* 21 (1998), 17-25; David Hymes, "Heroic Leadership in th Wilderness, Part 2," *AJPS* 10, no. 1 (2007), 6; and Ursula Rapp, *Mirjam: Eine Feministsch-rhetorische Lektüre der Mijamtexte in der hebräischen Bibel*, BZAW 317 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 149-165. Jobling also aligns Num 11.4-35 with Exod 18 and 24. See my discussion on the relationship between these texts in David Hymes, "Heroic Leadership in th Wilderness, Part 1," *AJPS* 9, no. 2 (2006), 305-14. Jobling's suggested parallel with Exod 12.37-39 is questionable in my opinion and will be touched on in the discussion concerning the ☉ material.

Intertextual relations may be found first of all in Exod 16, a text that in a synchronic analysis of the Pentateuch comes prior to our Numbers pericope. Here a complaint is raised after a period of travel in which the people's former diet in Egypt is referred to. Furthermore the chapter includes the provision of manna and quail. Beyond a thematic alignment, Exod 16 also has structural similarities. When comparing Exod 16 and Num 11.4-35, Jobling notes that, "each is the central and largest pericope of a set of three (in the first case, the other two sections are Exod 15.22-27 and 17.1-7) related to provision and/or murmuring, and in each case the two outer sections belong to the same story-type" ⁵⁶ These parallels seem to be more than just superficial, they accentuate the differences between the pre- and post-Sinaitic reflections. The fact that Exodus material has the concept of "testing" (נסה) as its *leitmotif* ⁵⁷ while Num 11-12 has replaced the "testing" with the use of "to burn" and "anger" ⁵⁸ seems to be of significance. Any interpretation that does not account for this shift is found wanting.

Psalms 78.17-31 is another intertextual link to Num 11. From the **אז** we may argue that the stories of Exod 16 and Num 11.4-35 have been conflated, identifying this text as having been written after those of Exodus and Numbers. Its conflated nature can be seen in the presence of האוהה "desire" ⁵⁹ in Psa 78.29-30 which is found in Num 11.4, but not in Exod 16 and at the same time the presence of נסה which is characteristic of the Exodus material, but lacking in Num 11. ⁶⁰

2.2 The Septuagint of Numbers 11

John Wevers introduces his study of the Greek text of Numbers with the following paragraph:

The Greek translation of the Numbers is without a doubt by far the weakest volume in the Greek Pentateuch. What makes work on the book so frustrating is that side by side one can find gross failures to follow ordinary rules of grammar, i.e. of apparent incompetence, as well as acute and even subtle distinctions betraying an active mind engaged in the interpretation of sacred scripture, ready not only to clarify obscure passages, but even to correct what might appear to be factual errors or contradictions within the text. ⁶¹

⁵⁶ Jobling, "A Structural Analysis of Numbers 11-12," 64.

⁵⁷ See Exod 15.25; 16.4; 17.2, 7. It is interesting to note that although Num 11.1-3, 4-35; 12.1-15 can be united by the theme of Yahweh anger, Num 13-14 does not contain the same semantic markers. Num 14.22 does use the "testing" theme however.

⁵⁸ The root $\sqrt{\text{חרה}}$ and **אף** are used in 11.1, 20, 33; 12.9.

⁵⁹ The verbal root $\sqrt{\text{אוהה}}$ is found in Num 11.4 and 34.

⁶⁰ See Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 326-29. Fishbane also deal with the inner-biblical exegesis of Deut 8.1-18, but this pericope is dealing with Exod 16 and does not seem to know Num 11.

⁶¹ John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Texts of Numbers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), ix.

The Greek text should be investigated both as a translation⁶² of an original Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage*,⁶³ although some portions may be considered original composition in Greek, and as having its own literary integrity.⁶⁴

I begin my investigation in the **Ⲫ** of the book of Numbers by a few observations that may be made via a simple diachronic reading of the text. This is necessary since as Evans observes, "the LXX is a heterogeneous collection of documents produced at different times and by varying methods."⁶⁵

First, the role of Aaron has been intensified. This can be noted in the many verses where in the **Ⲳ**, God addresses only Moses, the **Ⲫ** has added Aaron. Furthermore the **Ⲫ** of Num 7.88 has focused on Aaron's ordination rather than depicting a complete discussion about the altar. Recently James Findlay has furthered scholarship in this area by contrasting the **Ⲳ** and the **Ⲫ**'s reading of Num 16-17. He concludes that the "translator's ideology. . . can be seen as anti-Levitical and pro-Aaronide."⁶⁶ Although an anti-Levitical bias may be evident in Num 16-17, the fact that the 25-50 year age limits for Levitical service has been presented in a consistent fashion in both Num 4.30 and 8.24-25 speaks of a deep concern for these matters.⁶⁷ A reading of Num 19, the procedure for the cultic preparation of the ashes of the red heifer, shows signs of a careful translational technique that

⁶² See Anneli Aejmelaeus, "Translation Technique and the Intention of the Translator," in *On the Trail of the Septuagint* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993), 65-76; James Barr, *The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations*, *Mitteilungen Des Septuaginta-Unternehmens* 15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979); Sebastian Brock, "The Phenomenon of Biblical Translation in Antiquity," in *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations*, ed. Sidney Jellicoe (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1974), 541-71; Sebastian Brock, "Aspects of Translation Technique in Antiquity," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 20, no. 1 (1979), 69-87.

⁶³ John A. L. Lee, "Translations of the Old Testament: I. Greek," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C. - A.D. 400*, ed. Stanley Porter (Boston/Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2001), 775, writes, "the Septuagint is characterized generally by faithfulness to the original, as is only to be expected in the translation of a sacred text. This general fidelity extends to the style and rhetorical shape of the original."

⁶⁴ Benjamin D. Sommer, "Translation as Commentary: The Case of the Septuagint to Exodus 32-33," *Textus* 20 (2000), 43-60 has argued that the Septuagint translation may also function as a commentary.

⁶⁵ Trevor V. Evans, *Verbal Syntax in the Greek Pentateuch: Natural Greek Usage and Hebrew Interference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 3. Lee, "Translations of the Old Testament: I. Greek," 775, writes, ". . . there was no unified approach to the task but that each translator, or group of translators, set an individual stamp on the book that he or they worked on."

⁶⁶ James Findlay, "The Priestly Ideology of the Septuagint Translator of Numbers 16-17," *JSOT* 30, no. 4. (2006), 428. Findlay further suggests that translator was dealing with a struggle of "power and legitimacy among various priestly groups." He concludes that, "the evidence from LXX Numbers 16-17 may indicate that the translation had some interest in promoting the authority of the Jerusalem Temple and its stewards. In addition, the text may reflect concerns about the claims to authority by various Levitical groups in the Jewish communities of the time, with a clear intent to affirm the Aaronides, linked to the Jerusalem high priests of that period, as the only liturgical actors with full legitimacy." (p. 429).

⁶⁷ In contrast with the **Ⲫ**, the **Ⲳ** and the **ⲛ** has 30-50 years in chapter 4 and 25-50 in chapter 8. This has been considered a problem since at least the time of Rashi.

has attempted to clarify some of the more confusing inconsistencies in the text, showing further the translator's interest.

Second, an example of a translation technique that falls out of the ordinary pattern is seen in Num 9.15-23 and 10.11-36. Here Anssi Voitila⁶⁸ and Trevor Evans⁶⁹ have noted that the translator has lost sight of the narrative flow of the Hebrew verbal system and sprinkled the translation with future tenses where it logically should not be.

Third, the Greek translation of the book of Numbers defaults toward a consistent pattern of expressions. In Num 1.2-46 for example, the list of leaders and census are reported in a repetitive pattern that smooths out the occasional variations in the מ and מ.

Fourth, as Peter Flint indicates, ". . . in the case of many other books of the Septuagint, LXX Numbers presents several standard equivalents for Hebrew terms."⁷⁰

When we specifically focus our attention on the Greek of Num 11, it is important to note the observation of Gilles Dorival that the "LXX attenuates the anthropomorphism of the MT."⁷¹ Whether it is to translate "in the ears of Yahweh" (בְּאֵזְנֵי יְהוָה) as "before the Lord" (ἐναντι κυρίου) or toning down the harsh sounding "and his nostrils became hot" (וַיִּחַר אָפוֹ) as "and he was enraged with anger" (καὶ ἐθυμώθη ὀργῆ), the ⚡ tends to use a "non-literal translation technique" to render "metaphorical meanings."⁷²

The first significant interpretative crux in the chapter occurs in 11.4a, with the translation of "the riffraff / assembled group who were in their midst" (הַמִּצְרֵף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ) with "the mixture who were among them" (ὁ ἐπίμικτος ὁ ἐν αὐτοῖς).⁷³ Dorival understands that the ⚡ uses ἐπίμικτος to connect the Num 11.4-35 pericope with the Exodus 12 account where the term is used to translate

⁶⁸ Anssi Voitila, "The Translator of the Greek Numbers," Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Cambridge, 1995, Bernard A. Taylor, ed., (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), 109-12; and A. Voitila, "What the Translation of Tenses Tells about the Septuagint Translators," *SJOT* 10, no. 2 (1996), 183-196.

⁶⁹ Trevor V. Evans, "Some Alleged Confusions in Translation from Hebrew to Greek," *Biblica* 83 (2002), 238-248; Also Evans, *Verbal Syntax in the Greek Pentateuch*, 139-40. He writes, "they perhaps reflect confusion arising from the repeated switches between narrative and direct speech in Num. 9-10 and contrast with the Pentateuchal translator's usual command over their material."

⁷⁰ Peter W. Flint, "Numbers," *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, provisional Edition (n.l.: International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, 2004), 2.

⁷¹ Gilles Dorival, *La Bible D'Alexandrie: Les Nombres* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1994), 285, "La LXX atténue l'anthropomorphisme du TM." See Dorival's introduction on pages 156-57 that deal with the anthropomorphisms.

⁷² See Staffan Olofsson, *God is a Rock: A Study of Translation Techniques and Theological Exegesis in the Septuagint*, Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series 31 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990), 1-15, where he reviews some of the literature and introductory problems.

⁷³ Aquila has συνειλεγμένοι = crowd together, things bound together and the Theodotion has ὁ ἐπισυστρέφων = collect together - See Num 16.42 (17.7).

the phrase "large mixture" (רב רב = ἐπίμικτος πολὺς). This group is distinguished in Exodus 12.37-38 from three other groups: the 600,000 foot soldiers, the general company and the animals.⁷⁴ This clear case of intertextuality taints the pericope as a whole. Wevers identifies the issue best when he writes that, "by this interpretation, the responsibility for the revolt is put on the shoulders of the hangers-on, rather than on the Israelites themselves. There is certain irony in this reliance on the Exod passage, since the same passage lists not only the "large mixture" as traveling with the Israelites, but also πρόβατα καὶ Βόες καὶ κτήνη πολλά σφόδρα."⁷⁵

In Num 11.4b the ⚡ continues to provide surprises. It reads the ⚡'s וַיֵּשְׁבוּ ("and they returned," better used adverbially "again"⁷⁶ or "moreover"⁷⁷) as וַיֵּשְׁבוּ with its καὶ καθίσαντες "and they sat down." Milgrom proffers support for the ⚡ reading with Judg 20.26; 21.2; Ps 137.1; Job 2.12-13; Lam 2.10; Neh 1.4 which combine the verb בָּכָה with יָשָׁב.⁷⁸ The orthography of the ⚡ does not give us any help at this juncture. It seems to me that although the ⚡ may be said to be harmonizing, and thereby correcting the grammar, the pointing of the ⚡ is more suspect.⁷⁹

The nuance of the ⚡ of Num 11.11 is noteworthy. Although the "burden" (בִּשָׁא) is a rather common term, the ⚡ has chosen to translated it with the rare noun ὄρμη. Liddell and Scott has divided the term into three fields: 1) "rapid motion forwards, onrush, onset, assault"; 2) "impulse to do a thing, effort"; 3) "setting oneself in motion, start on a march".⁸⁰ Flint and Wevers have translated the word as "onslaught"⁸¹ following the first definition of Liddell and Scott. However, Dorival has correctly followed the second definition with his translation "the impetus/impulse of (these) people."⁸² Therefore I would translate Moses' dialogue as follows: "Why have you mistreated your attendant and why have I not found grace before you, to put the impulse of this people on me?" The word appears again in Num 11.17 where I would also translate: "And I will come down and speak there with you and I will remove some of the spirit that is on you and place it on them and

⁷⁴ Dorival, *La Bible D'Alexandrie: Les Nombres*, 287. Dorival also mentions the term appearing in 2 Esd 23.3, Ezek 30.5 and Judith 2.20.

⁷⁵ Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Numbers*, 161-62.

⁷⁶ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*. in The Master Christian Library Version 7, Disc 1, CDROM, Ages Software, Inc., 1999. Keil and Delitzsch cite Gen 26.18 as an example.

⁷⁷ Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*, 83. Milgrom cites Deut 23.14 as a parallel.

⁷⁸ Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers*, 308.

⁷⁹ n.b. The Syriac, according to BHS has the causative וַיִּכְפּוּ which is another attempt to solve the grammatical difficulty.

⁸⁰ Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie, ed. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, "With a revised supplement, 1996," Rev. and augmented (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1253.

⁸¹ Flint, "Numbers," 16; Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Numbers*, 165.

⁸² Dorival, *La Bible D'Alexandrie: Les Nombres*, 290, 292, i.e. "l'élan de (ce) peuple."

they shall help with the impulse of the people and you will not carry them alone." The Greek may be making a distinction between the immediate crisis deriving from the complaint and that of the regular leadership role of Moses. This "impulse" connects more closely with the complaint that was first mentioned in 11.4 as "craved a craving" (ἐπεθύμησαν ἐπιθυμίαν) and then closed off the pericope in 11.34, 35 (See also Num 33.16, 17), which was incited by the dissident group, i.e., the "mixture." In this way the **Ⲫ**, like the masoretic tradition has interlaced the two major plot lines, but have done it in an entirely different manner. For the **Ⲫ**, the desire/craving is the context for the assistance of the seventy elders and it seems that when the crisis has passed, their roles will also be nullified. With this developing contextual background, the "they prophesied and was not repeated" of Num 11.25 takes on a slightly different connotation. The seventy were empowered for the task at hand, with the gifting that was necessary for dealing with just that task alone. In Num 11.16, the **Ⲫ** has accentuated Moses role in the choosing of the seventy with the gloss: "you yourself" (αὐτὸς σὺ). This personal involvement on the part of Moses further detracts from the role of the elders.⁸³

Once again, Num 11.18 accentuates the complaint. Where the **Ⲛ** concludes with the simple statement, "and Yahweh will give to you meat and you shall eat," the **Ⲫ** has "and the Lord will give you meat to eat and you shall eat meat" (καὶ δώσει κύριος ὑμῖν κρέα φαγεῖν καὶ φάγεσθε κρέα).

As already noted in Num 11.4, the **Ⲫ** has been influenced by a strong intertextual thrust. Allusions to Exodus continue to appear throughout the chapter. Although the **Ⲛ** may have triggered the memory of Exod 19.10 and called for a cleansing in preparation for the meat, the **Ⲫ** of Num 11.18 in no wise clouds the picture. In 11.21 "foot soldiers" (πεζῶν) has its only other occurrence in the Pentateuch in Exod 12.37. In 11.28, Joshua is said to be "one who stands/attends" (ὁ παρεστηκώς) is once again in Exod 24.13.⁸⁴ The final connection involves the use of ὄρτυγομήτρα, which is really "a bird that migrates with quails"⁸⁵ and not quail, which would be ὄρτυξ.⁸⁶ This is paralleled in Exod 16.13, and the different reflections on the Exodus and Numbers incident in Psa 104.40; Wis 16.2, 19.12. The accumulative weight of these allusions point not only to a translation technique that utilized the book of Exodus in a harmonistic fashion, but also slightly deflect the blame of the incident.

⁸³ Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Numbers*, 169, writes, "the gloss is interesting in the stress that it places on Moses in person. . . . What is meant is that Moses is personally to choose his cabinet of advisers."

⁸⁴ The phrase ὁ παρεστηκώς also appears in Deut 1.38; Judg 20.28; Jer 42.19; Mk 15.39; Lk 1.19 and Jn 18.22.

⁸⁵ Liddell, Scott, Jones and McKenzie, ed. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1257.

⁸⁶ Liddell, Scott, Jones and McKenzie, ed. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1257.

2.3 The Samaritan Pentateuchal Trajectory of Numbers 11

Studies on the Samaritan Pentateuch have been troubled by both sectarian and doctrinal biases. During the Reformation/post-Reformation era it was used as fodder to bolster the **Ⲅ** or **ⲅ** over against the Protestant choice of the **Ⲅ**. The blatant demeaning of its value for establishing an unbiased early text by Gesenius in 1815,⁸⁷ set the stage for a long period of academic house arrest. It was not until 1915 that Paul Kahle made initial efforts at rehabilitating this valuable textual trajectory.⁸⁸ The discovery that the scrolls from the Judean desert contained some manuscripts that were similar to the **Ⲅ** tradition has forced even some skeptics to rethink the value of this work.⁸⁹ However, the fact that these "proto-Samaritan" or as some have now dubbed them "harmonistic

⁸⁷ W. Gesenius, *De Samaritanorum origine, indole et auctoritate* (Halle: Springer Verlag, 1815), at this time this I have not been able to consult this work. It has been summarized by Bruce Waltke, "The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Text of the Old Testament," in *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, ed. J. B. Payne (Waco, Word Books, 1970), 212-13. The following is Waltke's summary of Gesenius's classifications of **Ⲅ** versus **Ⲅ** variants: "(1) readings in which emendations of a grammatical nature have been attempted, (2) glosses or interpretations received into the text, (3) conjectural emendations of real or imaginary difficulties in the MT, (4) readings corrected or supplemented with the help of parallel texts, (5) large additions interpolated from parallel passage, (6) emendations of passages and words of the MT which were objectionable to the Samaritans because of historical difficulties or a seeming lack of dignity in terms applied to the Creator, (7) morphological alterations in favor of the Samaritan dialect, (8) alterations made in favor of Samaritan theology and hermeneutics." Waltke on the other hand has presented his own modification of Gesenius's classifications: "(1) the Samaritan text has been corrupted by scribal error; (2) the Samaritan text preserves a linguistic tradition which differs from the linguistic tradition preserved by the Tiberian grammarians; (3) the Samaritan text has been modernized by replacing archaic Hebrew forms and constructions with forms and constructions of a later Hebrew linguistic tradition; (4) the Samaritan text has been smoothed exegetically and linguistically by removing grammatical difficulties, and by replacing rare constructions with constructions that occur more frequently; (5) the Samaritan text has been supplemented, clarified and corrected by small additions, an interpolations both large and small from parallel passages; (6) the Samaritan text has been clarified and interpreted by small changes; (7) the Samaritan text has been corrected to remove historical difficulties and objectionable passages; (8) the Samaritan text has been adapted to conform to the theology of the Samaritan sect."

⁸⁸ Paul Kahle, "Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Pentateuchtextes," in *Opera Minora. Festgabe zum Januar 1956* (Leiden: Brill, 1956), 3-12. This article was originally published in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 88 (1915), 399-439. It is important to note that Kahle was actually supporting A. Geiger's conclusions that the **Ⲅ** was an important source for Pentateuchal studies. See page 11-12 where he writes, "Am richtigsten hat wohl A. Geiger über den samaritanischen Pentateuch geurteilt, wenn er bei der Untersuchung desselben zu dem Resultat kommt: "Also der samaritanische Text ist ein höchst wichtiges historisches Dokument, das, abgesehen von einzelnen Samaritanismen in betreff Sichems - wo es aber auch nicht immer im Unrecht ist - und den Aramaismen, eine alte Rezension repräsentiert, wie sie zu jener Zeit allgemeine Verbreitung hat, daher auch in den Übersetzungen, namentlich der LXX, zuweilen sogar auch in alten thalmudischen Schriften erscheint."

⁸⁹ Emanuel Tov, "Proto-Samaritan Texts and the Samaritan Pentateuch," in *The Samaritans*, ed. Alan D. Crown (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1989), 406, writes concerning a cluster of proto-Samaritan: "They share with the Samaritan Pentateuch its linguistic simplifications, harmonizations in small matters, as well as non-characteristic readings, yet differ in many details in these areas. The spelling of 4QPaleoEx^m is fuller than that of the Samaritan Pentateuch, that of the other texts is not. They are not sectarian in any way. Moreover they contain various readings not known from other sources. At the same time, these proto-Samaritan texts share a sufficient amount of significant detail with the Samaritan Pentateuch in order to recognize the close relationship with that text."

texts⁹⁰ vary in detail from the later Samaritan Pentateuch and even among themselves,⁹¹ assured that results of investigations have been slow in coming. For our study of Num 11, as in the proto-Masoretic fragments mentioned earlier, the evidence is spotty. 4QNum^b disappointingly starts at 11.31.⁹² So our investigation must deal with the more sectarian document itself.

Although the א of Num 11 shows signs of many orthographic⁹³ and morphological peculiarities that tend to be plene⁹⁴ and grammatically corrective, several interpretatively significant points⁹⁵ may be highlighted. First, is the use of the verbal root נצל in verses 17 and 25, which in the hipil form would present a rather harsh⁹⁶ reading: "take away" or "snatch away"⁹⁷ when compared to the gentler אצל of the א . In spite of the high esteem that the later Samaritan theology places on Moses,⁹⁸ such a term is surprising unless the idea is that only a violent wrenching away could secure a portion of

⁹⁰ See Esther Eshel and Hanan Eshel, "Dating the Samaritan Pentateuch's Compilation in Light of the Qumran Biblical Scrolls," in *Emanuel: studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea scrolls in honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. Shalom M. Paul, Robert A. Kraft, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Weston W. Fields (Boston/Leiden: Brill, 2003), 215-40; Esther Eshel, "4QDeut" – A Text that Has Undergone Harmonistic Editing," *HUCA* 62 (1991), 117-154; Emanuel Tov, "The Nature and Background of Harmonizations in Biblical Manuscripts," *JSOT* 31 (1985), 3-29.

⁹¹ Nathan Jastram, "A Comparison of two "Proto-Samaritan" texts from Qumran: 4QPaleoExod^M and 4QNum^B," *DSD* 5, no. 3 (1998), 282, concludes that "the traditions behind א and the Proto-Samaritan texts at Qumran split apart, with both sets of traditions showing the ability to continue to make further interpolations on their own."

⁹² Eugene Ulrich, Frank Moore Cross, James R. Davila, Nathan Jastram, Judith E. Sanderson and Emanuel Tov, ed. *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, XII, Qumran Cave 4, VII Genesis to Numbers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 216-17.

⁹³ See James D. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 52-69.

⁹⁴ Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect*, 54 states: "One can say of Samaritan manuscripts in general that they show preference for the fuller orthography: the internal *matres lectionis* yod and waw are used extensively for the *i/e* and *o/u* vowels. . . . In addition . . . 'alef is occasionally used as a *mater* in SP. . . ."

⁹⁵ Several changes are evident that do not seem to have grave interpretative value. For example in Num 11.8 the א does not have א "or" as in the א , but has the conjunctive-waw. In 11.15 the 2nd person fem independent pronoun את has a more appropriate second masculine singular אתה . Once again in 11.23 the אתה here where the א has עתה . Finally in 11.32 the א has the unusual verb וישטחו which translates "and they spread out." The van Gall edition of the א , which Jastram has followed to fill in the missing portions of 4QNum^b in the DJD volume has שהוט להם וישטחו which would translate as "they spread them out, slaughtering" The text of Abraham Tal, *The Samaritan Pentateuch: Edited According to MS 6 (C) of the Shekhem Synagogue* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1994), as cited by Mark Shoulson, *The Torah: Jewish and Samaritan Versions Compared* (n.l.: n.p., 2006), 187, has both of the verbs from the שחט "to slaughter."

⁹⁶ George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1903), 112, calls it "too violent."

⁹⁷ David J. A. Clines, ed. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, Volume V נ-נ (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 742.

⁹⁸ The Samaritan creed reads, "We believe only in God and in Moses the son of Amran his servant, and in his sacred Law, and in the Mount Garizim Beth El, and in the day of punishment and reward." See Moses Gaster, *The Samaritans: Their History, Doctrines and Literature*, The Schweich Lectures 1923 (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1925), 180. See John Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans*, The New Testament Library (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), 147-222. Macdonald writes on page 147, "Samaritanism as a religion and philosophical system, is unique in one respect. Though derived from the same source as Judaism and having the same Pentateuch (broadly speaking), it developed a belief in Moses, its only prophet, as the pre-eminent one of all humanity, the specially endowed of God."

Moses' spirit for the seventy. Later Samaritan theology however would still insist that Moses' uniqueness was in no way changed. Macdonald quotes the *Memar Marqah* as indicating that "his prophethood was like the surrounding sea, for from it seventy prophets prophesied without diminishing of it."⁹⁹ It is important to further note Ingrid Hjelm's observation that

Prophets are either ignored or held in contempt in the Samaritan literature. Since Moses is the sole and only prophet and the Pentateuch is the only authoritative scripture, there is no need for other prophets. Those prophets who *are* mentioned - Elijah . . . Elisha, Hosea, Joel, Amos and Jeremiah - are all called sorcerers and are accused of using magic and astrology" "They called themselves prophets. They addressed words among the whole congregation of Israel [ישראל כל קהל] on the authority of Yahweh - which Yahweh did not in fact command, nor did he speak with them at all' . They have no messages from God but speak their own words and lead the people astray.¹⁰⁰

The second significant reading is that of 11.25 which concludes with the words "ולא יאספו" and "and they will not gather." Both the Samaritan Targum J & A partially confirm this reading with "אתכנסו ולא",¹⁰¹ here surprisingly the "אתכנסו" is a noun, meaning "gathering together."¹⁰² Aesthetically another "אסף" may be welcomed, however the meaning of the text is at first blush nebulous. If the text is best translated with a passive connotation, i.e. "and they will not be gathered," which occurs for the niph'al form, then the idea is that the elders would not die on account of the revelatory experience like the elders did not die in Exod 24.11. Another possible interpretation is to view the verbal construction as an antithetical clause to Num 11.30 where the niph'al form "ויאסף" is understood as indicating that "Moses returned to the camp, both he and the elders of Israel." In this way the democratizing statements of Num 11.29b are slightly mitigated.¹⁰³

Either way the exceptional experience of the seventy is vouchsafed as the only avenue to the continuing of Moses' revelation.¹⁰⁴ In later Samaritanism, once again, the idea of prophesying has a unique accent. Macdonald argues that for them, "the prophet is the *spokesman* of God, who knows

⁹⁹ Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans*, 209.

¹⁰⁰ Ingrid Hjelm, *The Samaritans and Early Judaism: A Literary Analysis* JSOT Sup 303; Copenhagen International Seminar 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 254-55.

¹⁰¹ Abraham Tal, *The Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch: A Critical Edition*, Part II Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomium (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1981), 190-91. It is interesting to note that Abraham Tal, "Divergent Traditions of the Samaritan Pentateuch as Reflected by Its Aramaic Targum," *JAB* 1 (1999), 313. argues that ". . . a plurality of texts existed in ancient Samaritan religious life."

¹⁰² Stephen A. Kaufman, ed., *Targum Lexicon: Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon*, electronic edition, Logos Bible Software (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 2005).

¹⁰³ Stuhlmueller, "Would That All Were Prophets!" 140, argues that "intricate textual work leads to some serious doubt about the negative tone of our Hebrew text; a more positive reading may have been original. Later, when prophecy fell into disfavor with religious authorities at Jerusalem and also with the classical prophets, the negative overtones were emphasized. The text thus modulated to its present form, disassociating the elders from prophecy." Stuhlmueller seems to be arguing the polemic nature of the **א** over against other textual trajectories.

¹⁰⁴ See James A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans: the earliest Jewish sect, their history, theology, and literature* (Philadelphia: The J. C. Winston Co., 1907), 229.

at first hand the divine will."¹⁰⁵ So the issue focuses on "revelation" and for the seventy it is the preservation of Mosaic utterances.¹⁰⁶ However, the Samaritan text of Num 11 does not clearly indicate this.

A third interesting difference is found in verse 28 where the \aleph has מביחריי which is like the Θ 's $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ but with a pronominal suffix, i.e., "one of his chosen." The \aleph has מבחריי is best translated "his youth."¹⁰⁷

Overall these slight differences do not seem to indicate a great contrast in meaning over against the \aleph . However, viewed from the larger context where Num 10-14 has 5 major interpolations from Deut 1,¹⁰⁸ the structure and message is The first interpolation from Deut 1.6-8 inserted after Num 10.10 introduces a new unit for the \aleph with Yahweh charging Moses to resume the journey to the land of ancestral promise. The \aleph does not have the same clear focus on the "land" as the goal for the proceeding narrative. The strange mention of the Amorites, which will be repeated after Num 12.16 and 13.33 is not found in the \aleph and is ominous.¹⁰⁹ The second interpolation from Deut 1.20-23a is inserted after Num 12.16. Here Moses gives a charge from the hill country of the Amorites sounding like Yahweh in the preceding interpolation, to possess the land. In response to this charge, the children of Israel approach (ויקרבו) Moses and request that men may be sent (נשלחה) and that they (ויחפדו) "may endear the land to us."¹¹⁰ The end result is that the guilt of the Israelites is made clear, while exonerating Moses and God.¹¹¹ The next three interpolations continue this same theme. It should be noted however, that in Num 14.45 the interpolation of Deut 1.44b is expanded by the clause, "and they did not return to the camp" (וישבו אל המהנה).¹¹² In contrast, Deut 1.45

¹⁰⁵ Macdonald, *The Theology of the Samaritans*, 205.

¹⁰⁶ See Ruairidh Bóid, "Use, Authority and Exegesis of Mikra in the Samaritan Tradition," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin Jan Mulder (Assen/Maastricht and Minneapolis: Van Gorcum & Fortress Press, 1990), 620-22.

¹⁰⁷ It is interesting to note that Psa 78.31 has the phrase וּבְחֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

¹⁰⁸ After Num 10.10 = Deut 1.6-8; Num 12.16 = Deut 1.20-23a; Num 13.33 = Deut 1.27-33; Num 14.40 = Deut 1.42; Num 14.45 = Deut 1.44b. See Emanuel Tov, "Rewritten Bible Compositions and Biblical Manuscripts, with special attention to the Samaritan Pentateuch," *DSD* 5 (1998), 344-346.

¹⁰⁹ Although in Deut 1.44a the Amorites are those that defeat the rebellious band, this fact is left out. Instead the later portions of the verse is interpolated after Num 14.45. In Num 14.45 in both the \aleph and the \aleph it is the Amalekites and the Canaanites who attack.

¹¹⁰ The \aleph of both Num 12.16 and Deut 1.22 has the verb חפד rather than חפר which can be found in the \aleph of Deut 1.22 and translated "to explore." The verb חפד is understood as meaning "endearing" from the Samaritan Targum A which has the Aramaic שחד. See Tal, "Divergent Traditions of the Samaritan Pentateuch as Reflected by Its Aramaic Targum," 309.

¹¹¹ Tal, "Divergent Traditions of the Samaritan Pentateuch as Reflected by Its Aramaic Targum," 302.

¹¹² It is interesting to note that Num 11.4 combines the verbs שוב and בכה with an opposite meaning to Deut 1.45. Furthermore the gratuitous ending of Num 14.45 in the \aleph seems to stand in opposition to 11.4.

begins with the Israelites returning and weeping before Yahweh (ותשבּו ותבכו לפני יהוה).

The overall message is that the children of Israel did not listen to Yahweh or Moses and thereby lacked the faith to courageously possess the land of their ancestral promise. Num 11 and the prophesying elders continue as a witness against the people who have chosen against Moses and Yahweh.

A further note is necessary concerning the seventy in the later Samaritan traditions. Gaster long ago noted that in a colophon at the end of a manuscript of the α a reference to the seventy was made. The claim is that "the text of Bible in their possession is the one which they received as an 'ancient tradition' from the seventy elders. These were the seventy elders chosen by Moses in the wilderness to whom he had entrusted a copy of the Law."¹¹³ This Law then in its larger contextual reading focuses on a judgment of Israel for their apostasy from the perspective of the Samaritans.

3. Conclusions

Although my initial plan was to include the different Targumim along with the perspectives of Josephus and Philo in this study, time, space, and your patience have run its course. All that is left is an attempt to tie the many loose ends together.

First, the attempt to find the Pentecostal distinctive of the "initial physical evidence" in Numbers 11 is a hopeless venture, which can be classified as eisegesis rather than bringing out a message that is found in any of the pluriform witnesses. The different textual traditions have all attempted to do justice to both the quail and elders stories. Lifting up the prophetic theme, whether via source criticism or neglecting the fuller context, smacks of the earlier Pentecostal hermeneutics of proof-texting. Furthermore, it may reflect the dangerous trend in Pentecostal scholarship that neglects the weightier matters of biblical and systematic theology in lieu of issues of tertiary concern. At the very heart is a misunderstanding of biblical theology, where one must prove their doctrines in every available pericope. Since the concept of "initial physical evidence" is one which derives from a New Testament context, it is within the New Testament that such argumentation should properly be held. No type, no allegory, no archetypical patterns that are superimposed on the scriptures is necessary.

Does this mean that Num 11 is not of special interest to the Pentecostal? Although, all readers

¹¹³ Gaster, *The Samaritans*, 119. Gaster further notes that this tradition attributes the LXX translation to this Samaritan textual tradition. Martin Hengel, *The Septuagint as Christian Scripture: Its Prehistory and the Problem of its Canon*, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 26, also notes, "originally, the model of Num. 11:24, 26: 70 + 2, may . . . have played a role," in the story of the Septuagint.

from every Bible believing perspective should be interested, there are components that may tickle the fancy of the Pentecostal/Charismatic reader. The desire for a democratization of the revelatory aspects of God's gifting is important. That this desire was grounding in the negative context of "craving a craving" in spite of the clear general warning of Num 11.1-3 may very well challenge the implied spiritual ascendancy of the gift filled Pentecostal/Charismatic extrovert. The contextual reading that the multiple *leitwörter* and rhetorical structure of the **ⲙ** argues that one must be cognizant of chapters 12-14 as well needs to be heard anew in the Pentecostal setting. The democratization of the gifting has a specific purpose, to make one aware ultimately of our unfaithfulness and God's gratuitous forgiveness.

Further speculations into intertextual connections with the whole prophetic movement that dominates the second part of the Jewish canon is of grave interest. Moving beyond the Second Temple Judaic usage of the seventy which led to the seventy of the Sanhedrin, or the Samaritans who view this same seventy as those who vouchsafe the Law of Moses, Christians who delve into the Second Testament must ask about the gospels' use of a new "seventy/seventy-two" that are sent out with a prophet-like ministry.

A pluriform reading of the ancient witnesses, that is, the compound-eyed view, enriches the scriptural message. The **ⲙ** is willing to desire God's revelatory gifting in the context of a humble awareness of the sinful culpability of the people who are gathered together, only to move in the wrong direction. The masoretic tradition shows no sign of beautifying its "savior" from Egypt. Moses may even complain louder than the people, but the difference is that he does not ultimately lose heart. Although the people do not believe that God can provide, Moses at least holds on to the fact that Yahweh is the one that needs to hear it all. His intercession, as Sommer's redactional analysis highlights, comes before and after the crucial Num 11.4-35. Even beyond that, the **ⲙ** invites all to the great apostasy, where all seems lost, but Moses still comes through.

The **Ⲅ**'s concerns need to also be heard once again. Like Achenbach fragmentary hypothesis approach, the "mixed" group ultimately incites the people. We may not want to fall into the trap of xenophobia, which a simplistic reading of either Achenbach or the **Ⲅ** could inadvertently produce, however the possibility that a few could lead the masses astray may be a point to consider. For **Ⲅ**, the immediate result is that the people just sit down and cry. Although, I probably did not bring out this point sufficiently, the **Ⲅ**, places emphasis on a deep despair and lack of faith in God being able to provide for their needs/wants. The quail, or more accurately the birds that migrate with them are

not just eaten with gusto, but are dried out and preserved. Maybe implying that even after God did provide, the lack of trusting God continued, setting the stage for the 𐤄's perspective on the larger context. The seventy are a stop-gap measure for the Greek Bible. Even their prophesying is a one time event that could very well reflect the existential anxieties of the translator in the diaspora who lives in a prophecy-weak environment. The elders are the means to broaden the personal influence of Moses within the ragtag community, while hoping that the people may "see the light." Nevertheless, the basics that all the witnesses espoused blend into the 𐤄's message. The "craving a craving" yields a desire in Moses for a prophetic styled gifting to be democratized throughout the community: in the midst of "bad," a hope for God's "good." Eldad and Modad become the paradigmatic model for a hoped-for new perspective. Interlaced with this message, the 𐤄 seems to tell us that Israel has been trapped in a repetitive loop, repeating and not learning the lessons of Exodus.

Finally, the nuances of the 𐤃 should not be brushed aside. The intricate aesthetics and rhetorical structure of the 𐤃 take a backseat to a carefully crafted insertion of portions of Deut 1. Here, all things begin with the explicit charge of Yahweh and the voice of Moses affirming God's charge pulses through the text. In spite of a collective and deep-rooted proclivity to not follow God's command/s, here being led astray by "craving a craving," the future is foreboding. The overall message is negative and judgmental. Being warned in Num 11.1-3, the people of Israel still gather together in opposition to Moses. Good does happen, like in the Greek and masoretic traditions, but it is via the gathering of the seventy that will carry on Moses' work. The desire of Moses for a democratization of the prophetic gifting will be an unfulfilled one, not unlike that of Moses' and Yahweh's acquiescence to the request of the people to send spies out to the land. Although the people "returned" in 11.4, they will not return in 14.45.

Numbers chapter 11 does have much to offer and viewing it with compound eyes may enrich the way we open ourselves to what it may be speaking to us.