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TYPE-CASTING THE SAMSON FAMILY: GENESIS PARODIES IN JUDGES 13–14

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Abstract: *While many scholars have treated type scenes from the Samson narrative in a case-by-case manner, more attention is needed to deduce their collective rhetorical effect. The Samson narrative censures Samson and his parents by using typology, particularly type scenes and types, as a weapon against the family to expose their sins and weaknesses. This article explores four types related to Genesis found in Judges 13–14. The elements of various type scenes are juxtaposed to establish patterns in order to find deviations and to determine if textual allusions are present. Deviations from the type scene are marked by expansions, suppressions, or modifications of details in the Samson account. These deviations consistently unmask the shortcomings of the Samson family; they serve, therefore, as a large-scale literary device due to their density and unity of purpose. The various types form a collection of parodies that denounce Samson and his family as less righteous than their Genesis forefathers.*

Key words: *Samson, typology, type, type scene, parody, patriarchs, Eve, Judges 13–14*

The Samson narrative employs typology as a large-scale narrative technique to show the failures of Samson and his family.[1] The story uses type scenes to portray Samson and his family as similar to, or even worse than, unfaithful "Israelites" from the patriarchal period. When a Samson account parallels a Genesis narrative, Samson or his parents are consistently depicted unfavorably when compared with earlier generations. Scholars have explored some of these types in a case-by-case manner.[2] The types, however, function as a collective to demonstrate that Samson and his family typify the generation "who did not know Yahweh nor the work which he had done for Israel" (Judg 2:10) and who failed the test to "keep the way of Yahweh" (v. 22).[3] Specifically, the various types function as parodies to denounce this family as less righteous than the patriarchs and Eve. To support this thesis, I will first briefly define and classify key literary terms like typology, type scene, and parody. Then I will explore several types within the Samson story to

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[1] For a helpful *intra*textual treatment of Samson's family in Judges, see Michael J. Smith, "The Failure of the Family in Judges, Part 2: Samson," *BSac* 162 (2005): 424–36.

[2] A notable exception is Lillian Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, JSOTSS 68 (Sheffield: Almond, 1989), 132–35.

[3] All translations are the author's unless otherwise stated. When the versification differs between the Hebrew and English, the English will appear in a bracket after the Hebrew. It is beyond the scope of this article to offer a treatment of Samson as a representative of Israel. For a well-argued case, see Edward L. Greenstein, "The Riddle of Samson," *Proof* 1 (1981): 247–55.

assess the nature of the type, its relationship to the Genesis account(s), and its rhetorical effect in the pericope.[4]

I. TYPOLOGY[5]

Typology is a form of imitation, and in its broadest sense is the study of types.[6] A *type* is simply an "event, person, or institution which serves as an example or pattern for other events, persons, or institutions."[7] For example, Moses is a type of Joshua in the book of Joshua because Joshua leads the people over the Jordan River on dry ground (Joshua 3–4).

When types offer a sequence or pattern of events, they are called type scenes. Koowon Kim defines *type scene* as "*a recurrent sequence of common motifs*—each subdivisible into elements and capable of functioning independently—which seem to be united under a common theme."[8] A biblical type scene is "a series of recurrent narrative episodes attached to the careers of Biblical heroes."[9] Notably, not every element of the series must be present. In fact, no particular element or elements are essential to a type scene, nor does the sequence need to be followed mechanically.[10] Instead, a "family resemblance" and a "narratival movement of multiple motifs" constitute the necessary conditions.[11] Because type scenes use patterning, they act as formulaic conventions. The narratives employing them imitate and, at times, diverge from the pattern.

The issue of divergence leads to a corresponding literary device, namely parody. Parody emphasizes a difference *amidst* the correspondence.[12] This is particularly

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[4] For typological connections with Moses, see Gary E. Yates and Jillian L. Ross, "Samson: An Anti-Moses Deliverer," *BSac* (forthcoming).

[5] This section is an adaptation from and consolidation of my dissertation. For more details, see Jillian L. Ross, "A People Heeds Not Scripture: A Poetics of Pentateuchal Allusions in the Book of Judges" (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2015), 87–98.

[6] Benjamin J. Ribbens, "Typology of Types: Typology in Dialogue," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 5 (2011): 84; cf. David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship between the Old and New Testaments*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010), 180. *Imitation* is a technique whereby "the author fits his text into a tradition and willingly attempts to use [the tradition's] means—whether styles, forms, lexicon, or devices—and its values to echo previous success." Allan H. Pasco, *Allusion: A Literary Graft* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 5.

[7] Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible*, 180.

[8] Koowon Kim, *Incubation as a Type-Scene in the 'Aqhatu, Kirta, and Hannah Stories: A Form-Critical and Narratological Study of KTU 1.14 I–1.15 III, 1.17 I–II, and 1 Samuel 1:1–2:11*, VTSup 145 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 13 (emphasis mine). Robert Alter's definition is too specific. He states that a type scene "is an episode occurring at a portentous moment in the career of the hero which is composed of a fixed sequence of motifs. It is often associated with certain recurrent themes; it is not bound to specific *Leitwörter*, though occasionally a recurrent term or phrase may help mark the presence of a particular type-scene." Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 96.

[9] Robert Alter, "Biblical Type-Scenes and the Use of Convention," *Critical Inquiry* 5 (1978): 597.

[10] For "special purposes," such as elaboration or adaptation, a type scene may alter its sequence (Kim, *Incubation as a Type-Scene*, 18).

[11] Kim, 14, 16–17.

[12] Gale A. Yee, "The Anatomy of Biblical Parody: The Dirge Form in 2 Samuel 1 and Isaiah 14," *CBQ* 50.4 (1988): 565–66; W. J. Kynes, "Beat Your Parodies into Swords, and Your Parodied Books into Spears: A New Paradigm for Parody in the Hebrew Bible," *BibInt* 19.3 (2011): 281.

important for the Samson story and assessing the way the type, that is, the model, is being implemented. If the model is used similarly, then it is considered analogical, but if its use emphasizes a difference then it is parodic. *Parody* "retains the *form* or stylistic character of the literary model [here the type], but substitutes an alien subject matter or *content*. The primary impact of parody results from the incongruity between form and content."[13] In other words, parodies aim to expose something whether in the parodied text, in the model, or external to it.[14] Because of this, various types of parodies can be formed. If the parody is aimed at the original, then the precursor is used as a target. If the parody is aimed at something else, then the model is used as a weapon.[15] The Samson story characteristically wields the model, the type or type scene, as a weapon against Samson and his family. To support this point, this article surveys three representative type scenes: Samson's mother (birth of a child), Samson's father (quest for a deity's name), and Samson himself (quest for a bride). It also considers one type: Samson as an Eve figure.

II. SAMSON'S MOTHER: BIRTH OF A CHILD (JUDGES 13)

The Samson story begins with a laconic version of the cyclical framework and then launches into a lengthy theophany that encompasses chapter 13. The theophany functions as Samson's call narrative, yet the unit is also cast into an annunciation type scene or, more accurately, a hero-of-a-barren-woman scene.[16] This latter type scene occurs in several narrative texts, particularly among the patriarchs.

Seven major elements emerge from these texts. According to Benjamin Johnson they include, "(1) a statement describing the woman's barrenness; (2) an attempt by the woman or her spouse to obtain children; (3) the promise of the son; (4) information about the promised child; (5) a reaction (usually doubt) to the promise; (6) the birth of the son; and (7) the naming of the son."[17] As will be argued, the type scene, particularly as a convention, will be used as a weapon against Samson's mother because some of the elements either will be absent in the Judges 13 account or will fall short of reader expectations established by the patterns. Below is a chart classifying each biblical story.

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[13] Yee, "The Anatomy of Biblical Parody," 566 (emphasis hers).

[14] Yee, 568.

[15] Kynes, "Beat Your Parodies into Swords, and Your Parodied Books into Spears," 291.

[16] I prefer the term *hero* (Alter, Niditch) to *son* (Johnson) because the former articulates more clearly the son's role as protagonist and divine agent. See Alter, "Biblical Type-Scenes and the Use of Convention," 359; Robert Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read: The Case of the Bible's Annunciation Type Scene," *Proof* 3 (1983): 119; Susan Niditch, "Samson as Culture Hero, Trickster, and Bandit: The Empowerment of the Weak," *CBQ* 52.4 (1990): 609–12; Benjamin J. M. Johnson, "What Type of Son is Samson? Reading Judges 13 as a Biblical Type-Scene," *JETS* 53.2 (2010): 270. For a more detailed treatment of this type scene, see the aforementioned works.

[17] Johnson, "Reading Judges 13 as a Biblical Type-Scene," 272. Johnson includes two minor elements that do not affect my analysis: "(1) the command to name the son; and (2) a statement of the son's prosperity."

Table 1: Comparison of Elements among Hero-of-a-Barren-Woman Narratives[18]

Type-Scene Elements	Sarah Gen 16–21	Rebekah Gen 25:19–26	Rachel Gen 30:1–6	Samson's Mother Judg 13	Hannah 1 Sam 1
Statement of barrenness	X	X	X	X	X
Attempt to acquire a son	X	X	X	Ø	X
Promise of a son	X	Ø	Ø	X	X
Description of the child	X	X	Ø	X	X
Reaction to the promise	Abraham: X Sarah: X	Ø	Ø	X	X
Arrival of the child	X	X	X	X	X
Naming of the child	X	Esau: X Jacob: X	X	X	X

Perusal of the of barren-woman narratives reveals that Samson's birth narrative contains all but one element, namely the attempt to acquire a son (element 2). This suppression is important. After the statement that Manoah's wife is barren, the informed reader anticipates a subsequent statement that the woman attempts to acquire a son, yet Manoah and his wife represent the sole case of a couple who never tries to obtain a child. "They neither offer prayer as Isaac and Hannah … do, nor try to obtain children through the means of a handmaid as Sarah, Leah, and Rachel do."[19] Thus, like Israel who failed to cry out to God for a deliverer in 13:1, so too Manoah and his wife fail to cry out to God for a son.[20]

The text further deviates from the convention through modifications and expansion. For example, in the reaction to the promise (element 5), Manoah acts atypically. Having heard the news of the special child, Manoah offers a prayer not of thanksgiving but of supplication (Judg 13:8). Furthermore, his prayer exhibits doubt and confusion. He requests that "the man of God" return and "teach what we shall do for the child to be born" (Judg 13:8) despite the fact that he was given that information in the previous clause ("the child is to be a Nazirite to God from the womb," v. 7). Typically, in the convention the parents' reactions exhibit faith, as is especially the case of Hannah.[21] While it is true that Abraham's reaction ex-

[18] For a similar table, see Johnson, "Reading Judges 13 as a Biblical Type-Scene," 286.

[19] Johnson, 272; cf. J. Cheryl Exum, "Promise and Fulfillment: Narrative Art in Judges 13," *JBL* 99.1 (1980): 47–48.

[20] James L. Crenshaw, *Samson: A Secret Betrayed, a Vow Ignored* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1978), 43; Yairah Amit, *The Book of Judges: The Art of Editing*, trans. Jonathan Chipman, VTSup 38 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 298; Robert H. O'Connell, *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges*, VTSup 63 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 224; cf. Johnson, "Reading Judges 13 as a Biblical Type-Scene," 274.

[21] Hannah prayed in anguish prior to the promise; her reaction to Eli's words included eating, removal of sorrow, and arising early in the morning to worship (1 Sam 1:17–18). Rebekah, like Manoah, prayed after the fact, but upon hearing the status of her children seems to accept it as fact (Gen 25:23, 28). Sarah laughs but once rebuked exhibits fear (Gen 18:12–16).

hibits some disbelief, his initial and final reaction exhibit faith.[22] As soon as Abraham hears that he will father the child through Sarah, he falls on his face in reverent awe, albeit followed by laughter (Gen 17:17). Nevertheless, when Yahweh reiterates that Sarah will bear the child, Abraham demonstrates great faith by "that very day" circumcising his entire household (בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה; vv. 23, 26). Manoah again stands in contrast. Even though Yahweh answers Manoah's prayer and sends the envoy to him, Manoah doubts the envoy's words (Judg 13:11–14). For, "Manoah asks his name in order to honor him—not immediately but *after* [his] word comes true" (Judg 13:17).[23] Thus, Manoah's protracted reticence to accept the divine messenger's announcement characterizes him as lacking faith and distinguishes him from others in barren woman narratives.[24]

Other features also incriminate the couple. For example, unlike the other narratives, the naming of Samson (element 7) lacks an etiology. In fact, the name is rather curious. It likely means "little sun" and may pay homage to the sun god, *Shemesh*. This lack of explanation raises questions as to why Samson's name does not relate to the narrative or point Godward. Younger is assuredly correct when he states, "[Samson] is hardly a name that would be expected after such a double theophany of Yahweh to his mother! Certainly one would have expected a Yahwistic name, one starting or ending with the divine name (e.g., Zechariah [*zkryhw*], Jehoash/Joash [*yhw'š*/ *yw'š*], etc.)." [25] Similarly, the thrice-repeated charge to refrain from unclean food distances the couple from other couples in the type (Judg 13:4, 7, 14).

Several scholars suggest that Judges 13 extends beyond the hero-of-a-barren-woman type to an allusion to Sarah and Abraham.[26] Richter, in my estimation, of-

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[22] Mathews aptly writes, "Abraham's reaction consisted of the range of human response; initially, he collapses in reverential awe, laughs, reasons, and then urgently pleads." Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, NAC 1B (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 205.

[23] K. Lawson Younger Jr., *Judges/Ruth*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 290–91. Further support comes from the fact that Manoah does not erect an altar to consecrate the site where Yahweh appeared to him (291).

[24] Johnson also sees the length of this section as critical to this type scene; however, he emphasizes different aspects, especially ignorance. For more details, see Johnson, "Reading Judges 13 as a Biblical Type-Scene," 279–80.

[25] Younger, *Judges/Ruth*, 292. Johnson argues that the absence of the etymology may not be significant. Johnson is correct that what Samson is not named, something like Jeshua ("Yahweh saves"), is more important than what he is named. Johnson is, however, incorrect to suggest the emphasis in the account is on Samson having a name. Namelessness is not as significant a trope in Judges 13 as Johnson makes out. True, there is an interplay between Manoah's wife not having a name and the envoy of Yahweh not giving his, but the envoy is named seven times in the narrative (Judg 13:3, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21). Furthermore, naming alone does not give sufficient attention to the role irony, absence (esp. cultic), and ambiguity all play in the narrative.

[26] Klein attempts to argue for an allusion to Sarah by suggesting that both Sarah (Gen 21:1–3) and Manoah's wife (Judg 13:6) conceive during the encounter with the deity or his emissary. Likewise, Johnson takes a novel approach. He not only sees a subtle allusion to Sarah's theophany but also to Hagar's theophany (Johnson, "What Type of Son is Samson?," 276, 280–81, 285). There is some heuristic value to comparing the accounts, but it is far from clear that one is to extrapolate the idea that Ishmael is a "wild ass of a man" (Gen 16:12) and apply it to Samson the Nazirite deliverer. For more details, see

fers the most compelling associations. Richter finds five motifs in Judges 13; four appear in Genesis 18: (1) a birth narrative of a barren or old woman, (2) a promise of a son, (3) hospitality to a divine visitor, (4) the recognition of the divine visitor, and (5) fearfulness.[27] I offer a sixth, namely faith/faithlessness (in the reaction to the promise). Richter's first two elements, barren women and promise of a son, find strong similarities with Genesis 18 and Judges 13. The last two, recognition of the visitor and fearfulness, exhibit significant differences. The third motif, hospitality, seems to relate at first glance, but its respective placement in the narratives and its contribution differ in ways that do not readily yield a fuller meaning of Judges 13.[28] Despite the similarities, I do not find sufficiently clear markers to warrant an allusion without looking at more passages in the Samson narrative. Although an allusion to Abraham is opaque, the use of the type as a weapon against Manoah and his wife to cast them as inferior parents of a hero is clear.

III. SAMSON'S FATHER: QUEST OF DEITY'S NAME (JUDGES 13:11–23)

Concurrent with the birth type is Manoah's theophany narrative (Judg 13:11–23). The narrative boarders on the burlesque due to Manoah's inability to grasp what the reader knows: Manoah is face to face with God (Judg 13:23). According to Crenshaw, Manoah's encounter with the envoy contains the motif of the quest for a deity's name. The elements of the motif, or rather type scene, include "(1) a divine manifestation; (2) a human request for the God's name; (3) a divine refusal, together with a gift of a clue as to the concealed name; and (4) the successful use of the clue" by a figure in the story.[29] Crenshaw tacitly treated the subject with respect to Samson; however, the narrative type also appears with Jacob wrestling with "a man" (Gen 32:23–32, esp. v. 29) and with Moses at the burning bush (Exod 3:1–4:17, esp. 3:13–15). Through examining these stories, two additional elements emerge: prayer to God (prior to theophany) and fear of death. The following table classifies the elements in each story.[30]

Johnson, "What Type of Son is Samson?," 276, 280–81, 285; Klein, *The Triumph of Irony*, 111–15; cf. Adele Reinhartz, "Samson's Mother: An Unnamed Protagonist," *JSOT* 55 (1992): 33–35.

[27] Wolfgang Richter, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch*, BBB 18 (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1966), 141–42.

[28] Richter, 142.

[29] Crenshaw, *Samson*, 46.

[30] For ease of discussion, Crenshaw's third element is divided into two: divine refusal and gift of a clue as to the concealed name. Crenshaw sees only one clue (*Samson*, 46), the main clue, but the envoy is not limited to one per narrative (Judg 13:16, 18, 20). Additionally, the prayer in Moses's story occurs in Exodus 2:23 (cf. 3:7), when the Israelites groan (אנח *niphil*) and cry out (זעק) for help such that their call for help went up to Yahweh (שַׁוְעָה). The prayer coupled with Yahweh's response transitions into the theophany.

Table 2: Comparison of Elements among the Quest for a Deity's Name Narratives

Type-Scene Elements	Jacob Gen 32:23–32	Moses Exod 3:1–4:17	Manoah Judg 13:11–23
Prayer	X	X (Israelites)	X
Divine manifestation	X	X	X
Human request for the god's name	X	X	X
Gift of a clue	X	X	3X
Divine refusal	X	Ø (extended giving of it)	X
Use of the clue	Jacob: X	Yahweh: X	Ø (?)
Fear of death	X	X	X

The interrelationship between prayer and fear of death, coupled with the envoy quotation "Why do you ask my name?" (לָמָּה זֶּה תִּשְׁאַל לִשְׁמִי) seem to move the Judges account from a parody on the type scene to (and in addition) a veiled allusion to the Jacob narrative. In the Jacob account, fear of death is the first element; prayer is the second, and these lead to the divine manifestation and Jacob's response to it. In the Manoah narrative, however, prayer begins the sequence, which results in the third divine manifestation (though Manoah's first). This in turn culminates in fear of death, which is Manoah's reaction.

When considering theophanies, "the human reaction to the appearance of the deity is of central importance."[31] To capitalize on this concept, the narrator exploits the "clue" elements (5–6) in Manoah's quest for the divine name through repetition and, possibly, suppression of the use of the clue itself. Prior to Manoah's request, the envoy gives hints at his identity. He refuses to eat the food (Judg 13:16). In the next clause, the envoy nudges Manoah further to the truth by telling the man to offer the offering "to Yahweh" (v. 16). After asking the messenger's name, Manoah does not readily understand the main clue, "Why do you ask my name?" (לָמָּה זֶּה תִּשְׁאַל לִשְׁמִי) even with the appended "since it is wonderful" (וְהוּא־פֶלִאי; v. 18).[32] Only when Yahweh's envoy disappears up into the flames does Manoah "know that he was the envoy of Yahweh" (v. 21). Moreover, the whole time Manoah is groping for the identity of "the man who appeared to this woman" (v. 11), the narrative makes liberal use of the title "the envoy of Yahweh" (מַלְאַךְ יהוה). The appellative occurs eight times in nine verses but appears only one other time in the chapter.[33] In each instance, the narrator uses the epithet, not Manoah.[34]

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[31] George Savran, "Theophany as Type Scene," *Prooftexts* 23 (2003): 136.

[32] This, to Crenshaw, is the only clue (*Samson*, 46).

[33] The divine epithet appears in Judges 13:3, 13, 15, 16 (2x), 17, 18, 20, 21; in Judges 13:9, מַלְאַךְ הָאֱלֹהִים is used (cf. Judg 13:6).

Other features of Manoah's theophany stand out when compared with the Jacob narrative.[35] The key features include the prayer, the placement and nature of the fear of death element, and the divine refusal. In Genesis 32, Jacob, like Manoah, had prayed to God prior to his divine encounter (element 1). Jacob's prayer differs markedly and will set up a helpful contrast. Jacob prays that God would *deliver* him from his brother Esau whom *he feared* would kill him and his family (Gen 32:12; cf. v. 8 [Eng. 7, 11]). Jacob's petition is grounded in the covenant, including God's promise to him at Bethel: "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Yahweh, who said to me, 'Return to your land'" (32:10 [Eng. 9]). Manoah's prayer exhibits no fear and requests another encounter.[36]

The divine refusal relates to the clue. Jacob inquires of the wrestler's name *after* he requested a blessing from the supernatural being, after being asked his own name (for the blessing), and after receiving the clue. Jacob grasps the clue whether from the messenger's question or from the clue alone, namely his Yahwistic new name.[37] Jacob comprehends this clue because he responds to the situation in kind with his own use of the clue (element 6) vis-à-vis a place-name wordplay: "Jacob called the name of the place Peniel because he saw God face to face" (Gen 32:31 [Eng. 30]). Then also in response to the divine encounter, Jacob memorializes the place. Furthermore, Jacob states that "his life has been *delivered*" (נצל; 32:31 [Eng. 30]). This verbiage harkens back to his prayer for deliverance from Esau (נצל; Gen 32:12 [Eng. 11]).[38] *Fear* no longer controls Jacob.[39] He arises, returns to the camp, and he himself goes in front of his family to Esau (וְהוּא עָבַר לִפְנֵיהֶם; 33:3). Jacob believes that God has kept this covenantal promise to bless him and his seed in the land.[40]

Manoah reacts in a significantly different manner. In addition to the question "Why do you ask my name?," the envoy offers the clue "it is wonderful" (Judg 13:18). As mentioned above, Manoah fails to grasp the situation. It seems that

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[34] In fact, Manoah himself never speaks the covenant name of Yahweh, even when seeing "God" (אֱלֹהִים; Judg 13:22).

[35] On the micro-level, Moses's request for a deity's name (Exod 3:1–4:17) is less helpful because the plot elements emphasize the deity disclosing his name and shift the motivation from personal knowledge to national faith.

[36] Ironically, Manoah may not know that his son is a deliver (ישע). So, Robert B. Chisholm Jr., *A Commentary on Judges and Ruth*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2013), 393–94n62.

[37] His name is built off the fact that "[he has] striven with God and with man and prevailed" (Gen 32:29; cf. 32:26 [Eng. 25, 28]).

[38] Similarly, the Peniel language is employed by Jacob when he sees his brother. This phraseology stands at the center of a chiasm in Gen 32:9–11, according to J. P. Fokkelman: "A) I have much, my brother; keep what is yours. B) that I may find favour in your sight: C) accept my present from my hand; D) therefore, because I have seen your face D') like seeing the face of God, and you have received me with favour C') do accept my blessing, B') for God has dealt graciously with me, A') for I have everything." *Narrative Art in Genesis: Specimens of Stylistic and Structural Analysis* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975), 226.

[39] Nevada Levi DeLapp, *Theophanic "Type-Scenes" in the Pentateuch: Visions of YHWH*, LHBOTS 660 (New York: T&T Clark: 2018), 35–37; cf. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis*, 220.

[40] DeLapp, *Theophanic "Type-Scenes" in the Pentateuch*, 37. This is not to say that Jacob is a very faithful patriarch moving forward. Jacob can still be presented as superior to Manoah while remaining a flawed character.

Manoah never uses the clue in any form, neither in the envoy's presence nor afterwards.[41] Manoah did not memorialize the place as Jacob had done, nor did he build an altar for Yahweh (cf. Gideon, Judg 6:32), nor did he name his child with it (13:24). Manoah did nothing, except fear. Fear gripped Manoah such that he thought he would die (v. 22). For Manoah, his fear came after his encounter with God; for Jacob the encounter allayed his fears. For Manoah, his immediate fear of death for himself and his wife due to the encounter suggests a disbelief in the promise. Jacob's "disbelief" occurred at the beginning and transformed into faith in the promise (Gen 32:12, 31–32; [Eng. 32:11, 30–31]). Thus, the theophany that was to illuminate Manoah achieved its aim only after many clues and after Manoah's wife logically explained the absurdity of their death after the promise (Judg 13:23).

The multiplicity of the clues and repetitions coupled with statements about Manoah's knowledge, or lack thereof (Judg 13:16, 21), creates a parody of the type scene. In this case, the literary convention is used as a weapon against the target, Manoah's theophany. Jacob's quest of a deity's name provides a helpful parallel account to illustrate the attack on Manoah. Because of the shared quotation and contrasting elements, a veiled allusion to Genesis 32:22–32 in Judges 13:12–25 seems likely. Clearer is the fact that Manoah's theophany parodies the request of the divine name. In a different vein, "Manoah's repeated failures of perception, prepare the way in more broadly thematic terms for the career of a hero who will be inveigled by women to his own disaster, and whose formidable brawn will not be matched by brain, or even by a saving modicum of common sense."[42]

IV. SAMSON: QUEST FOR A BRIDE (JUDGES 14)

Once Samson is born, the story moves quickly from cradle to courting. The reader no sooner learns that Yahweh's spirit is stirring within Samson (Judg 13:25) than Samson seeks to marry a Philistine (14:1–2). The statement should elicit surprise because of patterns within the type scene of the hero's betrothal. Samson's betrothal in Judges 14:1–4 exhibits various suppressions and reversals of the type scene. The following elements reflect my adaptation and expansion of Robert Alter's elements: (1) parent's objection to marrying a Canaanite (minor element), (2) journey to a foreign land, (3) encounter with a young woman, (4) water drawn (mi-

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[41] Here one cannot be too confident because there is a text critical issue with וּמַפְלִא לַעֲשׂוֹת (v. 19), which even Natalio Fernández Marcos believes exhibits textual corruption (*Shoftim: Judges*, BHQ 7 [Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2011], 91*; cf. Chisholm, *Judges and Ruth*, 398n75) because the *hiphil* participle followed by the infinitive makes little sense. Crenshaw seems to follow LXX^{A}. He reads it as if the phrase were in apposition to "to Yahweh," namely as a ל-prefixed articular substantive participle: "to the one who does wonders." In so doing, he interprets that "Manoah seized the clue and interpreted it like a true sage" (*Samson*, 46). This reading, however, is very speculative and even if it were the correct reading, it fails to account for the fact that it is the narrator who credits Yahweh as the one who does miracles, not Manoah. Crenshaw also errs by suggesting that Manoah "demonstrate[s] that newfound knowledge in the act of sacrifice and in his choice offering" (*Samson*, 46). Manoah had been instructed by the envoy to offer the meal; Manoah offered the sacrifice *before* he knew who the being was, not after (Judg 13:21).

[42] Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read," 124.

nor element), (5) the young woman rushes home to tell her family of the encounter, (6) betrothal of the couple, and (7) a meal (whether upon meeting or a wedding feast).[43] Previous studies have not recognized the "Canaanite prohibition" as an element, but the disapprobation features significantly in the stories of Isaac, Jacob, and Esau and thereby warrants inclusion as a minor element.[44] In fact, for the patriarchal narratives, the *grounds* for the quest of a bride rests squarely on the fact that the hero's parent or parents do not want the son to marry a woman native to the land of Canaan.[45] This first element will feature significantly in the analysis, particularly as an argument for a typological allusion to Jacob and Esau. Below is a table containing the elements found in the accounts of Isaac, Jacob, Esau, Moses, and Samson.[46]

[43] Alter's elements include (1) a young man or surrogate's "journey to a foreign land," (2) his encounter with a girl, (3) water drawn, (4) "the girl or girls rush to bring home the news of the stranger's arrival," (5) "a betrothal is concluded," and (6) the betrothal usually occurs "only after [the man] has been invited to a meal" ("Biblical Type-Scenes and the Uses of Convention," 359). Meals around the time of betrothal tend to point to favorable events; reports of wedding feasts (instead?) contain troubling complications in the narrative (the wrong wife [Gen 29:23]; threat of the wife's death [Judg 14:15]).

[44] *Pace* Alter, "Biblical Type-Scenes and the Uses of Convention," 359; Klein, *Triumph of Irony*, 132–33. It should be noted that Esau's narrative lacks a betrothal narrative but reports his marriage to Hittite and Ishmaelite women as a rhetorical means of setting up Jacob's betrothal and recriminating Esau.

[45] Although the Philistines are technically not Canaanites, Judges seems to appropriate them into the list at some level by including them first among the nations that Yahweh "left" (*hiphil* נוח) in the land as a test to see whether Israel would obey the commands of Yahweh (Judg 3:1–6).

[46] "M" denotes modifications. The book of Ruth also employs the type scene; see Alter "Biblical Type-Scenes and the Uses of Convention," 365–66.

Table 3: Comparison of Elements among Betrothal Type Scenes

Type-Scene Elements	Isaac Gen 24	Jacob Gen 28–29	Esau Gen 26:34–35; 27:42–28:9	Moses Exod 2:15–22	Samson Judg 14
Prohibition against marrying foreign women	X	X	Gen 26 [disapproval] Gen 28 X	Ø	M [objection]
Journey to a foreign land	X	X	Gen 26 Ø Gen 28 X	X	X [6 mi.]
Encounter with the woman	X	X		X	M [Samson saw a woman]
Water drawn	X	X		M [Moses]	Ø
The woman rushes home	X	X		X	M [Samson goes home]
Betrothal	X	X		X	X
Meal/wedding feast	meal	wedding feast		meal	wedding feast

As the table indicates, modifications, often represented as reversals, are the norm for this type scene. In general, suppression works in tandem with the reversals such that what replaces one item leaves aspects of the type scene underrepresented.[47] For example, although Samson travels to a foreign land, the "jaunt" to Timnah is only about six miles and, as a result, acts as a suppression of the journey to a foreign land. Consequently, Samson's actions become functionally equivalent to marrying "a daughter of the land" (cf. Gen 27:46) rather than a woman untainted by their wiles.

The prohibition against marrying these daughters of the land (element 1) weds Samson with the patriarchs, and thereby moves beyond Deuternom(ist)ic

[47] The above shows alterations in the type scenes, and concomitantly several traditional elements are omitted. "Samson's courtship suppresses all the traditional elements of the well-scene: there is no symbolic water, no invitation to the woman's home, and no recognition of their common background and heritage. The bride-to-be doesn't hurry home; in a reversal that anticipates the turn from tradition of the entire marriage episode, Samson goes to *his* home, and he doesn't hurry excitedly either. He simply 'goes' or 'comes up' to his parents to tell them of his wishes, to demand that they 'get her for him as a wife.' The son doesn't even acknowledge his parents' protests; neither is the sharing of food, a ceremonial observation of a betrothal, mentioned in this episode. The shared meal which brings blessing to the family in the form of betrothal, marriage, and new generations is ironically turned into a completely informal and unsocial event: Samson scoops honey into his hands and goes on, 'eating as he went' (14:9) without the traditional aspect of a shared meal. Indeed, he only 'shares' his transgression" (Klein, *Triumph of Irony*, 132–33).

concepts of foreign marriages.[48] These type scenes share the idiom "from the daughters of X." The phraseology of מִן (source) + daughters of + gentilic/toponym is uncommon. It occurs only sixteen times in the Hebrew Bible, twelve of which are in Genesis (8x) and Judges (4x).[49] None appear in the Deuteronomistic History outside of Judges, with Samson's betrothal using the phrase three times (Judg 14:1, 2, 3).[50] Moreover, all the Genesis usages relate to the aforementioned betrothal stories.[51]

Repetition, density, and narrative time work in concert in the patriarchal betrothals to reveal the element's importance, particularly in the Jacob-Esau account.[52] This account employs the formula "take a wife from the daughters of X" six times in ten verses.[53] In Genesis 27:46, the "daughters of Heth" (2x: בְּנוֹת חֵת; מִבְּנוֹת חֵת) denote Esau's wives that "made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah." Esau's wives act as proof that Jacob should not marry a woman "like these daughters of the land" (כָּאֵלֶּה מִבְּנוֹת הָאָרֶץ; 27:46). Therefore, Isaac commanded (צוה) Jacob "not to take a wife from the daughters of Canaan" (מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן; 28:1; cf. 36:2). Five verses later, the command is repeated from Esau's perspective (28:6). *"Then Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were evil in the eyes of Jacob his father"* (וַיַּרְא עֵשָׂו כִּי רָעוֹת בְּנוֹת כְּנַעַן בְּעֵינֵי יִצְחָק אָבִיו; Gen 28:8). As a result, Esau goes to Ishmael and takes two of his daughters for wives (Gen 28:9). Rhetorically, the passage condemns Canaanite marriage and supports marriage within the family clan.

The Samson account uses the phrase "from the daughters of the Philistines" (מִבְּנוֹת פְּלִשְׁתִּים) twice.[54] The story begins with a report that Samson went down to

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[48] Moses's betrothal lacks this element for various reasons, one of which may be because he is marrying a foreigner whose patronage goes back to Abraham (Gen 25:2, 4).

[49] References specifically using gentilics and toponyms include: Gen 23:4, 37; 27:46; 28:1, 6; 36:2; Judg 14:1, 2; 21:21. The construction "from the daughters of" also appears with the land (Gen 27:46), filial connections (Judg 14:3 [your brethren]), and personal names (Gen 28:2 [Laban]; Exod 26:25; Ezra 2:61; Neh 7:63). Of these, the Genesis and Judges references specifically parallel "the daughters of Hittites/Canaanites/Philistines." The collocation מִן + בְּנוֹת + gentilic/toponym appears twice more in the HB with the מִן functioning once as a privative (Deut 23:18: "None of the daughters of Israel") and once as an agent ("by the daughters of Jerusalem," Song 3:10). Thus, the phrase מִבְּנוֹת used in the broadest sense occurs only seventeen times, with only fifteen relevant texts.

[50] The other occurrence is the rape-marriage of the "daughters of Shiloh" (Judg 21:21).

[51] The report of Esau's marriages in his *toledoth* (Gen 36:2) represents the sole occurrence outside of the betrothal accounts.

[52] Ill-fated wedding feasts rather than prenuptial meals occur only in the Jacob and Samson stories (Gen 29:22; Judg 13:10–20).

[53] In Isaac's narrative, twice the idiom recounts the servant's oath that he will not take a wife for Isaac "from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land I am dwelling" (מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי; Gen 24:3, 37). The first time it reports Abraham's lengthy statement (17 words); the second is an abridged version in the servant's mouth (10 words).

[54] Unlike the other appearances of the idiom, Judges 14 contains the only occurrences lacking "to take" (לקח). This unusual break from the standard convention falls within the concept of "ungrammaticality," a phrase appropriated by Cynthia Edenburg for detecting allusions and sources. According to Edenburg, if an ungrammaticality exists, it often suggests that a foreign element has entered the text. It seems reasonable to propose that Judges 14 retained the more common Deuteronomistic idiom "take a wife (for)," namely לקח + אשה (+ל), and added the separate phrase "from the daughters of X" to activate an allusion to the type scene, and specifically to Gen 28:6–8. For ungrammaticality, see Cynthia

Timnah and saw "a woman in Timnah from the daughters of the Philistines" (Judg 14:1). It is repeated in Samson's speech to his parents (14:2), where he commands his parents, "Now take her [the Timnite] for me as a wife" (14:3). The objection of Samson's father and mother, in contrast to the disapprobations of Rebekah and Isaac, is both terse and weak. Samson's parents simply ask a question: "Isn't there someone better here?"[55] Samson's callousness should be seen in light of the willingness of men who journeyed to find a suitable wife.[56] More importantly, Samson and Esau should be compared. The table below illustrates the verses with verbal and thematic density.

Table 4: Esau and Samson[57]

Genesis 28:6, 8	*Judges 14:1–3*
[6]Esau **saw** that … Isaac commanded [Jacob], "DO NOT TAKE a wife **from the daughters of the** *Canaanites*." [8]And Esau saw that the daughters of the Canaanites were EVIL *in the eyes of Isaac* <u>his father</u>	Samson … **saw** a woman in Timnah **from the daughters of the** *Philistines* … and Samson said to <u>his father</u>, "TAKE her for me, for she is RIGHT *in my eyes*
Esau takes two Ishmaelite wives (to please his father).	Samson and his parents go to Timnah to arrange the wedding (to please Samson).

Strikingly, Esau sees that the "daughters of Canaan," his wives, are evil in the sight of his father, and he seeks to make reparation. Samson, in contrast, does what is right in his own eyes (Judg 13:3, 7) in contrast to his father's wishes. Comparing Samson's actions with Esau's shows that Samson is doing evil in the eyes of Yahweh (Judg 13:1; Gen 28:8).

This comparison also demonstrates that Samson is unlike the patriarch Jacob, who according to Genesis 28:7, "heard his father and his mother and went to Pad-

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Edenburg, *Dismembering the Whole: Composition and Purpose of Judges 19–21*, AIL 24 (Atlanta: SBL, 2016), esp. 168–74.

[55] Samson's parents do retain the idea of family-clan intermarriage when they ask, "Is there not [a woman] from the daughters of your brethren?" (הַאֵין בִּבְנוֹת אַחֶיךָ; Judg 14:3). For an insightful critique of the family's exchange, see Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth*, NAC 6 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 425–26; cf. Amit, *Art of Editing*, 281.

[56] Abraham's servant made an oath, embarked on a long journey, and petitioned God to reveal the right(eous?) woman. Jacob obeyed his father and went; Esau also went to acquire wives that are more suitable. The narrator does not seem to view Esau's polygamy as a major problem in the text.

[57] **Bold** indicates identical verbiage; *italics* similar verbiage, and SMALL CAPS antithetical verbiage. <u>Underline</u> indicates deviations in sequence.

dan Aram." Moreover, Samson acts similar to, yet worse than Esau. Esau unintentionally does evil in the eyes of his father and seeks to make the matter right. Samson has no regard for his parents' wishes, and more importantly, the commandment of Yahweh (Judg 3:1–6).

The Samson pericope at the very least is patterned after the betrothal narratives. By modifying language and reducing the time narrated on certain elements, Samson's betrothal has been parodied to show Samson's resolute disobedience and callousness. He acts worse than all his forefathers whom he should resemble.

V. SAMSON: EATING THE FORBIDDEN FOOD (JUDGES 14:5–9)[58]

In addition to the above type scenes and patriarchal types, the text evokes one type from primeval history, namely Eve. Following Barry Webb, I believe that Samson's eating the forbidden food not only sets up the riddle event but also casts Samson as one disobedient to God's instructions.

When Samson and his parents travel to Timnah to arrange the wedding, Samson famously encounters the lion, kills it (presumably unscathed), and conceals the incident from his parents (Judg 14:5–6). On the wedding day, the trio again goes down to Timnah (14:8). Samson returns to the lion's carcass and to his surprise finds honey inside (14:8). Samson scoops the honey out of the carcass with his own hands (14:9). He then goes on his way, eating as if nothing were wrong (14:9). Omitting the details about the lion's corpse, Samson gives the honey to his parents, who eat unawares (14:9). In this second lion encounter, the narrative regresses, giving several details about how Samson scooped and ate the honey (Judg 16:8–9a). Only after the parents have ingested the honey does the narrator report Samson's silence on the matter (Judg 16:9b). According to Webb, "his concealment of the source of honey can hardly mean anything else than he knows that food from such a source was 'unclean,' and therefore forbidden."[59]

Further support for Webb's interpretation comes from a veiled allusion to Genesis 3:6. The lion's honey vignette "is reminiscent of something that happened in another place and time: he saw, he took, he ate (v. 8). … [And] after the 'seeing,' 'taking,' and 'eating' comes the 'giving' of the honey to someone else (Samson's parents), who also 'eat' (v. 9; cf. Gen. 3:6)."[60] Webb deduces that the intertextual link between forbidden foods "is not coincidental."[61] The following table is an adaptation and expansion of Webb's argument.

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[58] This is a slight adaptation from Ross, "A People Heeds Not Scripture," 274–78.

[59] Barry G. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 370.

[60] Webb, 369.

[61] Webb, 369.

Table 5: Comparison of Judges 14:8–9 and Genesis 3:6

	Judges 14:8–9	*Genesis 3:6*
Context	God forbade Samson to eat unclean food. The prohibition was given to Samson's mother but also applied to him.	God forbade Eve to eat from the tree. The prohibition was given to Eve's husband but also applied to her.
Temptation	No one enticed Samson. Samson saw (ל + infc ראה) the honey in the lion's corpse. Samson was surprised to see it.	The Serpent enticed Eve by his cunningness. The woman saw (ראה) that the tree was good for food. The fruit was delightful to her eyes. The tree was desirable to make one wise.
The Sin	"He scooped (II רדה) the honey out with his hands." Samson ate en route (וַיֵּלֶךְ הָלוֹךְ וְאָכֹל)	Eve took (לקח) from of its fruit. Eve ate (אכל).
Sharing	Samson gave (נתן) to his parents, who were *not with him*. And they ate (אכל) They sinned unknowingly.	Eve gave (נתן) also to her husband, who was *with her*. And he ate (אכל). Adam sinned knowingly.

Viewing the information above reveals two important features. The verbal parallels are sparse; and the relationship between the two texts is largely thematic. Upon further inspection, Samson does not "see," "take," and "eat," but "turns to see," "scoops," and "eats." Likewise, directly after Eve "ate," she "gave;" Samson "went on, eating as he went" before he "gave." These differences do not overrule Webb's assessment, however. Adam and Eve's sin with the forbidden fruit is the first sin, and as such, it carries significance for the Israelites. When an alluded text is emblematic, the triggers do not need to be loud to be heard.[62] Additionally, the differences found in Samson's story suit the plot development for Judges 13–16. Samson scooping rather than taking makes it clear that he is putting his hands in-

[62] Speaking generally about triggers, David R. Klingler, "Validity in the Identification and Interpretation of a Literary Allusion in the Hebrew Bible" (Ph.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2010), 130.

side the unclean carcass. The "walking as he went" emphasizes his high-handed sin. The fact that Samson "goes" reveals his recalcitrance to the extent that he would cause his parents to sin unknowingly (cf. Lev 5:17). His going, as mentioned above, also provides key information for the riddle scenes.

In the end, Samson is a type of Eve. Both Eve and Samson ate the forbidden food. Samson is an antitype in the sense that he is worse than Eve. Eve was tempted by a being; Samson was not. Eve was deceived; Samson was not. Eve thought she was gaining wisdom by eating the good fruit; Samson knew he was getting unclean honey. Most importantly, Eve gave to a not-so-innocent bystander, her husband; Samson gave to his innocent (and once again ignorant) parents. Thus, Adam sinned knowingly; Samson caused his parents to sin unknowingly. Samson, the Nazirite deliverer empowered by the Spirit, sinned against Yahweh. He ate unclean food despite the envoy's thrice repeated prohibition. He failed to heed Scripture (cf. Judg 3:4) and acted in a manner worse than Scripture's first sinners.

VI. CONCLUSION

Literary conventions provide schema from which readers draw inferences about characters. The Samson story knits together several type scenes found within the Hebrew Bible to depict Samson and his family as flawed Israelites who deviate from the positive patterns established by the type scenes. The Samson narrative also seems to move beyond type scenes into types of characters. The cast of characters from Genesis includes Eve, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Esau. The density of types suggests that the judge and his family, despite their privileged status, fail to rise to the level of their ancestors at every turn. Even when a forefather acts sinfully or unwisely, this family manages to act worse.

If the hero-of-a-barren woman alludes to the Abraham-Sarah story—and this is a significant *if*—then the Samson narrative portrays his family as worse than each patriarch with a general progression through the patriarchs. Manoah and his wife are inferior to Abraham and Sarah; by extension Samson the promised son with his seemingly superior call becomes inferior to Isaac. Manoah likewise falls short of Jacob due to his inability to recognize the envoy of Yahweh. The Samson family again proves deficient when recast into Isaac's nuclear family. Manoah and his wife when reprising Isaac and Rebekah only mildly rebuff their son for seeking to marry a foreign woman. Failing to heed their request, Samson the Nazirite fails to raise himself to the level of Jacob and slumps below Esau, who married two Hittites. Samson even acts worse than Eve by eating forbidden food highhandedly. Thus, Judges 13–14 weaponized the patriarchal narratives to offer dark parodies recriminating the divinely called deliverer and his family. The sustained formulations of typological relationships clearly and consistently characterize Samson as a markedly flawed Israelite with parents undercommitted to the covenant.