

“For your sake . . .”: A Case Study in Aramaic Semantics*

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Philological interpretation of ancient texts obviously involves making choices, and in the particular case of West Semitic philology the choices are frequently tricky. The corpus of material, after all, is limited, and the evidence in a given instance often ambiguous. Thus, the philologist is routinely to be found at an interpretive crossroad with avenues of approach leading off in all directions (usually to other crossroads!). One is often mindful of Robert Frost's "road not taken" which has made all the difference.

It is therefore important as a philologist to be mindful of one's choices, to consider not only why one has decided to follow a given interpretive avenue but also how one came to make that decision. For if the method of choosing is not as carefully considered as the choice itself, then the choice—however apparently obvious or logical—can go wrong. The intent of this study is to explore a small series of philological choices with the focus on the method of choice—to look more at the means than the ends and to show that this endeavor in itself may prove a sufficient justification.

The specific philological issue involved is a little semantic quandry encompassing the language of both the Targum of Job from Qumran Cave 11 (11QtgJob)¹ and the so-called Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen).²

To any scholar who has closely examined these two most well known Aramaic Qumran scrolls two complementary facts emerge with clarity: First, in their respective roles as translation and quasi-translation of presumed Hebrew originals, these texts may function as sensitive tools to probe the semantics of Qumran Aramaic; second, that our knowledge of Aramaic semantics of that period, our "feel" for the fine points of meaning, is nonetheless strikingly limited. Indeed, simply because of our lack of a genuine, subtle control of the language, all scholars are susceptible to making semantic and syntactic errors in judgment when dealing with 11QtgJob and 1QapGen—especially in places where restorations or partial restorations are called for.

*This study is revised and enlarged from my dissertation, *The Process of Translation in 11QtgJob: A Preliminary Study* (Yale Univ., 1980).

1 The *editio princeps* is J. P. M. van der Ploeg, A. S. van der Woude, with the collaboration of B. Jongeling, *Le Targum de Job de la Grotte XI de Qumrân* (Leiden, 1971). The standard commentary is now M. Sokoloff, *The Targum to Job from Qumran Cave XI* (Ramat Gan, 1974).

2 The *editio princeps* is N. Avigad, Y. Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon, A Scroll from the Wilderness of Judaea* (Jerusalem, 1956). The standard commentary is now J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I*, rev. ed. (Rome, 1971).

A case in point is 11QtgJob 1:7. The text reads *h'l d°[*, the photograph in the *editio princeps* clearly showing the first four letters, but only the barest trace of the fifth letter following the *dalet*. This letter is impossible to identify on the basis of the trace seen in the photograph alone.³ The question is, what form beginning with *dalet* should be restored? The issue can only be satisfactorily resolved through reference to the presumed underlying Hebrew phrase in Job that *h'l d°[* translates. Fortunately, the *Vorlage* in this instance is easy to determine; 11QtgJob 1:7 renders Job 18:4b, which according to the Masoretic tradition reads *hlm'nk t'zb 'rs*, "For your sake will the earth be abandoned?"⁴ Since the *he* of *h'l* in 11QtgJob 1:7 can only be morphologically identified as the interrogative particle,⁵ it is thus clear that *'l d°[* can only be presumed to render BH *lm'nk*. But how is this phrase to be translated in Qumran Aramaic so as to conform to the letter readings we find here in 11QtgJob?

The editors of the *editio princeps*, J. van der Ploeg, A. S. van der Woude, and B. Jongeling, quite naturally endeavored to solve this problem by considering how BH *lm'n* is rendered elsewhere in the Cave 11 Job Targum. As it happens, this Hebrew term is translated in only one other instance in 11QtgJob, 34:4 = MT 40:8b. There, the Hebrew *tršy'ny lm'n tšdq* is translated *wthybny 'l dbrt dy tzk*, "(or) would you condemn me so that you may be innocent?"⁶ In 34:4 BH *lm'n* is obviously translated by *'l dbrt dy*—a correspondence that appears to be just the evidence required to determine what to restore in 11QtgJob 1:7. Since Hebrew *lm'n* equals Aramaic *'l dbrt* in one clear instance, so too it would seem in another. Hence, the original editors restored our text *h'l d°[rtk*, which they translated "à cause de toi."⁷ M. Sokoloff, in his commentary on 11QtgJob, has labeled this restoration "certain as a comparison with 34:4 shows."⁸ Indeed, this approach to 1:7 has been left unchallenged by all other scholars who have discussed the passage.⁹

The evidence would seem clear; the solution obvious. Yet a closer consideration shows that the "obvious" choice has more problems than would appear upon cursory examination.

3 Cf. van der Ploeg, van der Woude, Jongeling, *Le Targum de Job*, 107, fragment 1B.

4 Cf. *ibid.*, 12–13. All the major versions agree with the Masoretic tradition here except the LXX, which reads *τι γαρ εαν αποθανης*. For a consideration of various proposals regarding this reading, see my dissertation cited above, 68, n. 69. The LXX reading is, in any case, unconnected to the tradition reflected in 11QtgJob. Of course it is hypothetically possible to take *h'l* as a causative verbal form from the root *'ll*; but such an interpretation would ignore the relationship of 11QtgJob to its presumed *Vorlage* or, at minimum, argue in favor of the Job Targum reflecting a unique text tradition. Considering that there is a far simpler interpretation of the fragmentary reading in 1:7 that allows a clear connection with other ancient readings of Job 18:4b, this hypothetical approach can be safely excluded.

5 The *he* interrogative is commonly employed in 11QtgJob. For a complete list of occurrences, see, e.g., Sokoloff, *The Targum to Job*, 203.

6 The reading in 11QtgJob once again reflects an underlying text tradition in line with the Masoretic tradition and the major versions outside of the LXX. The LXX reading of Job 40:8b, *οιει δε με αλλως σοι κεχρηματικενοι η να αναθανης δικαιος*, probably is best characterized as paraphrastic rather than reflecting a different *Vorlage* from the other versions. Note in this regard, G. Beer's comment that the Greek text is "dogmatisch" (*Der Text des Buches Hiob* [Marburg, 1897], 246); and, more generally, H. Orlinsky's discussion of paraphrase in the LXX text of Job in *HUCA* 29 (1958), 229–71.

7 Van der Ploeg, van der Woude, Jongeling, *Le Targum de Job*, 12–13.

8 Sokoloff, *The Targum to Job*, 107.

9 Cf. B. Jongeling, *Een Aramees Boek Job* (Amsterdam, 1974), 35, 39; B. Jongeling, C. J. Labuschagne, A. S. van der Woude, *Aramaic Texts from Qumran* (Leiden, 1976), 12–13; J. A. Fitzmyer, Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome, 1978), 10–11; cf. also the glossary listing on p. 314.

In particular, it is the implicit method in which this problem has been "solved" that is open to question. The weakness in this methodology becomes clearer when we focus our attention on *lm'n*, the term translated in both 11QtgJob 1:7 and 34:4. In fact, *lm'n* in Job 18:4b (= 11QtgJob 1:7) has a different syntactic function than in Job 40:8b (= 11QtgJob 34:4). In the latter instance the Hebrew term acts as a subordinating conjunction connoting purpose, "so that." In the former instance *lm'n* functions as a preposition expressing advantage, causality, "for the sake of, because of."¹⁰ Now it is quite clear that the Aramaic phrase '*l dbrt dy*, like Hebrew *lm'n*, can act as a conjunction connoting purpose; this is patently established, not only by the equivalence in 11QtgJob 34:4 = MT 40:8b, but also by the two occurrences of the phrase in Biblical Aramaic (Dan. 2:30, 4:14).¹¹ However, nowhere in Aramaic is it established that '*l dbrt* possesses the other nuance that *lm'n* has, namely, prepositional connoting advantage, causality. Nonetheless, the implicit assumption made by all scholars who have discussed this passage and endorsed the restoration made in the *editio princeps* is: If *lm'n*/*l dbrt* agree in one syntactic function and semantic sense, then we can further assume that they have a broader congruence of function and meaning—even though there is no direct evidence to support this assumption. One may express this interpretive approach in terms of an analogy:

lm'n (Hebrew conjunction of purpose): '*l dbrt* (Aramaic conjunction of purpose):
lm'n (Hebrew preposition of advantage, causality): '*l dbrt* (Aramaic preposition of advantage, causality [without clear attestation]).

That is, if Hebrew *lm'n* is semantically equivalent to '*l dbrt* as a conjunction connoting purpose, then we can also affirm: since *lm'n* is established as having the further function of a preposition of advantage, causality, so too may we conclude to be the case with '*l dbrt*.

In fact, this is a most questionable analogy. Broad semantic correspondences may exist between given terms in two languages—especially if the languages are linguistically related. Indeed, such broad correspondences often occur in the case of cognates. However, such correspondences cannot be viewed as *inevitable*. In the case of terms that are not cognates, it is more typically the case that, beyond their coincident meaning in one particular instance, they lead quite "separate lives." Even in the case of cognate terms,

10 For a discussion of the semantic range of *lm'n*, one may consult the standard lexica; e.g., *BDB*, 775; *KB*³, 531. See also Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax, An Outline* (Toronto, 1967), 63–64. Here and below I have not tried to mark a distinction between the nuances "advantage" and "causality" in relevant Hebrew and Aramaic prepositional phrases. This is because there are, so far as I am aware, no reliable criteria based upon which one might be able to do so. We will therefore grant, in the absence of further evidence, that both nuances are applicable.

11 Dan. 2:30: '*l dbrt dy pšr' mlk' yhw'd'wn* "so that the interpretation may be made known to the king"; Dan. 4:14: '*d dbrt dy ynd'wn hyy'* "in order that the living may know." The form '*d dbrt* for '*l dbrt* undoubtedly reflects an assimilation *ld > dd*; cf. H. Bauer, P. Leander, *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen* (Tübingen, 1927), 260, §69z. Cf. also S. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (Leipzig, 1975), 113, §3.7.5.1.8; 230, §5.5.4.3.3; 439, §7.5.9.6. An identical shift occurs in the form '*dbr* (> '*ldbr*), which occurs in Egyptian Aramaic. Cf. P. Leander, *Laut- und Formenlehre des Ägyptisch-Aramäischen* (Göteborg, 1928), 124, §62x; Segert, *Grammatik*, (who miscites the form as '*dbrt*). Beyond the examples in Biblical Aramaic and 11QtgJob, '*l dbrt* (*dy*) is not attested in the Aramaic corpus. However, a similar form '*l dbrt š* is found in Eccl. 7:14. Both the Egyptian Aramaic form and Hebrew form will be further discussed below.

broad congruence of meaning cannot be necessarily assumed.¹² Thus a statement such as Sokoloff makes that the restoration in 11QtgJob 1:7 is “certain,” based on comparison to 34:4, is methodologically unsound. One simply cannot rely on the sort of analogic reasoning discussed above. The comparison is only suggestive; it is an obvious avenue of interpretation that exegetes have followed more-or-less uncritically, depending essentially on their “feel” for Aramaic syntax and semantics. But as we noted at the outset, this “feel” is an unreliable guide, one which must be continually checked and refined through close analysis of the available evidence.

Actually Sokoloff, to his credit, appears to be the only scholar who has shown an awareness that more evidence must be mustered if one desires to “pin down” the proposed restoration of *ʿl dbrtk* in 11QtgJob 1:7. The fact that *ʿl dbrt* (*dy*) is only known to function as a compound, subordinate conjunction in its attested Aramaic occurrences is a point he has recognized; and he thus attempts to show that additional evidence exists that *ʿl dbrt* may act as a compound preposition. The evidence to which he appeals is the form *ʿldbr*, known from Egyptian Aramaic.¹³ This form does at first seem to represent what would be required as support for the proposed restoration in 11QtgJob 1:7 since it appears to be a variant of *ʿl dbrt* with the masculine *dbr* used instead of the feminine **dbrh*. Moreover, *ʿldbr* (usually written as a single form)¹⁴ does have dual conjunctive and prepositional function. The former use appears to be established in Aḥiqar 202. Although the context is unclear due to damage to the text, the phrase *ʿldbr zy* may be read, which one may assume introduced a subordinate clause of some sort.¹⁵ The prepositional use of *ʿldbr* is clearly seen in a number of papyri. The occurrences in papyrus 6 of A. Cowley’s collection may be cited as representative. There, an individual writes to another *ʿl ʿrq ʿzly ʿz ʿnh qblt ʿlyk ʿldbrh* “about my land, concerning which I lodged a complaint against you” (line 5). The complainant continues in the next line to note that the defendant of the suit was ordered *lmwm ʿbyhw ʿldbr ʿrq zk* “to swear by Yahu concerning this land” (lines 6–7)—a point reiterated in the next two lines: *ʿrq zk zy ym ʿt ly ʿldbrh* “this land, regarding which you swore to me” (lines 7–8). Finally, in line 16 of the text the complainant assures the former

12 Numerous examples may be cited of cognates whose semantic ranges are not matching in virtually any set of related languages. We may note as an example the case of a term that plays a prominent role in the current discussion, the nominal *dbr*. In Hebrew, of course, this is a very commonly employed term that has a broad semantic range: “word, matter, affair, cause,” etc. Its semantic range in Aramaic is narrower in two respects. The sense most common in Hebrew, “word,” is not normally applied to the term in Aramaic, and its use in the sense “matter, affair” appears to be confined to set phrases (*ʿldbr, ʿl dbrt [dy]*). Clearly, Hebrew and Aramaic treat *dbr* in distinctly different fashions.

13 Sokoloff, *The Targum to Job*, 107. He makes the following comment: “The prepositional use of this expression [i.e., *ʿl dbrt*] is found elsewhere in E[gyptian] A[ramaic] in the m. form *ʿldbr*.”

14 According to E. Kraeling, there are two instances in Brooklyn Museum Papyrus (hereafter, *BMAP*) 13 where the form is written *ʿl dbr* (lines 2, 6). In both instances, the readings are partially restored. In neither case can it be certainly affirmed that the form was written as two words; indeed, to judge from the photograph, one may well argue otherwise (especially in line 6). Cf. E. Kraeling, *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri* (New Haven, 1953; repr.: New York: Arno, 1969), 284, pl. XIII.

15 Cf. E. Sachau, *Aramäische Papyrus und Ostraka aus einer Jüdische Militär-Kolonie zu Elephantine* (Leipzig, 1911), 178, papyrus 58:12 with plate 49. Line numbering for the text follows the standard edition, A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1923; repr.: Osnabrück: Zeller, 1967), 219. Hereafter, all references to texts in the Cowley collection will be made under the siglum *AP*. Where possible the readings have been checked against the plates in the Sachau edition.

object of his suit 'nt rhyq mn kl dyn zy yqblwn 'lyk 'ldbr 'rq' zk, "you are free from any claim which may be brought against you in regard to this land." In all these instances 'ldbr functions as a preposition; and, if the Egyptian Aramaic form is assumed to be essentially the same as our 'l dbrt, then this would appear to demonstrate that such a phrase can indeed act prepositionally—as the context in 11QtgJob 1:7 would demand.

There is nothing essentially wrong with this line of reasoning. One might quibble that 'ldbr and 'l dbrt are not, strictly speaking, identical in morphological form, but this seems a minor issue. Still, once again, there is a methodological flaw in an approach that would use the Egyptian form as decisive support for the restoration 'l db[rtk in 11QtgJob 1:7. The problem here concerns the semantic meaning of the preposition 'ldbr in its Egyptian Aramaic occurrences. In no case, with one possible exception which we will consider below, does the form have a sense equivalent to Hebrew *lm'n* as we find it in Job 18:17b, i.e., of advantage, causality. Rather, 'ldbr consistently is employed with the force of specificity, "concerning, in regard to."¹⁶ For this reason, the Egyptian Aramaic form only offers limited support for the proposed restoration in 11QtgJob 1:7. What is really needed is definitive evidence that 'l dbrt not only may act as a preposition, but also that it functions as a preposition with the required semantic sense.

What evidence, then, exists to suggest that the Egyptian Aramaic form may have the force of advantage, causality? Scholars have advanced three possible exemplars out of the 19 occurrences known.¹⁷ Cowley translates the phrase 'ldbr ksph in his papyrus 71:30 as "on account of his money."¹⁸ The context is broken, making it impossible to establish any context for the phrase. In consideration of this, a translation in line with the normal understanding of this phrase in Egyptian Aramaic is preferable; read "concerning his money." The phrase l' 'kl' 'nh 'nyh 'ršny 'ldbrh dyn in Brooklyn Museum papyrus 4:12–13 is rendered by E. Kraeling as "Nor am I, Ananiah able to start a suit against thee on account of it."¹⁹ However, the translation "on account of" for 'ldbr is inappropriate to the context because there is no apparent causal connection between this statement and that which precedes it. After the normal introductory formulae the text gives a statement of land purchase by Ananiah and of a grant of part of the land to his wife and their mutual descendants (lines 2–4); this is followed by a legal description of the property at issue (lines 5–12). The statement that follows and which is quoted above in lines 12–13 is clearly referential to the property—just as in Cowley papyrus 6:16 cited above. A preferable translation is that given by J. Greenfield and B. Porten in their collection of Egyptian Aramaic texts: "I shall not be able—I Ananiah—to bring suit against you concerning it."²⁰

16 There are a total of 15 occurrences of 'ldbr with prepositional force in the Elephantine corpus. Beyond the four instances in AP 6 cited above, they are as follows: AP 28:8, 10, 11; 38:3; 40:3; 45:3 ('dbr; cf. above n. 11); 62:1:5; 74:30; BMAP 4:13; 13:2, 6 (cf. n. 14). There has been no scholarly dispute that in 12 of these instances 'ldbr has the force of specificity. To these may now be added four other examples recently published by J. B. Segal in his collection of Aramaic texts from Saqqara, *Aramaic Texts from North Saqqara* (Oxford, 1983). The references, according to his text and line numbering, are 4:7 (partially restored), 8:6, 28b:6, 81:5. In all four instances the nuance of specificity fits the context. Three occurrences where other proposals have been made, AP 38:3, 71:30, BMAP 4:13, will be discussed below.

17 Cf. *ibid.*

18 Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, 181.

19 Kraeling, *BMAP*, 169.

20 B. Porten with the collaboration of J. Greenfield, *Jews of Elephantine and the Arameans of Syene; Aramaic Texts with Translation* (Jerusalem, 1976), 44. Note P. Grelot's similar translation, "Je ne pourrai pas, moi 'Ananyah, t'intenter un procès à son propos." Cf. *Documents Araméens d'Égypte* (Paris, 1972), 222.

Finally, there is the case of Cowley papyrus 38:3–4, the possible exception alluded to above. Here it must be granted that the context can allow for a causal interpretation of *'ldbr*. The passage reads: *wydrng rbhyl' mṭ' l' bwṭ' srny 'ldbr 'bn šrp | zy hškhw gnyb byd rkly'*. Cowley, for example, translates, “when Waidrang, commander of the army, came to Abydos, he imprisoned me because of a precious(?) stone which they found stolen in the hand(s) of the dealers.”²¹ This interpretation is justifiable, but an alternate reading of *'ldbr 'bn šrp* as a referential statement, “concerning one dyed stone,”²² is equally possible in the context. Indeed, in light of the consistent evidence elsewhere in the Elephantine corpus that *'ldbr* is used to connote specification, this is likely the best interpretation. Note in this regard that P. Leander, in his grammar of Egyptian Aramaic, confines the sense of *'ldbr* to “betreffs”—specifically citing text 38:3 as one such exemplar.²³ It may be possible to argue for a “middle course” regarding *'ldbr* in this passage, specifically that it is better described as having a force much like German “wegen,” encompassing both the force of causality and specificity.²⁴ Nonetheless, this is far from certain; more than a single example would have to be found in order to advance such an argument from “possible” to “probable.” Thus, overall, *'ldbr*, as attested in Egyptian Aramaic, does not offer convincing support for the existence of a preposition *'l dbrt* in 11QtgJob 1:7 connoting advantage, causality. At best, only one ambiguous use of *'ldbr* bolsters this view—and this in contrast to numerous examples to the contrary.

One is tempted to speculate that scholars may have nonetheless tended towards reading a causal force into Egyptian Aramaic *'ldbr* under the influence of the Biblical Hebrew use of *'l dbr*; for in Biblical Hebrew there is no question that *'l dbr* can function as a compound preposition connoting advantage, causality.²⁵ In fact, it is surprising that no one has mentioned the Hebrew evidence in the discussion of 11QtgJob 1:7 since it is doubtlessly the strongest support for restoring *'l dbr*. One need only turn to the standard lexica of Biblical Hebrew to find listings of *'l dbr* as a preposition of advantage, causality.²⁶ A couple of examples will be sufficient to demonstrate the usage. Thus, Joseph’s brothers are greatly alarmed *'l dbr hšp hšb b' mṭhynw* “because of the money returned in our sacks” (Gen. 43:18), and Moses declares *wyhwh ht' np by 'l dbrykm*, “the LORD was angry at me because of you” (Deut. 4:21). The Hebrew form can also be employed to express specificity as in Exod. 8:8, *wysq mšh 'l yhwh 'l dbr hšprd'ym* “and Moses cried to the LORD concerning the frogs.” Note too the phrase *'l dbr byt hrpd* “in regard to Beth HRPD” in

21 Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, 136. Similarly, note Grelot’s translation, “lorsque Vidranga, le chef de garnison, est arrivé à Abydos, il m’a fait emprisonner à cause d’une gemme que l’on avait trouvée volée entre les mains des marchands,” *Documents Araméens*, 392; also Greenfield and Porten: “when Vidranga the garrison commander arrived at Abydos he imprisoned me because of 1 dyed stone which they found stolen in the hand of the merchants,” *Jews of Elephantine*, 83.

22 On *'bn šrp* cf., e.g., Grelot, *Documents Araméens*, 392, note c.

23 Leander, *Laut- und Formenlehre*, 124, §62x.

24 Note that this is precisely how Sachau translates *'ldbr* in this passage: “wegen eines Edelsteins”; cf. *Aramäisch Papyrus*, 57.

25 The influences of the Biblical Hebrew expression is probably the easiest way to explain why Cowley, for example, translated “on account of” in *AP* 71:30. Considering that there is no context by which to establish this meaning for *'ldbr* in the passage; it is quite possible that Cowley—consciously or unconsciously—“fell back” on the Hebrew expression to guide his translation.

26 Cf., for example, *BDB*, 184; *KB*², 201; *KB*³, 203.

Lachish letter 4:4.²⁷ One may even see a "middle" nuance (= "wegen"; cf. the discussion of Cowley papyrus 38:3–4 above) between causality and reference in some instances, e.g. *mlbd hmtym 'l dbr qrh*, "besides those who died because of/concerning Korah" (Num. 17:14). Finally, the conjunctive use *'l dbr 'šr* is also attested; cf. Deut. 22:24: *'l dbr 'šr l' š'qh . . . 'l dbr 'šr 'nh 't 'št r'hw* "because she did not cry out . . . because he humbled his neighbor's wife."

Further supportive evidence from Biblical Hebrew for the restoration of *'l dḅ[rtk* in 11QtgJob 1:7 comes from forms with *'l dbrt* found in Ecclesiastes.²⁸ There are three such instances in all: one instance where the form, read *'l dbrt š*, functions as a subordinate conjunction of purpose (7:14); two instances where *'l dbrt* has prepositional force (3:18, 8:2). The latter cases, clearly, are of special interest; unfortunately, they both appear in grammatically difficult contexts. This in turn makes it uncertain as to how *'l dbrt* should be understood in the two passages. Still, scholars have argued that in one or both instances the sense is causal.²⁹ Forms of *'l dbrt* in Ecclesiastes are particularly strong buttresses for the proposal to restore *'l dḅ[rtk* in 11QtgJob 1:7; for it is well known that this book betrays significant Aramaic influence. Indeed one might well argue that *'l dbrt*, as found in Ecclesiastes, represents an Aramaic calque.³⁰

One must therefore conclude that there is reasonable evidence, especially in regard to Hebrew *'l dbr/dbrt*, to support the proposed restoration *'l dḅ[rtk* in 11QtgJob. Still, this evidence must be viewed cautiously. As noted above, it is not inevitable that cognate forms in related languages have cognate meanings; and the Hebrew evidence must be evaluated in

27 Cf. H. Torczyner, L. Harding, A. Lewis, and J. L. Starkey, *Lachish I (Tell de Duweir); The Lachish Letters* (London, 1938), 79–87. For a recent treatment and comprehensive bibliography, cf. D. Pardee, S. D. Sperling, D. Whitehead, P. Dion, *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters* (Chico, 1982), 89–95. The phrase *'l dbr* is not the only one in Hebrew to encompass both advantage/causality and specificity. Also note *'l 'wdwt*, e.g., in Gen. 21:11, 25 (= "because of") and in Gen. 26:32 (= "concerning").

28 The form *dbrh* occurs as a substantive in Job 5:8, usually understood in the sense "cause, suit"; cf., e.g., *KB*³, 204. We must also mention the difficult phrase *'l dbrty mlky šdq* in Ps. 110:4—a phrase, save for the addition of a grammatically difficult *yod*, which appears related to our form. Scholars have, in fact advocated reading *'l dbrty* causally in the context. For a full discussion of the form and its interpretation in Ps. 110:4, cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, "'Now This Melchizedek . . .,'" *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Missoula, 1974), 223–27 and the bibliography cited there. (This essay originally appeared in *CBQ* 25 [1963].)

29 In Eccl. 3:18 the context and hence the meaning of the phrase *'l dbrt bny h' dm* is hard to establish due to the difficulty of interpreting the following phrase, *lbrm h' l' h'ym*. In 8:2 the unusual phrase *'ny py mlk šmwr* preceding *w' l dbrt šbw' t' l' h'ym* hampers the likelihood of gaining a clear understanding of the latter phrase. R. Gordis (*Koheleth, The Man and his World* [New York, 1968], 235–36, 288) and *BDB* (p. 184), for example, see a causal meaning for *'l dbrt* in both passages. C. D. Ginsburg (*The Song of Songs and Koheleth* [repr.: New York: KTAV, 1970], 315, 391–92) views *'l dbrt* as referential in 3:18, causal in 8:2. C. F. Whitely (*Koheleth* [Berlin, 1979], 36; translating "because of, concerning") and *KB*² (p. 202; translating "wegen because of, in regard of") appear to take *'l dbrt* as having a "middle" nuance in both passages—a position apparently maintained in *KB*³ (p. 204; translating "wegen").

30 H. L. Ginsberg has developed the most well known argument delineating the Aramaic affinities of Ecclesiastes, arguing, in fact, that Qoheleth's original text was Aramaic; cf. his *Studies in Koheleth* (New York, 1950). Note that he specifically singles out *'l dbrt š* of 7:14 as a calque of Aramaic *'l dbrt dy*—although he takes no clear position on the prepositional uses of *'l dbrt* in Ecclesiastes. Sokoloff essentially takes the same position; *The Targum to Job*, 158. Whitely declares that all uses of the phrase in Ecclesiastes have "a direct linguistic connection with Aramaic *'l dbrt*"; *Koheleth*, 36. In contrast, Fitzmyer believes that despite "a superficial resemblance to (and perhaps common origin with) the Aramaic *'l dbr . . .* and *'l dbrt dy*," the Hebrew phrase "seems to be different"—at least insofar as its use in Ps. 110:4 (*Essays*, 226, n. 18).

this light. Direct Aramaic support for prepositional *'l dbrt* with the force of advantage, causality is both limited and problematic. Such factors should lead us to consider not so much whether *'l dbrt* is a potential reading in our text, but rather whether it is the *best* reading. We should recall that the initial reasoning that lead scholars to an assumption that *'l dbrt* is the appropriate reflex for BH *lm'n* was based upon a fallacious analogy. Is it not possible then that reliance on this original dubious equation has lead scholars down the wrong analytical trail (or at least not down the best trail)? Such "warning flags" should lead to a more rigorous consideration of evidence for or against the restoration of *'l dbrt* in 11QtgJob 1:7. In fact, there exists additional crucial evidence that not only suggests an alternate, superior restoration, but also seriously challenges the likelihood that *'l dbrt* could be the correct reading.

The evidence comes from the Genesis Apocryphon. 1QapGen is a likely place to look for further evidence to aid us in understanding the language of the Cave 11 Job Targum for two reasons: first, because its language appears to be closely akin to the latter text, both chronologically and stylistically; and second, because, like 11QtgJob, portions of its text show a one-for-one equivalence to an underlying Biblical Hebrew text, in this instance a text of Genesis. This correspondence, once again, can be employed as a useful tool for analyzing Aramaic semantics.³¹

Yet here a good deal more care must be exercised than in the case of 11QtgJob. This is because 1QapGen—even when most closely following an underlying text—is a far looser rendering. Its narrative typically uses the underlying text more as a point of reference than as a model carefully to be followed. Departures from and expansions upon the underlying Genesis narrative are the norm. Hence, one must take great care in determining what, if any, Hebrew term a given Aramaic term in the Genesis Apocryphon may reflect. One must especially be sensitive to a tendency in 1QapGen to conflate its narrative by harmonizing and amalgamizing two or more similar passages in Genesis. This latter point, as we shall see, will be of crucial importance to our understanding how to restore the broken text in 11QtgJob 1:7.

Obviously, the most helpful evidence we could find in 1QapGen would be instances where a given Aramaic term or phrase appeared to be equivalent to an underlying *lm'n*, used as a preposition expressing advantage, causality. Unfortunately, *lm'n* is not used with this specific force in the part of Genesis reflected in the preserved portions of the Genesis Apocryphon. Rather, it is confined to its conjunctive usage.³² Instead, there are three other

31 To describe the Genesis Apocryphon as a "translation" or "targum" based on a static Hebrew *Vorlage* would certainly be improper. Still, there are specific passages in 1QapGen that clearly show a close correspondence to a Hebrew text of Genesis, a correspondence close enough to allow one to track the relationship between individual Aramaic words and phrases and their reflexes in Hebrew. In such instances the characterization "quasi-translation" (used above) may not be inappropriate. I have tried to confine the discussion of Aramaic/Hebrew semantic correspondences to those cases where the relationship is most manifest; nonetheless, it is a valid criticism to question whether the conventions of a translation (as in 11QtgJob) would show continuity to the conventions of a "quasi-translation" (as in 1QapGen). The answer probably is both yes and no. More investigation of the subject will be required before a more definitive judgment can be made. It is hoped that this study may contribute to a clarification of this issue.

32 There is one example, 1QapGen 20:10 where *kdy hwyt mtgr* parallels *lm'n yytb ly* of Gen. 12:13, with the Biblical third person future narrative switched to first person past tense (since in the Genesis Apocryphon the story at issue is told in retrospect by Abram). Thus, Aramaic *kdy* is equivalent to BH *lm'n* as a conjunction with causal force: "so that it will benefit me . . . /so that I was benefited . . ." On the syntax of 1QapGen 20:10, cf. Fitzmyer, *Genesis Apocryphon*, 227.

forms which appear to have this function in the relevant portions of Genesis: *b'bw'r*, *bgll*, and—a phrase we have already discussed above—'*l dbr*. We have already noted examples of '*l dbr* as a preposition of advantage, causality. Likewise, we have shown that *lm'n* has this sense at the outset of this study. We may now cite a couple of examples to demonstrate that *b'bw'r* and *bgll* also have an equivalent meaning:

Thus, e.g., for *b'bw'r*—Gen. 3:17: '*rwrh h' dmh b'bw'rk* "Cursed be the ground because of you."³³

For *bgll*—Deut. 1:37: *gm by ht' np yhw' h' bgllkm* "The LORD was also angry at me on account of you."³⁴

Beyond noting this basic semantic equivalence, it is difficult to distinguish the precise differences in nuance between *lm'n*, *b'bw'r*, *bgll*, and '*l dbr* as prepositional phrases connoting advantage, causality. Nor can one formulate any definitive rationale regarding why one form would be used in a given circumstance versus another. The terms, perhaps, may be best viewed as similar in function to the English phrases "for the sake of," "on account of," "because of"—prepositional phrases which can be essentially interchangeable but which nonetheless have definite, if subtle, distinctions that a native speaker can "feel" if not articulate.

In contrast to this variety of Hebrew prepositional phrases employed to express advantage, causality, the Genesis Apocryphon shows a far more restricted vocabulary. In fact, the available evidence demonstrates that IQapGen consistently utilizes a construction with *dyl* to form such prepositional phrases, the standard form being *bdyl* plus a noun or pronominal suffix. Thus we find in IQapGen 19:20 *wtpłt npšy bdylyky* "and my life will be saved for your sake," a phrase that reflects Gen. 12:13c: *whyth npšy bgllk*.³⁵ Here, the equivalence *bdyl* = *bgll* is clearly established. A similar use of *bdyl* can be demonstrated in IQapGen 20:26 which reads *m' 'bdth ly bdyl [šr]y* "what have you done to me because of [Sar]ai?" Context alone shows that the form *bdyl* must have causal force. But, beyond this, there is also a possible underlying Hebrew model. The Aramaic *m' 'bdth ly* definitely reflects Gen. 12:18b, *mh z't 'šyt ly*³⁶ to which has been added the qualification "because of Sarai." This conflation perhaps reflects the influence of Gen. 12:13b *lm'n yyb ly b'bw'rk* "so that it will go well for me on account of you." Note in this respect that the preceding phrase in Gen. 12:13a, '*mry n' 'hty 't* "Pray say you are my sister" reflects similar phraseology in Gen. 12:19a *lmh 'mrt 'hty hw'*³⁷ "Why did you say she is my sister?"—a passage in close juxtaposition to the one reflected in IQapGen 20:26. The close association of like phrases may well have facilitated the addition of *bdyl [šr]y* to IQapGen 20:26. If this is so, then Aramaic *bdyl* would seem to reflect BH *b'bw'r* in this instance.

The case of IQapGen 20:25 is more interesting. There the Aramaic text does not closely adhere to a specific underlying Hebrew text; nonetheless, the phrase *bdyl šry 'ntt 'brm* shows the direct influence of Gen. 12:17a '*l dbr šry 'št 'brm* "for the sake of Sarai, Abram's wife."³⁸ It is quite striking that the writer of the Genesis Apocryphon has chosen

33 For a listing of examples of *b'bw'r* as a preposition expressing advantage, causality, cf. e.g., *BDB*, 721; *KB²*, 674.

34 For a listing of examples of *bgll* as a preposition expressing advantage, causality, cf. e.g., *BDB*, 164; *KB²*, 185; *KB³*, 186.

35 The equivalent was noted by Fitzmyer, *Genesis Apocryphon*, 31, 33, 61.

36 Cf. Fitzmyer, *Genesis Apocryphon*, 31, 33, 65.

37 Ketib: *hy'*.

38 The connection of the phraseology of IQapGen 20:25 to Gen. 12:17a was not noted by Fitzmyer.

to render BH 'l dbr by *bdyl* in this instance. The correspondence strongly suggests that Aramaic 'l dbrt did not have a function like BH 'l dbr. For, if this had been so, 'l dbrt—virtually a cognate of the Hebrew phrase from a lexical standpoint—would have been the obvious, logical equivalent to employ in IQapGen 20:25. Since it was not used, we have here strong support for the assumption that Aramaic 'l dbrt was deemed syntactically and semantically inappropriate as a preposition connoting advantage, causality. Quite obviously, if this is an improper—or at least less preferred—use of 'l dbrt in IQapGen, one must also question its appropriateness in 11QtgJob. As mentioned above, this in turn makes the proposed restoration of 'l dbrt in 1:7 of the Cave 11 Job Targum increasingly doubtful.

Still, despite the considerations noted above, the heretofore favored restoration in 11QtgJob 1:7 can only be abandoned if evidence in favor of an alternate, superior interpretation can be brought forward. Fortunately, once more the Genesis Apocryphon can aid us. The crucial passage in this regard in 20:9–10 which reads: *w' mrt šry lmlk' d' hy hw' kdy hwyt mtgr 'l dylh' wšbyqt 'nt 'brm bdylh'* “but Sarai said to the king: ‘He is my brother’ so that I was benefited for her sake and I, Abram, was spared on account of her.”

Fitzmyer sees this passage as essentially reflecting Gen. 12:16a *wl' brm htyb b' bwrh* “and he [i.e., Pharaoh] benefited Abram for her sake”—and to some extent he is correct. Since the narrative of the Genesis Apocryphon basically follows the order of the Hebrew text of Genesis and because the Aramaic account has already covered events through Gen. 12:15, it is logical to see IQapGen 20:9–10 as reflecting the next verse.³⁹ However, the rendering in the Genesis Apocryphon has a fuller formulation than that found in verse 16a, and it is equally clear that this too is based upon an underlying Hebrew model: Gen. 12:13. The Hebrew text there gives an account of Abram's instructions to Sarai: *'mry n' 'hty 't lm'n yytb ly b' bwrk whyth npšy bgllk* “Pray say you are my sister so that it will go well for your sake and my like will be preserved on account of you.” The phraseology of Gen. 12:13 has to a large extent been superimposed over that of verse 16a in the IQapGen 20:9–10. Note especially that the Aramaic *kdy hwyt mtgr 'l dylh' wšbyqt 'nh 'brm bdylh'* is very near to being a word-for-word rendering of BH *lm'n yytb ly b' bwrk whyth npšy bgllk* with the narrative shifted from a future tense to the past tense of a retrospective account.⁴⁰

For our purposes the reflexes of BH *b' bwr* and *bgll* in IQapGen 20:10 are obviously of greatest interest. In the case of *bgll*, the Aramaic equivalent is just what we expect—*bdyl*. However, the equivalent of *b' bwr* is somewhat different. The author of the Genesis Apocryphon, in an apparent attempt to avoid a repetitive use of *bdyl*—just as Gen. 12:13

39 Cf. Fitzmyer, *Genesis Apocryphon*, 31, 33, 63. According to Fitzmyer's reckoning, Gen. 12:13 is reflected in IQapGen 19:20 with Gen. 12:15 possibly reflected slightly in 19:24 (*ibid.*, 31).

40 We have already noted above that Gen. 12:13c is also rendered by IQapGen 19:20 with phrasing very close to what we find here. Actually the rendering in 19:20 appears to have some equivalence to Gen. 12:13b as well—BH *yytb ly b' bwrk* generally being reflected in the Aramaic *'hy blyky*. The form *blyky* is only found here (read *bt(l)ky*? cf. 19:16) but may be seen as equivalent to BH *b' bwrk*. If this is in fact so, then the form *btll/btl-* may represent another preposition expressing advantage, causality in Qumran Aramaic. The unusual form employed here may be best explained by the immediately preceding context, Abram's dream of the cedar and the date palm. In this dream the date palm saves the cedar from being cut down by pleading that both trees are of the same family. According to the Genesis Apocryphon, this then inspires Abram to the well known “brother/sister” strategy. In context with this dream the phrase *'hy blyky* may represent a word play on this theme: not only “I will live because of you” but more properly, “I will live in your shade.” I am grateful to Marianne Luijken for pointing this out to me.

avoids repetitive use of prepositions—employed what he must have considered the closest semantic equivalent in Aramaic, 'l dyl.⁴¹ This, of course, throws an entirely new light on 11QtgJob 1:7. Since 'l dyl is thus established as functioning as a compound preposition expressing advantage, causality, it is an excellent candidate for our restoration; read h'l dy[lk. The advantages of this reading are noteworthy. The equivalency of 'l dyl to BH b'bw'r, established in 1QapGen 20:10 = Gen. 12:13/16 demonstrates that the form has the appropriate semantic function. In contrast, we have shown support for Aramaic 'l dbrt in a like role is far more dubious. The reading h'l dy[lk is thus certainly the *best* choice to make in 11QtgJob 1:7.

Thus we have achieved our stated goal: finding the most likely restoration in a small fragmentary passage in the Cave 11 Job Targum. But there are more valued lessons to be learned here than simply how one should say "for your sake" in an ancient targumic text. What we have also shown is that great care must be taken in coming to a choice, in assaying the fine points of semantics in a long deceased, literary language of which we have but limited knowledge. Even when the choices appear to be easy and obvious, one cannot take anything for granted. Rather, one must sift the available evidence extensively and question one's own assumptions constantly.

Finally, there is also a lesson here for scholars who indulge in the game of making large scale restorations in broken texts in Qumran Aramaic or other like ancient languages. If we have trouble deciding how to say "for your sake" in an instance where better than half the phrase is given to us, how confident can we be of our ability to restore whole clauses and sentences where no such supporting evidence is available? We may be wiser to take a more humble attitude and recognize that, considering the awesome gaps in our semantic knowledge, we should perhaps leave blank the physical gaps in our texts.

41 Fitzmyer does not make note of the conflation of Gen. 12:13/16 underlying 1QapGen 20:9–10, and it would appear from his translation (cf. *Genesis Apocryphon*, 63) that he was unaware of it. The fact that he translates 'l dylh' as "by her" rather than with a specific force of advantage, causality, appears to indicate that he did not see this form as semantically equivalent to the following bdylh'—as the underlying model of b'bw'r . . . bgllk in Gen. 12:13 indicates to be so. Moreover, his rendering of the verbal phrases hwy't mtgr and šbyqt respectively as "I might be benefited" (substantive) and "I . . . was spared" (simple past) indicates that he did not see the two clauses in 1QapGen 20:9–10 as parallel in tense. Once again, if he had recognized that the Aramaic text here was modeled on Gen. 12:13, where the verbal tenses of yy'ib and whyth (perfect consecutive) are clearly parallel, this likely would have led him to render the verbs in the Aramaic text respectively as "I was benefited" and "I . . . was spared."