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In Praise of Editing in the Hebrew Bible

Collected Essays in Retrospect

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translated by
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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABL	Assyrian and Babylonian Letters
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BHK	*Biblia hebraica* (ed. R. Kittel; Stuttgart: Württemburgische Bibelanstalt, 3rd edn, 1937)
BHS	*Biblia hebraica stuttgartensia* (ed. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1966–67)
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament
CB	Cambridge Bible
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
DBAT	Dielheimer Blatter zum Alten Testament und seiner Rezeption in der Alten Kirche
EncHeb	*Encyclopaedia Hebraica*
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
IB	*Interpreter's Bible*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KHAT	Kurzer Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
MGWJ	Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
NCB	New Century Bible
OTL	Old Testament Library
RB	*Revue biblique*
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum, Supplements
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WC	Westminster Commentaries
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

Foreword

About a year ago, I was asked to make an up-to-date list of all my publi-
cations. To my surprise, I found out that many articles from the 1980s up
to the present had never appeared in English. Put otherwise, all references
to these articles in publications of mine that appeared in English were
pointless for any reader without a command of contemporary Hebrew.
Then the idea came to me that perhaps I should translate them into
English, even though some of them date from the beginning of my work as
a biblical scholar.

Consequently I had to consider whether these articles were still of any
importance. Are their ideas still significant? Does the fact that some were
written more than 30 years ago indicate that they may be irrelevant or
invalid now? I consulted my friend, Professor Athalya Brenner, who has
edited more than 40 books on biblical research—which means that there
is no doubt whatsoever as to her editing skills. Furthermore, Athalya is
known for her professional integrity and ability to tell authors, including
her friends, exactly what she thinks. I shared my doubts with her, and only
after receiving her support and encouragement did I start on this project
and embark on this journey.

At the first stage I made several decisions. First, the articles would
appear in the order of the biblical books with which they dealt. Second,
they would not be updated, but would reflect the state of research current
at the time when they were written. Third, I would add a preface to each.
This last decision would be something of an innovation, highlighting the
article from an additional angle, a subjective one this time. Hence the
preface might reflect my relationship to the subject and the ideology set
forth in the article, or it might tell of the circumstances in which the
article was written or published. In some cases the reader might learn
about the teachers under whom I studied, about those teachers who
guided my first steps in the field, and about my own relationship to various
issues in biblical research. These prefaces would show the researcher not
as a rigid professional, but as a more rounded character. Since people are
but the image of their surroundings, one reasonably assumes that these
have an influence on their work.

At the second stage I looked for a publisher who would buy the idea. Happily, Professor Cheryl Exum and Professor David Clines, representing Sheffield Phoenix Press, agreed to publish the book.

At the third stage I assigned the translation enterprise to Betty Sigler Rozen, while at the same time, during my last sabbatical in India, I wrote the prefaces for the articles and began to go over the translated material. Out of consideration for the English reader, I have quoted, as far as possible, from English sources that can be examined in their own context, so that the quotation may be from a date well after the original article was written. All Bible quotations are taken from the Jewish Study Bible of the Jewish Publication Society.

Embarking on a journey one knows the starting point, but not what will happen on the way and not how the trip will end. Thus it was that in the fourth stage I realized that most of the articles have a common factor—the subject of biblical editing. This led to the omission of a few articles so that the others would constitute more than a mere collection of articles and would make a more focused statement on the theme of editing, with its own purpose and significance.

Before the fifth stage, a few words about editing. This subject fascinated me from an early stage in my studies, as shown in the subject of my doctoral thesis, on the art of editing in the book of Judges, later published as *The Book of Judges: The Art of Editing* (Amit 1999). No one will gainsay that the Bible is a long, carefully edited book, meaning not a chance agglomeration of materials that were found together and bound together, but rather a complete and carefully selected library. The material included there underwent critical consideration expressed in its sequence, its beginning and end, and individual work on each and every book included there. Moreover, this is no one-time act of editorial enterprise, but a continuous process. Hence the critical reader of the literature of the Bible does not imagine a large writing desk covered with scrolls at which an editor sits and works, correcting, making changes in keeping with his world view, arranges the material in the order he prefers and then sends it to the scribes who will make enough copies to meet the public demand. The critical reader is aware that the canonization of this text proceeds gradually and can follow the editorial process through additional versions that may be compared. One example is the book of Chronicles as against the Deuteronomistic History, another the Septuagint translation or the Qumran manuscripts as against the Masoretic text—and there are many more. Thus the conclusion emerges that what is before us is the result of a collective editing process, one that went on for centuries and which afforded the editors considerable freedom. They made changes according to their needs, erased and omitted, added material they found or even composed,

and nonetheless managed to find the common element in the work as a whole. Those processes ended only with the sanctification and canonization of the Sacred Writings. Before the canonization one may speak of a diachronic multi-staged process and find writings that indicate layers of editing. There were also synchronic combinations, revealing different schools of thought among the writers involved. Additionally, one can seek out the central editing guidelines that impart unity to a specific book or to the entire canon.

However, these editors left nothing in writing about their work processes and guiding principles, so it is left to the interested later reader to reconstruct the poetics of the editing, the result of which can only be a supposition or a proposal, as in my doctoral thesis and book. There I showed that, 'notwithstanding the fact that biblical editing is a protracted, collective process, and that throughout the process different, and at times conflicting, editing tendencies were accumulated on top of one another, the editors of each biblical work preserved certain central editorial features, giving the majority of its components the sense of combining toward the same goal. I refer to the preservation of these central lines of editing, which run through the work and give the majority of its components a sense of unity: implied editing' (Amit 1999: 9). As I see it, implied editing was possible under three preconditions common to biblical redactors through the generations. One condition was what I call 'the formative function', which is the perception of biblical literature as material designed to shape and educate its readers. The second condition was 'the rhetorical function', according to which much attention was given to the means of transmitting the material in a way that aroused the readers' continued interest and even the desire to read and to hear again. For instance, judicial codes are introduced within story frameworks, surrounding the bare bones of the law with intriguing narrative. The third condition, 'the target audience', obliged biblical editors to consider the nature of their audience that would range from people who could neither read nor write to society's cultural and intellectual elite. The need to reach different types of readers so that the book would be central to all of community life gave rise to sophisticated poetics that amaze scholars even today, that would reach not only people who liked to hear stories, but also the more refined and educated audience.

Even after I finished my research on the book of Judges, the editing theme continued to engage my interest as shown in this collection of articles and material I published more recently.

In this collection I try to show that editorial decisions are among the factors that have given the Book of Books its vitality and length of days, that have enabled it to withstand the test of time over more than 2000

years. To begin the Torah with a Creation story that sanctifies the Sabbath was a decision made by editors among whom I identify those of the Holiness school (Chapter 1 of the present volume). The decision to begin the story of Eden with a lengthy exposition that may have once been an independent Creation story and in its present place formulated as a description of Utopia from which man was expelled, it indicates clear-eyed editorial observation of human nature and its weaknesses (Chapter 2). It is not by chance that the biblical sequence leads to Cain's murder of Abel and the warring world that is no longer 'the same language and the same words'. Who if not the editors organized the stories into a sequence that describes a world moving ever further from the primordial reality that God had found 'very good?' The new divisive reality is the background for the appearance of Abraham and his descendants on the stage of history, and for the attempt to show them as an entity separate from their surroundings. The writing about that special and chosen entity is the result of editorial activities. Editors are those who determined that for significant periods in the nation's history the women would be depicted as barren (Chapter 3). It was the editors who kept and did not reject the Dinah story for the sake of an unequivocal stance *vis-à-vis* the Shechemites–Samaritans. Similarly, they did not reject the story of the rape of Tamar so they could furnish the reader with material that showed Absalom in a favorable light, and Amnon and David unfavorably (Chapters 4 and 16). The editors too decided not to give up the Joseph story but to present it as a continuation of the history of Jacob and thus create a background for the enslavement in Egypt (Chapter 5). Some articles highlight editorial considerations, others the editorial techniques. The editors do not avoid multiple voices (Chapter 6), and have no problem with two or more versions of a single motif that stress the comprehensive aims of the text (Chapters 7 and 15). Nor are they fazed by a reality activated by two systems and hence by double causation (Chapter 8): a plausible system functions under laws of a familiar reality and another system is guided by a divine hand that imposes its own will. It was important too for me to show editorial activity as creative, giving rise to terms of its own like 'men of Israel' (Chapter 9) and using motifs creatively for its formulative needs, transforming mighty Samson, that Hercules style hero, into a nazirite of God (Chapter 10). Editing is central in determining the structure of a work, as is evident in the final chapters of the book of Judges, which contain a conclusion and an added unit (Chapter 11), revealing the development of 'add on' techniques. The editors developed refined means, like alien elements inserted in formulaic phrases (Chapter 12) and are responsible too for introducing advance hints of things to come as links between the parts of a composition (Chapter 13). The question naturally arises as to when the editors

were active. My inclination is not to date the entire editing enterprise as late as the Second Temple era, but to regard it as beginning in the late eighth and the seventh centuries BCE (Chapter 14). The last chapters of the present collection are devoted to the late book of Chronicles, and in this case we have to thank the editors who decided to include it in the canon, despite the difficulties it creates. The book of Chronicles introduces the reader to different poetics from those used in its sources (Chapter 17) and different presentations of persons who figure there like Saul (Chapter 18). There are also original ideological developments such as the preference for the Temple tradition over that of the Exodus (Chapter 19).

Reviewing the chapters of this book gives rise to another question: What is the connection or the difference between editor and author? More than once I attribute to the editor functions that could just as well be attributed to the author, for the prolonged and collective aspects of the biblical creative process gave its editors the status of authors. I do not want to declare the death of the authors and present the Bible as an orphan with editors as step-parents. Rather, I want to point out that we have no tools for discerning the original and primary contribution of the authors, which became, as it were, clay in the creative hands of editors through the generations. These editors, through changing times, succeeded in apposing divergent views, and at the same time applying common editorial guidelines that directed future generations how to distinguish between teachings to be observed at the peril of one's life, and those that may be disputed, where attitudes may be changed, multiple opinions expressed and most important of all—the editors succeeded in maintaining the formative status of the Book of Books.

Now, having reached the fifth stage, the end of the road, all that remains is to express my thanks:

To Athalya Brenner, who encouraged, supported and helped where it was needed.

To Cheryl Exum and David Clines, who undertook to publish the book and did everything possible to make it happen.

To Betty Sigler Rozen, who carried on with the translation through a difficult time in her own life.

To Dana Torres, who took care of the bibliography with meticulous care and devotion.

And again, with gratitude to my family, who waited so eagerly for me to retire and be theirs entirely. They acknowledge that habit becomes nature and long years of involvement in biblical literature make it a second nature that is hard for me to give up.

1

WHO DECIDED TO OPEN THE TORAH
WITH THE CREATION OF THE SABBATH?

Retrospective Preface

The Jewish people have observed the Sabbath as a day of rest from ancient times to this day, and there is no question of its unique contribution to the Jewish identity. It gave each and every individual that sense of majesty that enabled him or her to cope with a dog's life, as Heinrich Heine's poem *Princess Sabbath* proclaims: 'But on every Friday evening / At the twilight hour, the magic / Fades abruptly, and the dog / Once more is a human being' (Heine 1982: 651). To this day Sabbath has its special place in contemporary Israel. Public violation of the Sabbath may threaten the government and demonstrations regarding Sabbath occur in Israel from time to time. No wonder that I asked myself again and again when it was that the Jewish people began observing the Sabbath. Who were those who understood its tremendous force? What rhetoric they used to convince their public? And who was interested to open the five books of the Torah with the idea of the Sabbath?

The answer came to me bit by bit in the early 1990s as I read the doctoral thesis of Israel Knohl, which convinced me of two points. One is that there was a Holiness school (H) that created passages in the Torah in addition to Leviticus 17–26 (today I am convinced that it left an imprint on the book of Joshua as well). The second point is that its authors, who appeared after the Priestly school (P), were influenced by it and even protested against it. However, I am not convinced of Knohl's historical framework that place the work in the days of Ahaz and Hezekiah. Nor am I convinced that the P school was such an elite that through its ritual occupations, mainly the sacrifices, attained a higher spiritual level.

These gave rise to many doubts, leading to such questions as: Was the Creation Story, seeming to describe a transcendental God and a world created by the word, indeed a product of the P school? According to the text itself the world was created not only by the word. God appears and blesses the animal world, the world is described as vegetarian with no

place for animal sacrifices, and woman is not described as a potential deviant but as a person created in God's image. The view that this was a P creation was undermined. On the other hand, texts ascribed to H reveal that this school viewed the Sabbath as hallowed as the Temple: 'You shall keep my Sabbaths and venerate my sanctuary, Mine, the Lord's' (Lev. 26.3); 'For this is a sign between me and you throughout the ages, that you may know that I the Lord have consecrated you' (Exod. 31.13). Moreover, the drastic threats against desecrating the Sabbath bring to mind those in the P source against violating the ritual precinct. Hence I came to the conclusion that presenting God as observing and sanctifying the Sabbath was a product of the H school and its editors and not of the P school.

That possibility, revolutionary in a sense, seemed to me a convincing and productive solution. Thus it becomes clear why Genesis begins with two Creation stories. When the one that climaxes with the Sabbath is put first, the second introduces the story of Eden. Thus it became clear that the Sabbath text (Gen. 2.1-3) should not be regarded as an addition but as the story's climax and even its central purpose.

It further became evident that the struggle against idolatry was waged not only by mentioning the sea monsters, but principally by limiting the roles of the sun and the moon: their first purpose was not to divide day from night, as this was done by the light of the first day, but as 'signs of the set times' on the fourth day, and thus there is no connection to the waxing and waning of the moon. The result is that the H Calendar is set apart from the heavenly bodies that might become objects of idolatry.

However, most significantly of all, it became clear that to convince the public of the importance of the Sabbath, a God could be shown who kept the Sabbath, resting from all his labor, so that all created in his image were obliged to do likewise.

This formulation, a work of genius and an incontrovertible success, focused on a different flow of time, and social commentary was added too. Over time the Sabbath became an element of human rights in Western culture. Josephus Flavius reports in *Against Apion* 2.282 (LCL, pp. 404-407): 'The masses have long since shown a keen desire to adopt our religious observances; and there is not one city, Greek or barbarian, nor a single nation, to which our custom of abstaining from work on the seventh day has not spread'. Certainly it is no surprise that the other monotheistic religions adopted it in their own ways. One recalls a reaction of the Zionist thinker Ahad Ha'am (A. Ginsberg: 1856–1927) to the suggestion of postponing the Sabbath to Sunday: 'More than Israel kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath kept them'.

In my view, the first to accord such strength and importance to the Sabbath were those authors/editors of the H school, who knew that our

lives proceed along axes of space and time. Having experienced exile, which is a different space, and the powerful strength of assimilation, they understood the separating and unifying force of the Sabbath and created a world with different time: Sabbath time.

The Creation Story and the calendar of the H school open the biblical literature, but this is not the only reason to open with this article the book. Since this school appears not to have been fully explored by research, I find that the message of this article is an appropriate beginning for this book.

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CREATION AND THE CALENDAR OF HOLINESS

God required seven days to create the world. For six days he commanded, acted and created, and on the seventh day he ended his work and rested from all his labor. Genesis 1.1–2.4a, describing the work of Creation as a unit of seven days, is unique to biblical tradition. From the time of Wellhausen most scholars agree that not only is this story part of the Priestly school (P) of the Torah: it is compelling evidence of the refined concept of God that dominated that intellectual group as it put forward a systematic, rational view of Creation.[1]

This article, however, attempts to convince the reader that the Creation Story, based on the seven-day unit at the end of which God rests, blessing and sanctifying the seventh day, is in fact the work of the Holiness school (H), which appears responsible for the final editing of the Torah.[2] This school it was that decided to commence the Torah by making the Sabbath an integral part of the cosmic act of Creation. It thus proclaimed a calendar of holiness marked by a rhythm of seven—the Sabbath rhythm—separated

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1. Wellhausen 1957: 112-16, 297-308. For a brief summary of the history of research on this P narrative, see Westermann 1984: 81-88, following Schmidt. Weinfeld (1968) takes a critical view of the Wellhausen school of research regarding the abstract religious view of the Creation Story. Recently, Knohl (2007: 124-48) has found a solution of compromise by distinguishing between two main periods of divine revelation in the P school: the period of Genesis and of Moses. The first is marked respectively by personal language and personifying descriptions, and the second by a tendency towards abstraction.

2. For a concise summary of differences between H and P and the history of research on H—its extent and relationship to P—see Knohl 2007: 1-7. He coined the term 'Holiness school', dating it later than P and indicating its role in the editing of the Torah.

from the cosmic calendar based on movements of the lights in the firmament. Life according to the model God determined naturally embodies a holiness dimension derived from the holiness imparted to the seventh day. It typifies and sets apart those who choose it. Therefore biblical passages centered on holiness declare that the people are not holy unless they follow the divine calendar of holiness, of the Sabbaths: 'You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy... [A]nd keep my Sabbaths...' (Lev. 19.2-3).

In the first part of the article I shall show that the Sabbath is an integral part and indeed the climax of the Creation Story. Thus the author of the Sabbath passage (Gen. 2.1-3) is responsible for the entire story. In the second, I address thematic and stylistic elements that link the passage to H. In the conclusion I focus on why H made the Sabbath so central, even presenting it as the basis of Creation and placing it at the opening of the entire Torah. Furthermore, I discuss why that school avoided both the term 'Sabbath' and the use of imperative regarding the Sabbath, meaning language of command.

1. *The Role of the Sabbath in the Creation Story*

A study of the structure of the Creation Story indicates the importance attached to the seventh day (the Sabbath passage: Gen. 2.1-3). This passage not only ends but climaxes the process of Creation, and is thus an integral part of its composition.

1.1. *The Sabbath Passage has Additional and Varied Links with the Creation Story*
1.1.1. *The conclusion link.* The Sabbath passage places rest at the end of activity, and thus it is the thematic and narrative conclusion of the preceding materials. Rest following Creation is a recurring motif in various religions.[3] According to *Enūma eliš*, human beings were created to allow the gods to rest.[4] The link between Creation and rest, particularly the creation of humans, is thus both widespread and ancient. On the other hand, the day of rest as the seventh day is an innovation of the Israelite Creation

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3.   See Pettazzoni (1967), who discusses the term 'otiositas' (p. 32), denoting the opposite of creativity and activity of the Creation myth.

4.   See the Babylonian Creation Myth, *Enūma eliš*, Table VI, lines 8-9, 34 (Foster 1993: 384-85). This source also links the rest motif with the gods' entrance into their temple (lines 47-166). On the link between the Sabbath and the Temple, see Weinfeld 1977. Compare with the rest motif after the creation of human beings in the Atra-hasis Epic, Table 1, lines 240-49 (Lambert and Millard 1969: 59-61). Similarly, Ptah, god of Memphis, is described as being satisfied after completing his work too, interpreted also as resting; see Pritchard 1955: 5 n. 19.

Story.[5] There are scholars who think that the passage that contains this innovation, attributing greater importance and authority to the seventh day, is a secondary addition that gives the story etiological significance. Thus for example Seeligmann maintains:

> Clearly this etiology is not primary in the internal literary development: acts of creation were not originally recorded to explain the holiness of the Sabbath. In Israel as in Babylon there were stories of the creation of the world, and to one of these was added, at a certain point, the praise of the Sabbath, which today is its highest point. At first it was not integrally linked to the Creation Story.[6]

Seeligmann distinguishes between the link effected 'at a certain stage' and the story 'today'. His argument that the acts of creation were not recorded to explain the sanctity of the Sabbath is convincing, first of all because there are no parallels to it. That said, it does not indicate time relationships within the Creation Story, that is, that the Sabbath passage is a secondary etiological addition. He too regards it not only as an integral part of the composition but also as a natural ending and climax for the internal dynamics of the story. Thus the etiology argument does not necessarily indicate that the Sabbath passage is secondary in the existing story, but rather points to active editing as it was handed down. Seeligmann even stresses that 'In fact internal dynamics are at times more convincing than any characteristic thought to be etiological'.[7] Thus even the absence from the Sabbath text of etiological formulations like 'therefore' and 'to this very day' does not detract from this narrative its etiological nature. Indeed, recognizing this quality emphasizes the internal dynamics behind the perception of the Sabbath as an integral part of the story. Readers perceive themselves advancing from one day to the next, learning the details of Creation and the logic behind it. Naturally, then, this path leads to the final stage, which is the Creator's rest once his work has ended. The writer or editor chose the materials for his new story from the versions within the traditions at hand, or even from a familiar epic.[8] This new story is designed to announce an additional creation connected with the seventh day, namely, resting after six days of work. This perception

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5.   To varying extents, scholars stress the link between the Sabbath and Mesopotamian culture as against its unique quality in Israelite culture. See, e.g., Cassuto 1961: 65-69; Gitay 1971; Tigay 1976: 509; Uffenheimer 1985, and the comprehensive bibliographies of each of these studies.

6.   See, e.g., Seeligmann 1992a; the citation is from p. 37.

7.   Seeligmann 1992a: 29.

8.   Compare Cassuto 1961: 8-12. See also Cassuto 1972c. While Cassuto does not relate specifically to the Sabbath passage, it may be inferred from his comprehensive relation 'to the first section in the book of Genesis' (1972c: 85).

that cessation from work is a kind of creation arises from the phrasing 'On the seventh day God finished the work that He had been doing'; and it is not written that he finished his work on the sixth day, or at least at the end of the sixth day.[9] Hence the Masoretic version prepares the basis for the oxymoronic concept of activity that is cessation, and thus hints at the creation of the Sabbath as a new entity that is cessation of any type of work.

 Some scholars, however, tried to undermine the perception of the Sabbath as a natural ending for the Creation Story, seeing a discrepancy between the acts and the days of Creation. It was impossible for them that a story limiting itself to six days would ultimately describe eight if not more acts of creation,[10] the reason being that each day of creation is marked by one single act, so that the six-act model must be maintained.[11] But this argument fails. On one hand, there is disagreement as to the number of acts of creation; and on the other, the formulation 'On the seventh day God finished' leaves room to postulate that there was some activity on the seventh day. Thus it seems that the rigid six-day structure, with the seventh day as the end of the process before it, points to an earlier plan that allows no compromise on seven or eight days of Creation. It can only be based on six days and a seventh one uniquely appointed for rest, a day with a holy quality, as stated in Exod. 31.16: 'The Israelite people

9.   In the Samaritan Version, the Septuagint and the Peshitta it is the sixth day. Compare also *Jub.* 2.2, 16, as well as Talmudic and Midrashic attempts to confront this difficulty by describing the Holy One as one who 'entered by a hair's breadth' (*b. Meg.* 9a; *Gen. R.* 10.10 and Rashi's commentary on this verse). The ancient versions, the Sages and the commentators who followed them, in contrast to the Masoretic text, have in mind the pragmatic halakhic problem of Sabbath observance, hence the centrality of separating the days from what was done on each day. The accepted way of explaining the verb 'finished' in v. 2 is as a past perfect. See, e.g., Cassuto 1961: 61-62; also Wenham 1987: 35; Sarna 1989: 14, and more. However, already criticizing this view is Ehrlich 1969a: 4.

10.   The acts of Creation can be adapted to several numerical structures. The idea of eight acts comes from description of two acts on the third day, on which it was twice said 'this was good' (vv. 10, 12), and again on the sixth day on which it was said 'it was good' and 'very good' (vv. 25, 31). However the system combines the creations of the fourth, fifth and sixth days. In other words, are the sun, the moon and the stars a single act of creation? Are creeping things, the fowl of the air, and the great sea monsters, or beasts, cattle and reptiles also the result of a single such act? To say that at a stage in antiquity eight acts of creation ended with the rest of the Creator, and only later this was forced into the seven-day mold for the sake of an etiological explanation for the Sabbath (see Tigay 1976: 509) is just one possibility of reconstruction of the ancient stage. Compare, for example, the 22 species in *Jub.* 2.1-15.

11.   See the summation in Westermann 1984: 88-90.

shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout the ages as a covenant for all time'.

Lexicography too helps to establish the verse about the Sabbath as an ending, with the repeated use of the Hebrew root *k-l-h*, meaning 'to complete' and 'bring to an end', and the combination and repetition of the word 'all' (Hebrew *kol*) in Gen. 2.1-3. This play on words is reinforced by the sound of *melakto* ('his work') in which the letter 'k' occurs again. All these strengthen the sense of an end and a summation of what went before. No wonder, then, that Westermann introduces his discussion of the Sabbath verse with 'Conclusion of the Creation Narrative'.[12]

1.1.2. *The time link.* Reporting on the seventh day immediately after the six-day series creates a complete, enclosed time unit of seven days congruent with the use of number seven to represent perfection. Seven-day periods are common in the biblical and in ancient Near East literary traditions. Thus in the Ugaritic epos, building Baal's house took six days and ended on the seventh day (*CAT* 1.4.VI.22-23). When he beseeched the gods to bless him with a son, the righteous Danel, hero of the Ugaritic Akhat narrative, gave them food and drink for seven days (*CAT* 1.17.I.1-17 [Parker 1997: 57]). When informed that his son was born, he made a seven-day feast (*CAT* 1.17.II.30-40 [Parker 1997: 51-52, 57, 133-34]). In the Mesopotamian tradition the Flood too lasted seven days (*The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet XI, lines 141-46), and other examples abound.[13] In the Bible there are seven-day units connected with such conditions as impurity after childbirth (Lev. 12.2), the bridal feast (Gen. 29.27-28; Judg. 14.12) holidays (Exod. 23.15; 34.18, and more), as there are with different ceremonies such as anointing priests (Exod. 29.30; Lev. 8.33-35), consecrating the altar (Exod. 29.37), dedicating the Temple (1 Kgs 8.65-66) and days of mourning (Gen. 50.10; Job 2.13). Repeated use of the seven-day unit is thus typical of ancient thought and appears to be connected with the magical, mystic quality of this number and with its aura of perfection.[14]

1.1.3. *Stylistic link.* The description of the seventh day is difficult to present as an artificial appendage of the preceding material, connected to it as it is stylistically. The account of the seventh day (Gen. 2.1) repeats the beginning of the story 'to create heaven and earth' (Gen. 1.1) and its

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12.   Westermann 1984: 167.
13.   Pritchard 1955: 94. Cassuto (1972a: 33-34) already saw this phenomenon. For these and other examples, besides variations on use of the seven-day model, see Loewenstamm (1962a), who maintains that Ugaritic scribes borrowed the model from the Mesopotamian epos.
14.   For a detailed discussion, see Hehn 1907.

conclusion: 'Such is the story of heaven and earth when they were created' (2.4a).[15] The Hebrew roots *b-r-'* (2.3) and *'-ś-h* (2.2 [×3], 3) are also repeated throughout the six days of Creation (*b-r-'*: 1.21, 27 [×3]; and *'-ś-h*: 1.7, 16, 25, 26, 31, see also 1.11-12). Ordinal numbers are another stylistic link beginning with 'a second day' and concluding with the triple repetition of 'the seventh day'.

1.1.4. *Linking motifs*. The blessing motif mentioned in connection with the seventh day: 'And God blessed the seventh day' (2.3) also appears in relation to the beings created on the fifth day (1.22) and with the creation of human beings (1.28).

   In summary, whoever sought to present the seventh day as a day of rest that concluded Creation had to present all Creation as a six-day process, to decide what was created on each day and what characterized the seventh day. Thus he shaped that day for the linking function indicated above (§§1.1.1-4), concluding in a circular fashion that reinforces the sense of a closed and complete independent unit (see the links between 1.1 and 2.4a). Attaching the Sabbath to the Creation tradition and reworking it into the narrative before us now required innovation and meticulously balanced judgment of style and subject so that all Creation would serve as the cosmic etiology of the Sabbath. The inner dynamics of such deep reworking is an act of Creation in itself. It leads the reader to attribute great antiquity and authority to the Sabbath day, even without mentioning the specific commandments for its observance.[16] The connection between the verse about the Sabbath and the Creation tradition that precedes it, cannot then be dismissed as an editorial appendage. It is rather a new work that reflects not only departure from the ancient Near Eastern creation traditions but also a new biblical attitude *vis-à-vis* Creation.[17] In conclusion, one reasonably assumes that using a new work and not a revised one to commence the

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15.   Most commentators link this element (Gen. 2.4a) with the preceding P narrative. Skinner (1930: 39-41), however, regards it as an editorial insertion and does not link it to the adjacent passage (2.4b–3.24). Cassuto's (1961: 96-100) view is different. He regards this formulation as the opening of the passage that follows and concludes with 3.24. The formula 'Such is the story' often serves as an opening, as in Gen. 5.1; 6.9; 10.1; 11.10; and more. Hence the view that in this case it was moved from the end of the passage to the beginning. See Skinner's discussion, pp. 40-41.

16.   On the creativity of the editing and the difficulty of distinguishing author from editor, see the first chapter of my book (Amit 1999, especially pp. 14-18).

17.   Ps. 104, for example, is recognized as an account of creation close to that of Genesis. See Weiss 1984: 88-90. However, we cannot find there a hint of Sabbath. Similarly, in God's response in Job 38 we find the power of God in creation, but not the Sabbath.

book of Genesis and indeed the entire Torah cannot be a coincidence but rather an indication of purpose and of planning on a broader scale.

1.2. *Ascending Order as a Means to Make the End a Climax*
My assumption here is that content is not to be separated from form and that selection of a particular form declares the intention to stress certain aspects of content. The Creation Story adheres to the ascending order model six–seven (6+1).[18] My argument is that choice of an ascending numerical order shows that the author/editor of the story perceives the Sabbath with its additional component (+1) as the climactic stage.[19] Thus in other stories like marching around the walls of Jericho: 'Let all your troops...complete one circuit of the city. Do this six days... On the seventh day, march around the city seven times...' (Josh. 6.3-4, 15-16). The climax on the seventh day is expressed in the number of times the Israelites encompassed the city and also in reaching their goal—the city's fall.[20] In other stories too, where the model is applied to time it indicates climax. Similarly in the giving of the Law, Moses is commanded to go up into the mountain of God to receive the stone tablets: 'The Presence of the Lord abode on Mount Sinai, and the cloud hid it for six days. On the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud' (Exod. 24.16). God's direct summons—the climax—is reached on the seventh day.[21] In linking the

18.   This combination is mentioned specifically in the wisdom literature: 'Six things the Lord hates; Seven are an abomination unto him...' (Prov. 6.16-19), and 'He will deliver you from six troubles; in seven no harm will reach you' (Job 5.19). Elsewhere it is implied: see 1 Kgs 18.43-44; Amos 3.3-6; Ezek. 46.4; Pss 78.44-51; 105.28-36 (Exod. 7–11 prefers the nine–ten model) and 1 Chron. 2.13-15 (in 1 Sam. 16–17 the seven–eight model is preferred. In none of these cases does the model relate to time units.

19.   Cassuto (1972a) raises the possibility of using the numbers model to locate the climactic event or the gravest instance. Zakovitch (1978), who explored the three–four model, notes additional uses, such as change and deviation. On the Sabbath as the climax of the Creation Story, see Toeg 1972. Toeg too locates the climactic stage through form, but sees the repetitions as serving liturgy and ritual as well. Compare with Sarna 1989: 14.

20.   A time model made up of days is also inferred at 1 Kgs 20.29 and Est. 1.5, 10. The time model may use years, as in 2 Kgs 11.3-4 and 2 Chron. 22.12–23.1. The context recalls the laws of the slave and the shmitah. See also Uffenheimer 1985.

21.   Scholars maintain that the unit in Exod. 24.15b-18a is an example of P. Thus Driver (1911: 258) sees in this passage a parallel of P to the JE story in Exod. 19. See also the survey of later commentators in Durham 1987: 340-41. Toeg (1977: 10) calls this a transition unit. The model in this story creates a sense of crowding because of another typological number: forty days (Exod. 24.18b). The number forty is used together with seven also in the complex story of the Flood (see Gen. 7.4 and elsewhere). Perhaps adding the six–seven model in the Sinai context prefigures its Sabbath connection in Exod. 31.15-18; 35.2. According to Knohl (2007: 63-67), the P school that introduced the

model to time units there is typically a common factor in the six elements and a divergence or change in the last and highest (+1). Through this change, the last stage becomes the climax of the entire unit.[22] Our story describes six days of Creation *vis-à-vis* a day of rest that is the opposite of the days before it. Creation is thus the common denominator within the process, and reaching the stage of rest is its transition and its summit. Style too serves to stress the resemblance among the elements. Each of the six days of Creation ends with 'And there was evening and there was morning X day' (Gen. 1.5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). Only the description of the seventh day ends otherwise, although the ordinal number is used there three times. Moreover, although the ordinal does not require a definite article, in the Sabbath passage it has one in all three instances: 'the seventh day' (2.2 [×2], 3). Study of the model indicates the importance of the penultimate element as a stage advancing towards the final one.[23] In our story the sense of completion mounts from the acts of creation on the sixth day—here too the ordinal is identified—because the human being is shown here as ruling over all creatures that preceded him, and also in the description of God contemplating and concluding his handiwork: 'And God saw all that He had made, and found it very good' (1.31). The true conclusion, however, is only on the seventh day and described thus: 'On the seventh day God finished all the work that he had been doing, and He ceased on the seventh day from all the work that He had done' (2.2). Thus the ascending number model also accentuates the special status of the Sabbath. Thus too the salient point moves from the creation of the human being to the sacred status of the seventh day. Choosing the numerical model as the balancing element leads to establishing the Sabbath not only as the end of the change of course, but its summit. Creation reached a climax characterized by rest on the seventh day. Since the quality of rest and the framework, the seventh day, are linked, the day itself is blessed. Furthermore, God not only blesses but also sanctifies the day. It is, then, not only unique because of divine inactivity, but because of the special activity of sanctifying that day.

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passage is the H school to which he attributes the entire fabric of editing and elaborating the links in the Torah literature.

22.   In the Ugaritic epos (see n. 13), the change accentuated by the word *mk*, is translated as 'Then (on the seventh day)'; see *CAT* 1.4.VI.31-32 (Parker 1997: 134); 1.14.III.2-4, 10-15 (Parker 1997: 15-16); 1.17.I.16 (Parker 1997: 53); 1.17.II.39 (Parker 1997: 57). In the Kereth Narrative the change is effected by additional means, such as reference to the sun, words added before the seventh day and replacing the word *mk* with *whn*, which is also translated as 'then'.

23.   See Zakovitch 1978: 523-25.

1.3. *The Sabbath and the Torah Literature*
The discussion of the structure is oriented towards the more general issue of *the Sabbath's place as part of the Creation Story in the Torah as a whole*, where the Sabbath is not only presented as both the conclusion and the summit of the Creation Story, but as the opening of the whole Torah. In other words, its place within Torah literature proclaims its importance and centrality. Readers learn that God used the seven-day calendar in the work of Creation. It follows that like other created forces operating within the universe, the calendar too acquires the force of reality. The calendar God used is part of universal law and from now on can serve as a model for those created in God's image. Apart from the lights in the firmament, then, created 'to separate day from night' and to serve as 'signs for the set times—the days and the years' (Gen. 1.14), the reader learns that there is also divine time, the week, which is the sacred calendar. Indirectly he learns that this Sabbath is not the seventh day or the day of *šapattu*' (the 15th day) assigned to the birth of the moon in the Babylonian creation story (*Enūma eliš*, Tablet V, lines 17-18).[24] The fact that this new calendar opens the Torah literature influences the whole process of subsequent reading. Indeed, every encounter with the Sabbath is affected by the initial one, and one understands why the Sabbath appears as the first commandment incumbent on the Israelites (Exod. 16), why it is among the Ten Commandments, and why for those who enter the covenant, the punishment for violating it is death.

2. *The Sabbath and the Literature of the Holiness School*

The Sabbath has a central place both in the Holiness Code (Lev. 17–26) and in some of the P literature (Exod. 17; 31.12-17; 35.1-3; Num. 15.32-36), which has a very close connection to the Holiness Code.

2.1. *The Sabbath and the Holiness Code*
Considerable evidence in the Code points to the centrality of the Sabbath:

2.1.1. First on the list of the festivals in the Holiness Code is the Sabbath (Lev. 23.1-3), despite its original redundancy in this framework.[25] From the concluding verses (23.37-38) one learns that the list was to have dealt with 'the set times of the Lord that you shall celebrate as sacred occasions... apart from the Sabbaths of the Lord...' The Sabbath is different from the

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24. Foster 1993: 378-79. See also n. 4, above.
25. Cf. Rashi on Lev. 23.3. Research has accepted this ever since the nineteenth century. See the attempt at disproof by, among others, Hoffmann (1965: 95-96). But see Knohl (2007: 14) for its acceptance as an assumption, as well as additional bibliography.

other festivals as it recurs throughout the year. By philological analysis of v. 2b ('These are My fixed times, the fixed times of the Lord, which you shall proclaim as sacred occasions'), researchers have even pointed out its secondary character here as a problematic opening in the spirit of v. 4, one that serves as a resumptive repetition to link the festival laws to the Sabbath (v. 3). Put otherwise, the combination technique of a repeated opening and the deviant use of the first person ('My fixed times') indicate a secondary, tendentious connection determining the place of the Sabbath. This contrasts with the calendar of the public cult in P (Num. 28–29) where the Sabbath is the integrated opening of the list that deals with additional sacrifices (Num. 28.9-10). The list progresses from the Sabbath which is the most frequent, through the new moons to the annual festivals. Hence the Sages' question: 'What has the Sabbath to do with the appointed seasons? It is to indicate that whoever profanes the appointed seasons is regarded as though he had profaned the Sabbath, and whoever carries out the requirements of the appointed seasons is regarded as though he had carried out the requirements of both the appointed seasons and the Sabbath' (*Sifra, Parashat Emor, Parashah* 9).[26] The midrashic answer declares the importance of the Sabbath in the calendar of annual festivities, and one infers its importance for those who drew up the calendar in the Holiness Code.[27]

2.1.2. The frequent mention of the Sabbath in the Holiness Code indicates its importance, as do linkage preferences and its place among the three commandments introducing the section Kedoshim ('You shall be holy'). The commandment to keep the Sabbath is set between honoring one's father and mother and the prohibition against worshipping idols and images (Lev. 19.3-4). This indicates its clear connection to the first five commandments.[28] The importance of honoring parents is clear not only

26.   See Neusner 1988b: 233. There are many answers to this question, but I restrict myself here to the reply of Nachmanides (Rambam 1974: 357), who takes the halakhic position and disagrees with the Sages who interpreted it as 'alludes to the intercalations [of an extra month in a leap year]'. In his view, what is written declares that: 'the Sabbath you are to keep, making it a Sabbath of solemn rest from all manner of work whatsoever...[even] when the Sabbath falls on one of [the days of] the festivals...'

27.   Noth (1965: 165-68), emphasizes that the addition reflects the importance of the Sabbath after the Exile.

28.   In both versions of the Ten Commandments the Sabbath is between the first three, relating to the fear of God, and the fifth, about honoring parents (Exod. 20.2-12; Deut. 5.6-16). Thus it is understood as a transition point between Commandments about relations between human beings and God and those between human beings themselves. No doubt that the first four Commandments are unique to the Israelite religion. Weinfeld (1986: 10), following Schwartz, explains the change of order as the result of chiastic quotation, so that honoring the mother and father comes before fear of God and honoring the Sabbath.

from its place at the beginning of the section Kedoshim—'You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God am holy' (19.2)—but also from the unusual use in this context of the verb *y-r-*'. This verb appears in the Holiness Code four times in connection with awe of God (19.14, 32; 25.36, 43) and twice with awe of the Temple, where God's rituals are performed (19.30; 26.2). In the last two, keeping the Sabbath immediately precedes the command to hold the Temple in awe, 'You shall keep My Sabbaths and venerate My sanctuary: I am the Lord' (19.30; cf. 26.2). Additionally, Schwartz points to the structural dimension. The Sabbath at the end of ch. 19 is mentioned together with honoring elders and the prohibition against witchcraft (vv. 30-32), so is similar to the opening of the section, that is, the conclusion as a beginning.[29] Moreover, its place at the end of the Holiness Code alongside the prohibition against idolatry (26.1-2) and the stress on the nonobservance of the sabbatical year (26.36-46) show, as Weinfeld states, 'the subject's significance in the author's world view'.[30]

2.1.3. The metonymic use made of the Sabbath in the Holiness Code shows how important it was. The year when the land rests is called the Sabbath of the land (Lev. 25.6) with the added emphasis of 'complete rest': 'But in the seventh year the land shall have a Sabbath of complete rest, a Sabbath of the Lord…' (Lev. 25.4).[31] Violating the Sabbath of the land brings down the drastic punishment of general, prolonged exile so the land can expiate the ignored Sabbath years: 'it shall observe the rest that it did not observe in your Sabbath years while you were dwelling upon it' (Lev. 26.34-35).[32] Regarding this, the severity attached to violating the Sabbath commandment (Exod. 31.14-15; Num. 15.32-36) justifies the destruction and desolation of the land. Undoubtedly, calling the year when the land rests a sabbath arises from the similarity of the two commandments, although these emphases are absent from other texts related to the sabbath of the land outside the Holiness Code (compare Lev. 25.2-7; 26.34-35, 43 to Exod. 32.1-11; Deut. 15.1; Jer. 34.14-16).

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29.   Schwartz (1987: 120-22), significantly, regards Lev. 19.33-36 as additions.

30.   See n. 28.

31.   Rashi's commentary on Exod. 31.15 emphasizes (2004: 443): 'A Rest of relaxation not a casual rest. A Shabbos of cessation—The verse used a two-fold term with reference to Shabbos in order to say that it is forbidden regarding any work, even work involved in the preparation of food. Likewise, Yom Kippur, about which it says, "It shall be a shabbos of cessation to you" (Lev. 23.32) is forbidden regarding all work. But about *Yom Tov* all it says is, "on the first day [there shall be] a cessation and on the eight day [there shall be] a cessation" (Lev. 23.39). [Those days] are forbidden for any work of labor, but they are permitted regarding of food to be eaten that day.'

32.   The later source, 2 Chron. 36.21, apparently influenced by the Holiness Code and by H school in general, is also severe. See, e.g., Dillard 1987: 301-302.

2.1.4. To impart greater holiness to festivals they were granted the holiness of the Sabbath. So it was for the first and eighth days of Succoth (Lev. 23.39 and 35-36), for the New Year, described as a Sabbath of complete rest (23.24) and especially as regards the Day of Atonement: 'It shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for you...' (23.32).

2.1.5. The Sabbath becomes stronger in the Holiness Code by serving to determine the date of other events. Thus it was with 'the day after the Sabbath' in the ceremony of elevating the sheaf (Lev. 23.11) and determining the date of Shavuot: 'And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering—the day after the Sabbath—you shall count off seven weeks. They must be complete' (23.15).[33]

The Sabbath, then, has a central place in the Holiness Code that will serve as a guide in examining texts external to it that are attributed to P.

2.2. *The Sabbath in the Priestly Literature Outside the Holiness Code*
2.2.1. There are six references to the Sabbath outside the Holiness Code in the P writings in the Torah, which naturally include the Creation Story (Gen. 1.1–2.4a). However, as the Creation Story is our main theme, since I set it aside for the present and examine the other five in order of their appearance.

The first is the story of the manna given to the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sin. The final version that has come down to us makes it a story of a test (Exod. 16). God promises to shower bread from heaven on his complaining people and see whether they will follow his law (16.4), as it is written in the *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* (Nelson 2006: 177 [Tractate *Vayassa*]): '"On the seventh day (some people went out together), etc." (Exod. 16.27): These were those lacking faith among them'. Here in the midst of this test is the Sabbath (Exod. 16.5, 16-30). That the purpose of the test is educational is evident from its end: 'So the people remained inactive on the seventh day' (v. 30). Examining the story according to source criticism reveals it as a combination, but also that P dominates.[34] In other words, this story about teaching the Children of Israel to observe the Sabbath comes from P.

The Sabbath is mentioned in two other instances serving as a framework for the description of building the Tabernacle (Exod. 25–40). The commandment–performance continuum in the building of the Tabernacle (Exod. 25–31 + 35–40) is recognized as characteristically P material but

33.   On 'the day after the Sabbath' and the argument as to what Sabbath means in this context, see the conclusion of Haran 1976: 517-21.
34.   The story also contains J materials not dealt with here. For a detailed study, see Childs 1974: 274-83. For a criticism of Childs' method, see Durham 1987: 223-24.

embedded within it is a different element (chs. 32–34).[35] Warnings to stop work on the Sabbath serve as an opening (31.12-17) and closing (35.1-3) framework for the inserted material. The warnings generally attributed to P thus have the editorial functions of editorial attachment and of resumptive repetition.

The fourth time P deals with the Sabbath is *vis-à-vis* the gatherer of wood (Num. 16.32-36) stoned to death for Sabbath desecration.

Finally, the Sabbath is mentioned in the calendar of the public cult of the P Code (Num. 28.9-10) because of the additional sacrifice on that day.

2.2.2. Close study of the content and form of these five instances shows that the verse about the Sabbath passage in the list of additional sacrifices in the P Code differs in both respects from the others.

2.2.2.1. As to content, the approach in the first four instances is that the principle of keeping the Sabbath is of overwhelming importance, as evident from the policy behind the formulations and from the consequences for the violator. The general prohibition of work is repeated (Exod. 31.14-15; 35.2), as are specific types of work, such as gathering manna (16.26), kindling a fire (35.3) and gathering wood (Num. 15.32-35). In Exodus 16 the Sabbath is presented as the beginning of Torah acceptance. It precedes the revelation on Sinai and is the first test the people undergo after the law given them at the waters of Marah (Exod. 15.22-26). Moreover, this story links it to one of man's existential needs, which is food.[36] The prohibition against kindling a fire in Exod. 35.3 complements the one against gathering manna on the Sabbath—both are means for preparing food.[37] The Sages

35.   On these two chapters as not a P but a JE source that even underwent Deuteronomic editing, see Childs 1984: 557-58.

36.   According to Greenberg (1984a: 175-76): 'A full omer of manna, preserved by Moses' command in a jar before the Ark of the Covenant, was preserved not only because of God's miracle on behalf of the Israelites, but also as a memorial for the generations of their first encounter with the Sabbath'.

37.   Cassuto (1967: 454-55) considers that the literal text refers to types of work involved in building the Tabernacle, such as smelting metals. See, however, Rashbam's (Rashbam 1997: 425) conclusion in the light of the Sages' commentary on Exod. 35.3: 'Concerning holidays it is written (Exod. 12.6), "What every person is to eat, that alone may be prepared for you". Accordingly, kindling a fire in order to bake and cook is permitted [on a holiday], but concerning the Sabbath it is written (16.23), "Bake what you would bake before the Sabbath begins, and boil what you would boil". That's why the text tells us here that even kindling a fire for the sake of preparing food [an action which is permitted on a holiday] is not permitted on the Sabbath, how much more so all the other types of "work" that are forbidden even on holidays.' Compare with Ibn Ezra, Nachmanides and many others. I disagree with Weinfeld (1968: 142) that 'No authority can teach us the Priestly law in this context and the Sabbath was mentioned here only to show that work in the sanctuary does not supersede the Sabbath'.

and the medieval commentators interpreted the two additional warnings positioned near the commandments related to building the Tabernacle as proof that this did not supersede the Sabbath.[38] Put otherwise, even early commentary sensed that juxtaposing the Sabbath commandment to the building of the sanctuary served to reinforce the sanctity of the Sabbath by putting them on the same level. Moreover, not engaging in building does not involve a death penalty, showing that the holiness of the Sabbath is greater than that of the sanctuary. The wood-gatherer stoned for violating the Sabbath (Num. 15.32-36) shows unequivocally and in practice how to deal with such a person, clarifying and completing the earlier warnings. The warning in Exod. 31.14-15 includes both 'put to death' and 'cut off from his people'. The second, to be carried out by God, might otherwise arouse doubts as to the responsibility of society.[39] Thus the story of the wood-gatherer removes any shadow of a doubt as to how society should behave. Taking a cumulative view of these passages and weighing the contribution of each element to the preceding one and the effect all of them together, the purpose is clear: to proclaim the sanctity of the Sabbath, to which the editing process imparts supreme importance.

   There are also linguistic reinforcements exemplified by the combi-nation: 'a Sabbath of complete rest' (Exod. 16.23; 31.15; 35.2), the repetition of the adjective 'holy' (16.23; 31.14, 15; see also 31.13; 35.2), and the definite article used for 'the seventh day' (16.26, 27, 29, 30; 31.15, 17; 35.2). The commandment to keep the Sabbath is repeated three times using the root *š-m-r* (31.13, 14, 15). Attribution of the Sabbath to God is a repeated motif, which is important in this context (16.23, 25; 31.13; 35.2). Sabbath is also represented as God's gift (16.29) or as an everlasting sign between him and his people (31.13, 17). Other significant motifs linking these verses with the Holiness Code are introduced by the expression: 'You shall know that I the Lord am your God' (16.12), repeated with variations no fewer than 16 times in Leviticus 19, and by stressing that God is the source of holiness: 'I the Lord have consecrated you' (Exod. 31.13), as it is written in the opening of Leviticus 19: 'You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy' (Lev. 19.2).

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   38.   Thus in the *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai* (Nelson 2006: 377), and also Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra and Sforno on Exod. 31.12. This conclusion derives from the literal text (*peshat*) and its editing, not only in the case of Cassuto (1967: 403), but also in the views of critical commentators (e.g. Childs 1984: 541-42).

   39.   See Loewenstamm (1963: 331): 'The prohibition against violating the Sabbath was extremely severe in the view of the Priestly Code. As in the case of one who sacrificed his son to the Molech the sense was that if he was not put to death by man, his punishment would come from God...' This reinforces my interpretation.

In summary, the importance vested in the Sabbath in these passages together with their style and recurring motifs all link them to the H Code and to the argument that they reflect the same school.

2.2.2.2. However, the Sabbath passage in the calendar of the public cult in the P Code is totally different from what is described above. Absent are such expressions as 'Sabbath of complete rest', 'holy' or 'the seventh day', or those attributing the Sabbath to God and prohibiting all work, although there would have been place for at least some of them as there is in some other passages on the sacrifices of the festivals. For example, the fifteenth of Nissan is mentioned as 'a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations' (Num. 28.18). So it is for the other festivals (see also vv. 25, 26; 29.1, 7, 12 and v. 35), while the Sabbath is mentioned only in connection with the additional sacrifice. There is no hint of the prohibition against work or of the day's holiness.

2.2.2.3. In view of the foregoing, one is led to regard the source of the passage on the Sabbath in the festival calendar of the P Code as different from the school of the other writings. While the first does not give the Sabbath special importance, the other author presents the Sabbath and its observance as central to the relationship between God and his people. Besides the thematic facet, style and motifs indicate the links between the first four passages (Exod. 16.16-30; 31.12-17; 35.1-3; Num. 15.32-36) and the Holiness Code. This necessarily leads to acceptance of Knohl's argument that 'Many sections outside the Holiness Code that have hitherto been attributed to P are really part of the writings of the H School'.[40]

Mentions of the Sabbath in the P source outside the calendar of additional sacrifices, then, come from the Holiness school.

2.3. *The Creation Story and the Holiness School*
Now that most texts regarding the Sabbath are seen to belong to the Holiness school, the source of the Sabbath passage in the Creation Story remains to be resolved.

2.3.1. Thematically, the central position of the Sabbath in the Creation Story (§1.2, above) is compatible with its position in the Holiness Code and school. Stylistic emphases and motifs bear this out. The holiness motif is present in Gen. 2.3, and there are expressions that hint to the Sabbath too, such as 'the seventh day', which is repeated three times (Gen. 2.2 [×2], 3), repetitions of the root *š-b-t* ('ceased', Gen. 2.2, 3) and the threefold appearance of expressions made up of the noun *melaka* ('work') and the root *'-s-h* ('to do'): 'He ceased on the seventh day from all the work that He had done' (Gen. 2.2 [×2], 3). Moreover, describing God as completing his

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40.   Knohl 2007: 6.

work and resting imparts an anthropomorphic aspect to Creation, as in Exod. 31.17: 'For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and was refreshed'. The *n-p-š* root accentuates the idea of God's needed rest after completed work.[41]

This leads to the conclusion that Gen. 2.1-3 also originate in H.

2.3.2. Yet the contrary question may be asked too: Why did the two hallmarks of H not find their way into the Sabbath passage in the Creation Story—the name 'Sabbath' and a formulation that emphasized the prohibition of work are absent, which differs from their constant presence throughout the H texts on the Sabbath. This void draws in all commentators from first to last. For example, all commentary on the story as etiological (see §1.1.1 above) assumes cosmological authority for the Sabbath. Cassuto even asserts: 'The verb *š-b-t* also indicates "the Sabbath day"'. In his opinion the author preferred a formulation not specifically directed to Israel but common to all the nations, and so deliberately avoided 'Sabbath', which appears in the Torah only regarding the Sabbath observance commandment given to Israel.[42]

Preference for oblique rather than direct language, avoidance of an explicit mentioning of a recognized subject, and use of variety circuitous means that point towards the same subject all are signs of hidden polemic.[43] Users of hidden polemic prefer oblique rhetoric to direct writing, because it penetrates without arousing the reader's opposition, and the result here is that without the Sabbath and its prohibitions actually being named they are inferred. Instead of the stern language of commandment, *imitatio dei* is assumed. The reader's conclusion would be that even as God rested after six days of work, so should human beings created in his image. As Cassuto writes: 'We must refrain from work thereon so that we may follow the Creator's example and cleave to his ways'.[44]

41.   In Exod. 23.12 *n-w-h* and *n-p-š* appear in parallelism, while in 20.10 only the first appears. The second is found in the context of rest in 2 Sam. 16.14. On the anthropomorphic aspect of the Creation Story and especially in relation to the rest of God, see Weinfeld 1968: 126; see also n. 4, above. By contrast, Sarna (1989: 15) is convinced that the rest idea is secondary.

42.   In Cassuto's view this explains the preference for 'God' over the J form: 'Lord' (Yhwh). See Cassuto 1961: 64. Additional, but less convincing, suggestions include that of Sarna (1989: 14), who declares that this particular text is the basis for the future institution of the Sabbath.

43.   On additional signs of the hidden polemic, see Amit 1990 and 1992. A decade later I published my book, *Hidden Polemics in Biblical Narrative* (Amit 2000), in which I dedicated a chapter to the Sabbath as a seemingly hidden polemic.

44.   Cassuto 1961: 64, and see also p. 68. Compare with Greenberg 1984b. It seems to me that according to the approach of Eliade, which Cassuto uses, the Sabbath should be included in consecrated time.

3. *Why the Special Status of the Sabbath in the Holiness School?*

The special place of the Sabbath in H has been shown above. This reaches its peak through the etiological reworking of the Creation tradition— giving the Sabbath cosmic, universal significance and by placing it at the beginning of the entire Torah. Place and context now serve as an explanatory basis for every subsequent mention of it in Torah literature. The question, then, is whether there is an ideological motive for this in H.

An all-embracing holiness characterizes the Holiness Code and therefore the Holiness school too. Unlike the P Code, they do not limit holiness to rituals and to the Temple precinct. On the contrary, holiness penetrates, spreads and controls all areas of life. The cosmic aspect of the Sabbath in the Creation Story testifies to holiness that can and does spread, in so doing becoming applicable to all who follow the way of God. On the other hand, the demand to be holy proclaims again and again the need to abandon the customs and abominations of the Gentiles. Adopting the divine weekly calendar of holiness determined by successive Sabbaths creates a barrier between sacred subjects and other ones.

One could hardly imagine a more effective means for separation than the Sabbath. Through it individuals in Israel sever themselves from the time frames around them and adhere to another one that can be described as divine time or the calendar of holiness. Life in divine time imposes a new and different rhythm and gives secondary importance to new moons or to the day of full moon, or to other days of assembly connected with the lunar phases.[45] The seven-day cycle creates a path for a life of holiness separate from the existing calendars linked to the heavenly bodies and continues the divine time begun in the week of creation. This unique path does not cancel the new moons or the full moon festivals, but rather gives them second place *vis-à-vis* the basic parallel and independent weekly calendar.

Struggles in which the calendar serves as a means of severance or isolation go back to the days of Jeroboam son of Nebat (1 Kgs 12.32-33),[46] and gain strength among the sects in the Second Temple period:[47]

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45.   Compare with *Enūma eliš* Table V, lines 18-22 (Foster 1993: 379). On the dispute between the assembly date as the day of the full or the darkened moon, see Tur-Sinai 1963. In any case, even if the Sabbath occurred weekly as the ancient sources state (Exod. 23.12; 34.21), one reasonably assumes that, as in *Enūma Eliš*, it followed the waxing and waning of the moon.

46.   See Al-Qirqisani's survey, beginning with the secession of Jeroboam in Nemoy 1930. See also Talmon 1958b.

47.   On the calendar problem and the sectarian calendars, see the general discussion and bibliography in Y.B.Z. Segal 1982, esp. 207-208. According to Al-Qirqisani, the

> No barrier appears to be more substantial and fraught with heavier con-
> sequences than differences in calendar calculation. An alteration of any one
> of the dates that regulate the course of the year inevitably produce a break-
> up of communal life, impairing the coordination between the behavior of
> man and his fellow, and abolishes that synchronization of habits and activi-
> ties which is the foundation of a properly functioning social order.
> Whosoever celebrate his own Sabbath, and does not observe the festivals of
> the year at the same time as the community in which he lives, removes
> himself from his fellows and ceases to be a member of the social body to
> which he hitherto belonged.[48]

It seems, then, that H—looking at society as a whole and not from the angle
of priests sheltered within the Temple precincts with their secret theory
and tradition—was interested in reworking the Creation tradition as a
story that calls to live life in divine time. The advantage of the Holiness
Calendar is that although separate from the solar or lunar calendar or from
a combination of the two, it allows accommodation to all of them.

   P, by contrast, almost ignored the Sabbath as it was practiced in the
First Temple era, as Kaufmann says: 'The "myth" of the Sabbath finds no
reflection in the temple worship (Num. 28.9f.), but only in the peoples
rest'.[49] Kaufmann emphasizes that the priestly practice particular to the
Sabbath in the Temple was limited to the day's additional sacrifice. He
points out the gap between the Temple enclave and people's lives, con-
cluding that the Sabbath of the First Temple era was part of the popular
religion. According to him, the roots of sanctity of the Sabbath lay in an
ancient taboo, mythological and magical, so that violating it brought the
death penalty. It is hard nevertheless to support his approach without
sufficient knowledge of the nature of the Sabbath in the time of the First
Temple. For instance, was it even then connected with Creation? Did
violating it even then involve the death penalty? Was it a weekly or only a
mid-month occurrence?[50] My preferred explanation for the discrepancy

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calendar and festival dates were a point of contention; see Nemoy 1930: 342-44, 362-64.
On a sectarian calendar, see, e.g., Talmon 1958a. That the sect used a solar calendar is
also reflected in, for instance, *Jub.* 6.29-38 and *1 En.* 1.72-82. See also Daniel-Nataf's
description (1976: 196 [=65]) of the therapeutae in the writings of Philo of Alexandria.
The calendar there seems to have stressed a 50-day cycle. Daniel-Nataf's denial (pp. 177
and 196 n. 78] that there is a new festival in the calendar seems questionable. An exam-
ple of a cult calendar dispute is the 'the day after the Sabbath' issue, see n. 34, above.

   48.   Talmon 1985a: 164-63.
   49.   Kaufmann 2003: 305-306.
   50.   In the historiographic and prophetic books that reflect the First Temple period
and mention the Sabbath, there is a strong link between Sabbath and new moon; see
2 Kgs 4.23; Isa. 1.13; Hos. 2.13; Amos 8.5. Nor does mention of the Sabbath in 2 Kgs 11.5,
7, 9; 16.18 indicate that it occurred weekly. See the approach of Tur-Sinai 1963.

between the Temple and the popular Sabbath considers it from two standpoints: the P Code and the H school. While the P Code virtually ignored the Sabbath, because it did not suit the ritual activity of the sanctuary, the H school saw in it an institution that could sanctify all of society.

The contention, then, is that it was the H school that labored to establish the myth of the Sabbath and created the Holiness Calendar, striving to make it a binding way of life. According to Knohl:

> The emphasis on the sanctity of the Sabbath, the severe punishment assigned to its violations, and the discussion of the details of the work prohibition give the Sabbath some of the grave atmosphere of holiness that surrounds the cultic enclosure. According to HS, the Sabbath is a sign of the holiness of Israel (Exod. 31.13), and Israelites who keep the Sabbath are like priests serving in the Temple.[51]

Put otherwise, it was the H school that raised the status of the Sabbath from folk practice to a binding, circumscribing and separating custom.

* * *

An additional question arises: When did H function? The answer would naturally relate to the issue of the composition and editing of the Creation Story. Its resolution is related in my opinion to the perceived need for separation, effected *inter alia* by a separate calendar. The crucial question, then, is: In which historical era was it central and critical for Israel to separate itself from other nations? It would seem to be that of the Babylonian Exile and the Return to Zion, when the people of Israel lived in different centers according to different calendars, without a Temple, and wished to create a sacred domain in surroundings that were impure. This was the 'Sitz im Leben', for the binding Sabbath calendar that would both unify and separate—and even justify the destruction itself. The Holiness Calendar thus emerged from the struggle of the H school, which compiled the literature of the Torah at the beginning of the Second Temple era.[52]

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51.   Knohl 2007: 196. His conclusion shows how problematic it is to attribute the Creation Story to P and the need to reexamine the H imprint on the Torah.

52.   This conclusion disagrees with Knohl (2007: 204-12), who dates the growth of the school to the time of Ahaz-Hezekiah. See also Greenberg (1984a: 171): 'I say only that the Sabbath played an important role in Israelite life before the Babylonian Exile, but it is true that during that time it acquired new significance and importance, different from what it had before. When the Temple was destroyed and its sacred implements lost, when prophesy waned and the religious-political life of the people was restricted, the Sabbath and circumcision became the Jewish community's main means of self-identification, and in exile they attained an importance they did not have before.' See also what he said on the importance of the Sabbath in the writings of the

Moreover, this explains why the prophets of the Exile and of the Return to Zion very strictly define Sabbath observance and declare its desecration a cardinal social sin (Jer. 17.19-27; Ezek. 16.21; 20.12-24; 22.8, 26; 23.3, 8; 44.24; 45.17; 46.4; Isa. 56.2-6; 58.13, 23).[53] In the description of Nehemiah's deeds too the Sabbath is central. In the confessional prayer of the Levites after 'the stock of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners' (Neh. 9.2) no mention is made of specific laws other than the Sabbath: 'You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke to them from Heaven; You gave them right rules and true teachings, good laws and commandments. You made known to them Your holy Sabbath, and You ordained for them laws, commandments and Teaching, through Moses Your servant' (9.13-14). The link between the Sabbath and separation is evident from the terms of the covenant opening with the injunction against mixed marriages and against trading on the Sabbath (10.31-33). These two issues, the Sabbath laws and the struggle against mixed marriage, conclude the book of Nehemiah (13.15-30):

The Sabbath and the Holiness Calendar became a formative force in the history of the Jewish people, as seen, for example, when Hermann Cohen criticizes Kant's description of Judaism in *Religion of Reason: Out of the Sources of Judaism*:

> Even today the scholars dispute—in self-mockery and ignorance—what in the last instance could have effected the continuance of the Jews. They do not want to acknowledge the truth of the unique God as the final reason for it. They prefer to make the law responsible for it. They think that they are at the same time able to despise the latter because of its legalistic formality and lack of inwardness.
>
> However, the Sabbath is the genuine and most intimate representative of the law. And through the Sabbath the law, in accordance with the unique God who loves men, has preserved Judaism as well as the Jews...[54]

This status of the Sabbath and its historical power stems, in my own opinion, from H. This school, which edited the literature of the Torah,

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Exilic prophets in Greenberg 1973. In this context it is important to mention the place of the Sabbath in Ezekiel, associated with H: Ezek. 20.12-13, 19-20; 22.8, 26; 23.38; 44.24. See also Cassuto (1958a: 642) on Ezekiel. On the place of the Sabbath in Manasseh's time and in Ezekiel's prophecies, see also Greenberg 1983: 366-67.

53.   The only external testimony as to Sabbath observance in First Temple times is a late one, in the last quarter of the seventh century BCE, though this is disputed. See the discussion of Ahituv (1973: 96-100) on the reading of the complaint letter from Mesad Hashavyahu. The combination לפני שב[ת] in line 5 is not necessarily a noun phrase.

54.   Hermann Cohen 1972: 158. In the same so familiar spirit and words, Ahad Ha'am (A. Ginzberg 1954: 286), in 'The Sabbath and Zionism', wrote: 'One may say without exaggeration that more than Israel kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath kept them'.

strove to emphasize the Sabbath not only in the context of the wanderings in the wilderness, and not only by enacting a calendar of festivals, but by presenting it as an element of Creation and as a new and consecrated perception of time.

2

THE GARDEN OF EDEN AS UTOPIA

Retrospective Preface

Which of us would not like to live in a better world, a world where a human is not a wolf to his/her fellow human being (*homo homini lupus*) and nations do not make war on one another? It would be a world without violence, where human rights are not trampled, a world that overcomes poverty and where every individual receives appropriate education and all necessary medical care. The list could be longer and readers could work out their priorities for solving social problems and creating their utopian world. But this is not to be dealt with here and now.

  I would instead like to share with you my wonder and admiration for the authors/editors responsible for developing the story of the Garden of Eden, which is the story of their utopian world, built about 2500 years ago. True, the shape of their story broke the literary rules and created a disproportionately long opening (Gen. 2.4b–3.1a),[1] but it brought into the opening new ideas uncharacteristic of the ancient Near East, ideas that in time became the foundation of Western culture. The opening of the Garden in Eden story criticizes the order that existed in the world of its authors and presents the lost alternative. Distancing the gems and the gold from the garden is the opposite case from the wonderful garden, where Giglameh meets the ale-wife Siduri and is exposed to its special jewelry trees.[2] Work is more of a hobby or a means of keeping busy, 'to till it and tend it' (Gen. 2.15), and not an existential condition or for the purposes of serving the gods, and so is not congruent with the purpose behind man's creation in the Babylonian creation story.[3] The concept of a God who is not

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1.   The story ends in Gen. 3.24 with the expulsion of the humans from the garden.

2.   See, e.g., Tablet IX, lines 115-30 (Foster 2001: 70-71): 'He went forward seeing […], the trees of the gods./The carnelian bore its fruit,/Like bunches of grapes dangling, lovely to see,/The lapis bore foliage,/Fruit it bore, a delight to behold,…Its fronds were green chlorite, […] sweet dates,/Coral(?), […], rubies(?),/Instead of thorns and brambles, there were […] of red stone,/…'.

3.   *Enūma eliš*, Tablet VI, lines 7-8 (Foster 1993: 384): 'I shall create humankind, They shall bear the gods' burden that those may rest'.

arbitrary, whose moral considerations are comprehensible, is the basis for an attempt to establish a morality-centered world, where death is a punishment for sin and not pre-ordained. What we have then in the biblical story of the Garden in Eden is an innovative perception of man's place in the world and *vis-à-vis* his God, together with a humanistic perception fully aware of man's weaknesses and virtues and unafraid to describe them.

The Garden of Eden story is therefore an important attempt to penetrate the complex nature of humanity. It concentrates on the ills of human society, on the need to confront materialist values, hedonism and the view that work as such is of supreme importance. The story describes the human tendency to disobey the law, the unbearable ease of temptation and the natural tendency to shirk responsibility. Depicting man not as a *tabula rasa* but rather that 'the devisings of man's mind are evil from his youth' (Gen. 8.21) indicates shrewd and realistic observation of humankind. Furthermore, the first event in the Torah after the expulsion from Eden is a murder, and a murder in the family to boot. Man is thus a dichotomous creature. On one hand he is 'a little less than divine...you have made him master over your handiwork' (Ps. 8.6-7). On the other hand, his uncontrollable drives are recognized, as are the need to watch over him, to limit him, to educate him, to refine him and to make him more moderate.

No wonder, then, that biblical literature gives so central a place to the law and the leadership that is to enforce it, as a means of creating a better person and a better society in a dystopian world.

From the time the Garden of Eden story was written to the present day, Israelite and later Jewish societies have continued to develop ideas centered on the attempt to control the life cycle and to create a better society. It seems to me that this is the only way to understand the utopian and unenforceable Law of the Jubilee in Leviticus 25. This law's purpose is to spin the wheel of life backward once in 50 years, to stop the ownership race and to oblige all individuals to return land they had purchased to their original owners so that every man in Israel (apparently at the time of conquering the land, despite the known doubts even about that) would own land and could start a new life. That was not a realistic law and we have no record that it was applied. Yet, its existence indicates a social ideology concerned with the fate of every individual, an ideology that perceives that the land belongs to God (Lev. 25.23), one that tries to prevent the concentration of capital in the hands of the few. It is only natural for those who grew up on such ideas to display social sensitivity. Perhaps it is for this reason that we often find Jewish revolutionaries in the course of history, and perhaps it is this reason that we find communities in contemporary Israel such as the *kibbutz* or the *collective moshav*, where,

despite all difficulties, ongoing efforts are being made to preserve their unique identity and adapt it to the Third Millennium. And so, even though we were driven out of Eden, we continue to think of what the original state warns of and what life directions it offers.

The transition from the Garden of Eden story to what is relevant and current led some of my research colleagues to remark: a fine homily, but just a homily. Nonetheless I am convinced that my approach to the Eden story is the plain meaning, the *peshat*. It is for you, the readers, to decide.

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Biblical Utopianism

This study examines the possibility that the Garden of Eden described in Genesis 2 reflects elements of the literary genre of utopianism and purposely constructs a world that contrasts with the actual one, in which the biblical author and his readers lived. Biblical utopianism, especially as reflected in the prophetic literature, is a subject to be explored, and may lead to a much larger scholarly discussion that might bear interesting fruit.

1. *Genesis 2.4b–3.1a as Exposition*

The Garden of Eden story may be divided into two parts: Gen. 2.4b–3.1a, with its detailed description of the garden and its dwellers, and Gen. 3.1b-24, in which the action of the story—the fall of Adam and Eve—takes place.[4] How does the story of the sin / transgression of human beings relate to the earlier idyllic description?

The story of the sin is preceded by a detailed description of the state of the world even before the creation of human beings and certainly before they sinned. Along with the description of the creation of man, animals, woman, and the naming of the animals, there are specific details about the nature of the garden: the river that passes through it, branching into four streams, and the two trees found in the garden. A question thus arises: What is the thematic connection between this detailed description and the story of the sin that follows it?

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4.   Many scholars consider that the story of the sin/transgression/disobedience in Eden begins in Gen. 2.25. See, e.g., Gunkel 1997: 14-15; Speiser 1964: 14-28; Westermann 1984: 318-21. According to this approach, which I accept, Gen. 2.25 + 3.1a is the immediate exposition of the expulsion story and it presents its characters: the man, the woman, and the serpent.

The question may seem superfluous since there is a distinct connection of plot and theme between the two parts. For example, the planting of the garden described in the first part is the scene of the action in the second part. The characters whose creation is described in the first part—the man, the woman, and the snake (one of the animals)—are the protagonists of the second part. The proscription placed upon the man in the first part is the sin/transgression that the humans commit and for which they are punished in the second part. This close connection has caused exegetes to regard the first part as a kind of introduction or background to the second.[5] This opinion is also reflected in the analysis of scholars who understand 2.4b as the beginning of the second story of creation (J). According to this approach, the second story, which may have been an independent narrative, at some point lost its independence, was re-edited and now in its present placement serves as an introduction to the story of the first human sin and its punishment.

This hypothesis, accepted today by most scholars, where Gen. 2.4b–3.1a is a kind of preparation for Gen. 3.1b-24, focuses the reader's attention on the issue of proportion. If Genesis 2 is an exposition or prologue, why did the narrator not adapt and summarize the data and present them in an appropriately condensed form as background for the action in Genesis 3? Why does the introduction include an assemblage of details and elaborations that all together occupy almost the same amount of space and narrative time as the main story in Genesis 3? Moreover, it can be argued that eliminating some details would not detract from understanding of the story. For instance, if the readers did not know of the river dividing into four streams or was not aware of the course of two of its branches, would they not understand the story of the sin? Would readers understand less if they did not know that the man named the animals? In other words, the readers are faced with a confusing question: Why does the exposition contain information not needed for the understanding of the story and unnecessary for its exposition?

Another instance of biblical exposition may shed light on this issue. The regular method employed in the Bible to present expository details is stringently selective and concise, a description, whose every detail is germane to the story. In 1 Sam. 28.3-6, for example, each expository detail helps the reader understand the development of the story about Saul and the necromancer at En-Dor (1 Sam. 28.3-25). The narrator repeats the news of Samuel's death, already announced in 1 Sam. 25.1, since Samuel is going to be the object of the story; it is he who will be called up from the underworld. The narrator recounts the banishment of the necromancers from

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5.   See, e.g., Skinner 1930: 51-52; Cassuto 1961: 71-73; and many others.

the land, since the story will revolve around a medium. He also reports on the deployment of the armies, the personal circumstances of Saul, and the lapse in communication between him and God, all to elucidate the measures Saul will adopt. All these details serve the reader's understanding of Saul's predicament as he goes disguised to consult the medium and entreats her to conjure up the dead Samuel for him.

By contrast, in the Genesis story under consideration, the exposition (2.4b–3.1a [26 verses]) is even longer than the story itself (3.1b-24 [23.5 verses]) and includes details the story does not even hint at, details that make no contributions to its development. Why, then, was it thought appropriate to include them? I believe the solution to the conundrum of accumulation and elaboration is to be found in the relationship between the story and what precedes it, not only as the connection between story and its exposition, but also as a thematic confrontation involving the issue of utopianism.

2. *What Makes the Exposition a Description of Utopia*

The extensive elaborations in the exposition of the Garden of Eden story describe and characterize a good world, as well as the forces that represent evil and whose absence must be emphasized in a world that is only good. I suggest that concern with these questions, which is the will to construct the conception of the perfect world, is what expanded the opening description and created an introduction that is not solely expository and whose function is not only to provide background material. The elaborations concerning the river and the direction of the flow of two of its branches (2.10-14), man's toil in the garden (2.15) and man's naming of the animals (2.19b-20a) are a collateral discussion of what makes the Garden of Eden exclusively good, utopian. What is the basis of evil in the reality outside the garden? Finally, what are the characteristics of biblical utopia?

First, one must define utopia. The term was used originally by Sir Thomas More in *De Optimo Reipublicae Statu dequi nova Insula Utopia Libellus* (1516), which explored a new organization of society, where citizens should enjoy tranquility and harmony. He located this ideal place on a nonexistent island. The word *utopia* itself means 'no place', from the Greek *topos*, 'place', and which does *u/ou*, 'not', exist.[6] The common denominator of utopian writings is their severe critique of the existing social order and, sometimes, the hierarchical treatment of its most negative and most positive attributes. The writer who describes utopia expresses an opinion

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6. Following Thomas More's book a literary genre of utopian writings emerged, including Tommasino Campanella's *The City of the Sun* (1981) and Francis Bacon's *Nova Atlantis* (1974).

about what needs to be purged from society at all costs and toward what goals society should aspire, so that a utopian work is radically critical or deprecating of the existing order. It yearns for the redemption of human civilization in its dream of ideal conditions that are impractical and even impossible by their very nature. Thomas More, for example, sees the root of evil in private property. To highlight the evil of his own society and the economics of his own world, he creates an imaginary island where cooperation and equality prevail. He believes that education and environment can change human beings into good creatures. Most sharply he criticizes the practice of slavery and war and dreams of integrity in human relationships.

While More coined the term utopia, elements of this literary genre were in evidence much earlier. They are found in Plato's *Politeia* (*The Republic*), which also describes sociopolitical perfection. Plato sketches a state whose government is in the hands of philosophers. There the decisive influence will not be either the masses or the aristocrats whose status comes from their origins or their wealth, but rather the state will be ruled by a spiritual aristocracy. Plato's state, as Jaeger maintains, is a perfect place in which it is possible to mold the perfect man.[7]

Genesis 2 proves, in my opinion, that biblical literature also deals with the concept of utopianism, that is, with the outline of ideal conditions for human existence.[8] Like More, the biblical story does not believe its utopia actually exists. Thus the author of the introduction to the Garden of Eden story emphasizes both its lost location through the fictional geography of its rivers, and also the impossibility of returning to it: 'So he drove the man out, and stationed at the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the fiery ever-turning sword, to guard the way to the tree of life' (3.24).

The emphasis that the Garden of Eden is located beside a river that forks into four streams (the Euphrates, the Tigris, the spring Gihon near Jerusalem and the unidentified Pishon), whose names might be familiar to the reader but not their common origin (2.10-14), was intended to affirm that the situation then differed from the one known to the reader, and that for the reader this geography is actually imaginary and the Garden of Eden is nowhere to be found although it is connected to some familiar rivers. As Cassuto argued:

> On the basis of the various identifications of Pishon and Gihon that have been suggested, numerous attempts have been made to ascertain the site of the Garden of Eden according to Scripture. Many hypotheses have been put forward and a number of different opinions have been expressed. But in the

7.   Jaeger 1944: 353-54.
8.   A question beyond the scope of the present study is the utopian nature of the prophets' visions of the end of days.

light of our exposition all these theorizings are valueless. Our text, as stated, describes a state of affairs that no longer exists, and it is impossible to determine the details on the premiss of present-day geographical data. The Garden of Eden according to the Torah was not situated in our world.[9]

That it is not possible to identify the location of the garden accentuates the fact of its non-being, of its *u-topia*. The reader understands the nature of the biblical utopia from additional attributes of the garden described in the introduction. By means of these attributes, the author articulates a scale of negative and positive values for the reader. The negative values are gold and precious stones (2.11-12), struggle for power or domination (2.19b-20a), and sexual lust (2.25). In the garden's perfect conditions, acquisition of property or other material values had no place. The author criticizes the idea of property by his description of the rivers' course, emphasizing that gold, bdellium, and onyx were not to be found inside the garden. The place of such material values was outside the garden, in the land of Havilah (Saudi Arabia?).

Within the Garden of Eden, there was no struggle for power or domination, because the human being was created as the single-sovereign ruler, and all other creatures were created for his sake, but since 'it is not good for man to be alone. I will make a companion'. We also learn of the human creature's power since he is the one who names the others. Naming in the ancient world expressed superiority, sovereignty and power (see Num. 32.38; 2 Kgs 23.24; 24.17; 2 Chron. 36.4). God also appears as a giver of names (Gen. 1.5, 8, 10). Equating human power to assign names to that of God, performing the same function, emphasizes human authority over the other creatures.

In the life within the garden there is no place for sexual tension. Man and woman walk about 'naked…and are not ashamed'. Christian exegetes, traditional Jewish exegetes like Ibn Ezra, and modern scholars including Ehrlich, Kahana, Gunkel, and Speiser think that knowledge of good and evil refers to sexual knowledge, or, in other words, carnal lust.[10] In the garden, there was no knowledge of good and evil; such knowledge was the result of disobeying the laws of the garden. And, indeed, the first reaction of Adam and Eve to eating the fruit of the forbidden tree was to perceive their nakedness. Their enlightenment is nothing but the loss of innocence and the intrusion of the element of shame, so they cover themselves with leaves. That comprehension of good and evil is a sign of maturity we learn from other biblical writings too (Deut. 1.39; 2 Sam. 19.36; Isa 7.15-16). The lack of discrimination between good and evil characterizes children and the aged. As Ehrlich notes, 'From this it will be seen that the small boy and

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9.   Cassuto 1961: 118; see also Cassuto 1954a: 536; Skinner 1930: 62-66.
10.   Ehrlich 1969a: 7; Kahana 1969: 14; Gunkel 1997: 18; Speiser 1964: 26-28.

the very old man both lack this knowledge. Undoubtedly the same holds true for the very small girl and old woman. The wise man will understand that the knowledge of good and evil is the knowledge of all things, as ibn Ezra has written'.[11] Scholars have noted since medieval times that sexual knowledge is the basis of maturity and of all knowledge.

We can conclude, therefore, that within the boundaries of the good, innocent life of Eden, there were no power struggles in connection with material values, government, or sexual lust. Those elements which drive and move our world to this day, were not present there.

On the other hand, the positive values of life in the garden are work (2.15), obedience to God's command, which is law (2.16-17), and life with no perpetual threat of death.

Even in the garden, the human creature was required to till and tend the earth (2.15b). The work in the garden was not hard and exhausting work and the ground was not cursed for the human being (3.17-19). The idea is to be busy and occupied with positive duties, to tend.

The obedience to the law of God is the focus of life even in the garden. Human beings have to obey the commandment of God, which in this case is not to touch the tree in the midst of the garden. The ideal life is not anarchy or disorder, but life organized in the light of divine demands.

Indirectly we understand that the garden was free of pain of death too. The forbidden tree was the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and man was allowed to eat 'of every tree of the garden' (Gen. 2.16-17), which means that he was free to eat from the tree of life and live forever. Actually, the purpose of the expulsion was to prevent him from reaching the tree of life, from becoming even more similar to the divine beings.

The story tells us that eating of the tree of knowledge exposed the human being to control by cravings and urges and precipitated his departure from the protected world of the garden, from utopia, into a world governed by struggles for power, and dominated by pursuit of satisfaction for the appetites. The utopia of Eden was taken from human beings for all time, and through the descriptive details in the introduction to the story of sin, the reader is alerted to the most destructive forces—gold (= money), the power struggle and sexual lust—against which humans must be on their guard. According to our story, being aware of the destructive nature of these forces that were absent in the garden, along with the devotion to work, the absence of the fear of death and obedience to God's command demanded even in the biblical utopia, could improve and balance the life of the human being who has eaten the forbidden fruit and is forever barred from the garden.

11.   Ehrlich 1969a: 7; also Ibn Ezra on Gen. 3.6.

Such an astute approach, recorded as early as the first half of the first millennium BCE, is absorbing and exciting in itself, and hints at the extent to which biblical teachings may be relevant for modern readers. Whether the relevance has been forced upon the biblical text as a kind of modern homiletic midrash or whether it springs naturally from within the narrative itself can be answered by considering the question posed at the beginning of the chapter: Why is there a lack of proportion between the length of the introductory exposition and that of the story itself? Examination of the additional details has shown that the author of the narrative unit 2.4b–3.1a was not content merely to present the background material required for developing the plot of the story of transgression and punishment. He used the expository stage specifically to reiterate the utopian character of the Garden of Eden. It served both as a vigorous protest against the narrative forces to which humanity was exposed from the moment the fruit had been eaten and humans were banished from the biblical utopia, and also as a recommendation for positive values that humanity had been obliged to observe even under the utopian conditions of that never-known garden.

3

Why Were They Barren?

Retrospective Preface

Sometimes the questions our Sages raise are more interesting than the answers they give. The Midrashic question—'And why were the mothers barren?'—indicates first of all their literary sensitivity. As for the answers, there is a didactic aspect—'so they would pray to God'—and a chauvinistic aspect: 'so their husbands may enjoy them', I find both disappointing. But the question itself reveals the theme of barrenness in the biblical world, a theme that interests me as well. Following the Sages, I continued to ask why, in addition to the Matriarchs, only three other women are said to have been barren: the mother of Samson, Hannah mother of the prophet Samuel, and the Shunammite. On the other hand, what 'right' have women who gave birth to five and six children (Leah and Hannah) to be called barren? My answer is in the chapter that follows, but the subject of barrenness, and motherhood as representing strength and empowerment, fascinates even today.

Actually, every woman in the Bible, not only the mothers of the nation, was potentially barren, or barren for a time that could include the interval between one pregnancy and the next. The biblical perception was that the ability to conceive and give birth did not depend on physiological or psychological factors, but on God's will.

The monotheistic God controlled fertility. At least from the literary and ideological standpoint, this could deprive men of their virility and show them the limitations of their role in continuing the human race. This new reality emphasizes the link between the woman and God, one in which the man is merely a supporting actor. The desire to internalize God's all-inclusiveness led to a prolonged struggle with other celestial entities, including fertility goddesses, so that the tendency to suppress and do away with them grew ever stronger. The closer tie between the woman and God appears to have been a compensation for the growing distance from the world of past beliefs, and thus she was presented as God's partner in the work of creation. When Eve said 'I have created a man with the help of the Lord' (Gen. 4.1), it reflected a deep understanding of her significance in bringing forth the next generation. Quite likely this created fear and

anxiety or even hostility in the male world, the result of which could have been the day-to-day suppression of women on every level, and the realization of God's harsh words at the expulsion from Eden: 'I will make very severe your pains in childbearing; in pain shall you bear children. Yet your urge shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you.' One must bear in mind that this etiological statement was just one part of the hard lives of women: it does not relate to the unbearably high proportion of women who died at some stage of pregnancy and childbirth, a problem successfully confronted in the modern world.

Indeed, the modern Western world made it easier for women to deal with fear of barrenness, whether through fertility treatment or through a new understanding of motherhood as not necessarily the only choice. Today a woman may legitimately devote herself to professional advancement and forego motherhood. It is legitimate too for a man to be a full partner in every stage of rearing the children, single-sex families are also legitimate, as is using a surrogate, and there are other options too. But do modern innovations return the woman to Eden? I don't think so.

While woman's position in the Western world is improving and her dependence on the man in many instances is a matter of choice, this new reality brings us back to the inborn differences between the sexes. There are, for example, the generally greater physical strength of the man, and new evolutionary developments that create greater emotional capacities in both men and women. So it occurs that in a world where the problem of barren women is to a great extent solved, the problem of male impotence is on the increase, as is the issue of wife beaters and of those quick to kill. It even occurs to me that were the Torah to be written today, life after Eden would begin not with the fratricidal story of Cain and Abel, but with Adam deciding to kill his wife Eve. But rest easy as to how the human race would have continued: just as a wife was found for Cain, so a second wife would have been found for Adam. Whether she would have been a helpmeet for him or against him (Hebrew, *ezer kenegdo*, can indeed be understood in this way)—I leave the matter to the commentators and to the individual experience.

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Why Were the Matriarchs Barren?

1. *The Curse of Barrenness*

While the Bible recognizes sterility in both sexes, the one allusion to it in the male is in Deut. 7.14: 'You shall be blessed above all other peoples:

there shall be no sterile male or female among you or among your live-stock'. There is, however, no instance of male sterility in biblical literature, nor any metaphoric use of such a condition. All this creates the mistaken impression that sterility exists only in the woman's domain. This seems to reflect the ancient world's attitude toward sterility as an essentially female defect, or one for which women may *a priori* be held responsible. Deciding whether a man was sterile was a longer, more complicated process, and did not necessarily have a crucial effect on his social and economic status. But barren women were in an entirely different predicament: apart from their emotional injury, they suffered economically and socially as well. Small wonder, then, that they are portrayed as miserable individuals who need to be rescued.

In ancient Israel, as in other patriarchal societies, a woman's main function was to bear and rear children, for numerous offspring were a means to survive in a fierce struggle for existence. Thus the first blessing that God bestowed on humankind after he created male and female was: 'Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it' (Gen. 1.28). Where fertility is so cardinal a blessing, sterility is perceived as a curse and a barren woman as one accursed.

The blessing God grants his people for distancing themselves from Canaanite customs and keeping his commandments is to remove every instance of barrenness, as written at the end of the Book of the Covenant: 'No woman in your land shall miscarry or be barren' (Exod. 23.26). The phrase 'in your land' extends the blessing to the cattle, as we also see in Deuteronomy: 'there shall be no sterile male or female among you or among your livestock' (7.14).

The curse of barrenness had a realistic and pragmatic aspect above and beyond the emotional needs of the female ego. Barrenness determined the inferior status of the woman in the family and in society. The woman who bore no children not only failed to carry out her family role, she also had no economic security. If her husband died and she was left with no children, she was at the mercy of his brothers or of the sons of her rival, the fertile wife. She might even have to return to her father's house, in which case she would cease to belong to her husband's household and once again become dependent on her father's house, which she had left years before. Only a levirate marriage with her husband's brother could alter her situation, but if she remained a widow, she was totally dependent on her surroundings, and biblical law repeats again and again the difficult situation of widows (Exod. 22.21; Deut. 10.18; 24.19-21, and elsewhere).

In this reality, for a barren woman death was considered preferable to life, as resounds from Rachel's plea to Jacob: 'Give me children, or I shall die' (Gen. 30.1). After giving birth to Joseph and on explaining his name, she says, 'God has taken away my disgrace' (30.23), indicating the shame

that lay in the absence of sons. The barren woman is described as heavy-hearted, grieving for the children she lacks. Of Hannah it is said in 1 Sam. 1.10: 'In her wretchedness, she prayed to the Lord, weeping all the while'. Subsequently she describes herself as 'a very unhappy woman' who can only pour out her heart before God in her misery and anger (1 Sam. 1.15). Her thanksgiving prayer reflects the happiness of motherhood and the contrary situation of being barren: 'While the barren woman bears seven, the mother of many is forlorn' (1 Sam. 2.5).

Barrenness appears as well as a metaphor for defeated Jerusalem. When the prophet says: 'Shout, O barren one, you who bore no child!' (Isa. 54.1), he describes the city as grieving and desolate, sparsely populated and yearning for better times. No longer will there be barrenness, but rather children; no longer shame and disgrace, but instead joy and gladness.

The barren woman suffered not only because of social attitudes, but also in the daily routines of family life. Polygamy was common in a society striving for numerous offspring, exposing the childless woman to ongoing disrespect at home, as seen in the relations between Hannah and Peninnah in 1 Sam. 1.6: 'her rival, to make her miserable, would taunt her that the Lord had closed her womb'. The case of Hannah, barren and nonetheless the beloved wife, was exceptional, so the narrator stresses: 'but to Hannah he would give one portion only—though Hannah was his favorite—for the Lord had closed her womb' (1 Sam. 1.5).

2. *Barren Women in the Bible*

Who are the women whose barrenness biblical literature seeks to emphasize?

In the Bible only four barren women are specifically mentioned. Three are the Matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, and Rachel, and the fourth the wife of Manoah, mother of Samson, last of the Judges.

Sarah's plight was noted even while she was still in Ur of the Chaldeans and Haran: 'Now Sarai was barren, she had no child' (Gen. 11.30), where the author sets the stage for future complication. Abram, designated to be the father of the nation, is married to a sterile woman who cannot give birth. Arriving in Canaan not only did not change the situation for her and for Abram, but it highlighted the contradiction between the promise to make of Abram 'a great nation' and the barren reality so keenly voiced and expressed the feeling of disappointment in the covenant among the sacrifices in Gen. 15.2-3: 'I shall die childless…my steward will be my heir'.

In that predicament and after a long period in which Sarah failed to bear Abraham a son, she offers him her handmaid Hagar. Isaac was born when Ishmael was at least 14, indicating that Sarah was barren for many long years.

How long Rebecca's barrenness continued is not clear, but it impels Isaac to entreat God: 'Isaac pleaded with the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord responded to his plea, and his wife Rebekah conceived' (25.21). This brief description does not suggest suffering or anxiety on her part.

Rachel's barrenness is contrasted with the situation of her unloved sister Leah, who bore four sons one after the other: 'The Lord saw that Leah was unloved and he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren' (29.31).

Samson's mother too is specifically designated as barren: 'There was a certain man from Zorah, of the stock of Dan, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren and had borne no children' (Judg. 13.2). The angel of God who comes to announce the birth of her son even stresses the point: 'An angel of the lord appeared to the woman and said to her, you are barren and have borne no children; but you shall conceive and bear a son' (13.3).

These four women, then, are mentioned explicitly as barren, but there are others in the Bible. While Hannah, mother of the prophet Samuel is not defined as barren, the reader has no doubt that she is, whether because of the narrative centered around the vow in return for a son, or because of the contrast with Peninnah, mother of many children, or because of alternative descriptions of her condition: 'Hannah was childless' (1 Sam. 1.2) and 'the Lord had closed her womb' (1.5).

Another figure not designated as barren but to whom barrenness may be attributed is the Shunammite. Thus Gihazi describes her to his master, the prophet Elisha: 'The fact is...she has no son, and her husband is old' (2 Kgs 4.14). It is doubtful whether referring to the man's advanced age gives him sole responsibility for the lack of offspring. Possibly it voices doubt as to whether he will live much longer. In the case of Abraham and of Sarah, too, their advanced age is noted. However, here it is added to her barrenness and thus augments the impossibility of having children: 'Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years; Sarah had stopped having the periods of women... Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment— with my husband so old?... Is anything too wondrous for the Lord? I will return to you at the same season next year, and Sarah shall have a son' (Gen. 18.11-14). While in the case of the Shunammite the arguments are not unequivocal, as in the case of Sarah, many commentators describe the Shunammite as barren and the announcement of the man of God as a typical story of announcing conception, like those about the angels visiting Abraham and Sarah, the angelic messenger to Manoah's wife, and the story of Hannah.

In the Midrash there is a specific reference to another barren woman—Leah. So states *Pesikta de-Rav Kahana*: 'There are seven childless women: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, the wife of Manoah and Hannah and Zion'.[1] The Midrash regarding Leah is based on the verse: '"The Lord saw that Leah was unloved and he opened her womb" [Gen. 29.31]. On the basis of that statement we learn that Leah had been barren...' The approach that regards Leah as barren like the other three Matriarchs appears also in *Midrash Tanhuma*: 'Four barren women conceived on the Rosh Hashanah [New Year]: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah'.[2]

In the life stories of the nation's mothers one senses a tendency to present them all as barren, even if only at an intermediate or transitional period. Leah bore Jacob four sons one after another as compensation for being the unloved wife (Gen. 29.31). It may be inferred, then, that God closed her womb and she was barren, and only because she was unloved did he open her womb. This interpretation teaches us that any woman is potentially barren till the moment God decides to open her womb; or in other words, any woman who did not conceive on her wedding night is considered barren. Moreover, one reads: 'When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as concubine' (Gen. 30.9) Leah was acting as if she were barren, just as the barren Sarah gave her handmaid Hagar to Abraham, and as her own barren sister Rachel gave Jacob her handmaid Bilhah, who bore him two sons: Dan and Naphtali. Similarly, when Leah stopped bearing children for a while, she gave Jacob her handmaid Zilpah, who then bore him Gad and Asher. Leah's behavior shows that she regarded herself as barren at the time.

Leah's story reflects a strange situation in which not to conceive and not being pregnant between one birth and the next is to be barren. Indeed, this is how the Sages saw it when they included Leah among the barren Matriarchs. Their view, according to which Leah is also barren, is therefore congruent with the spirit of the biblical story that depicts her in language and motifs linked to that condition. At the same time, the narrator refrains from explicitly describing her as barren, which indicates ambivalence as to whether Leah typifies barrenness in any realistic sense.

This scrutiny of barrenness as shown in the stories of the four Matriarchs when it is doubtful whether in real life all would be so regarded, indicates the narrator's poetic preference for presenting all of them to a greater or lesser extent as barren.

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1. Neusner 1987: 63-64 [XX:I].
2. Berman 1996: 139 (*Parashat Va-yera* 17 [Gen. 21.1]).

3. *Annunciation of Conception and Birth*

The biblical stories of barrenness are the background for divine intervention, whether directly or through God's emissaries, as described by the narrator or by the protagonist. The most concrete form of intervention, by God or his angel, includes a story of announcing a birth soon to come.

Sarah tells Abraham: 'Look, the Lord has kept me from bearing' (Gen. 16.2). She knows her sterility depends on God's will. Besides, giving birth becomes even more impossible as she stresses that she and her husband are old. Abraham accentuates this, asking himself: 'Can a child be born to a man a hundred years old, or can Sarah bear a child at ninety?' (17.17). The narrator also comments: 'Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years; Sarah had stopped having the periods of women' (18.11). Naturally, Sarah has doubts: 'Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment—with my husband so old?' (18.12). And God responds: 'Is anything too wondrous for the Lord? I will return to you at the same season next year, and Sarah shall have a son' (18.14). The literal text says that these are the words of God, who is in fact one of the three persons who came to try Abraham and to announce the birth of his son: the others turn out to be angels.

The appearance of angels, who look like men, or God himself as an angel, is a recurring motif in stories announcing a birth or a divine calling. In Sarah's case God himself announces the birth to Abraham; in Hannah's, God is replaced by his representative, the high priest, and with the Shunammite by Elisha the Prophet, called 'the man of God' or 'a holy man of God' (2 Kgs 4.9, 21 and more).

The common factor in these stories is the unexpected element that breaks through what seems like an inevitable reality. Therefore, these are stories of miracles designed to stress direct divine intervention, or intervention through heavenly or earthly messengers that change the natural course of events.

When the event came to pass, and Sarah conceived and bore a son, the narrator highlights God's intervention through parallelism and repetition: 'The Lord took note of Sarah as He had promised, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken (Gen. 21.1).

The barrenness motif and its link with the divinity are woven into all the stories about Sarah and is intrinsic to the formulation of her life as the mother of the nation. Her sterility and the miracle of her becoming the first in the series of barren matriarchs are emphasized by the narrator, the characters, the story of the birth, and the added motif of the aged father. Taken together, all these means reveal how eager the narrator was to link the barren state with divine providence.

The detail and repetitions in Sarah's case have implications for the instances of barrenness that follow. Comparisons reveal a much reduced narrative regarding the other matriarchs. Rebecca does not even suffer from her barrenness, and after Isaac's brief entreaty she is blessed with twins. God's intervention in this case comes about in his answer to prayer.

Rachel's barrenness is not discussed so much for itself as for a background to the birth of Jacob's first ten children, the sons of Leah and the two handmaids. Divine intervention here is manipulative, compensating the unloved wife and punishing the beloved one. Jacob's reply to Rachel's jealous outburst heightens further that only God has the power to grant or to withhold offspring: 'Can I take the place of God, who has denied you fruit of the womb?' (Gen. 30.2). As for Leah, we have already seen how far her barrenness was far from incontrovertible.

One finds barrenness in Sarah, then, a central and dominant motif. With the other matriarchs, by contrast, it has a limited narrative development (Rebecca), or it becomes a manipulative means to show God's role in the act of birth.

4. *Fertility and the Elect*

The Bible's uncompromising monotheistic message of one God made it necessary for its authors to supply answers to different subjects, which were under the domain of the entire pagan pantheon and which were the functions of different gods. One important and central concern was fertility.

Conception was a mystery in ancient times, for the details of the process were not and could not be known and understood. This, together with the survival instinct that made numerous children an imperative, caused people everywhere to regard the powers above as responsible for and involved in their survival. While in polytheistic society fertility, including that of the earth and the animal world, was the province of several gods and goddesses, in a monotheistic culture all this was under the aegis of the one God. No longer were the earth, the animal and woman responsible for fertility. God alone could cause a woman to bring children into the world. The first recognition of this comes in Gen. 4.1 in the midrashic pun of Cain's name, when Eve declares: 'I have gained a male child with the help of the Lord'. She knows that Cain's birth came about thanks to the divine creative force. The miracle of creation is thus linked to divine intervention. In other words, intercourse with a man is not enough to cause a woman to conceive: divine involvement is required. God alone is responsible for the fertility of the animal and plant world. As the prophet states: 'And she did not consider this: it was I who bestowed on her the new grain and wine and oil' (Hos. 2.10). The male in these descriptions is deprived of

his central role in all that regards fertility, while the link between God and the woman is strengthened. The example of Manoah following after his wife suffices to show how marginal the male role is in birth narratives.

It follows that God has power over pregnancies not only among the people who are to be called Israel, Abraham and his descendants, but universally, as part of his cosmic nature as the one universal God. Abimelech king of Gerar is punished for taking Sarah, Abraham's wife, and only after he returned her to Abraham, 'Abraham then prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his slave girls, so that they bore children; for the Lord had closed fast every womb of the household of Abimelech because of Sarah, the wife of Abraham' (Gen. 20.17-18).

Human fertility, then, like fertility in general, is controlled by the God of Israel. Every pregnancy and every birth is according to God's will, as stated in the instance of Hannah: 'Elkanah knew his wife Hannah and the Lord remembered her. Hannah conceived, and at the turn of the year bore a son' (1 Sam. 1.19-20). Intimate knowledge that ends in birth occurs because God remembered and willed it. Not every birth came as a surprise, for God intervened as a matter of course. It surprised only in the case of the barren.

Not every biblical figure nor indeed every hero merits a birth narrative, or a mention of divine intervention in his birth, because his mother had been barren. To present any female figure as barren and the subject of divine intervention is to call attention to the hand of God in wondrous events that the reader will perceive as unique.

It follows that the use of the barrenness motif is a bridge between regarding every birth as an expression of divine might controlling fertility *vis-à-vis* the need to highlight God's intervention in selected instances. Therefore, in those instances both the mother and those around her are depicted as not expecting her to give birth. Then God intervenes, the totally unexpected occurs, and the event is seen and interpreted as a miracle. Biblical literature contains very few narratives of women described as barren followed by an account of their subsequent childbirth, or of an explicit divine intervention on their behalf. This hints that there is a system and purpose in choosing the barren women. When, then, did the biblical author elect to use that possibility?

The possibility of selectively using the motif of barrenness leads one to note that of the seven instances in the entire Bible, four are at the beginning of Israelite history, in Patriarchal times. And again we ask: Why are all four mothers to one degree or another depicted as barren?

Genesis Rabbah first raises the question, 'And why were the matriarchs barren?' (45.5).[3] The Midrash offers several answers.

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3. For the quotations from *Genesis Rabbah*, see Neusner 1985a: 148-49.

The first is that 'the Holy One, blessed be He, lusts after their prayer and mediation'. This cruelly didactic reasoning is further supported by *Tanhuma*: 'The Holy One, blessed be He, stated: They are wealthy and beautiful, and if I should also grant them sons they will not pray to me'.[4]

The second response in *Genesis Rabbah* reflects national concerns. Rabi Hunah in the name of Rabi Hiyya bar Abba believes that the role of barrenness was to diminish the slavery of Egypt, 'It was so that they might live out the greater part of their years without the subjugation [of child-raising]'.

The third, linking sterility to esthetics, smacks of male chauvinism: 'It was so that their husbands should have pleasure with them. For so long as a woman receives pregnancies, she loses her looks and lacks grace. For all of those ninety years before Sarah had a child, she was as beautiful as a bride in her marriage-canopy.'

The very fact that the question was asked shows to what extent the barren woman motif was an option deliberately taken, and points to the reasons why it was in use. The answers reflect the world of the Sages, often a very chauvinist one.

Weinfeld states that sterility was one of the obstacles on the way to realizing God's promise to grant his people offspring and a land:

> The stories of the Patriarchs are a long chain of difficulties along the road to the emergence of a chosen people. Sarah, who has to bring Abraham's seed to life, is barren, as are Rebecca the wife of Isaac and Rachel wife of Jacob. And as if that were not enough, when the long-desired sons were born, dangers awaited them... The obstacles were overcome in what appears as the usual human way, but behind the scenes the hand of God guides events toward their exalted purpose.[5]

According to Weinfeld, sterility was just one among many other obstacles. But, as it seems to me, one has to ask why select that particular one, barrenness. I think that the intensive use of this motif shows how much the writer wanted to show God's role and direct involvement in the shaping of Israel's early years as a people. Showing the Matriarchs as barren women indicated that the God of Israel who controls fertility was directly involved in Israel's emergence and that he was not acting from behind the scenes.

Biblical literature, the voice of a monotheistic faith, chose a limited number of barren women to show the affinity to God in special times and events. Therefore those authors chose to concentrate on the barren women at critical periods in the nation's life. The four Matriarchs belonged

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4.   Berman 1996: 174 (*Parashat Toledot* 9 [Gen. 27.1]).
5.   Weinfeld 1982: 112.

to the early days of the people, when the nuclear family was becoming a clan. The mothers and Samuel and Samson belong to the transition times between the Judges and the monarchy: Samson launches a struggle against the Philistines, to be completed under David, while Samuel follows the establishment of the monarchy, anointing both Saul and David to kingship. The Shunammite appears in connection with God's legitimate representative, the prophet. Her function is to show that while God or his angels may be far away, communication with them is maintained through the prophets who are men of God, and his only legitimate representatives. Thus a picture emerges of a God sometimes involved personally and sometimes involved through his appointed representatives in the development of his people and their historic role. The barrenness of the Matriarchs becomes a literary motif with a clear theological purpose.

Presenting the infant as the fruit of a union between God and a flesh and blood woman may affect perceptions regarding the newborn. Even in the Hebrew Bible we find that this kind of connection created exceptional creatures, and when the sons of God cohabited with the daughters of man, the *Nephilim* were born (Gen. 6.4). The New Testament too stresses the uniqueness of those born through God's direct intervention. So it was with Jesus, son of the Virgin, and with John the Baptist, whose aging mother Elizabeth had been barren all her life. However, as the authors of the Hebrew Bible eschewed mythology (de-mythologization), on the one hand they dispensed with these exceptional creatures by the flood, and on the other hand they emphasized God's involvement in every pregnancy. Therefore, even if his messengers visited a barren woman, and despite God's role in their birth, the offspring were ordinary human beings. So it was with Isaac, and with Jacob and his sons, described with their abundant human weaknesses. Samson was no giant, but was totally dependent on God's spirit and will; Samuel developed from being a youth who served the high priest in the Tabernacle to being a prophet and kingmaker, constantly struggling to maintain his position. The birth and biography of the Shunammite's son, saved from death as a boy, manifest the power and status of the miracle-working prophets who could rescue barren women and thus attest to God's continued intervention in people's lives.

5. *Conclusion*

The use of the motif of barrenness is deliberate and calculated. That it is so concentrated among the mothers of the Israelite nation indicates that its existence as a people was the will of God.

The barrenness motif proclaims the existence of this people exists not because of a promise arbitrarily kept, but because its existence was pre-destined. The mothers became sterile so that it could be shown that Israel

were God's people. Israel appeared upon the stage of history by divine will and divine intervention, thus having significance and a destiny.

Of these people it can be said as it was of Jeremiah the Prophet: 'Before I created you in the womb, I selected you; Before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet concerning the nations'.

4

The Lost Honor of Dinah, Daughter of Jacob

Retrospective Preface

The study of the Hebrew Bible in Israel begins in kindergarten and continues until the end of high school. Nevertheless, nowhere in more than a decade of study is Genesis 34 part of the curriculum. For Israeli pupils the story of Dinah remains an untold story. Did curriculum designers think that children of tender years should not encounter a story of rape? Did they think the story raises a moral difficulty by describing the sons of Jacob as acting deceitfully and brutally toward one trying to atone for his misdeed, so that even older children may be better off avoiding it? Perhaps! But there is no use arguing with facts, and the fact is that in all my school years I never encountered the story, even though some stories from Genesis are studied within the curriculum at least twice, in both the elementary and secondary school stages.

Thus it was that my first reading of Dinah's story was at the university when preparing for the proficiency examination. I was drawn to it as one is drawn to previously censored material suddenly released for publication. Despite the various commentaries I read later, the story continued to disturb me, for the rape problem could have been resolved simply by marriage, in the spirit of the law in Deuteronomy (Deut. 22.28-29). Such a resolution would seem to have met the needs of all concerned, especially those of Jacob's sons who would have received the right to settle in the land and even to expand their trading opportunities. Dinah, no longer a rape victim, would have become a beloved princess. Unlike Tamar, whom Amnon hated after he raped her, driving her from his room, here is a case of lust turning to true love: 'Being strongly drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob, and in love with the maiden, he spoke to the maiden tenderly' (Gen. 34.3). And we have to remember that the maiden's feeling interested no one in the world described here, only the modern readers. With all that, the solution with its economic and civil benefits, which also resolved the issue of the maiden's violated honor, was rejected out of hand by Jacob's sons. Furthermore, to make sure it would never take place they used denial

and deceit, working up to the brutal climax of murdering all the male inhabitants of the city.

Why the marriage solution was unthinkable despite its manifest advantages, and although it could have rescued Jacob's daughter from her inferior position, is what my article attempts to explain.

Analyzing the story and tracing the signs of hidden polemic running through it, I reached the conclusion that the marriage of Dinah and Shechem was totally out of the question, because this was not a question of people like the Arameans who would surely have included Bilhah and Zilpah, or like descendents of the sons that Hagar and Keturah bore to Abraham. The Shechemites were not even Canaanites of the same type as Bath-shua, wife of Judah, or possibly Tamar whose origins are not stated, but both became part of Jacob's family like Jacob's other sons' wives. What makes the story in Genesis 34 a special case is the threatening fear of forming permanent ties with the population who dwelled in the land, later to be called the Samaritans. In other words, this story in my opinion presents the struggle of those who returned to Zion from the Babylonian Exile, against the inhabitants of the north who were not exiled and remained in the country, and naturally would not have had the searing experience of the Exile, with the ideological lessons it etched into the returnees.

That being so, I could give this preface the title: 'The Untold Story—and Rightly So'. But why justify the omission of this chapter from the curriculum? It turns out that the controversy with the Samaritans is not over. If anyone thinks that this story belongs to the past and has become ancient history, from Second Temple times, that person is wrong. To modern Israel, a land of immigrants of varied ethnic communities and cultural groups, came most of the Samaritans from nearby Shechem and its environs just before the War of Independence in 1948 and especially after the Six-Day War in 1967. They regard themselves as descended from the House of Joseph and live according to the Law of Moses. What, then, is their status to be? Should they be regarded as Jews in every respect, with the same entitlements as all other Jewish groups who immigrated to Israel, or should they be excluded from the community and deprived of the Right of Return? The Israeli government's decision in 1949, influenced by the research and activity of the state's second president, Yitzhak Ben Zvi, regarded them as Samaritan Jews to be treated like any other Jewish group, immigrating from an Arab country. Later, with the increased pressure from extreme and isolationist groups, the issue was raised again before the Supreme Court. Thanks to the opinion voiced in a report by Professor Shemaryahu Talmon of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1994, it was decided to regard them as part of the Jewish people.

   Nonetheless, the very fact that the polemic could resurface, and that
our chapter (Gen. 34) could add fuel to the racist fire are good and suffi-
cient reasons to omit this chapter from the curriculum and keep the jinni
in its bottle.

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Implicit Reduction and Latent Polemic in the Story of the Rape of Dinah

1. *Introduction*

The rape story of Dinah in Genesis 34, describing the violent encounter
between the sons of Jacob and the people of Shechem, is an intriguing
point of contact for different contemporary approaches to the intricacies
of biblical narrative. It engages scholars with a philological-historical
approach, those whose approach is said to be literary[1] and others who
emphasize the work of editing.

1.1. The chief interest of those whose approach is *philological-historical* is to
recreate the original documents that make up the episode or reveal the
traditions that formulated it, and to trace its history. Their tools are text
criticism and analysis of the written text for duplications, multiple styles
and discrepancies of different kinds.[2] The researcher determines the
document's historical background, including that of all the additions, and
discerns what groups of authors left their imprint on it. However, exami-
nation of the rape of Dinah story illustrates the conflicting conclusions

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   1.   Some scholars object to the term 'literary'. They claim to use various analytical
techniques, including philological-historical ones, and not exclusively for esthetic or
so-called literary purposes.
   2.   Lack of unity in our story is found due to: (1) uncertainty as to where Dinah was
after the rape (compare 34.17 and v. 26); (2) ambiguity as to who led the negotiation—
Hamor in vv. 6 and 8-10 or Shechem in vv. 11-12; (3) Shechem would not have accepted
the conditions of the agreement (v. 19) before presenting them to the townspeople
(vv. 20-24). It is also unclear whether the demand for circumcision was addressed only
to Shechem (v. 14) or to all the townspeople (v. 15); (4) the brothers' role in the act of
vengeance is unclear—in vv. 25-26 and 30-31 Simeon and Levi take revenge and are
rebuked, while in 27-29 the sons of Jacob take revenge and are not rebuked; (5) Dinah is
presented both in v. 1 and v. 3—she is called 'your daughter', 'our daughter' in vv. 8, 17,
and 'our sister' in v. 14; (6) the expression 'took her' is parallel to 'lay with her by force'
in v. 2; (7) involvement of editors in the text is shown as the anachronism in v. 7 and
the apologetical phrases in vv. 13 and 27.

reached by the critical approach, unable to determine whether the story comes from one source with later additions[3] or from two sources or two traditions.[4] Nor has it even succeeded in identifying the component parts of the story.[5] That approach also uses tools that literary analysis describes as poetics, such as paying attention to the order in which details are given and the delay in presenting information; following the parts played by characters; following changes of speaker, of view point, or of style; use of repetitions and designations, judgmental statements introduced by the narrator, and the like. Some of these phenomena have been seen as difficulties in the story of the rape of Dinah. Nevertheless, many scholars

  3. From the beginning of critical research until this day some scholars insist on the basic unity of the story, reducing the number of difficulties and resolving those that remain as the result of editing the original text. Kuenen (1894: 255-56), for example, assumed the existence of a story from the J source, in which Jacob's sons conditioned their approval of the marriage on receiving a large sum of money. In his view this agreement was not reached because Simeon and Levi opposed it. The P editor in Ezra's time was astounded by the story of the sons of Jacob agreeing to a marriage with the Canaanites, so he introduced the circumcision demand as a trick from the outset. Most scholars attribute the story to J in view of its early source. See, e.g., von Rad 1963: 325-30; Speiser 1964: 266-68. According to Meyer (1906: 420), the original story was about Simeon and Levi only, and the other brothers were introduced in an addition. By contrast, Zakovitch (1985) regards Simeon and Levi as additions to the original story, in which Shechem loved Dinah, reached an agreement with her brothers, who deceived, murdered, and plundered. Rape was a secondary theme added to justify the brothers' conduct and criminalize the Shechemites; the revenge of Simeon and Levi too provides a moral element behind the brothers' conduct. Sandmel (1963: 365-66) holds a similar view.

  4. See Westermann 1985: 532-45. Researchers are not agreed, however, as to the identification of the sources. Skinner (1930: 417-18), who summed up the state of research, solved the problem by stating that the text was written by J^x and E^x, then edited by P. These sources are close to the known sources but not part of them. He mentions Dillmann (1892: 351-55) and Driver (1926: 302-308) as those not hesitating to attribute to P what others attribute to E. Westermann, following Wellhausen, refrains entirely from attributing the two stories to classical sources or to those close to them. He separates A's family narrative centered around Simeon, Levi, and Shechem of the patriarchal era, and B's tribal narrative centered around the sons of Jacob and Hamor, from the time of the Israelite conquest of Canaan. Unification of the two stories came later, and did not antedate the Exile. The responsible editor at this point was familiar with the view in Deut. 7 and his language was similar to P's. Lehming (1958: 228-50), loyal to form criticism, discerned two primeval stories in the infrastructure committed to writing by J and united in the amphictyony of Shechem at the oral stage.

  5. Kevers (1980), who also provides a systematic and concise research report, provides his own view. He acknowledges failure to reconstruct entire, discrete stories in the second part of the chapter, and to find the additions to the original tale. In his view Gen. 34.1-26 is an almost complete literary entity, if the word 'two' and the names 'Simeon' and 'Levi' are deleted from v. 25.

think these difficulties appear at times forced and artificial, intended only to justify breaking the story down into its original components. This was the reason for a critical approach maintaining that such a process not only ignores formative techniques but lacks psychological sensitivity to the varied events that necessarily constitute any reality.

1.2. Followers of the *literary approach*, by contrast, are scrupulously careful to describe every method used in formulating the text, assumed to be a single whole and not a combination of sources. Hence what might be defined as difficulties or foreign elements, such as discrepancies and repetition, are seen as the writer's[6] rhetorical means and strategies. But might not this system err through its artificiality, like the previous one? The former assumes that the story is not a single entity and should be divided into two, while the latter assumes the unity of the story and ignores the foreign elements that accrued with time, making every effort to justify them.[7] Another no less significant issue of this approach is to ignore the historical-social background of the shaping stage. It is doubtful, for instance, whether the imbalance between the two violent acts in this story disturbed either the morals or the poetic sense of the original biblical author. Slaughtering the Hivites—genocide in the modern idiom—is something he could well have interpreted as obeying God's command.[8]

6.   Compare Sternberg 1985 (in Hebrew: 1973). He maintains that the chapter as narrated dictates a balanced reader response *vis-à-vis* the rape and the brothers' vengeance, for on the basis of the facts alone 'it is the victims of the massacre that are likely to gain most of the sympathy: the reader could hardly help condemning Jacob's sons for the shocking disproportionateness of their retaliation' (p. 445). The delicate balance is the principle that unifies the story and explains all its strange elements, even dictating that Jacob be less sympathetic and that Simeon and Levi be separated from the fraternal collective (pp. 466-75). Sternberg's analysis illuminates as a literary strategy the very places his predecessors viewed as proof positive of discrepancies. His research motivated other studies that follow the literary approach. So it is with Ararat (1978) who points to a different unifying principle arising from wider boundaries for the story, from Gen. 33.18 to 35.8. He sees the story of Dinah as a link in the 'circumventing' chain that becomes 'Jeshurun', meaning that it establishes the image of Jacob as a believer purified of all cunning and deceit. Caspi (1983) follows the dynamics of the reading process, and does not deprive the story of its unity. Fewell and Gunn (1991: 193-211) offer a sharp feminist response to Sternberg's interpretation. However, this criticism was answered by Sternberg's (1992) sharp criticism.

7.   Zakovitch 1981: 27.

8.   Responding to Sternberg (1973), Nissim (1977) shows sensitivity to the normative issue. She stresses that the sense of balance in the story lies in the extreme approaches the narrator puts forward, leaving the reader undecided regarding the two sets of norms. Modern readers, she thinks, may give their full sympathy to Jacob, to Dinah, to Shechem or to the brothers.

The question of principle is, then, whether those following the literary approach view the text in a way congruent with ancient standards of values and of the permitted and the forbidden in ancient thought.

1.3. Those taking the third *editorial path* create a kind of synthesis between the two extremes above, assuming that ancient editors had the status of authors and often did more than connect sources and add comments. They formulated the material at hand on the principle of an inner unity that gives the whole work meaning, including all its parts, and sometimes they created materials that suited their needs. Naturally, the more thorough the editors, the less the reader of the new work could pick out its supposed sources. Such a premise reins in the assumptions of the philological-historical approach that, eager to reconstruct the history of the text, manages to pull apart compositions whose unity is in no doubt. With that, they do not deny the tensions that infiltrated the work during the years of its transmission before it became a canonized text, and do not look for poetic excuses to prove unity where there is variety. Nor do they ignore the challenge of reconstructing the historical background of the composition of the story and its editing.[9]

   The first part of the present study deals with the contribution of the editorial approach to the understanding the text and resolving its difficulties.[10] In the second part I point out the hidden polemic in this story, and in the third I focus on the question of authorship, and hypothesize as to which school was responsible for the formulation as we know it.

2. *The Rape of Dinah Following the Assumptions of Implied Editing*

Reading the story from this point of view of implied editing assumes that all its components are interlinked and give expression to the editing process. As the reader advances in the act of reading, the principle of central unity underlying the composition is revealed, the principle that guided the editors through the generations. It is highly probable that some foreign elements, not part of its intrinsic meaning, penetrated the text over the years, which necessitates an attempt to understand how and why they got there. Moreover, a focus on editing obliges one to relate not only

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   9.   For a detailed representation of the system see Amit 1999: 1-24 (22-24).
   10.   Besides the three approaches noted here, more esoteric approaches maintain that Gen. 34 is a single original and complete entity whose difficulties are explicable inter alia because it was abridged from a longer story, or a story reflecting the author's psychological makeup, or a story where difficulties were caused by sociological-ethnological problems. See Kevers 1980: 44-45.

to the elements that build the story and to their integration, but also to where it fits into its close context, which is the story cycle or the book, and into the broader context of biblical historiography.

2.1. In *the close context*, Jacob's sojourn near Shechem and events related to that location and to that period are set forth as a unit, Gen. 33.18–35.5, and the story of the rape and revenge (ch. 34) is a discernible unit within it. Verses that surround the rape story (33.18-20 and 35.1-5) connect it to the immediate context of the patriarchal migrations, presenting Jacob's wanderings as a repetition of Abraham's. Jacob comes to places where Abraham has been and does similar things: he builds altars and even buys land where possible, illustrating the principle of *Ma'aseh avot siman lebanim* (the actions of our forefathers are models [of behavior] for their descendants to follow).[11] The central theme of these passages are the relations of the ancient forebear with his God, while, by contrast, in the story of Dinah's rape and its outcome, God's name is not even mentioned. Jacob is passive and at center stage his sons confront Shechem and Hamor. This chapter can be seen, then, as a discernible unit in the story of the ancestral Jacob's wanderings.

2.2. The plot of *the discernible unit* is made up of several causally linked events connected to each other by cause and effect. The story opens with the rape and the attempt to atone for it through marriage and ends with the cruel vengeance because of the rape, even although the guilty one agreed to fulfill every marriage condition put to him. Looking at the plot as one of rape and its consequences, it is seen to have five stages. The first presents the problem: Dinah, daughter of Jacob, who 'went out to visit the daughters of the land', was raped. The solution seemed within easy reach, as the rapist prince fell in love with her, tried to win her over, and even told his father of his wish to take her as his wife (vv. 1-4). The second stage shows the way to the solution: the two sides meet and negotiate over the marriage (vv. 5-19). From the readers' viewpoint, the negotiation encounters difficulties, since the narrator informs us that Jacob's sons, the injured party, do not intend to abide by the agreement and their policy is to trick the other side (v. 13). In the third stage another step is taken, worsening the complication and inviting disaster, for all Shechem's male inhabitants have been circumcised, according to the terms of the agreement (vv. 20-24). At the fourth stage, readers understand that the demand for circumcision is a ruse to wreak cruel revenge (vv. 25-29). The revenge episode

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11.   Ramban (Nachmanides) repeatedly used this dictum; see his approach in his commentary to Gen. 12.6. This principle was adopted by many interpreters; see, e.g., Cassuto 1964: 299-300; 1954b: 328-31.

opens with Simeon and Levi carrying out the murder and releasing their sister, while the other brothers looted and took prisoners. In the fifth and final stage Jacob rebukes only two sons, Simeon and Levi, for killing all the men of Shechem, but the two are convinced they were right (vv. 30-31).

2.3. The *plot tension* building from the fourth into the fifth stages arouses wonder as to why only Simeon and Levi attacked the town and liberated their sister. Not only had all the brothers planned it together and the two acted on a collective decision, but a revenge operation of this type requires a force as large as possible. What were the other brothers doing while the two killed every male in Shechem and released their sister? Were they waiting for a signal to start looting? Why did Jacob direct his rebuke only to Simeon and Levi when the circumcision revenge was planned collectively? Tension arises in these two narrative stages. One cannot evade the issue by saying that Jacob addressed only the two responsible, since even had Simeon and Levi not done their killing, it is doubtful that the other brothers would not have looted, or even murdered and looted. There is no hint of regret over the cruel murder, and their unbridled looting of the town would have been enough to make Jacob odious to his neighbors. Is not taking captive the women and children of Shechem in itself reprehensible? The abundant detail about the spoils, including the human spoils (vv. 27-29), compels the reader to notice the other brothers' part in the vengeance and acknowledge what they did to ruin Jacob's reputation. Murder and plunder are two aspects of the same vengeance effected by the ruse of the circumcision demand in which all the brothers took part.[12]

Its context heightens the source of tension. Jacob does not stop with an immediate rebuke but on his deathbed deprives Simeon and Levi of an inheritance (Gen. 49.5-7). The link between the 'blessing of Jacob' and this story raises the question of God's support. From the sequence of the story one may understand that God supported the deed of Jacob's sons, including Simeon and Levi, for he allayed the patriarch's fear in that the people of the land did not pursue the sons of Jacob (Gen. 35.5). Nonetheless, the

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12.   Ramban (Nachmanides), who assumes Jacob was privy to the circumcision ploy, adds: 'There is a question which may be raised here. It would appear that they answered with the concurrence of her father and his advice for they were in his presence, and it was he who understood the answer which they spoke with subtlety, and, if so, why was he angry afterwards? Moreover, it is inconceivable that Jacob would have consented to give his daughter in marriage to a Canaanite who had defiled her... Now many people ask: "But how did the righteous sons of Jacob commit this deed, spilling innocent blood?".' See his commentary on v. 13 (1974: 416-17); and Leibowitch 1981: 380-87.

biblical historiography points to other divine support, for 'Jacob's blessing' indeed left the tribes of Simeon and Levi without an inheritance.

Hence it would seem that the problem of identifying the avengers and the connection between vengeance and rebuke would disappear had Jacob's sons appeared united and at no stage had the narrator set Simeon and Levi apart, and if 'Jacob's blessing' was examined with no connection to the rape of Dinah story. It is convincing, then, that the difficulty arises from setting Simeon and Levi apart as guiltier than the others. The story proceeds logically until v. 25 (see above, n. 5). The problems arise at the revenge and rebuke stage. Hence, omitting the word 'two' and the names Simeon and Levi (vv. 25, 30) helps to order the materials of the plot in a continuous narrative, without a focus of narrative tension. This conclusion does not indicate the discovery of an earlier story reflecting some historical reality,[13] but rather that removing the source of tension makes room for a commentary to explain details of the story.

2.4. The commentary framework provides *the principle of a central unity, which is the editorial guideline* for this story. In my view, all the materials in the text, save for the editorial digressions connected with Simeon and Levi, follow a single guideline that explains the difficulties raised by various commentators (see above, n. 2). This is, as Ehrlich puts it in the introduction to his commentary on this chapter: 'The story of Dinah is written in the Torah to let you know how careful the forefathers were not to marry among the Canaanites, for even one who had been taken was not given as a wife to him who took her'.[14]

2.4.1. This guideline first and foremost explains the basic materials of the plot, which are rape with marriage as the solution. Significantly, the narrative does not focus on the rape, which is mentioned only at the expositional stage as a plot motivation. The story as a whole, however, is devoted to marriage as the solution, or to explaining why it must be rejected out of hand despite its advantages. Consider the advantages of the marriage offer:

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13.   Most commentators find in this story a historical echo of an early Israelite conquest of Shechem or of contacts between the Hebrews and the Canaanites before the conquest that followed the Exodus. See, e.g., Nielsen 1955: 259-83; Wright 1965: 19-135. Haran (1973: 1-31) maintains this is a fictional story without a historic kernel, but relates to the hostile relations between the Israelites and the Canaanite city that typified the period before Abimelech. Na'aman (1990: 343-44) perceives the story as a paradigm.

14.   Ehrlich 1969a: 95.

   (a) It was the accepted solution in such cases: 'she shall be his wife. Because he has violated her, he can never have the right to divorce her' (Deut. 22.28-29).[15]

   (b) It had an advantage in this particular case, for the marriage was not forced on the rapist, who fell in love with his victim. Moreover such a marriage resolves the divorce problem for the wife.

   (c) The advantage of marriage is enhanced when dealing with the heir to the kingdom and his father, 'chief of the country' who were prepared to meet all conditions of the injured party although it had no rights.

   (d) A preferred solution when material enticements were offered—trading areas, political security, and the chance of coming into their inheritance. Jacob's sons could have settled permanently in a region of the country, not making do with the parcel of land their father had purchased outside the town (Gen. 33.19).

We find that marriage, the central axis of this story and the legal solution for rape cases, is impossible in this case, despite its manifest advantages, for it would mean a union with a Hivite, one of the seven Canaanite peoples of whom it was said 'You shall not intermarry with them' (Deut. 7.3).[16]

    Another conclusion is that there is no reason to regard the rape motif as secondary since it is the reason for the marriage proposal, motivating the entire narrative.

2.4.2. To accentuate the problem of rape that cannot be expiated by marriage, the author is careful in his designations. He repeats that Dinah is the daughter 'that Leah had borne to Jacob' (v. 1) and that she is 'daughter of Jacob' (v. 3). The repetition emphasizes the origin. It is important to make known that Dinah is a 'pure' offspring of her father's house, not the daughter of a concubine. For a reader aware of biblical standards for intermarriage with Canaanites (see below, §2.4.7), a complication set in as soon as the rape was reported. Such a reader would know that the protagonists' lineage did not permit the marriage solution. Moreover, the narrator turns readers' attention to the issue of marriage with the Canaanite, inhabitants of the land, when he repeats 'land' in the phrases: 'daughters of the land' (v. 1) and 'chief of the land' (v. 2), whose inhabitants are Hivites. Verse 30

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   15.   Compare with 2 Sam. 13.11-16. Tamar too sees marriage as a solution for rape and being sent away as a greater evil.

   16.   Shadal (1998: 330) ignores this principle: 'their words were illogical, for if Shekhem had married Dinah, the brothers' honor would not have been diminished but augmented...'

mentions 'the inhabitants of the land' who are the Canaanite and the Perizzite.[17]

2.4.3. This proposed guideline also explains the relatively long narrative time devoted to the negotiation scene where Hamor and Shechem propose marriage as a solution, a marriage that would mean the mingling of the two populations (vv. 5-19). Hamor and Shechem also try to persuade their fellow townsmen (vv. 20-24). The disproportion appears to be linked to the importance attached to the whole subject of marriage. To stress this, the narrator makes use of repetition: Hamor in vv. 9-10 speaks in a similar manner to the sons of Jacob in v. 16 and to his fellow townsmen in v. 21. The repetitions, expanding the time of narration on the subject of marriage, indicate the link between structure and significance in the story.

2.4.4. The circumcision demand, too, an integral part of the plot development, serves the guideline. Fulfilling it would allow the sons of Jacob, who as the patriarch said, were few in number, to release Dinah, to revenge themselves on the men of the town while they were still in pain and to cancel the marriage arrangement. This narrative development also shows that the marriage was totally out of the question. Even the willingness of the men of Shechem to enter the covenant of Abraham would not legitimize marriage with the Hivite. The circumcision rites then have thematic significance. Circumcision complicates the marriage question and accentuates the message: marriage with the inhabitants of the land, even if circumcised, is forbidden. The narrator heightens his criticism of the idea of marriage between Dinah and the circumcised Shechem by having Jacob's sons express the desire, impossible within the perception we find in part of the biblical texts, to become 'one kindred' (v. 16).[18]

2.4.5. Delaying information as to Dinah's whereabouts indicates to the reader retroactively that during the negotiation she was held in Shechem's house (v. 26). The information and its place in the narrative heighten the reader's sense that the circumcision ruse was a last resort of the weak against the strong, who were holding their sister.

2.4.6. The narrator's intrusions are necessary to highlight the story guideline:

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17.   Significantly, the word 'land' is repeated in connection with marriages that promise peaceful settlement in the country (vv. 10, 21).
18.   In v. 22 these words are spoken by Hamor and Shechem. In the Samaritan and the Septuagint versions they are prefaced by '*as* one kindred'.

(a) Wishing the reader to interpret the story not only as a specific incident but as a paradigm of Israelite–Canaanite relations, explains the wrath of Jacob's sons with a deliberately anachronistic statement: 'he had committed an outrage in Israel' (v. 7; compare with Deut. 22.21; Judg. 20.6, 10; 2 Sam. 13.12-13; see also Josh. 7.15). Mentioning the national name of Jacob, Israel, hints at the general problem and removes it from the family frame.

(b) During the negotiation, after Hamor finishes stating the inducements for the marriage proposal, the narrator intrudes to tell the readers that the sons of Jacob will not be induced, and that the circumcision proposal is just a trick (v. 13). The prior announcement is the concealed opinion of the writer that such a possibility did not exist and could only be a trick. Intervention is essential, then, to direct the reader and accentuate the message.

(c) In the author's attempt to weaken possible criticism of using circumcision as a trick, he adds his own view that under the circumstances it was justified 'because he had defiled their sister' (v. 13 and see also v. 27).

2.4.7. Examining the compatibility of the principle behind the editing of the story (implied editing) with the editing guidelines of the book of Genesis as a whole (close context), one finds the subject recurring throughout the book. It arises first in 24.3: 'you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell'. Later Isaac orders Jacob: 'you shall not take a wife from among the Canaanite women...' (28.6). Even Esau's behavior suggests it. At first he marries 'Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite' (26.34-35). They, however, were 'a source of bitterness to Isaac and Rebekah' (26.35; see also 27.46). Indeed, later 'Esau realized that the Canaanite women displeased his father Isaac. So Esau went to Ishmael and took to wife, in addition to the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael son of Abraham, sister of Nebaioth' (28.8-9). The marriages of the Patriarchs and their children, then, are of compelling ideological importance.

2.4.8. The narrator gives voice indirectly to the criticism of the marriage solution offered by Shechem and his father Hamor, referring by citation and allusion to the language of the law and of the rebuke with its dire consequences forbidding marriage with the Canaanites.[19] Compare the following texts:

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19.   Compare: Ezra 9.1-2, 12; 10.2, 10-17; Neh. 10.31; 13.25; Mal. 2.10-12. All these texts dealing with intermarriage are similarly worded.

Give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves (Gen. 34.9)

And when you take wives from among their daughters for your sons, their daughters will lust after their gods and will cause your sons to lust after their gods (Exod. 34.16).

You shall not intermarry with them: do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons (Deut. 7.3).

They took their daughters to wife and gave their own daughters to their sons, and they worshipped their gods (Judg. 3.6).

These passages all show that negating such marriages has deep thematic significance in the broader context of the law and biblical historiography.

The accumulated data reinforce the conclusion that the implied principle behind the definitive editing warns against intermarriage with the Canaanite inhabitants of the land. This assumption constitutes an integrative contextual framework that explains most parts of the text and the way they are presented.

2.5. Until now I have dealt with the integrative part of the text. Now, however, a serious question arises—the focus of narrative tension. What made the role of Simeon and Levi more salient in the revenge episode? In other words, what caused some particular editor to introduce a divisive element into the narrative?

The solution regarding the immediate context appears to lie in the need to explain the deathbed blessing-curse of Jacob in Gen. 49.5-7. Even Shadal maintained that 'This episode was written in order to render understandable the [subsequent] words of Jacob in his blessings...' I maintain that what he said applies not to the story as a whole, but only to the part of Simeon and Levi in it.[20]

2.5.1. This assertion rests on the broad context, the need to explain the special status of the tribe of Judah throughout history—the biblical historiography. Judah is fourth in the order of birth of the tribes, and appears fourth in the blessing of Jacob. In fact, however, that tribe received the right of the firstborn. Naturally, the editing would have to explain the fate of the deprived tribes with an appropriate story.[21] For Reuben, actually the firstborn, the solution was found in his relations with

20.   Shadal (1998: 323) refers to Gen. 49.5-7. Compare with Zakovitch 1985: 175-96.
21.   See also Gen. 29.31-35. This need is also expressed by combining the episode of Judah and Tamar (ch. 38) with the Joseph story, and the preference throughout for the image of Judah over that of Reuben. The Chronicler dealt with the issue differently, see 1 Chron. 5.1-2.

Bilhah (Gen. 35.21-22). There remained to find a reason why Simeon and Levi lost their birthright to Judah, the fourth son. It would seem that some later editor found it in the rape of Dinah story.

2.5.2. This same editor chose to link Jacob's deathbed words to the story of Dinah's rape, a story of revenge accompanied by rage, deceit, and savage punishment and use of the sword. These could be seen as connected with the act of revenge as reflected in the tradition of Jacob's 'blessing' by the use of such expressions as 'tools of lawlessness' and 'For when angry they slay men', and because of Jacob's own seeming withdrawal: 'Let not my person be included in their council'.[22] The connection is made by stressing Simeon and Levi's part in the revenge in our story and by separating them from the collective image of the brothers (vv. 25, 30). The combination led to problems later, as for example by separating the murderers from the looters, or describing the other brothers as arriving on the scene after the first two had left.[23]

2.5.3. Furthermore, a close look at Jacob's rebuke (vv. 30-31), where instead of addressing Simeon and Levi he addresses all the brothers, contributes to the analogical confrontation of the characters: Hamor and his son Shechem vs. Jacob and his sons. Throughout the story Hamor appears beside his son Shechem, and even a certain division of roles may be inferred: thoughtful statements come from the adult father, but from the young son come impulsive exaggerations ('Ask me a bride price ever so high', v. 12) and unrestrained behavior, beginning with rape and ending with circumcision ('And the youth lost no time in doing the thing', v. 19). Jacob, by contrast, does not stand beside his sons. From his first appearance he is described as keeping silent and the sons as capable of deciding, making plans, and carrying them out. Jacob is not mentioned at any stage of the negotiations and only when he finds out what his sons did in Shechem he becomes fearful and rebukes them. The sons are shown as willing to defend their honor and principles in every possible way, through deceit and revenge and finally by protesting the rebuke (v. 31)—'Should our sister be treated as a whore?'—since without marriage Dinah's honor remains violated.

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22.   How tenuous this connection is, is evident from the absence in our story of any hint of castrating oxen.

23.   Commentators have pointed out the difficulties in this passage. Dillmann (1892: 374-75) regards vv. 27-29 as a later addition. Skinner (1930: 421) deliberates as to whether those verses were introduced by one familiar with Num. 31.9-11. Von Rad (1963: 329) asks, reacting to v. 27, if this might not be an alternative version telling of an attack by all the sons of Jacob. More recently, Kevers (1980) suggested ending the story at v. 26.

Omitting Simeon and Levi, then, not only resolves the plot difficulty in our story and sheds new light on the revenge stage, but also contributes throughout to a systematic characterization of the persons involved in it.

To sum up, the work narrated here, as a story centered around rape ending with revenge rather than marriage, serves the central unifying principle of the implied editing: alienation from the Shechemites, the people of the land. The isolation of Simeon and Levi as the main avengers, however, is the stamp of later editing that adapted the story to the needs of the broader context.

3. *Hidden Polemic in the Rape of Dinah Story*

In my view, the rape of Dinah story is a hidden polemic against the intermarriage of Judeans with the inhabitants of the Samaria district later to be called Samaritans. The revealed polemic arises with the Canaanites, while the hidden stratum relates to all the nations living in the north at a later time. That polemic engaged the returned exiles from Babylon until Ezra and Nehemiah laid down a clear official policy against marrying among the peoples of the land.

The decision as to the existence of hidden polemic is founded on my definition of this type of story and on the rigid rules I set for uncovering it.[24] As I see it, stories containing hidden polemic are those that only by hints (signs), and not directly, take a position on a subject on which there are differences of opinion in biblical literature (the reason for the polemic). Such narratives contain an important message of hidden censure or indirect recommendation. The weakness of my definition is the endless interpretations it invites, sometimes expounding the story as a midrash, ignoring the author's intent and moving away from its hidden meaning or main recommendation. Let us examine the present story using the four following detailed criteria:

3.1. *Not explicitly mentioning the matter* the author wishes to oppose or to recommend. Our story discusses at length marriage with the Hivites, one of the seven Canaanite nations, without specifically mentioning either the Hivites or the peoples of the land, and certainly not Samaria and its inhabitants.

3.2. The presence of *signs* including deviances or difficulties through which the author signals the polemic. Thus even though the issue is not specifically mentioned, readers have enough hints to help them find it. One example of a deviance or difficulty is systematically avoiding the name of

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24.   See Amit 1990, 1994, and especially 2000: 93-217.

place in a text containing many place names. Reading the story of Micah's silver images (Judg. 17–18), one does not know the name of the place where Micah lives and the Levite reached (see 17.1, 8; 18.2, 13). But one knows the name of the Levite's town (17.7, 8), where the spies came from (18.2, 11), where they intend to go (18.7, 27-29), where they camped (18.11-12), and other such details. Another type of sign might be a poetic preference that affects story structure, characterization, or description of the area. Thus, for example, the author of the Concubine in Gibeah Story (Judg. 19–21) chose to stress that the Levite was a guest in Bethlehem in Judah (19.1-10) and avoided spending the night in Jerusalem, a town 'not of Israel', preferring to go up to 'Gibeah of Benjamin' (19.11-14). Not by chance is the preference emphasized, because the incident takes place in the tribal area of Benjamin and in Gibeah, Saul's city to boot, while in the background are cities linked to the history of David, possibly serving as a hint to Saul. Whether or not the story contains this hint depends on whether there are other signs besides the formulation of the background. The commentator will have to find them and not to rely on only one sign. When all the signs are taken into consideration the hidden polemic comes to light, providing an interpretation for different phenomena in the story. Here are some signs in the rape of Dinah story:

3.2.1. *The narrator selects Shechem*, nowhere else, as the backdrop for the rape story. Incidents in the town's history may explain the choice of Shechem to represent the problem of Samaria's inhabitants and its solution: isolation from the peoples living in the north.

   (a) Shechem has a mixed population, Canaanites that include the clan of Hamor, Shechem's father (Judg. 9.28). Moreover, the population of Samaria after the Babylonian exile was heterogeneous (2 Kgs 17.24; Ezra 4.2, 9-10).[25] In Ezra's time too the population was anachronistically designated as 'Canaanite' (Ezra 9.2). Shechem, with its mixed population, is an apt location in which to set forth the problem of assimilation among the native peoples.

   (b) Shechem as the scene of the rebellion against the house of David and Jeroboam's first capital designates the division of the kingdom and the separation of the northern tribes (1 Kgs 12.1, 25). Hence the attitude to Shechem represents the historical—and desirable—rift between Judea and the north, the rift between Jerusalem and Samaria that is Israel's northern capital and the center of Assyrian province.[26]

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25.   This reality is reflected in Sargon's annals as well. See Tadmor and Ahituv 1972.

26.   Small wonder that Shechem, with its sacred traditions extending back to the Patriarchs and Joshua, became holy to the Samaritans (Gen. 12.6; 33.18-20; Josh. 8.30;

(c)   The framework of our story (Gen. 35.1-5) marks the place where Jacob buried the alien gods: 'They gave to Jacob all the alien gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the terebinth that was near Shechem' (35.4). Burying rather than burning or smashing the alien gods (compare with the addition in the Septuagint to v. 4) hints that they continued to be worshipped there. Throughout the history of the Northern Kingdom, idol worship was characteristic of Samaria but not of Shechem:[27] 'He erected an altar to Baal in the temple of Baal which he built in Samaria' (1 Kgs 16.32). Idolatry was practiced in Samarian cities even after the exile: 'they also served their idols. To this day their children and their children's children do as their ancestors did' (2 Kgs 17.41). The motif of getting rid of alien gods, an act Jacob was never commanded to carry out (Gen. 35.1), seems to be secondary here, and to come from Josh. 24.23.[28] Introducing it in this context was designed to reinforce the polemic against Shechem that emerges from the story, and now from the story framework as well. The question is: Why oppose a city where neither idolatry nor a syncretistic religion is typical, and not a city like Bethel that appears so often in Genesis as a sacred site? The answer requires an understanding of the narrative not only as an open polemic against Hivite Shechem, but as a hidden polemic against what Shechem represents—the population of the north who are the peoples of the land and worshippers of alien gods.

3.2.2. *Defining Shechemites as Hivites.* The Hivites are generally mentioned as inhabiting the north (Josh. 11.3; Judg. 3.3; 2 Sam. 24.7). In the central area are the Gibeonites who are of Hivite descent, but Shechem is not mentioned as a Hivite city (Josh. 9.7, 17). On the other hand, the Gibeonite link is reinforced through the repetition of the deceit idea: deceit of the sons of Jacob as against the deceit of the Gibeonites (compare Gen. 34.13 with Josh. 9.22, see also 9.3). That Hamor and Shechem are of the Hivites

24.25-27, 32), as formally confirmed in the Samaritan Torah. In the Ten Commandments, both in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, the tenth commandment, as the Samaritans number them, commands the building of a stone altar on Mt Gerizim. Deut. 11.29b-30 in the Samaritan Torah names Mt Gerizim as the mountain of blessing: 'You shall pronounce the blessing on Mt Gerizim and the curse on Mt Ebal. Both are on the other side of the Jordan, beyond the west road that is in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the Arabah—near Gilgal by the terebinths of Moreh opposite Shechem.'

27.   After Abimelech rose to power with the financial assistance of from the temple of Baal-berith (Judg. 9.4), there is no mention of idolatry in Shechem. Nor is Shechem linked to the sins of Jeroboam or Ahab.

28.   Zakovitch (1980; 1992: 30-33) notes the secondary nature of Gen. 35.2bα.

refers back to the covenant with the Hivites, which resulted in their presence at the altar of the Lord 'as they still are' (Josh. 9.27). The Deuteronomistic tradition did not outlaw the Hivites, and the covenant they swore made them part of Israelite society and its religious rites. Thus the Gibeonite–Hivite analogy points to the polemic on the question of ritual between those who returned to Zion and the inhabitants of the land, who wanted to participate in the rites of Jerusalem: 'Let us build with you, since we too worship your God...' (Ezra 4.2).

3.2.3. *Not dispossessing the Hivites.* Avoidance of all possible contact with the Canaanites and their culture was connected with their dispossession (Exod. 34.11-16; Deut. 7.1-6; Josh. 23.7-13 *et al.*). In our story, however, although conditions made it possible, the Hivites were not dispossessed. While the revenge story begins with the slaughter of all males, it continues with the capture of women and children, meaning that women and male children survived. This difficulty is increased by comparing the looting in our story (Gen. 34.27-29) with the Israelite revenge on the Midianites (see Num. 31). The resemblance is conspicuous both in the syntactic structure, the repeated 'and also', and in the vocabulary relating to a similar act of vengeance 'and *slew every male*. Along with their other victims, they slew the kings of Midian... The Israelites took the *women and children* of Midianites captive, and seized as booty all their beasts, all their herds *and all their wealth*' (Num. 31.7-9). The story in the book of Numbers makes it clear that the narrator was aware of the problem posed by captive women and children, and proposes the solution of killing all the women who had lain with men and all the male children (vv. 11-19, and see also Judg. 21.9-12). In our story of the Hivites, by contrast, capturing the women and children does not involve killing all the males but leaves open the possibility that the fate of the women and children may be bound up with that of the sons of Jacob. Moreover, despite the literary interdependence of the two descriptions of revenge, our story does not mention burning the city (compare Num. 31.10). It would seem that resolving this tension was less connected to the broader context than to the hidden polemic. The editor adapted the narrative to other writings that assumed Shechem was not conquered (see Josh. 8–12), and that the city continued to have a strong Canaanite presence descended from Hamor father of Shechem.[29] However, to express this he could not describe the capture of the Hivite women and children, which put the Hivities within the Israelite camp. Avoiding the option of dispossession points to the connection between Israelites and Shechemites, indicating that in reality it was impossible to drive out the Samaritans and that there were ties between the two population groups.

29.   See Haran 1973.

3.2.4. *The circumcision motif and the Canaanite population.* One reasonably assumes that the inhabitants of ancient Shechem, like the Canaanites whom the Bible does not describe as uncircumcised, also practiced circumcision.[30] Therefore, designating the Shechemites as uncircumcised does refer to the Canaanite period or to their Hivite ancestry, which is not West Semitic, or to the time of the Israelite kingdom, but rather to a later time. Circumcision represents the covenant with the God of Israel and the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom were also a party to it. One may assume that this covenant was widely kept even after the exile of Samaria and after the new ethnic elements from elsewhere in the Assyrian Empire were settled there among the Northern population. This assumption derives from the willingness of these inhabitants to learn the laws of the God of the land (2 Kgs 17.25-28), and from the fact that the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin, who appear to be inhabitants of the Samarian province, wanted to participate in the worship of God: "Let us build with you, since we too worship your God...having offered sacrifices to him since the time of King Esarhaddon of Assyria who brought us here' (Ezra 4.2, see also v. 10).[31] Circumcision appears to have become an issue for the population of the north only after the exile, with the arrival of eastern groups that did not practice it. The circumcision motif, then, would refer to the post-exilic population of the North.

3.2.5. *The marriage motif coupled with the word 'land' (Genesis 34.1-3, 8-10, 21, 30).*[32] Thus the narrator directs readers to such expressions as 'the peoples of the land' and 'the peoples of the lands', common in Ezra and Nehemiah, specifically in connection with marriage: 'We will not give our daughters in marriage to the peoples of the land, or take their daughters for our sons' (Neh. 10.31; see also Ezra 9.1-2, 12; 10.2; Neh. 13.25). In First Temple times, one notes, upper class males married foreign wives as an integral part of a political reality. Censure of this practice came later and represents the doctrine of the Deuteronomistic school adopted by Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 13.26). The book of Ezra stresses: 'It is the officers and prefects who have taken the lead in these trespasses' (Ezra 9.2). From Nehemiah we learn that even the family of the high priests was intermarried with Samaritan dignitaries in political marriages: 'One of the sons of Joiada son

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30.   Licht 1962a.

31.   See Batten 1913: 115-16. The P source declares circumcision a condition for participating in ritual; see Exod. 12.47-48; Num. 9.13-14.

32.   That the Septuagint and the Peshitta translators chose the restricting term 'inhabitants' where the Masoretic text using 'land' reinforces the hint of a basic problem over intermarriage with the people of the land, not only those of the city of Shechem.

of the high priest Eliashib was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite...'
(Neh. 13.28). It seems, then, that the totally rejected option of marriage
between Shechem, son of a chieftain of the land, and Dinah, who 'went out
to visit the daughters of the land', points to the period of the Return to
Zion and to a central problem that characterized it, which was danger to
the purity of Israel and 'the holy seed' from the daughters of the land.

3.2.6. *Making the rape a national issue.* The rapist was no street urchin but the
prince of the city, Shechem son of Hamor, and the victim was not only
Dinah daughter of Jacob but a daughter of Israel, so that the incident
became 'an outrage in Israel'. Using the anachronism 'Israel' is part of the
system of signs. Moreover, describing the contact with the Canaanites as
one of force and violence on their part is incongruent with descriptions of
the conquest of the land that direct all the arrows of criticism at the Israel-
ites, who for their own reasons did not dispossess the Canaanites. Quite
differently, in Ezra and Nehemiah contact with the Canaanites, the peoples
of the lands, is described in terms of heavy compulsion and pressure on
their part.

3.2.7. *The few against their many enemies.* Only in our story does this propor-
tion appear as characteristic of patriarchal times. Indeed, the stories of the
Patriarchs show a marked tendency to extol their situation and even to
describe them as a people, in Gen. 13.5-7 and 32.8, 11, for example. In com-
plete contrast, in our story the sons of Jacob are few in number against the
inhabitants of Shechem and the people of the country, the Canaanites and
the Perizzites. Hence the offer to become 'as one kindred' is interpreted as
a threat of assimilation and extinction (Gen. 34.30). Significantly, the
demographic threat actually belongs to the later literature of the end of
the First Temple period.[33] 'The few against the many', then, suggests the
population of the returned exiles, which was small compared with the
northern population, 'the adversaries of Judah' (Neh. 4.1-2).

3.2.8. *Jacob positioned in disagreement with his sons.* Jacob in our story keeps
silent and fears his surroundings, unlike his sons who represent a proud
extreme position backed by values that enjoy divine support (Gen. 35.5).
His passive stance throughout the story eventually becomes one of prin-
ciple, but compromising and pragmatic, different from his sons' and
expressed when he rebukes them. That there are two opinions is signi-
ficant in the light of the polemic with the peoples of the lands. The sons'

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33.   The expression 'few in number' appears in Deuteronomy and in later writings.
See Deut. 4.27; Jer. 44.28; Ps. 105.12; 1 Chron. 16.19. A close expression, 'Meager
numbers', appears in Deut. 26.5; 28.62.

position appears to voice indirect criticism of opinions that run counter to the principle of isolation as represented by community leaders—the family of the high priest. In our chapter absolute isolation is the position preferred and intermarriage is seen as an expression of cowardice and unwarranted compromise.

Eight signs show, then, that the Dinah story was not designed merely to show a system of relationships with the Canaanites who should have been wiped out. Rather, it indicates a more complex relationship with the Hivites bound to Israel by a covenant. To me, these Hivites appear to be none other than the peoples of the lands settled in Samaria, among whom the returned exiles feared to assimilate.

3.3. *The polemic elsewhere in the Bible*. The relationship with the inhabitants of the Samarian hills after the return of the exiles to Jerusalem under the decree of Cyrus was a central topic in the literature of the time. It is evident in 2 Kgs 17.24-41, as it is in Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 4; Neh. 2.10, 19; 3.33-38; 4.6; 13.28).[34] From the last two books one even learns of the tendency to generalize the problem and to include the inhabitants of the north among the peoples of the lands, meaning that the intermarriage prohibition would naturally relate to them (see also Mal. 2.10-12).

3.4. *The hidden polemic in the commentary tradition.* Genesis 34 holds a central place in the Apocrypha and in Judeo-Hellenistic literature. In *Jub.* 30.1-26, our chapter serves a bitter open polemic against intermarriage (compare also Jdt. 9.2-4). In the *Testament of Levi* (3.5-7), Shechem is presented as a hostile town since the days of Abraham. The signal that it comes from the writer's time, that is, from the ongoing polemic against the Samaritans, lies in his epithet for them, 'For from this day forward Shechem shall be called "city of the senseless"' (7.2; compare with Ben Sira 3.25-26, where the Samaritans are called 'a despicable people that live in Shechem').[35] Another source is in the epic poem of Theodotus, which discusses Dinah's story and the destruction of Shechem by Simeon and Levi. Scholars are divided as to whether Theodotus was a Samaritan or a Jew.[36] All, however, are agreed that this epos served as an instrument in

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34.   See Amit 1999: 7-8; see also Josephus, *Ant*. 11.4.3 (84), where the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin are identified with the Samaritans.

35.   Charlesworth 1983: 790. Kugel (1992: 23-25) discusses in depth the place of Dinah's story in the *Testament of Levi*, and interprets the epithet 'city of the senseless' as a clear hint at the Samaritans.

36.   For a comprehensive review, see Pummer 1982. See also Guttmann 1958 and Collins 1980.

the Jewish–Samaritan polemic of the second century BCE. Genesis 34 has even been defined as the Magna Carta of the Jewish–Samaritan struggle, whose role it was to explain why the Samaritans were aliens.[37] It has even been proposed that some books of the Apocrypha should be regarded as a continuation of the polemic with the Samaritans over the sanctity of Shechem.[38] Our story, then, seems to have suited the polemical needs of the late Second Temple times since concealed within it was a similar polemic from the beginning of that period.[39]

3.5. *Why the preference for hidden polemic technique?* It seems to me that the struggle between the peoples of the lands in the north and Judea were waged clandestinely for both political and social reasons, as well as for rhetorical purposes, until the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

In the political circumstances of the time of Ezra and Nehemiah an ever sharper anti-Samaritan policy took shape. Possibly even before that relations with the inhabitants of the north were already in dispute. Some groups criticized them, as seen in 2 Kgs 17.24-41. With that some priestly circles inclined toward contacts with them, the undecided state favoring the hidden polemic.

Hidden polemic is indirect and so has the rhetorical advantage of removing from the message the primary focus of opposition to the argument that every polemic may raise. With that, it builds up a background in the reader's mind that is likely to guide his opinions, so that the Dinah story contributes indirectly to the polemic of the isolationists.

4. *The Source of the Formative Editing*

From the early research on our story up to the present, scholars have tended to link its development to editing at some point by the P school (see above, nn. 3-5). This conclusion is based on a style rich in typical P expressions, such as 'chief' in v. 2 and 'defiled' in vv. 5, 13 and 27, 'acquire' in v. 10, and 'every male among you is circumcised' in vv. 15 and 22, and similarly in v. 24, as well as 'cattle and sustenance' in v. 23. At the same

37.   Kippenberg 1971.

38.   Caspi (1983: 255 n. 29) even pointed out traces of this polemic tradition in the ballads of the Sephardic Jews.

39.   See Diebner (1984) who believes the story was composed in the second century BCE. For criticism of Diebner's time frame but agreement in principle, see Na'aman (1993: 30) who points out that Gen. 34, like, for example, Deut. 11.26-30; Josh. 8.30-35, and ch. 24, were composed within the open polemic about the ritual site at Shechem, that is, 'against the background of tensions between the ritual centers of Shechem and Jerusalem in the Second Temple period' (the quotation is from p. 30, but see the whole article).

time, because of its content, most researchers hesitate to attribute the story to P, pointing to links with earlier J and E sources. My own view tends towards a later editing, connected to the P school, for these reasons:

4.1. The connecting signs confirming that the story is late do not rely on P language that might indicate the First Temple era,[40] but rather on the following:

4.1.1. The editing in our story is familiar with both pre-Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomistic doctrines with their two intertwined demands: not to intermarry with the Canaanites but to dispossess and proscribe them.[41] Hence the editing stresses that Shechem is Hivite and that a marriage with an inhabitant of the country is the present case, and such a marriage is to be avoided at all costs. With that, and despite the terrible hostilities the story relates, the editor makes no attempt to explain or to denounce why all the Shechemites were not dispossessed. It seems, then, that the historiographic perspective of the author allows him to differentiate between the conquest of Canaan, the subsequent periods (Deuteronomistic historiography) and the preceding periods when there was no need to explain allowing the Canaanites to remain (pre-Deuteronomistic historiography). The author seems to know the episode of the Gibeonites–Hivites from Joshua 9 and even saw to it that the Gibeonites were deceived in return for their deceit. In addition he includes the names of several protagonists from Judg. 9.28 (see also Josh. 24.32 and §§3.2.2 and 3.2.3, above).

4.1.2. The editing also takes into account the story of the revenge on the Midianites from the P school,[42] and is stylistically and ideologically linked to it (see §3.2.3, above). The P story thus served as a model but historiographic and polemic considerations made it preferable to differ from it.

4.1.3. Using the circumcision motif for the existence of 'one kindred' points to a later period. Circumcision is known to have been customary among most peoples of the ancient Near East. The encounter in exile the

40.   For comprehensive discussion against Wellhausen's theory and in favor of an early dating of the P source, see Kaufmann 2003: 175-200 and 200-211; see also Haran 1972. Reinforcement in the language area is found in Hurvitz 1974b and 1982.

41.   On the distinction between pre-Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomistic historiography, see Amit 1999: 358-83, and more recently Rofé (1993), who distinguishes between the two stories: the story of the Ephramites and the Deuteronomistic story.

42.   The P source is not disputed in this case: see the critical commentaries on Numbers. More recently a connection with the H school has been suggested by Knohl (2007: 96-98), who maintains that the H school includes not only the Holiness Code (Lev. 17–26), but also other passages in the Torah, and that it postdates P.

Mesopotamian culture and its subsequent conquest by the Persians and the Greeks is what made it a mark of the Israelite population (see §3.2.4, above). In our story circumcision is no secondary theme but an integral part of the plot development. It is linked to a deception that cancels marriage and a ruse that makes possible a victory of the few over the many. In other words, if circumcision is a basic element in the story and sets Israel apart from its neighbors, the whole story is of much later origin.

4.1.4. If it is correct to assume that the story's intent is isolationist and sharply critical of mixed marriage, this too indicates its late date since it would have been no part of the reality of the First Temple era.[43]

4.2. Late editing containing elements of the P style raises the possibility that it is an H school story, meaning that it postdates the P school (see §4.1.2). Attributing this story to H, which may even have developed the literature of the Torah, may reveal something about its function during the time of the Return.[44]

4.2.1. The H school has more connections to the ancient Yahwistic, Elohistic, and Deuteronomistic literary sources that show links to our story than the P school does. This explains the stylistic mix that so impeded philological-historical research.[45]

4.2.2. The H school is known to concentrate on social rather than on ritual issues, and our story deals with an entirely social issue.[46]

4.2.3. Among the clear signs of the H school are the equality of the stranger and the sojourner (Lev. 19.33-34),[47] and our story is based on such an opportunity for equality. The sons of Jacob, the strangers, are to become equals to the inhabitants of the land, and at the same time, through circumcision, the Shechemites are to become the equals of Israel. True, H also voices the demand to drive out the inhabitants of the land (Num. 33.52-56) and to be separate and sanctified, and this ambivalence of equality as against isolation is evident in our story.

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43.   Compare with Weinfeld 1984: 124: 'the prohibition of mixed marriages as a primary condition of national existence is appropriate for Ezra's project: expelling foreign wives and separating the exilic community from aliens'.

44.   Knohl (2007: 6-7, 101-103, 224) regards the H school as responsible for the great enterprise of editing the Torah.

45.   Knohl 2007: 4.

46.   Knohl 2007: 3, 175-80 and elsewhere.

47.   Knohl 2007: 21, 182.

4.2.4. The attitude to circumcision differs from that of the P school that allowed circumcised aliens to participate in Temple rites (Exod. 12.43-49; Num. 9.14). One thus reasonably assumes that circumcised aliens married Israelites.[48] The P school, concerned as it was about ritual purity, did not warn against marriage with the circumcised alien population. However the H school, expanding the area of holiness, is more extreme and demands isolation from aliens and their descendants (Lev. 25.45-55), while at the same time demanding that they be treated in some respects as equals and that they eschew certain abhorrent Gentile practices (Lev. 17.10-16; 18.26; 20.2).

It appears, then, that the H school is where our story was formulated. That source wanted to highlight the issue of contact with strangers and that their circumcision does not permit marriage with them, combining P laws with Deuteronomistic separatism. If the H school reflects criticism of P,[49] it is then possible to find here a hidden polemic against the P aristocracy of the Return period and its contacts with the dignitaries living in the hills of Samaria.

5. *Conclusion*

An attempt has been made to show that the rape of Dinah story was composed and formulated in the early days of the Second Temple and serves the acute social struggle against marriages to aliens and the inhabitants of the lands, later to be called Samaritans, and in favor of a different and separate society. This rules out the possibility that the episode echoes ancient historical reality in the second millennium BCE. However, it enriches our knowledge of the Return to Zion period, of which so little is known. The present argument is that the story serves the isolationist polemic and even becomes the basis for the one against the Samaritans. Literature of this type sheds light on the source and the development of other contrary trends that expressed positive attitudes to aliens and to the peoples of the north.[50]

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48.   Naturally, then, this unambiguous attitude became the basis of halakhic conversion. See also Japhet 1989: 340-46; Milgrom 1982.

49.   Knohl 2007: 204-12.

50.   Japhet (1989: 334-51) finds a pro-Samaritan polemic in Chronicles. Zakovitch (1990: 19) relates to Ruth as a polemic against expelling the alien women: 'The prevalence of mixed marriages indicates that not all agreed they were forbidden. The demand to divorce the foreign wives would naturally arouse the strong opposition that the book of Ruth expresses...' On coexisting isolationist and openness trends during Second Temples times, see Weinfeld 1964.

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Repetition as Poetic Principle

*Retrospective Preface**

My first direct encounter with the theory of sources, one that shook up perceptions, was as an undergraduate. The year was 1961 and at the Hebrew University renowned teachers and researchers expounded various schools of thought. Hence in the same week one heard Professor I.L. Seeligmann and Professor Menahem Haran and was convinced as to the validity of sources and the importance of editing. During the same week one listened to Professor Meir Weiss, who spared no effort to convince his hearers of the wonders of biblical poetics and of the importance of 'close reading'. Through them one discerned that what could be interpreted as a source and what as editorial intervention was simply the result of sophisticated poetics and of the author's meticulous planning. And if you desired entry into adjoining chambers, you could hear Professor Shemaryahu Talmon eagerly expounding the primary place and nature of the traditions. Reinforcement would come from Professor Samuel E. Loewenstamm who, with the utmost tact and delicacy, would let you understand that without Ugaritic, Akkadian, Greek, and German there was no place for you in biblical research. That abundance had three possible outcomes: to transfer from Bible Studies to another department; to fall into total confusion from which you sought escape by clinging as far as possible to one method; or to continue to be confused in the hope that eventually confusion would lead to enlightenment.

I went with the third option. Sinking into confusion was pure joy, fascinated as I was by each of my teachers in turn. Eventually, having reached the Master's degree stage I determined that it was in fact possible to combine approaches, for there was no one single truth. Circumstances obliged me to pursue doctoral studies at Tel Aviv University. There following the advice of my open-minded and multidisciplinary mentor, Professor Jacob S. Licht, I studied literature under Professor Meir Sternberg. I found

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*   To my great sorrow, most of my teachers who are mentioned here are not with us any more. I wish Menahem Haran and Meir Sternberg health and length of days.

myself struggling to prove that even when discussing the particular story before us, one should employ the various tools of biblical research, that each has its uses, and that knowing the genetic past of a story may avert unnecessary meanderings through poetics. Entering upon my research journey, I was convinced that the basic principles of the sources theory were essentially valid, and formed the foundation upon which the writing and editing of the Torah and the literature of the Bible were based. These were not one-time compositions, but an ongoing editorial process. Moreover, behind the writing of the Torah and the biblical literature in general lay differing ideological schools. Hence it was not the work of a single author but of a collective, floating out, as it were, on different ideological streams, even though we examine it as the particular work before us.

The following article on repeated situations in the Joseph story was written in the later 1980s and clearly acknowledges the importance of biblical poetics, especially here where the poetic principles are expressly declared. As well, it acknowledges that frequently the sources solution is applied as a broad spectrum remedy, and it exemplifies my approach that biblical literature is an editorial outcome or product, thus granting our ancient editors the status of authors, and trying to discern and understand their principles. And so I do to this day.

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REPEATED SITUATION—A POETIC PRINCIPLE IN THE MODELING OF JOSEPH NARRATIVE

1. *Introduction*

A poetic principle in any text is learned from the text itself. It has been noted that 'From the story of David and Bathsheba itself one learns its poetics, even as the poetics of *Lolita* are not to be learned from declarations of the author or from some modern "Theory of Literature" but again, from the text itself'.[1]

It follows that in examining principles of composition in any work, even the author's assertions are only introductory statements to be examined in the light of the text. In other words, the reader or commentator, who uses composition principles as a key to interpreting and understanding the work, will try to find out the extent to which any given principle organizes the text, draws together its details, and explains its eccentricities.

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1. Perry and Sternberg 1968: 292.

Unlike modern literary works that apply familiar poetic principles and may even include the author's declarations on the subject, biblical literature does not include any theoretical discussions that may reveal its poetic principles. One exception, however, the story of Joseph, hints at one of its formative principles. The hint is not at the beginning of the story, nor is it given by the narrator as one might anticipate, but rather it appears when Joseph hears and interprets Pharaoh's two dreams: 'Pharaoh's dreams are one and the same...and as for Pharaoh having the same dream twice, it means that the matter has been determined by God, and that God will soon carry it out' (Gen. 41.25, 32).[2]

Joseph's remarks clarify the structural phenomenon within the story—that the two dreams are actually one and they appear or happen one after the other. Although the king described two different dreams—about the cattle and about the ears of grain (41.4-5, 21-22), with a waking period separating them—Joseph interpreted them as a single dream.[3] He even added a comment that explained both the twofold occurrence (41.25-32), and that one episode followed the other apparently in a single night (41.8).[4] Thus Joseph resolves the arcane, clarifies matters to Pharaoh and at the same time lets the reader know some of the principles he used in the interpretation.

In this article I examine the recurring situation in which the second occurrence repeats the first with variations.[5] Joseph sees the repetition as a sign of certainty that the indicated event will take place. Another question arises. Does Joseph's interpretation for the structural organization of

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2.   First to recognize the poetic significance of v. 32 was M. Sternberg, in his lecture to the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies (August 1981): 'Similarity Patterns in Biblical Narrative' (in Hebrew). He defined this verse as 'a meta-interpretation note'. See also Sarna 1966: 213.

3.   Pharaoh tells of his dreams in the singular (41.15, 17, 22). The difficulty in v. 8, which combines singular (his dream) and plural (none could interpret them), is resolved in the Samaritan version using plene spelling: חלמיו is read as plural. See also the Samaritan Targum in Tal 1980: 152-53, 168. Some prefer the Septuagint version using the singular ('it') in v. 8. See also Skinner 1930: 466; von Rad 1963: 368. Shadal (1998: 393) maintains: 'But the sorcerers thought there were two dreams, and they did not know how to interpret them. For this reason it says *ve-ein poter otam* (lit. "but there was no one who could interpret them"), in the plural.' See also *Targum Yerushalmi* and Sforno's commentary regarding that verse, and the discussion of Kasher 1938: 1535 para. 34.

4.   See, e.g., the commentaries of Rashbam, Radak, Ramban, Sforno, and Shadal (1998: 393).

5.   I do not refer to the use of repetition in combination of forecast, enactment, or report, a subject discussed in both earlier and later interpretation. For an innovative and detailed discussion of this subject, see Sternberg 1985: 365-440. On repetition in the Joseph story, see Redford 1970: 77-84.

Pharaoh's paired dreams closely following one another also apply to the other paired dreams throughout the story? Moreover, the principle of paired events may also serve the narrator as a technique explaining a structural feature present through the entire story, one that explicates the organization of its plot and helps the reader understand its significance. Put otherwise, can we understand the twofold occurrence as a poetic principle in the formulation of the story as a whole?

2. *Paired Dreams*

A conspicuous feature of the Joseph story is paired dreams. Pharaoh's dreams are far from being a one-time phenomenon. Therefore it is more reasonable to assume that the poetic structure they represents figure also in Joseph's dreams (37.5-11) and in those of Pharaoh's two courtiers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker (ch. 40).[6]

 In the world of beliefs and opinions that the Bible reflects, the dream has the status of a divine message. The dream is a means of communication that God uses to give advance warning of his acts. As Joseph says, 'God has told Pharaoh what He is about to do', or 'God has revealed to Pharaoh what He is about to do' (Gen. 41.25, 28).[7] Obviously, then, the dream is central in the biblical structure, where it serves as 'anterior narration', a kind of predictive narration.[8] When the dream appears before the event it spins the thread of the plot, preceding and proclaiming the direction of its development.[9] A single dream, however, would have served the purpose and there was no need for a pair of them. Moreover, repeating the same dream with slight variations could be regarded as superfluous information.

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6.   Nor do adherents of Source Criticism regard the paired dreams as a combination of two sources, but as the product of a single source characterized by the use of dreams. See, e.g., Skinner 1930: 443, 460, 465. Redford (1970: 89-91, 138-86) regards the dreams as a characteristic motif of the original story. Gordon (1965: 64) also discusses the tendency to pair dreams in ancient Near Eastern literature.

7.   This approach is not unique to biblical literature. Gilgamesh, hero of the Babylonian flood story, had dreams predicting the arrival of Enkidu, see Pritchard 1955: 76-77. On the importance of dreams in the ancient Near East, see Oppenheim 1956 and also Redford 1970: 90-91. A similar approach is found too in ancient Greek historiography. *Inter alia* are Penelope's dream in the Homer's *Odyssey* 19.535-65 (266-69) and the place of the dream and the Oracle in Herodotus 7.12 (324-25), 14-15 (324-27), 17-19 (330-33); also 1.13 (16-17), 19-20 (22-23), and more.

8.   Rimmon-Kenan 1983: 90.

9.   In early and late Deuteronomistic strata of the biblical literature the tendency to replace dream by prophetic vision, also serving as an 'anterior narration', is prominent. See, e.g., the connection between 1 Sam. 2.27-36 and 1 Sam. 3, and in 2 Sam. 7.4-17; 12.11-12; 1 Kgs 13.1-3. In this context see also Seeligmann 1992a: 34-36; von Rad 1966b.

Hence one may ask: What purpose did Joseph see in the second dream? Or, why did the narrator add another dream that did not enrich the reader's knowledge with any further detail, completion or expansion of the first?

2.1. *Pharaoh's Dreams*

Pharaoh's first dream dealt with seven lean and ugly cows that ate up seven sturdy and well-formed ones, while in the second dream Pharaoh saw seven thin and shriveled ears of grain eat up seven full and healthy ears (Gen. 41.1-8, 17-24). Resemblances between the two dreams are numerous: both tell of seven figures, and in both the same event occurs—the bad ones consume the good ones. Furthermore, both employ the same verbs and adjectives—'came up' (vv. 2, 3, 5, 17, 19, 22), 'healthy' (vv. 2, 4, 5, 7, 18, 20), 'thin' (vv. 3, 4, 6, 7, 23, 24)[10]—and both dreams contain expressions that create a similar picture: well-formed, full, and healthy (vv. 2, 4, 5, 7, 18, 22, 24) as against lean and shriveled (vv. 3, 6, 19, 20, 23).[11]

From the many similarities between the two dreams, Joseph deduces that 'Pharaoh's dreams are one', and that the seven well-formed, sturdy cows, like the seven full ears, are seven good years, years of prosperity. By complete contrast, the seven ill-formed emaciated cows, like the seven thin and shriveled ears of grain, indicate seven years of famine to follow. The narrator could have made do with one dream, whether of the cows or the ears of grain, and the predicted outcome would have been the same. But Joseph stresses that repetition relates to the fulfillment in the real world.[12] When the dream of the cows recurs in the ears of grain variation, it proclaims an inevitable divine decision 'the matter has been determined by God'. Furthermore, that both dreams occurred in a single night shows that it will happen soon.

Joseph has the status of commentator, interpreter of dreams (v. 15), and of one 'in whom the spirit of God rests' (v. 38). His solutions indicate that

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10.   In many Masoretic manuscripts, in *Onqelos* and in *Pseudo-Jonathan*, in vv. 19-20 the adjective דקות (instead of רקות) is used to describe the ill-favored cows. This is also the version of the Samaritan Pentateuch and its Targum (Tal 1980: 170-71), the Septuagint and the Peshitta on v. 27. The similar appearance of the initial letters (ר / ד) seems to have caused the error, and most modern scholars regard דקות as correct.

11.   Differences between the narrator's descriptions (vv. 1-7) and those of Pharaoh (vv. 17-24) show shades of style, not different purposes. With the narrator's mediation the reader can make this comparison, unlike Joseph, who heard the stories for the first time from Pharaoh. For a complete analysis of the similarities between Pharaoh's two dreams, see Sternberg 1985: 394-400.

12.   'The real world' here and afterwards is simply a contrast to the 'dream world', while the reality is the world of the story, which is usually a reality model. At this stage I do not relate to details of the dreams and their significance, but only to their arrangement.

the constellation of details in the dream world is significant for the events to transpire in the real world. He also discerns three phenomena linked to future events:

    a.   Their numerous similarities show that the two dreams are variations of one incident in reality. It can even be deduced from limiting and reduction of the similarities that the paired dreams relate either to more than one reality, or to different aspects of the same one, and to the tendency to create analogical links between several events or between aspects of the same event (vv. 25-27).

    b.   When one dream immediately follows another, that shows it is soon to become reality (v. 32c).

    c.   Finally, the recurrence of dreams reflecting aspects of a single comprehensive reality indicates God's resolve to carry out his plan (v. 32a+b).

In Joseph's system, formal and structural features like resemblance formulations, repetitions that vary somewhat, and the sequence of telling all explain the way events are to develop in the real world. Applying Joseph's interpretation code to two other pairs of dreams will clarify that we are dealing not only with the interpretation of dreams, but also with a poetic principle that explains the appearance of these pairs.

2.2. Joseph's Dreams
From the beginning of the story Joseph appears as the dreamer of two dreams: the dream of the sheaves (Gen. 37.5-7) and of the sun and the moon and the eleven stars (v. 9). On the plot level the dreams have a common factor expressed as well in the language, where both dreams repeat the obeisance ceremony using the word 'to bow low'. With that there are relatively numerous differences. In the first dream the sheaves represent both the brothers and Joseph, while in the second dream the stars represent the brothers without Joseph, but with the sun and the moon, and thus extend the family structure. The first dream is full of verbs that create a sense change that develops into a process: binding sheaves, rose, stood, gathered around, bowed low. But in the second dream there is but one intransitive verb, bowed low, and the feeling is static. Moreover, while in the first dream the sheaves representing the brothers bow down to the one that represents Joseph, in the second Joseph appears in person, not represented by a heavenly body. The text says nothing about the time elapsed between the two dreams. It is clear, however, that they did not occur the same night, since Joseph's conversation with his brothers comes between the two dreams.

The decoding system Joseph provided for interpreting Pharaoh's dreams allows us to assume that this is not a dream about one particular event, and the few lines of similarity between these two dreams appear to reflect this. With that, the common narrative element of the bowing down ritual, linguistically reinforced by repeating the same verb, signals Joseph's destined honor and greatness.[13]

In retrospect, the reader too sees that Joseph's two dreams, differing in detail, are two variations of a reality of dependence and submission, describing in a general way the plot of the story as a whole. The dreams constitute a narrative framework that begins in ch. 37 and ends when the brothers bow down before Joseph after their father's death (50.15-21). That they are paired proclaims a divine plan that must inevitably come to pass.

The reader who focuses on the differences, which naturally mark the variations, notes that the initial state of submission where sheaves bow down to another sheaf, gives way in the second dream to broader submission enacted by the stars, the sun, and the moon. Here no object represents Joseph; rather, he himself has become part of the reality of the heavens, above the status of the sun and the moon. The differences point to more extreme positions and possibly this time towards additional information, since they undermine the lines of similarity, complicate the second dream, and contain elements of a changing situation. The reader is thus entitled to understand that the dreams reflect two progressively worsening stages.[14] Yet to portray these in the narrative there was no need for two dreams: a single dream could have included them. In fact, each of Pharaoh's dreams describes two such stages, one of plenty and one of hunger. In Joseph's dreams, then, what was the purpose of the repetition? Following the interpretation technique that Joseph disclosed, repetition showed that 'the matter has been determined by God'.[15] Thus a repeated dream has a function—to inform the hearer or reader of an unalterable

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13.   From the angry response of the brothers and father (37.8, 10-11) one understands how keenly the characters of the narrated world perceived details of the dream as hints of a future reality, where Joseph would rule over his relatives.

14.   In retrospect, the time separation of the two dreams into two events hints at the two stages of Jacob's family's arrival in Egypt. In the first, only the brothers arrived, twice, to procure food in Egypt. They bowed down to Joseph, the vizier of the land (42.6; 43.26, 28; 44.14), and were dependent on him. This represents the dream of the sheaves, suggesting the link to crops and to the grain that the brothers set out to bring from Egypt. See Radak's commentary to Gen. 37.5. Only at the second stage did Jacob and all his descendants come to settle in Egypt for a long period.

15.   Ehrlich (1969a: 101) highlights the ambiguities and explains the brothers' envy: 'At first they hated him and with the second dream they began to believe he would become great, and envied him'.

divine plan. The differences between the variations with the uniqueness of each one may indicate additional information as well as a gradual process. In summary, therefore, understanding the poetic significance of the repeated events in Joseph's dreams guides readers, despite all the reverses and injuries that the dreamer is to endure, to his eventual rule over his kindred and his predestined exalted status. Again, 'The matter has been determined by God', although the events are not juxtaposed, meaning that God will not soon carry it out. Because this case is a gradual acquisition of power, to be inferred from the differences between the two dreams.

2.3. *The Dreams of the Chief Cupbearer and the Chief Baker*

In these paired dreams from ch. 40 the differences are visible at first glance. They are the dreams of two different people, Pharaoh's cupbearer and his baker, in a single night (40.5 and 41.11). The first has the dream of the vine with its happy end, and the second the dream of the baskets that ends fatally. From the start the differences between the dreamers reduce expectation that there will be many lines of similarity. Besides, characterizing each dream by the dreamer's occupation—a vine in the cupbearer's case and baskets of baked foods for Pharaoh in the baker's—seems very reasonable. With that, it astonishes that the dreams signify different fates, although both had sinned before their master, the king of Egypt, and were sentenced in a single day.[16]

There are, however, lines of similarity in this pair of dreams too. Both dreamers appear in their regular occupations and in both dreams repeat the number three. The vine in the cupbearer's dream has three branches and on the baker's head are three openwork baskets (40.9-19). The similarities appear to relate to the fact that the dreamers are linked by one event and reflect different aspects of it, an assumption reinforced by the simultaneous occurrence of the dreams.[17]

Perceiving lines of similarity, and particularly lines of difference, as the result of two developments within a single event—related to the sin and the fate of the cupbearer and the baker—does not require the presumption of additional information, since the dreams function to complement one another and to hint at the different fates of the participants in the event. The divine message may be given in a single dream that the individual dreams, but relates to his companion as well, or in one dream that comes

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16.   The reader has no idea what their crime was (40.1-3) and the story gives no reasons or justifications for Pharaoh's sentence. Clearly both men were guilty, so that the unexplained release of one constitutes an arbitrary decision. Undoubtedly Joseph's ability to decipher such a decision enhances his prowess as an interpreter of dreams.

17.   It later becomes clear that in three days the fate of each would be decided—one returned to his station and the other put to death.

to both of them. The ambiguity in our case turns out to have a double significance as regards both the event and Joseph. God notifies both courtiers in advance, each revelation relating to one of them, that is, to one aspect of the same event, illustrating the principle that 'the matter has been determined by God'. In addition, Joseph has proved his talents twice when he interpreted two dreams to two different people, so there can be no doubt that when the dreams came true the cupbearer could have no possible doubt that Joseph's interpretations were not random (41.11-13). Because of the repetition, the protagonists in the world of the narration are also convinced that Joseph is a true interpreter of dreams. No wonder, then, that they rushed him from the dungeon to Pharaoh (41.14). Another principle may be seen as realized here: it has been determined by Joseph.[18]

2.4. *Conclusion*

It may now be concluded that paired dreams do not necessarily indicate plural events. They may reflect one event, or stages of a process that structures the plot, or two aspects or facets of the same event. The number of events is derived by points of difference between the variations. Repeated situations that might have been dispensed with are found in all three paired dreams, each of which could have been encompassed in a single one, indicating the certainty that the event will come to pass. Repetition of an earlier sign is thus not superfluous: its purpose is to make known in advance, incontrovertibly, that this is God's plan.

3. *Repeated Situation as an Organizing Principle throughout the Joseph Narrative*

In the Joseph story the narrator makes frequent use of repeated events, not only dreams, to the point where the narrative may be said to advance through the repetition of paired structures. To survey the repeated elements:[19]

18.   Ehrlich (1969a: 101) states: 'And the cupbearer and the baker both dreamed for Joseph, that he might gain prestige as an interpreter of dreams, since "on the testimony of two witnesses a case can be valid"'.

19.   This survey excludes the paired dreams; see n. 6, above. Moreover, some elements I describe as repeated events are those regarded by adherents of the sources approach or a similar one as a combination of sources or traditions, or as an addition of later editing. For a summary see Redford 1970: 105-86, and also Humphreys 1976: 492. In my analysis, what is sometimes defined as duplication is presented as part of a single occurrence; so, for instance, Gen. 37.18-21, which may be presented as two separate decisions to kill Joseph (see Redford 1970: 182). I see this rather as two points of observation, of the narrator and the characters. See also von Rad 1963: 348, and Speiser 1964: 261.

a. Joseph was saved from his brothers' plan to kill him through two attempts of two brothers to save him. The first time Reuben proposed throwing him into a pit to avoid shedding blood, and the second time Judah proposed selling him to the traveling merchants (Gen. 37.18-30).[20] Both life-saving attempts are part of the story's original structure.[21]

b. Joseph was sold on two occasions, each of which became in retrospect an ascending step towards success. The first time his brothers sold him for twenty pieces of silver (37.28) to the Ishmaelites who brought him to Egypt. There he was sold a second time by the Midianites to Potiphar, Pharaoh's chief steward (37.36).[22] At first glance these seem like steps in Joseph's descent, but retrospectively it becomes clear that had his brothers not sold him to the Ishmaelites he would not have reached Egypt, and had Potiphar not bought him he would not have reached the prison where the king's prisoners were held and his reputation as an interpreter of dreams would not have reached Pharaoh.

c. In Egypt Joseph experiences two stages or periods that begin with success and end in disappointment before he became Pharaoh's second-in-command. The first consists of the successes in the household of the chief steward and the second of his successes while in prison. In both instances success assured him of status and Joseph rose from slave or prisoner to trusted manager (39.1-6, 21-23).[23] In neither case, however, did initial success alter his condition. In Potiphar's house he was lured into involvement with his master's wife, and was punished for no fault of his own (37.7-20). In prison, successfully interpreting the dreams brought no speedy release (40.14)—'The chief cupbearer did not think of

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20.   Critical commentary accepts these two events as a combination of J + E. See, e.g., Skinner 1930: 446-48. Redford (1970: 182-83) regards the Judah episode as the result of Judean editing.

21.   Hence my view is to restrict the Judean editing (see also n. 20, above) to the decision regarding the names of the characters: Reuben and Judah, or only Judah.

22.   Compare also 37.25, 27; 39.1 to 37.28a. Ishmaelites and Midianites are interchanged as well in the Gideon episode (Judg. 8.24, 26). Critical commentary sees this as typical of a difference of sources. See Skinner 1930: 449, 456-457; von Rad 1963: 348 and Soggin 1981: 159. Following the sources method, the dreams, the pit, and the Midianites are motifs from the E story, while the ornamented tunic and the Ishmaelites belong to the J source. Thus Joseph was not sold twice, only once, to the Ishmaelites, the Midianites having stolen him from the pit. See also Kahana: 1969: 55.

23.   The author is interested in a deeper resemblance between the two instances, accomplishing this by literary links, expressed as similar language in the narrator's reports. Compare the Hebrew of 39.2-6 to 39.21-23. The sources approach regards most of ch. 39 as from J, and ch. 40, the dreams in particular, as from E.

Joseph; he forgot him' (40.23)—and deliverance came only two years later (41.1, 9-13).

d. Joseph's brothers went down into Egypt twice and both times returned to their father and their families (42.1–45.25).[24]

e. Twice Joseph did not acknowledge his brothers, punishing them by making accusations. When he accused them of spying he arrested Simeon, demanded that Benjamin be brought to him, and terrified them by returning their money to their sacks (42.7-28). The second time he ordered his goblet to be placed in Benjamin's sack, accused him of stealing it, and demanded Benjamin as his slave (ch. 44).[25]

f. Following their first descent into Egypt, the brothers received a repeated sign connected with their money, from which they had to rule out mere coincidence. The sign first occurred in their lodgings when one brother opened his sack and found his money there, while all in their fear cried: 'What is this that God has done to us?' (42.28). The second sign came in Canaan in their father's presence when all the brothers found, their money in their sacks (42.35).[26] On their second descent the brothers told Joseph's steward about the money they found and in doing so the repeated sign became a single one. Although in the reality described here the sign was given twice, the brothers did not recognize the significance of that repetition.

g. On their second descent the brothers received two additional signs. The first was the invitation to dine at Joseph's home[27] and the second was the order in which they were seated at his instruction: 'the oldest according to his seniority to the youngest in the order of his youth'. The brothers responded in fear to the first sign and to the second in amazement. Again they did not notice the 'chance' repetition and so were totally surprised, not realizing that they had received signs to interpret what was happening.[28]

24.   There is a third descent, but it is different. Then they came with their father and their families to settle in Egypt for a long time (see above, n. 14). The sources approach attributes most of the first descent to E and of the second to J. See Skinner 1930: 473; von Rad 1963: 376-77, 386.

25.   Here too Redford (1970: 184-85) notes that the first instance of non-acknowledgment belongs to the original story, while the second was added by a Judahite editor.

26.   Most critical commentators do not differentiate between the two signs, attributing them and most of the chapter to E. See Kahana (1969: 61) for his reasons. Redford (1970: 184) ascribes both signs to Judahite editing.

27.   One assumes, and the brothers' reaction bears this out, that the invitation to dine at Joseph's palace was exceptional.

28.   Here too the two signs come from one source; see Skinner 1930: 488-79. The giving of the portions and the fact that Benjamin received greater portion (43.34) is not

h. Jacob acceded to his sons' demand to take Benjamin with them after two of them, Reuben (42.37-38) and Judah (43.1-10), repeated it.[29]

i. Twice Pharaoh repeated to Joseph his royal permission to settle his family in Egypt (45.16-21; 47.1-6).[30] This authorization would have been especially important, given as it was during a famine when many were migrating to Egypt and most particularly since the family were Hebrews and shepherds, an abomination in Egypt.

j. Twice Joseph informed his brothers that the development of events did not result from human planning, but from the will of God. The first time he said 'it was to save life that God sent me ahead of you... not you who sent me here, but God' (45.5-8). The second time, when his brothers feared that after their father's death he would take revenge on them, he said once again, 'Have no fear! Am I a sub-stitute for God? Besides, although you intended me harm, God intended it for good so as to bring about the present result—the survival of many people' (50.19-20). In these words, appear next to the narrative of Egyptian slavery and deliverance from it (Exod. 1.1–12.42), Joseph explained not only the gap between the brothers' plans and existing reality, but, more importantly, that all present events are part of a comprehensive plan. Hence Joseph's presence in Egypt is explained not only as a means to save the family, but also in its broader significance: Joseph was sent to prepare conditions for the long Israelite sojourn in Egypt.[31]

a sign, since the brothers had told Joseph of his special position in the family, and they had returned to Egypt because Joseph demanded to see him. (This does not explain why his portion was significantly longer than that of anyone else.)

29. This is the second time that Judah's specific proposal was accepted. The first time was when his brothers agreed to sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites (see a, above). There is no doubt that this repetition indicates Judah's importance and status among his brothers. Compare with *Gen. R.* 84.17 (Freedman 1961: 782-83): 'R. Judah b.R. Ilai Said: Scripture speaks in praise of Judah. On three occasions Judah spoke before his brethren, and they made him king over them: "And Judah said unto his brethren", etc.; [(Gen. 37.26)], "And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house" (Gen. 44.14), "Then Judah came near unto him", etc. [Gen. 44.18]'. The foregoing is linked as well to dis-cussions of the place of ch. 38 in our story. See the critical commentaries and intro-ductions, as well as Gen. 46.28; 49.8-12.

30. According to the sources approach, the first authorization is from the E source and the second from J. See Skinner 1930: 448, 495; Redford 1970: 185-86.

31. These two statements are not commonly divided between two sources. See Skinner 1930: 487; Redford 1970: 185-86. Besides, I feel that when Joseph calls his family 'many people' he is hinting at something broader. The appellation is not repeated in Genesis, while elsewhere in the Bible it has a broader meaning than a family. See Num. 21.6; Deut. 20.1, and elsewhere.

Tracing this series of double occurrences and examining them as the poetic principle of our title may tell us that God had determined to save Joseph and bring him into Egypt (see a and b, above), to teach him a lesson through two harsh experiences and to encourage him as regards the bright future awaiting him through the two repeated successes (c, above). God had also decided to punish Joseph's brothers (d and e) and at the same time to signal to them and to Jacob that the chain of events is not coincidental (f, g, h, and j). Finally, God had decided to bring Jacob and his family into Egypt to settle there (i and j).

From the survey and study of the paired dreams it seems to me that the repeated occurrences in the Joseph story, far from being coincidental, are part of a system. The narrator is not satisfied with stylistic emphases or offering his own version of an event, which would belong to the narrator–reader plane. Repetitions in this story exist too on the plane of events: things happen twice or are said twice and are actually experienced twice by the protagonists, so that repetition determines the entire narrative structure. With that, in most cases those who experience the repeated events are unaware of their significance, so that an interpreter of dreams is necessary to decode the paired sequence for them and to make it known to the reader.

4. *Conclusion and Proposal for Comprehension of the Editing*

In the Joseph story the repeated events constitute a poetic principle that explains the organization and structure of the narrative plot. It may also be applied to other repeated happenings in biblical literature, of which three examples suffice to show it as an editorial organizing principle.

The end of the priesthood of Eli's house is foretold in two prophecies: the one by the man of God to Eli (1 Sam. 2.27-36), and then through God's announcement to Samuel when he was consecrated (3.11-14). Eli, receiving both messages, understood that the matter was ordained of God, which may explain his resignation: 'He is the Lord; He will do what He deems right' (3.18). In any case, this suggests a possible motive for combining two prophecies in the editing process.

Another instance is when the people of Israel received two indications that Saul was destined to reign as king. The first was given at Mizpah after Samuel summoned the people to the Lord and the lot indicated Saul (1 Sam. 10.17-26), and the other was the victory over the Ammonites (11.1-11).[32] The motif of the scoundrels (10.27; 11.12-15) connects the two.

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32.   The first anointing took place in secret—only Samuel and Saul were present. See 1 Sam. 9.27–10.16.

Perhaps bringing in two stories of Saul's public anointing was an additional means of the biblical editor to explain to the readers how the people experienced the message of God and unanimously approved Saul as the right choice for kingship.[33]

David was forced to flee to the Philistines after twice seeing evidence of Saul's instability (1 Sam. 24 and 26). Was it a need to justify taking refuge among the enemy as a divine plan that motivated the editor to introduce the duplication?

These are among the many and varied examples of paired events whose repetition indicates that they are part of a plan and a system.[34]

It appears, then, that paired events, so often interpreted as preserving multiple traditions or as different canonical sources, may well be a poetic principle through which the editing may be explained. It explains too why in some instances the editor decided to introduce variations. We have seen that when repeating introduces additional information it has a goal and purpose of its own. The reader of biblical literature, then, is entitled to examine whether the poetic principle explained and realized throughout the Joseph story may explain other instances of twofold events in biblical narratives, and to evaluate the claim that editing considerations include the poetics of the repeated situation too.

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33.   1 Sam. 11.12-15 is explained as editing. See Budde 1890: 174. Most critical commentators follow this path, namely, that this is not a technical linking of two sources or traditions at the editor's disposal, but rather that the editor had a prior interest in a public repetition of the event.

34.   In some instances they are tripled; see n. 32, above. A separate study and discussion is required here.

6

WHO IS AFRAID OF MULTIPLE VOICES?

Retrospective Preface

While the previous chapter was about the poetic principle that largely eliminates the need for the sources solution, the present chapter is about two distinct voices responding to the question of whether the generation of the Exodus was the generation that conquered the Promised Land. Moreover, how does it happen that the two voices—one explaining the death of the Exodus generation in the wilderness and attributing the conquest to their sons, and another relating to a single generation only—appear side by side in a text of the Deuteronomistic school and do not express two different ideological streams? In other words, if using the sources method explains the existence of quite different answers by attributing them to different sources, this time the problem is more complicated, because the two different answers appear in exponents of the same school. Indeed, the issue reflects a microcosm of editing in general because it sets forth an editorial method that does not avoid multiple voices—despite the fact that they create discrepancies and even contradictions.

This issue has engaged and still engages research to this day. Some think it shows careless editing, others that editorial hands were tied in the encounter with already canonical material that could not be eliminated. Neither answer ever convinced me. The first seems haughty, failing to allow for considerations foreign to the modern reader who is a product of the Age of Reason. The second answer seems erroneous because the canonization of the biblical material was relatively late—witness the later books of Chronicles. As to editing this author/editor was not limited by considerations of the sanctity of Samuel and Kings, and reworked these books in accordance with his own needs.

My approach is to try to trace the ancient editorial considerations, even from a new point of departure that allows for the view that discrepancies and even contradictions did not seriously disturb the ancient editors. They did not regard contradiction as fault to be extirpated. They saw the

importance of each tradition or text in their own right, meaning that if a particular tradition or text served additional ideological needs it should be included.

In the article that comprises this chapter I suggested that Deuteronomy and its school, which knew the two-generation story according to which the sinners had to be punished, were also interested in the version of the single generation emphasizing the importance of actual experience as the most effective means to the recognition of God's power, the firmest basis of support for faith.

Today too I see this conclusion convincing, because it centers on the question of how to create in the individual an indispensable sense of belonging to a larger group which he/she does not want to give up. Concession of the sense of belonging may disintegrate the group, and with it the message it carries. This sociological issue occupied the thinkers of the Deuteronomistic school even if they had never heard of sociology. They did, however, understand the great importance of a sense of belonging and created the means to enhance it so that every single person would experience the awe and majesty of Sinai. The repetition emphasizes those present, the place, and the time: 'With us, the living, every one of us here today' strengthens in all hearers the sense of having been present at the covenant of Horeb. Such rhetoric enhances the experience of belonging not only among those in the world it describes, but most importantly among their descendants who continue to read about it through the generations.

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'BUT WITH US, THE LIVING, EVERY ONE OF US HERE TODAY': ON MULTIPLE VOICES IN BIBLICAL TEXTS*

On central questions of principle the Bible often does not speak in one voice but in several, in a polyphony of voices. Many critical scholars have understood this, and it has given rise to different schools of biblical research based on the sources, the traditions, and on other approaches. Even so, from time to time when a commentator comes upon two texts that flatly contradict one another, there is a new attempt to show some

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*   Originally presented April 1991 as a lecture to the Thirty-Ninth National Convention of the Biblical Research Society, devoted to research on Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, at Rishon Lezion, Israel.

issue on which there is a single opinion, one voice, as if it were ruled by a binding indoctrination. This is simply not so.

The Torah literature describing the Exodus from Egypt and the sojourn in the wilderness until the Israelites reached the steppes of Moab provides no uniform report from which one single truth may be deduced on this significant central period in the people's history. Rather, the record presents different truths as Moses the leader pronounces varied opinions on several subjects. This short article will deal with one subject on which Torah literature voices two different opinions, seeking to explain how they coexisted side by side.

1. *A Case of Multiple Voices and its Explanations*

In the introduction to the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy (5.1-5), Moses addresses the congregation saying: 'The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. It was not with our fathers that the Lord made this covenant, but with us, the living, every one of us here today. Face to face the Lord spoke to you on the mountain out of the fire' (5.3-4). The text raises a clear and obvious difficulty. Is the congregation with Moses on the steppes of Moab at the end of forty years in the wilderness the same one with whom the covenant was made at Mount Sinai at the outset of their journey? Was the community that was to conquer Canaan the same one that witnessed the Exodus?

Another tradition in the Torah literature describes the matter differently and in detail. According to Numbers 13–14, the divine decision not to allow the generation of the Exodus to enter the land was a punishment for complaining and for its reaction to the report of the spies: 'Nevertheless, as I live and as the Lord's Presence fills the world, none of the men who have seen My Presence and the signs that I have performed in Egypt and in the Wilderness and who have tried Me these many times shall see the land that I have promised on oath to their fathers; none of those who spurn Me shall see it' (14.21-23). Because of the importance of this tradition in the chronology of the wanderings in the wilderness it may be called the central tradition. It is even found in Deuteronomy: 'When the Lord heard your loud complaint, He was angry, He vowed: not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land I swore to give to your fathers' (Deut. 1.34-35), and later, 'The time we spent in travel from Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the Wadi Zered was thirty-eight years, until that whole generation of warriors had perished from the camp, as the Lord had sworn concerning them' (2.14). Moreover, it is even part of the Deuteronomistic tradition. The reason for the mass circumcisions at Gibeath-haaraloth was to distinguish between the men of military age who were circumcised

when they left Egypt and died in the wilderness, and their uncircumcised sons who were to enter the Promised Land (Josh. 5.2-5). These texts, then, reiterate the view that the entire generation that left Egypt, to the last man, perished in the desert and was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. Only two, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh were granted a different fate.

At the same time, one can hardly regard as a slip of the pen the approach emerging from Deuteronomy 5, according to which the congregation of Moses was the one of the Exodus, because it is repeated three additional times in Deuteronomy, and each time at significant points in the structure of his narrative. The first time, at the beginning of his farewell speech, Moses addresses his hearers as those who were there when judges were appointed shortly before the revelation on Sinai (Deut. 1.9-18, compare with Exod. 18). The second time, at the end of the historical report that precedes the laws of Deuteronomy, Moses emphatically reiterates that he is addressing the generation that saw and experienced Sinai, not their children: 'Take thought this day that it was not your children, who neither experienced nor witnessed the lesson of the Lord your God, His majesty, His mighty hand, His outstretched arm, the signs and wonders that He performed in Egypt… [I]t was you who saw with your own eyes all the marvelous deeds that the Lord performed' (11.2-7). This perception recurs the third time in the concluding chapters of the book: 'Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: You have seen all that the Lord did before your very eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his courtiers and to his whole country…I led you forty years in the wilderness…' (29.1-4).

The earlier and later interpreters commenting on Deuteronomy did not overlook this difficulty and tended to a harmonistic solution denying any contradiction in the Scriptures.

Rashi and, following him, R. Abraham ben Ezra, added the word 'only' to v. 3. This addition changes the meaning of the text and makes it possible to maintain that the covenant was made not only with the fathers but with their children too.

Ibn Ezra offers an additional possibility: 'Or its meaning is that He did not make a covenant [only] with our fathers who were in Egypt, but He made the covenant with us, for there were many in the camp who had heard the covenant directly from God. Therefore it states, *even us*, those who are here and alive.'[1] In fact, this additional interpretation rests on a distinction within the text itself. While the central tradition decrees that the generation of the wilderness will not enter the land, a distinction is made between the 'little ones' or 'your children who do not yet know good

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1. Ibn Ezra 2006: 536.

from bad' (Deut. 1.39), who were intended to enter and inherit Canaan, and the 'generation of warriors' doomed to die in the desert (Deut. 2.15; compare with Num. 14.29). One may therefore conclude that while most of those who went out of Egypt died in the wilderness, those who experienced the Exodus and were under twenty years old at the time of the spies were the ones present at Moses' parting address.[2] Nonetheless, this solution hardly resolves the difficulty arising from Deut. 5.3-5, which insists that the covenant at Horeb was made specifically with those present at the parting from Moses and not with their fathers. Hence some interpreted 'our fathers' as the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.[3]

Ehrlich has an interesting formulation that simply develops those of Abarbanel and D.Z. Hoffmann:

> Know that when Moses came to speak to the Israelites coming to the land about the covenant God made with them at Horeb, the whole generation of that covenant expired and died in the wilderness save for a very few, among them Moses who was about to die, and God's promises to the generation of the wilderness had not been kept. Moses feared the Israelites would not abide by that covenant. Thus he shrewdly said that God, seeing the end from the beginning, did not intend the covenant to be with the wilderness generation whom He knew would sin and all of whom were to die in their sin. The covenant at Horeb was made with their sons after them, all of whom are living this day.[4]

According to this sophisticated solution the fathers were mentioned to announce that the covenant at Sinai only appeared to have been made with the fathers, but that the purpose of it even then was the children who were Moses' congregation on the steppes of Moab.

This issue is elucidated in an article by Y. Hoffman titled 'Exigencies of Genre in Deuteronomy', and summed up thus: 'The harmonistic approach that appears common to both traditional commentators and critical scholars has proposed several solutions that, however, relate only to one or two texts and fail to resolve the problem as a whole that emerges in confrontation between all those texts that contradict one another'.[5] Thus the harmonistic approach resolves the problem at a local level as it deals with a particular passage and not with the problem as a whole as it emerges when other texts are considered.

In this instance, then, it seems possible to point to a system because the problem arises not only in one instance in Deuteronomy, but in a series of

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2. Compare with the commentary on Deut. 11.2 by Hoffmann 1959: 140; see also von Rad 1966a: 84.
3. Dillmann 1886: 265; Driver 1902: 83.
4. Ehrlich 1969a: 320.
5. Hoffman 1982: 42.

other texts as well. It echoes too through the strata of the historiographic literature that Deuteronomy influences: at the end of Joshua (24.31) and in the introduction to Judges (2.7). The book of Joshua concludes by summing up the era: 'Israel served the Lord during the lifetime of Joshua and the lifetime of the elders who lived on after Joshua who had experienced all the deeds that the Lord had wrought for Israel' (24.31). The passage from Judges (2.7) repeats it, only substituting the root *y-d-'* for *r-'-h*.[6] It appears then that according to this summarizing description too, after the death of Joshua there were elders who had 'experienced all the deeds the Lord had wrought for Israel'. This formulation merely repeats Deut. 14.7, and indicates the same approach, that does not differentiate between the generation of the fathers and the generation of the sons, saying that the generation that experienced the miracles of the Exodus and the wanderings in the wilderness is the same one that went on to conquer the land, and all these experiences taken together are God's great work for Israel.

The tendency to unite the two generations or the two periods can be explained by their proximity, or by the conspicuous common element— that massive succession of miracles that the people witnessed. In both periods, one after the other, the people experienced in the flesh God's mighty deeds and witnessed the deliverance wrought by his mighty hand and outstretched arm. At the same time one cannot ignore the different means the biblical editors used to let the readers know that two separate periods were involved. The text, for instance, emphasizes that the Exodus generation lived forty years in the wilderness and was led by Moses, while the next generation entered the land under the leadership of Joshua son of Nun. There is also a formal division between the books dealing with each period. The story of the wilderness generation belongs to the Torah literature, while the conquest under Joshua begins the series of the Former Prophets.

To sum up, the idea that only one generation elapsed from the Exodus till the conquest and inheriting of the land recurs in Deuteronomy and in the literature it influences: the end of the book of Joshua and the beginning of Judges. It is not found in Numbers. By contrast, the approach that distinguishes between Exodus generation, that is, the generation of the fathers, and their sons, the generation that conquered the land, which I call the central tradition, is found in Numbers, in Deuteronomy, and in other writings such as Neh. 9.23: 'You made their children as numerous as the stars of heaven, and brought them to the land that You told their fathers to go and possess'. Put otherwise, alongside the central tradition,

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6.   According to Seeligmann (1992b: 107 n. 13): 'Many are the texts in which knowing is parallel to seeing or arises from it, although alongside them are no few texts in which knowledge is acquired through the sense of hearing'. See also Amit 1999: 56-59.

also found in Deuteronomy 1–3, that book contains another message stressing that the generations did not change. Despite the possibility of systematically tracing the verses causing this difficulty, Hoffman points out: 'Neither did the critical approach of separation according to sources succeed in dealing satisfactorily with the problem we raised, namely that the contradiction, the incongruence between different verses in a given text is the type of problem that this approach by its very nature proposes to solve'.[7] Hence the question arises: Why did the Deuteronomistic literature, familiar as it was with the central tradition, not forego the tradition of the single generation?

2. *The Additional Explanation*

As I see it, the solution appears to be linked to the important and fundamental place of sign and knowledge in the book of Deuteronomy and its school. From a theological standpoint and throughout the biblical literature the divine sign is perceived as the most effective means to convince. God grants his emissaries—angels or prophets—the power to perform signs. Biblical theology assumes that experience based on the senses is the firmest possible base for knowledge and faith. Thus knowledge that comes with sensory experience is the compelling message to be passed on to future generations. Deuteronomy emphasizes the importance of the transfer process and the obligation involved: 'But take the utmost care and watch yourselves scrupulously, so that you do not forget the things that you saw with your own eyes and so they do not fade from your mind as long as you live. And make them known to your children and your children's children' (Deut. 4.9). And so in Deuteronomy knowledge becomes a proclamation and the sign seen or experienced becomes acceptance. This view was central as well in medieval Jewish thought. In the words of the Rabbi in *The Kuzari*, 'To the contrary—my opening words are the greatest proof to my religion, and moreover, they require no additional demonstrations of proofs!', and 'I and the rest of the Jewish people are obliged to believe based on our first-hand encounter with God [at Mt Sinai]. We have passed down this account, without interruption, from generation to generation, and so even today it is as if we are eyewitnesses to the event.'[8] Nonetheless, while Judah Halevi highlights the similarity between acceptance of things that were passed on from one to another and of seeing with one's own eyes, the Bible values the advantage of actual experience over acceptance of an oral message. Consider, for example, Job 42.5: 'I had heard

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7.　Hoffman 1982: 43. See pp. 43-45 for a survey of the critical research.
8.　Yehuda Halevi 1998: 13, 14-15.

You with my ears, but now I see You with my eyes'. Clear manifestations of this outlook and its historical significance are found in Deuteronomy and the literature it influenced. These make a clear distinction between transmitting a memory and experiencing. Those who know are those who saw, while those who did not see and did not experience in the flesh have to be taught by transmission: 'Take thought this day that it was not your children, who neither experienced nor witnessed... [B]ut it was you who saw with your own eyes...' (Deut. 11.2-7). According to Deuteronomy, memory and transmission are secondary to the primary direct experience of the senses. It follows that receiving the signs, meaning the personal experience of those living through the wondrous historical events of the Exodus and the first years in the wilderness, is the point of departure for the demand to keep faith. When the book of Deuteronomy discusses why Israel has obligations not imposed on any other people, the answer is clear and detailed: 'Has any people heard the voice of a god speaking out of a fire and survived... [I]t has been clearly demonstrated to you that the Lord alone is God...' (4.33-35). It follows that a people collectively favored by a divine revelation and an overwhelming experience of the senses thereby incurs obligations that other nations do not have. No wonder that Deuteronomy stresses the early period of the Exodus and the wandering in the wilderness as the time of so many signs experienced by the entire people, signs that led them towards the belief in God.[9]

It appears, then, that the author/editor of Deuteronomy, who knew the central tradition of the sins in the wilderness and the death of the first generation of those that saw and heard, was intent on offering another, more preferable possibility: to blur the distinction between the two generations by suggesting that there was just one generation that both left Egypt and was on hand for Moses' address on the steppes of Moab. Importantly, this appears at critical junctures in his historiographic narrative (1.9-18; 5.1-5; 11.2-7; 29.1-20 and also Josh. 24.31 and Judg. 2.7). In some of these contexts the author/editors uses the rhetorical device of directly addressing the congregation that stands and listens. He describes a single generation that experienced the entire period from the Exodus to the conquest of the land. With that, embedded in his description (Deut. 1.34-35; 2.14; Josh. 5.2-8) is the tradition of the two generations. Through the tradition of the single generation he presents his view on the effect of knowing through seeing, perceived as the effective means for knowing and recognizing.[10]

9.   For a wide-ranging study of this issue, see Amit 1999: 27-59.

10.   Hoffman's solution (1982: 46) differs: 'I suggest that in this matter the constraints were not theological or historical but rather literary, stemming from the special nature of the book as a pseudo-epigraph...which also exerts its influence to

The one-generation tradition, then, is the solution of the author/editor of Deuteronomy, who did not wish to undermine the force of sign that was experienced. He saw the conquest of the land as the conclusion of a series of visible signs experienced by the Exodus generation: 'The Lord your God Himself will cross before you; and He Himself will wipe out those nations from your path and you shall dispossess them...' (31.3). The collective experience as a means to learn of God's conduct is so important to the author/editor of Deuteronomy that he will set aside information from the familiar central tradition to establish an additional outlook on the earlier period—the childhood, as it were, of the people—in which the nation took shape, experienced, and reached awareness. That period was to serve as a foundation for the knowledge and memory of the later or 'adult' generations that were not been privileged to see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears. Furthermore, the collective experience and the single generation found in texts from Deuteronomy and its school is the basis for the collective sense of self that has no temporal borders in the thought of the Sages, who said: 'In every generation a man must regard himself as if he had come out of Egypt' (*Pesachim* 10.5).[11]

reinforce or to create the tradition identifying the generation of the steppes of Moab with the Exodus generation'. I have no doubt that theological constraints gave rise to combining the two generations.

11.   This approach is applied in Wright 1953: 363. He sees these formulations as the ritual basis through which the present generation identifies with the generation of Horeb.

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'For the Lord fought for Israel'

Retrospective Preface

I have a special affection for this article, which I wrote at the end of the
1970s, when I was in the early stages of my doctoral thesis on 'The Art of
Composition in the Book of Judges'. When I finished writing the article on
an old-style typewriter I gathered up the pages and the carbon copies—I
doubt if such copies exist today except perhaps in the Third World. With a
trembling hand I placed the original in an envelope and sent it to Professor
Moshe Weinfeld who for years was the sole editor of the *Shnaton—An
Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies.* Already the mother of
four children, I said to myself that if the article was accepted for publica-
tion it would be a sign that I had an academic future. If not, I would finish
my doctorate, continue teaching Bible Studies in high school and take care
of my family. A week did not pass before Professor Weinfeld called me at
home to let me know that my article had been accepted—as written. And
so I decided that the academic world was for me. Of my children, some
were happy with my decision, and some less so. My husband was not only
happy but at once threw himself into the project, taking on household
chores and becoming the family chef. As for pre-academic frameworks like
middle and high schools, I maintain institutional and other contacts with
them to this day, since for many years I was also the head of the Training
Program for Teachers of the Hebrew Bible at the School of Education at Tel
Aviv University and was involved in different committees in the Ministry
of Education.

The idea of analyzing Joshua's tactics in the war against Ai and the role
of the javelin came to me through my work on Judges and the story of the
concubine in Gibeah concluding that book, and describing another war in
which the ambush tactic was used. Reading what I wrote more than 40
years ago, two matters, of style and of content, impress me: the first per-
son singular, the word 'I', does not appear—instead, there is the pronoun
'we' and the first person plural ending. Now I have freed myself from this
royal 'we' and no longer use it, I leave the *pluralis majestatis* exclusively for
God. As for content, I am amazed at my expertise in analyzing the fine
points of war strategies. Is it because of my service in the Israeli Army

(obligatory for all girls in the non-religious sector)? Is it because of the affection some generals and scholars have for the war stories of the Bible, giving each of them the idea that they are at least Gideon if not Joshua, and that each of them is the one who will bring the victories of those days into our time?

With that, and despite these reservations, I hold to my view that one should understand the formulation and integration of the motif of the extended hand grasping the javelin within the tendentious elements in the book of Joshua. It is a motif that stresses God's role in the conquest by integrating a supernatural and hence impossible element that describes Joshua using the javelin to signal to the ambush (Josh. 8.18), and at the same time develops Joshua's image as the heir to Moses, with a staff in his hand throughout the battle (v. 26); like Moses in the war against Amalek (Exod. 17.11).

Even this early article, then, shows the importance I attached to those early editors who combined two variations of single motif to highlight the full purposes of the text. Here too I saw duality as a tendentious need taking precedence over the need for a plausible account of the war. After all, this literature was not intended to teach the sons of Judah warfare, or for the curriculum of military academies, but to perpetuate the idea 'for the Lord was fighting for Israel'.

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'AND JOSHUA STRETCHED OUT THE JAVELIN THAT WAS IN HIS HAND...' (JOSHUA 8.18, 26)

1. *The Hand that Holds the Javelin—*
a Redundant Motif (Joshua 8.18-19)

In the second war on the city of Ai Joshua used an ambush tactic. Its deployment in the attack[1] depended on a diversion tactic carried out by Joshua and his men, who were to approach the city, start to fight and then pretend to flee, drawing the city's inhabitants out of the town to pursue them. This decoy tactic had a psychological basis in the confidence of the

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1.   The account of the second war on Ai offers two versions regarding the ambush. Compare Josh. 8.3 with 8.12. Rashi proposed a harmonistic solution that 'one ambush was closer to the city than the other'. Even Kaufmann, a proponent of the elliptical solution, is constrained in this case to describe our chapter as one that suffered a serious scribal error...' See Kaufmann 1963: 122.

people of Ai following their earlier victory over Joshua's army (Josh. 7.1-5). Hence the army of Ai would be less alert to action in the rear and they would rush out en masse in hot pursuit and without a plan. When the army of Ai was well away from the city the ambush would enter, capture the city and set it on fire. The combination of the two tactics assured the destruction of the city and of its inhabitants. When the warriors of Ai saw their city burning they would lose their desire to fight, whereupon the fleeing Israelites would become pursuers and the retreating warriors of Ai would find themselves trapped between them and the oncoming ambush.

This description of the battle raises a question: How and when would contact be made between the ambush and the fleeing army, which would become the pursuer, thereby creating the pincer movement? The possibilities are (1) the fleeing army would signal the ambush to enter and conquer the town when it felt that the pursuers were far enough away from it; (2) the ambush waiting close behind the town (see Josh. 8.4) would decide when the time was ripe to attack, and when its work was finished and the town was burning, the ascending smoke would signal that the fleeing Israelites were to become pursuers; (3) the ambush and the fleeing army would agree in advance on a signal, such as reaching a particular point, or a sign from an agent having visual contact with both groups. Those who are convinced by strategic considerations point to the third choice, since it is implausible that with the increasing distance between the pursuers and the pursued, who could not know how their ploy would work out, could in advance agree on a signal.[2] Besides, a signal of the pointing javelin type from someone in the fleeing army is certainly irrational in such circumstances.[3] By contrast, the ambush stationed close to the town could sense when the time came to attack, and the burning city was a mighty sign visible from afar.[4] While this possibility is better than the first one, from the standpoint of the chain of command it transfers authority from Joshua to the ambush group, depriving him of the initiative and overall command of the battle.

2.   Steuernagel (1923: 239) posits that the signal was given by a small designated group from a place specified in advance.

3.   Hertzberg (1959: 59) criticizes the possibility of using a javelin signal because of conditions in the field. See also Holzinger 1901: 26, although some scholars, such as Steuernagel (1923: 238-39), stress such a possibility: 'One cannot declare that the sign could not have been seen because of the distance'. He bases his claim on the practice of using banners visible from a long distance. Noth (1971: 51) learns from v. 21 that Joshua and the ambush could see one another. The latter two, however, sense the weakness of their argument, Steuernagel (1923), and Noth states that the place of the javelin is not essential to the story.

4.   Hertzberg (1959: 59) indeed states that the tide changed when the smoke from the city ascended to heaven, as in v. 20. See also the J story in Holzinger 1901: 26.

Two Bible narratives bear the stamp of this war model: the second war on Ai (Josh. 8.1-9) and the war of the Israelite tribes against Benjamin (Judg. 20.29-44). Each describes a battle that follows a defeat and each combines the retreat–pursuit ploy with an ambush to create a pincer movement.[5]

Examining the communication between the ambush and the decoy force shows that the second and third options just discussed were used in the story of the war with Benjamin. From the twofold account in Judges,[6] it may be understood that in the first story of the war the (20.29-36a), the third possibility was used. The signal agreed upon between the two formations of the men of Israel was the arrival at Baal-tamar of a third one, the decoy group, where the first two were already in place.[7] Only at this stage did the ambush burst out. The second description (vv. 36b-44) states: 'Now the Israelites had yielded ground to the Benjaminites, for they relied on the ambush which they had laid against Gibeah. One ambush quickly deployed against Gibeah...' (vv. 36-37). From the text one infers instead of the agreed signal the men of Israel relied on the action of the ambush who signaled the retreating army by means of the burning of the city. This description, then, takes the second option:

> A time had been agreed upon[8] by the Israelite men with those in ambush.[9] When a huge column of smoke was sent up from the town... But when the column, the pillar of smoke, began to rise from the city, the Benjaminites looked behind them, and there was the whole town going up in smoke to the sky! And now the Israelites turned about, and the men of Benjamin were thrown into panic, for they realized that disaster had overtaken them...' (20.38-41).

5. Moore (1895: 435), following Welhausen, says that there is no proof of a literary connection between the two stories. Roth (1963) differs.

6. Most scholars agree that the story on the war with the Benjaminites is comprised of two juxtaposed descriptions of the same conflict. See Moore 1895: 435 and Boling 1975: 287. According to Burney (1970: 447-58), the solution lies in the method of intertwined sources, while Kaufmann (1963: 294-98) tries to refute such claims using the stages solution, with which we disagree.

7. This theory is according to Studer's approach (in Moore 1895: 437), who understands the v. 33 as the past perfect. Compare with Kaufmann 1963: 295 and Elitzur 1976: 177.

8. The Targum reads וזמנא, a reading followed both by the traditional commentators as well as translators and modern commentators. Ehrlich (1969b: 95-96) differs in his interpretation of this text and of Josh. 8.14.

9. There are different solutions regarding הרב. For instance, some proposed to correct it by reading חרב, as in certain manuscripts of the Septuagint; others proposed eliminating it as dittography of the preceding word ארב as found in other manuscripts of the Septuagint, as well as the *Vetus Latina* and the *Peshitta*. See also *BHK*. Following the Targum, some interpret it as an active command. We favor the second suggestion, accepted by Moore, Burney, Ehrlich and many others.

The narrator also stresses the psychological effect of that signal on the army of Benjamin, making it a precondition for the men of Israel to shift from flight to the hot pursuit of their demoralized and desperate opponents.

In Joshua 8, two of the three possibilities shown above appear. In preparing and giving battle orders, Joshua mentions no sign to signal the moment the ambush is to burst out.[10] By contrast, he specifically declares: 'And when you take the city, set it on fire' (v. 8). Here we learn that setting the city on fire was the signal, as it was in the second story of the war on Benjamin. In the course of the battle God intervenes and gives Joshua an ad hoc order about pointing with his arm and the javelin. According to this description the ambush would know the significance of the signal, would spring up, take the city and set it ablaze. Hence there is no proof that pointing the arm was the agreed sign, since it is clear from the first possibility that the retreating army gave the signal.[11] Here as in the war with Benjamin we read that when the people of Ai looked back and saw the smoke rising to heaven, they fled in panic and the Israelites who first retreated to the wilderness now became pursuers. But in this war the initiative remained Joshua's and the ambush obeyed the signal he gave.

Combining the two possibilities in a single story, the one that shows the burning of the city to be the signal given by the ambush, by contrast with the other one maintaining that Joshua signaled the ambush, thus creates an artificial time gap: between the giving of the signal and the ascent of the smoke. It is hard to determine what went on in that interval, and every attempt to do so illustrates the artificiality of the gap and so of the combination. One can maintain, for instance, that Joshua ordered the army to wait for the burning of the city, but such an interval could have served the pursuers from Ai. Or Joshua may have signaled to continue fleeing in anticipation of the smoke signal. Yet, taking such a course with the knowledge that the battle area was getting ever wider would weaken the effect of decoy and of the pincer movement. The biblical narrator sensed

10.   According to Steuernagel there would have been a familiar, recognized sign and hence no need to mention it at the beginning of the story. With that it is difficult to understand why it is implied in the first version of the Benjaminite war and at no stage in the second one. Was this a special signal known only to Joshua and his men? Hertzberg (1959: 59) is amazed at the absence of the javelin signal after v. 6. See also Holzinger (1901: 26), who infers from vv. 18-19 a J narrative in which the smoke is a signal and an E narrative where the javelin banner brings about the change.

11.   The addition to v. 18 in the Septuagint changes the element 'for I will give it into your hand' to a parenthetical statement, strengthening the link between the arm movement and the rising of the ambush: καὶ τὰ ἔνεδρα ἐξαναστήσονται ἐν τάχει ἐκ τοῦ τόπου αὐτῶν. See Dillmann 1886: 476.

the artificial time gap and tried at least to make it as brief as possible by emphasizing how very short it was: 'As soon as he held out his hand, the ambush came rushing out of their station. They entered the city and captured it; and they swiftly set fire to the city' (Josh. 8.19). Since it all happened so quickly there was no waiting or unnecessary retreat by Joshua and his army after the ambush received the signal. This interval would not have occurred had the ambush acted on its own initiative or upon an agreed signal as in the two stories of the war against the Benjaminites, that is, according to the second and third possibilities we presented.

It is possible, then, to make an interim summary, listing the four difficulties that the arm and javelin motif creates in describing the war:

1. A plot difficulty—bringing in a signal not previously agreed upon—obliges the reader to supply details missing from the story.
2. A strategic difficulty—absence of either a signal agreed on by both sections of the army, or by making one of them responsible for coordinating the response to the signal.
3. A technical difficulty as to the nature of the signal—a hand extending a javelin—which certainly would be hard to recognize in the heat of battle, especially when the battle area continually expanded.
4. The difficulty of the artificial time interval between extending the hand and the burning of the city.

Removing the hand and javelin motif (v. 18 + 'as soon as he held out his hand' in v. 19) from the text would eliminate difficulties (1), (3) and (4) noted above, and would stress the similarity between this war model and the second story of the war against the Benjaminites. There still remains the strategic difficulty of (2), the absence of an agreed signal, which was resolved in the first Benjaminite war.

Josephus Flavius in his *Antiquities of the Jews* overcame even the strategic difficulty. In his versions of both wars, of Ai and of Benjamin,[12] there is no hint of the hand and javelin motif. He emphasizes that the ambush and the main body of the army communicated through previously agreed signals that he does not discuss.

The unexpected appearance of the hand and javelin motif in the biblical sequence, as a signal inspired by God and not agreed upon previously, suggests editorial tendencies added to and absorbed within this war model with a view to separating it from the standard war model of ambush and decoy force. The hand and javelin motif in its present place and form imparts to this war, previously considered rationally, a miraculous quality

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12. Josephus, *Ant.* 5.1.12-13 (35-41).

due to God's direct intervention.[13] The beginning of the story describes the war in terms of human probabilities (8.3-17), in preparation for the ploys to be carried out. Then suddenly God intervenes, imparting a supernatural nature to the battle dooming all attempts to consider events by human standards. Thus the war that begins as a concatenation of cause and effect or proceeds according to dual causality principle[14] where God is behind the scenes,[15] now becomes another war in which God fights for Israel.[16] The signal of the hand holding the javelin demonstrates God's direct intervention in the course of the battle, and *ipso facto* requires no prior agreement, rendering superfluous all the probing questions about plausibility.

That Josephus Flavius ignores such editing trends is a principal characteristic of his method, which is 'to sacrifice the miracle element in order to gain approval from the Hellenistic reader'.[17] He preferred to forego the hand and javelin motif with its supernatural qualities, although as a military strategist he sensed that proper conduct of the battle required an agreed signal in keeping with the third possibility presented above. Since he was uncomfortable about the sudden appearance of the javelin, he substituted an unspecified prearranged signal. Following this approach Joshua conducted the entire war: he it was who ordered the army to reverse roles and become pursuers, and he it was who gave the sign to the ambush to enter the battle. In Josephus there is no artificial time gap because he took care to show the events as simultaneous.[18]

Until now we have traced the strategic and narrative redundancy of the motif of the hand holding the javelin, emphasizing its absence from other sources that describe Joshua's war (Josephus), or from the similar war in Judges 20.

2. The Additional Role of the Hand
Holding the Javelin (Joshua 8.26)

After his description of the war with Ai, the narrator expands on the role of the hand holding the javelin motif. In v. 26 the reader is given a new detail: 'Joshua did not draw back the hand with which he held out his javelin until all the inhabitants of Ai had been exterminated'. Only now the

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13.   Gressman (1914: 144-47) believes that the J source is responsible for the magical javelin motif and the E source for the story of the secular attack. For a contrary opinion, see Cooke 1918: 68.

14.   On the dual causality principle, see Seeligmann 1992c; Amit 1987, as well as Chapter 8 of the present volume.

15.   See Josh. 8.1-2.

16.   See Josh. 10.14, 42; 23.3, 10.

17.   Shalit 1967: lxxi-lxxii.

18.   Josephus, *Ant.* 5.1.15 (45-48).

hand turns out to have a previously unknown function. Not only did it signal to the ambush, but it was a condition for victory throughout the war, like the raised hands of Moses in the war against Amalek: 'Then, whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, but whenever he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed' (Exod. 17.11). Joshua now, like Moses then, assures victory in battle by continuing to hold out his hand. From being a limited wartime measure this becomes a symbol of God's protection and active participation throughout the battle, and a condition for victory.[19] Comparing it to Moses' war on Amalek, one infers that in this case the raised hands do not signal and apparently in our text too there is no connection between the hand holding the javelin throughout the war and the same hand signaling to the ambush with the javelin. In other words, when the signaling with the hand determines the fate of the entire event, it is no longer restricted to a functional role in guiding the course of the battle. The additional role of the hand and the javelin, then, is not congruent with the limited significance of signaling to the ambush. Introducing the two functions of this motif into the story of the same war is the result of putting together the two variations for the same purpose: to show that this was God's war. Interestingly, the duplication is avoided in the Septuagint, where v. 26 is omitted.[20] When both variations of the motif appear one after the other and the second one ruling out the first, it indicates the secondary nature of the motif and its redundancy. In the Septuagint, however, there is evidence of a stage where the editor preferred to express his opinion by using just one variation and by so doing to avoid the tension that emerges in using both.

3. *Hand and Javelin*

In various strata of scriptural literature, God is shown as waging war with his arm.[21] Sometimes this power is given to his emissaries, as it was with Moses and Aaron, and in our present story.[22] The motif of extending the

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19.   Compare with Noth's commentary (1971: 51). According to Holzinger (1901: 26), as early as v. 18 one learns of the javelin's miraculous quality and its use as a signal: 'As soon as he held out his hand' in v. 19 is merely an editorial unification by RJE'.

20.   Holzinger (1901: 26) thinks that the verse was omitted from the Septuagint due to *homoioteleuton*. We do not link the omission specifically to the translator, who may have had such a *Vorlage* before him. See the discussion on this issue in Tov (1978) and the comprehensive survey on the history of the problem in Orlinsky (1968).

21.   It is frequent both in prose and poetry. See Exod. 6.6; 7.5; 15.2; Deut. 4.34; 5.15; 7.19; 9.29; 11.2; 26.8; 1 Kgs 8.42; 2 Kgs 17.30; Isa. 5.25; 9.11, 16, 20; 10.4; 14.26, 27; 23.11; 45.12; Jer. 21.5; 27.5; 32.7, 21; 51.25; Ezek. 6.14; 14.9, 13; 16.27; 25.7, 13, 16; 35.3; Zeph. 9.4; Ps. 136.12; 2 Chron. 6.32, and more.

22.   Exod. 7.19; 8.1, 2, 12, 13; 9.22, 23; 10.12-13, 21, 22; 14.16, 21, 26, 27; Josh. 8.18, 19, 26.

hand recurs in the Exodus and in the wilderness stories, where the hand usually holds a rod,[23] although the appearance of the rod in the war with Amalek (Exod. 17.8-13) highlights just how secondary and how redundant it is. Moses announces to Joshua that he is about to ascend the mountain with the rod of God in his hand.[24] Once at the summit he acts through his upraised hands supported by Aaron and Hur, and the rod is gone and forgotten. In any case, if victory was achieved by virtue of the rod there was no need at the same time to keep both hands raised by supporters 'one on each side' (17.12).[25] There is also something unseemly in supporting the rod of God. It seems that in this war story the rod is redundant and victory was achieved by raising Moses' hands. Like God's outstretched arm, Moses too raises his arms and determines the fate of the war. Thus the description of the hands grown heavy and needing support served to blur the unique quality of Moses' hands and to show them as flesh and blood.[26] Possibly the Masoretic wording, 'his hand' in the singular, and not the plural 'his hands',[27] preserves evidence of a tradition describing a hand and a rod, as against the two supported hands.[28] Combining the traditions displaced the rod and created a syntactical difficulty in the Masoretic version. Again, improved editing reflected from the Samaritan and other versions avoided there the syntax problem. In the story of Joshua the

23.   Aaron's rod—Exod. 7.19, 20; 8.1, 12, 13; Moses' rod—Exod. 9.23. While in the Septuagint the hand appears instead of the rod, this seems to be a correction to coordinate with the instruction in v. 22. In Exod. 10.13 in the Samaritan version 'his hand' replaces 'his rod' (*BHK*); Exod. 14.17. See also Loewenstamm 1962b and the bibliography there.

24.   God's staff is mentioned as well in Exod. 4.20. According to Loewenstamm (1962b: 828) the tradition of Moses' rod comes from that of God's rod.

25.   For raising the rod Moses usually needed only one hand. See the sources listed in n. 23 above.

26.   We accept Loewenstamm's argument (1962b: 830-31) that Moses' hands are not to be seen as raised in prayer [See other translations and commentaries and compare with an Assyrian letter: 'When my arms grow weary (from being raised in prayer) I renew my strength by means of the elbows' (*ABL* 435 back l. 8). M.W.], because Moses here was fighting a war of God. Yet his argument that the slow influence of the rod in this story is the result of the difficulties of the war with Amalek, and that therefore Moses had to grasp the rod in both hands, is unconvincing. It depends on his supposition: 'One may assume that Moses' extended hand is merely a shortened statement to the effect that the hand with the rod was extended'. Differently, we assume that in parallel with the tradition of Moses acting through his rod, there was another of the strength granted to his hands.

27.   Thus the Samaritan version and the other translations. See *BHK*.

28.   One may even assume that the tradition of pointing the rod as against pointing the hand developed from the tendency not to vest direct divine force in the bodily organs of God's emissaries. This subject, however, demands deeper and more detailed discussion.

javelin replaced the rod, apparently because it suited the time and the place and was more compatible with the image of Joshua as a military commander.[29] In the Septuagint version of Josh. 8.18-19 that preserves the double version,[30] one can still sense the duplication between the hand motif and the motif of the hand holding the javelin,[31] bringing to mind a residue of duplication preserved in the war with Amalek (Exod. 17.8-13). The Septuagint version of the reference clause 'Hold out the javelin in your hand' (Josh. 8.18) is: 'Hold out your hand / the javelin in your hand'. Another similar formulation, which replaces the referent in the Masoretic version and preserves the duplication, is in the Septuagint description: 'And Joshua extended his hand / the javelin...'[32] This ambiguity echoes faintly twice in the Masoretic text also: v. 19 mentions extending the hand without the javelin ('as soon as he held out his hand'), and v. 26 stresses the importance of the hand in relation to the javelin by making the hand the antecedent and the javelin the referent: 'the hand with which he held out his javelin'.[33]

Hence the union in the Masoretic text between the hand and the javelin emphasizing that Joshua 'held out the javelin in his hand' is stylistic editing to blur the fusion of the javelin to the hand. The Septuagint, how-ever, preserves in this instance a version that did undergo such stylistic editing as did the Masoretic text, and there—as in the stories of Moses and the Amalekite war—one can still distinguish the two traditions: the tra-dition of the hand and the tradition of the rod, or in our case the javelin.

4. *The Motif of the Extended Hand Holding the Javelin and the Purposes of the Book of Joshua*

We have seen that through the combined motif of the extended hand holding the javelin the war on Ai became a war in which the Lord fought for Israel. The combination of this motif also drew a parallel between Joshua's activity and that of Moses, the two phenomena woven like threads into the entire book of Joshua:

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29.   Thus we can also explain why the angel who appeared to Joshua repeated the command to Moses: 'Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy', wielding a drawn sword and describing himself as 'the captain of the Lord's hosts' (compare Exod. 3.5 and Josh. 5.13-15).

30.   See Talmon 1960, 1964, and 1977.

31.   Ἔκτεινον τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐν τῷ γαίσῳ τῷ ἐν τῇ χειρί σου ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν.

32.   τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ, τὸν γαῖσον. According to Soggin (1972: 95) it is clear from the Septuagint that Joshua raised his hand and not the javelin, as in Exod. 17.11-13.

33.   While the last two examples may be explained as a kind of shortening by the narrator, or as a style variant, I consider superficial those solutions that ignore the Septuagint formulation and the accumulated evidence.

1. Emphasis on divine acts in the conquest of the land is affected at times through elaboration of supernatural elements in the sequence of the book,[34] and at other times through direct statement.[35] The combination of the two variations of the extended hand holding the javelin (8.18-19, 26) in the second war on Ai illustrates this purpose in different ways.

2. The development of Joshua's image along the line of Moses' is also evident throughout the book of Joshua.[36] No wonder, then, that Joshua like Moses is found to take action through his extended hand. Introducing this motif into the Joshua traditions allowed for two possibilities: that Joshua would signal to the ambush with his javelin or he would with his hand determine the course of the battle. The second possibility heightens the resemblance to Moses while the second is more suitable to conditions of the war. Both possibilities indicate adaptation of the motif to Joshua as commander of the army by replacing the rod with the javelin. Both possibilities appear in the Masoretic text while the Septuagint presents only the first one.

These constraints and purposes certainly had no influence either on the story of the war against the Benjaminites or on the versions of Josephus Flavius, so that neither of them has so much as a hint of the hand holding the javelin.

Interestingly, in the later editing of Chronicles similar editorial intentions are intertwined. There too stories are introduced both to show God's direct intervention[37] and to reveal its heroes in situations like those of the heroes of the past.[38]

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34.   Thus inter alia in crossing the Jordan (3.10-17), the vision of the angel (5.13-17), the fall of Jericho (ch. 6 and particularly vv. 5, 20) and the war in the south (10.10-14)

35.   See n. 16.

36.   At the beginning of the book (ch. 1) Joshua is described as Moses' successor, and at the end of the book, like Moses in Deuteronomy, 'he made a covenant and fixed rule' (compare Josh. 24.25 with Exod. 15.25) for the people, and issues warnings. Particularly in chs. 1–11 Joshua finds himself in situations like those of Moses, as in the crossing of the Jordan and the Passover and more. See also M.Z. Segal 1960a: 157. Hence many nineteenth-century scholars tended to see Joshua as a fictitious character molded in the image of the Moses traditions. See also Cassuto 1958b.

37.   2 Chron. 13.13-20; 14.8-14; 20.1-29. Compare with Japhet 1989: 125-36.

38.   Compare the similarities between Solomon in the dedication of the Temple in 2 Chron. 7.1-4 and Moses in Exod. 40.35; Lev. 9.23-24; Exod. 20.18. See Japhet 1989: 72-73.

5. *Conclusion*

The motif of the hand holding the javelin and signaling the ambush (8.18-19) and the motif of the hand extended throughout the war both appear as variations with a purpose in our story. Erasing them would have solved the problems of a reasonable account of the war. Erasing one would have resolved the ambiguity created by combining them, for their common message links them to the trends operating throughout the book of Joshua, and one of them would have sufficed. Indeed, their combined presence shows them as tendentious, and each theory makes the other redundant.

　　This study has shown that exposing the secondary variants while noting their adaptation to their specific place in the narrative is one way to trace the general tendencies at work in the editing of the book. Whether the book can be dated in this way is doubtful: it gives evidence only of a relatively late stage of the editing. The motif of the hand holding the javelin highlights two comprehensive tendencies in the editing of Chronicles, so the early origin of a motif cannot indicate the time frame of the work into which it is placed: late and purposeful literary editing does not necessarily indicate rational preferences. Comparison with similar stories or ancient manuscripts revealed something of the long and complex process of adapting and formulating the motifs. The different versions in our case indicate 'changes that are the result of continuous intra-biblical literary processes',[39] that appeared to have ended only with the domination of the trend to insist on meticulous attention to every letter of the accepted version. While introducing the motif advances the general editorial tendencies of the book, shades of difference between the Masoretic text and the Septuagint bear witness to a long process of creative editing that came to an end only with the canonization close to the time of the destruction of the Second Temple.

39.　Compare Talmon 1977: 124-63. The quotation is on p. 162.

8

DUAL CAUSALITY

Retrospective Preface

The idea of dual causality that relates to two systems of causation, one realistic and another directed by the hand of God, appearing side by side in explanation of varied events, first came to my attention in Kaufman's commentary on the book of Joshua and in Seeligmann's article on the same subject. The idea fermented in my mind, and as a result I wrote two articles on it.

The first was warmly received by Professor Emerton of Cambridge University, and appeared in 1987 in *Vetus Testamentum*, the journal of which he was editor-in-chief for many years, as 'The Dual Causality Principle and its Effects on Biblical Literature'. At that time I accepted the ideas of my predecessors that the dual causality principle is present only in certain strata of biblical literature. Additionally, I was influenced by von Rad, who maintained that the distancing of the divinity to the backstage area had poetic implications that created new types of writing, which he linked to the time of Solomon. Combining the historical facet of Seeligmann and the poetic facet of von Rad led me then to conclude that the historiographic strata expressing the dual causality principle were linked to the pre-deuteronomistic circles that in time were responsible for the writing of the early version of Deuteronomy and for establishing its school, meaning that they were no earlier than the end of the eighth century BCE.

Some years later, in 1992, I was invited to speak at a gathering in honor of the ninth anniversary of the death of my esteemed and honored teacher, Professor Seeligmann. It seemed right to choose a theme that interested him, but to approach it from a new angle, since I became convinced that all biblical literature expresses the dual causality principle. All of it reveals constant interaction between two systems, the divine and the earthly, and the stories differ as to the way each system is operated. My guiding principle was that biblical literature desired to construct a world of perpetual dialogue, in M. Buber's view, between God and the human being. The need for such a dialogue produced varied opportunities for operating the two systems in different dosages according to the different instances. Hence there are times when divine action is pushed into the

background to one extent or another, while at other times human activity is shown as depending at every stage on the divine will and intervention. The effect is twofold: the reality portrayed is complex, and it can meet the taste and needs of varied readers through the generations.

Scholars of the nineteenth century and at least into the mid-twentieth century assumed that in biblical literature, as in other fields, one should seek development from the concrete to the abstract and from folk ways to enlightenment, and along these continua they dated biblical texts, even characterizing them as of early folk or late abstract origins. Thus a text in which divine causality was prominent would be considered concrete and relatively ancient, while a text that distances God was considered abstract and relatively late. Applying the dual causality principle to biblical texts shows that the authors of late books such as Chronicles preferred the concrete system and made extensive use of divine intervention. It would appear that reality and human needs do not always dovetail with development theories. How else can one comprehend that in the Third Millennium more and more pilgrims journey to the tomb of Rabbi Nahman of Oman and the graves of other saintly persons, and throng to the doors of masters of the Kabbalah?

Biblical editors appear to have been well aware that reality is very complex, and to have been guided by a deep knowledge of human nature. They did not reject either causality option and thus allowed readers seeking miracles eagerly to anticipate the possibility of divine intervention, and readers looking for the real world with its psychological, economic and political motives to satisfy their desires too. Hence it seems to me that the massive use of double causality is one of the great secrets of biblical literature and its ability to stand the test of time.

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Dual Causality—An Additional Aspect

1. *The Existing Aspects*

The term dual or double causality was coined by Kaufmann to meet the apologetic needs of commentary on some of the historiographic literature of the Bible.[1] Arguing 'the historical nature of the book of Joshua' and 'the realistic story of the course of the war' he nonetheless had to deal with the

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1. Kaufmann does not use the term often. I found it in his commentary on Joshua. See the quotation following and n. 2. Seeligmann attests that the term was coined in the course of their discussions. See Seeligmann 1992c: 62 n. 1 there.

biblical presentation of the stories as miracles wrought through God's will and might rather than as achievements of the people and their leader. Kaufmann explained this literary reality as the result of 'a new religious idea revealed in Israel in Moses' time, one that began to create its own special world and formulated the story of the wars of conquest from the outset as a reflection of itself'.[2] This poetic principle serving a religious idea, he emphasized, should not be regarded as later editing of ancient stories, but as basic and intrinsic to them.

This argument served him in his struggle against the prevailing view in biblical criticism that the 'secular' stories preceded those reworked in the religious spirit, and were relatively close to the time the events took place. This clearly had implications on the plane of credibility. The 'secular' story, such scholars maintained, reflected an objective historical reality while the religious one was subjective and tendentious. It evolved later than and remote from the events themselves and came to embody changes that distanced it from its original form. Kaufmann, differently, tried to undermine the distinction between early and late, between credible and tendentious. Within his attempt to 'defend' the historical nature of the books of Joshua and Judges he maintained that 'The religious person perceived the events he experienced in a religious matter, and that is how he relates them'.[3] In his opinion, then, stories fixed in a religious frame cannot be regarded as other than early stories that reflect experiences soon after they occurred. He thought that the ambiguity of realistic materials alongside the stuff of legends resulted from a world view common to Joshua and his generation and to the scribes who, like many in the ancient world, would interweave two systems of explanation: realistic war strategies together with mantic divine promises or deeds that could be perceived as magical. Summing up his analysis of Joshua's victory over Ai, he wrote: 'The mode in this story is the biblical mode. Events occur through double causation: both through regular natural causes and by virtue of God's will that determines their end. Achan sins, Joshua sends out spies. He does not go out with the men of Israel. A medium-sized detachment is sent. Defeat ensues. Joshua 7.1-5 (the first defeat at Ai) is most typical. Sin is clandestine. Openly there is a most regular and 'natural' occurrence. If the spies were mistaken, that too was the result of sin. If Joshua remained in camp, that too was the finger of God. All of ch. 8 is in this mode: the war is fought using the regular tactics of ambush and cunning, but God is present everywhere, for defeat like the victory of Israel is but the sign of the supreme might of God's will...'[4]

2. Kaufmann 1963: 67.
3. Kaufmann 1962: 29.
4. Kaufmann 1963: 128. Emphases in the quotation are mine.

Opposing Kaufmann's approach, on one hand, yet fully aware of the advantages of the new term and its applications, on the other hand, Seeligmann published a study of human heroism manifest alongside divine deliverance as expressed in biblical historiography.[5] Setting aside issues of realism, historical accuracy and reliability that are Kaufmann's main concerns, Seeligmann pointed out different strata in biblical history. Among those dominated by the courageous human hero who promises victory to those around him, there are other strata in which the accent is on divine deliverance through human heroes, usually allowing some scope for human initiative. In other strata God appears as the sole deliverer, with no room for human activity. Seeligmann accepted the biblical research assumption that Kaufmann opposed, and he too thought that ancient folk literature tended to focus on human heroism. An examination of biblical historiography in this light, however, led him to conclude that a classification of the various strata reflected both chronological and theological relationships. Thus stories emphasizing the role of humans were older, while those that stressed God's role were later. It follows, then, that stories formulated on the principle of dual causality where God and humans participate in the historical process side by side belong to an intermediate stratum. The historical relationship to the changing roles of God and man indicated developmental directions in the world of beliefs and ideas. Seeligmann developed the idea of dual causality differently, then, presenting it as an instrument that helped reveal tendentious strata and reworking of historiographical material, making it possible to construct a relative chronology.

The conclusions of von Rad should be weighed too in the light of the foregoing. He not only recognized the enclaves within the biblical narrative where God's role was very much restricted, but also noted the relationship between the new content and the formulation of its stories. He wrote: 'for in the matter of narrative technique this indirect method of the action of Jahweh naturally made much higher demands on the narrator'.[6] Von Rad perceived the new writing method, which he called secular because it put God behind the scenes, in esthetic terms too, and thought that it was a greater and more complex challenge for the biblical author. In his view, the transition to this type of writing was linked to historical changes Israelite society underwent with the establishment of the united monarchy in the tenth century BCE that influenced spiritual life as well. Among many social changes, he mentions the union of north and south,

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5.   See n. 1 above. The influence of his research is evident in Schmidt 1970, and a Hebrew translation was published in Seeligmann 1992c.

6.   Von Rad 1962: 51.

establishment of a new ritual center and the rites practiced there, the strengthened position of king and court, the work of scribes and development of foreign relations. Von Rad saw them all as promoting the development of knowledge and science, a humanistic ambience and new poetics in writing. The transition from recording miracle episodes to writing comprehensive historiographic compositions explains the need to describe God's activity in another way, 'Jahweh had another quite different field in which he worked, one which was much more hidden from men's view and lay rather in their daily lives'. During this period he believes that three important works were written: the Yahwist history that represents comprehensive writing, and also the stories of David's ascendancy and inheritance of the throne, which had to do with recent events (1 Sam. 16.14–2 Sam. 5.12; 2 Sam. 6.12, 20–1 Kgs 2). Having to describe such recent events, where acts of God were not experienced, and the search for his presence in daily life led thinkers and writers in that generation to conclude that human behavior and the concatenation of events are not random, but guided by divine providence. Von Rad, influenced by the classic dating methods and by Rost's research,[7] thus attributes to Solomon's time both the Yahwistic history, where the extent of divine revelation is relatively great, and compositions relating to the history of the court legitimizing the ruling dynasty and its members. The greater the deeds of these dynastic heroes were, the less they gained from the ambience of myth and miracle.[8]

The combination of Seeligmann's historical approach and von Rad's, with its emphasis on the poetic formulation of the narrative material, led me to conclude that the dating of the historiographic strata that express the double causation principle, in which God and humans are two systems operating side by side, are seamlessly connected with the development of the Deuteronomistic school. In other words, the literary materials that put God behind the scenes and apply the dual causality principle reflect a world of beliefs and thoughts that began to emerge in Judea from the eighth century BCE and eventually led to the book of Deuteronomy and its school.[9] At the same time, systematically studying the poetical aspect showed me another facet that is the theme of this article.

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7. Rost 1982.
8. Von Rad 1962: 48-56.
9. Amit 1987, my first work on the subject where I accepted the earlier assumption that the double causation principle could be found only in specific strata of biblical literature and tried to explain this. The present article, however, differs both as to its basic assumption and inevitably in the way it is applied.

2. *The Additional Aspect*

Focusing on the facet of poetics, it appears that all biblical literature as it has come down to us, all of its varied parts and strata, expresses the principle of dual causality.[10] It reveals interaction between two systems of causation, the divine and the human, where the differences between different strata or enclaves are quantitative and qualitative. By quantitative I mean the amount of narrative time allotted to each system throughout the story, and by qualitative, how each force operated, that is, its role and the characteristics attributed to its representatives.

From this assumption it follows that biblical literature has no wish to present a world in which only one system operates, for all of this multilayered literature seeks to establish a world of ongoing dialogue between God and man. As M. Buber said: 'None of those books [those holy books of the nations] is, like it [the Hebrew Bible], full of a dialogue between Heaven and earth. It tells us how again and again God addresses man and is addressed by him.' He continues with an example:

> Very often we hear God's voice alone...and sometimes these records actually assume a dialogic form; but even in all those passages where God alone speaks we are made to feel that the person addressed by Him answers with his wordless soul, that is to say, that he stands in the dialogic situation. And again, very often we hear the voice of man alone...but here, too, the dialogic situation is apparent; it is apparent to us that man, lamenting, suppliant, thanksgiving, praise-singing man, experiences himself as heard and understood, accepted and confirmed, by Him to Whom he addresses himself. The basic doctrine which fills the Hebrew Bible is that our life is a dialogue between the above and the below.[11]

From the poetic standpoint, then, double causality must be understood as a writing technique or as a way to formulate a world, in which there is constant contact between above and below, with the full hierarchic significance of the distinction between them. The challenge that faced the authors was not to set up a real world or one resembling reality, where

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10.   This view naturally is expressed in materials that were developed into a story or a cycle of stories, not in short reports that could serve as a story basis but lack narrative and ideological development. The report of Elhanan son of Jaare-oregim, who struck down Goliath the Gitite (2 Sam. 21.19), will not be the basis of the discussion, but rather the story of David and Goliath. By contrast, lists like the one in 2 Sam. 21.15-22 must be considered within the context. Significantly, this list is introduced between 'God responded to the plea of the land thereafter' (v. 14) and 'David addressed the words of this song to the Lord after then Lord saved him from the hands of all his enemies and from the hands of Saul' (22.1).

11.   M. Buber 1952. The quotation is from pp. 47-48.

God is entirely behind the scenes, but to create variety of possibilities for the two systems, the divine and the human, to function in varying proportions side by side. The strength of the system lies in the varying proportions that allow maximally for the readers' inclinations while presenting a complex picture of reality. Even when the biblical authors take upon themselves this complex challenge—as von Rad calls it, of portraying a 'secular' and quasi-realistic world with divine activity pushed behind the scenes—this is not a logical world where events follow the laws and the order of nature. Nor is it actually a secular world where belief in human powers conquers the place of the divinity. It is a world in which human initiative only seems to hold sway and the reader's other role is to trace the hidden workings of divine Providence.[12]

To illustrate the quantitative difference in activating the two systems, I chose to focus on the Gideon story cycle (Judg. 6.1–8.28), because it contains two story blocks that differ clearly in the way they explain the course of events. In one block first place is given to God (6.11–7.23) while in the other it is given to humans (7.24–8.27a).[13] The point of change from one block to the other comes in the transition from 7.23-24.[14] The first block contains the Gideon adventures until his wondrous victory in the Jezreel Valley, where he acted with only 300 men, while the second opens as the tribe of Ephraim joins the war and concludes with the making of the ephod. In the first block many divine signs appear and instances of direct contact with the Divinity abound: the angel of God appears to Gideon and performs signs before his eyes, speaks to him at night and directs him what to do to the altar of Baal. Additionally, God answers him by repeating the sign of the fleece. Gideon was thus privileged to speak directly with God several times and was even granted a prophecy of sorts through a dream of the Midianite soldier. This block ends with miraculous deliverance: God causes the Midianite soldiers to draw their swords upon each other, and they flee. The second block is entirely different. It centers around a problem of human leadership: the confrontation with the men of Ephraim, with the people of Succoth and Penuel, and in the end Gideon's

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12.   See Spinoza (2007: 91 [15]): '...for I showed that Scripture does not explain things by their immediate causes, but rather relates things in a style and language that will encourage devotion, especially among the common people. For this reason, it speaks in a wholly inexact manner about God and things precisely because it is not seeking to sway men's reason but to influence and captivate their fancy and imagination'.

13.   See Amit 1999: 222-66 for detailed discussion of Gideon story cycle, its units and their arrangement in two blocks.

14.   For other possibilities of dividing this cycle, see Amit 1999: 232-33 and n. 20 there.

refusal of the kingship offered him by the men of Israel. Here there is not so much as a hint of divine revelation or direct discourse with God who is mentioned only indirectly, as when Gideon tells the Ephraimite, 'God has delivered…' (8.3).

Following the plot, the characters, and the role of time and place in each of the story blocks will help us understand how the biblical author managed to create two story systems regarding the interaction between the world above and the world below. Recognizing double causality was the common factor, although each system embodies different proportions between the causes and thus a different operational model.

2.1. *The Plot Material and its Formulation*

It was Aristotle who defined the plot of the tragedy as its important element and even as its purpose:

> The most important of these is the arrangement of the incidents, for tragedy is not a representation of men but of a piece of action, of life, of happiness and unhappiness, which come under the head of action, and the end aimed at is the representation not of qualities of character but of some action… They do not therefore act to represent character, but character-study is included for the sake of the action. It follows that the incidents and the plot are the end at which tragedy aims, and in everything the end aimed at is of prime importance.[15]

The definition is amazingly apt for biblical literature generally, as it is for plot development in the two blocks of stories in the Gideon cycle that express the dual causality principle first and foremost through their plots.

In the first block, with its signs and its miracles, the tendency is to emphasize materials that are implausible and unexpected. Wondrous developments sever the anticipated chain of events and are explained as direct divine intervention. Moreover, stress is laid on Gideon's going forth to war not with the 30,000 warriors who followed him but with only 300 (Judg. 7.1-8), against an army said to be as numerous as locusts and as the sands of the seashore (7.12, see also 6.5). Further on in 8.20, it emerges that at the end of the battle and before the one on the eastern side of the Jordan 120,000 Midianites were killed. Such impossibility and exaggeration not only increase the sense of the miraculous in this story block; it is explained as well, revealing the thematic principle that becomes the poetic principle in formulating the story: 'Israel might claim for themselves the glory of the victory due to Me' (7.2). The narrative material, therefore, was intended to show how each stage in the plot was the result of divine intervention, not of human doing.

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15.   Aristotle, *Poetics* 1450a (25-26).

Nevertheless, realistic material is interspersed. The narrator takes care to inform us that Gideon does not go forth to battle only with the Abiezrites, his father's clan, but sends messengers throughout Manasseh and to other tribes too: Asher, Zebulon and Naphtali. Moreover, he follows familiar military practice. He divides his forces into three groups, operates at night at the change of the watches, stations his soldiers in attack formation around the camp—with no hint of orders to attack but just to cry: 'For the Lord and for Gideon' (7.18).

Introducing the two types of materials, the reasonable and the inexplicable, stresses the existence of the two systems. As the narrative progresses, however, the realistic materials become a means to highlight the divine deliverance. Most of the warriors are sent home, so that all are aware of the size of the army Gideon is to lead. Gideon is left with a handful of soldiers whose fighting arms are tied by his own orders, because in their left hands they have torches and in their right hands horns. Only their mouths are free to shout 'A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!' and their eyes open to see God's mighty deed. Step by step Gideon's army turns into a group of bystanders whose role is to stand still and behold the miracle of how God causes swords to be raised one against the other in the entire enemy camp which then flees, turning from pursuer to pursued (7.15-22).[16] Only after the battle was won do Israelites from Naphtali, Asher and all of Manasseh surprisingly join them to pursue the Midianites. It turns out the army of 300 saw the miracle with their own eyes while those previously sent home heard about it and perhaps for that reason came back and joined them.

In dealing with double causality in this story block, the narrator is seen to express the position that human causality, relying on summoning troops and on putting strategies in place, is subordinate to God's. Therefore, from the poetic standpoint its redundancy has to be shown: the army is summoned only to be dismissed, to return later of its own accord. The tactics could all have been dispensed with on the basis of panic when 'the Lord turned every man's sword against his fellow' (compare for instance with Judg. 4.15). The night and the torchlight against the background hubbub of smashing pottery and blasting horns provide the audiovisual ambience of the battle but do not decide it. At the crucial stage God reappears and leaves only the pursuit phase to mortals. In this case human causality is systematically and openly reduced, its redundancy serving to highlight the principle that the hand of God, not the hand of Israel, saved the day. After the victory divine causality disappears and the stage

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16.   On the connection between this story and the description of the fall of Jericho (Josh. 6), see Amit 1999: 235 n. 22. The latter passage too reflects the combination of divine and human causes.

returned to mortal men. Such double causality, in which the human element is almost redundant, its role limited to continuing pursuit after the battle is won, may cause problems for the reader attempting to reconstruct and describe the battle in realistic and reasonable terms. Such a reader will dismiss some data, complete the gaps, lay stress on the tactics by presenting them as elements of surprise, psychological warfare or the like.[17] By contrast, a reader faithful to the thematics of the story will have no problem with a narrative that does not flow according to natural order, and is likely to be impressed by the poetic solution of two combined systems of causality and the division between them.[18]

Quite differently, in the second block of Gideon stories (Judg. 7.24–8.27a) divine signs are absent entirely. God neither acts nor activates and is mentioned only indirectly: as Gideon speaks to the men of Ephraim, 'God has delivered the Midianite generals into your hands' (8.3); to the men of Succoth and Penuel, 'When the Lord delivers Zebah and Zalmunna into my hands' (8.7), and finally to the men of Israel, 'the Lord alone shall rule over you' (8.23). With that, the reader has no doubt whatsoever that the progress of the plot, as in the first block of stories, unfolds here too according to God's will. The purpose of the story perceived as progression toward divinely supported deliverance results from the structure of the book of Judges as a whole, which presents the deliverer as God's emissary, acting through God's will and for him. Continuous reading also directs the reader to understand the second block of stories in the light of the first and as its sequel. At the same time, the absence of direct divine intervention has a crucial influence on the presentation of details. Now things no longer happen of themselves. Gideon sends messengers throughout Ephraim and the men of Ephraim are summoned. They succeeded in taking control of a small area of the Jordan fords and capture two Midianite generals: Oreb and Zeeb. The trend towards rationality is evident as well in the limiting of the size of the Midianite army, now 'only' 15,000 men. The narrator also

17.   Malamat 1974, especially 224-26, exemplifies this type of analysis.

18.   There is a different division of roles, with cooperation between human and divine causes in the late story of Jehoshaphat's victory in 2 Chron. 20.1-30, where the description of the victory resembles the one in our story. See my analysis in Amit 1987: 397-99. In addition, although in the Chronicles narrative there has clearly been no attempt to make it congruent with the real world, it does introduce realistic materials, such as appealing to God in prayer before going into battle. Moreover, most of the narrative time in this story too is devoted to the human system: Jehoshaphat prays, Jahaziel son of Zechariah addresses the people to encourage them, the Levites are described as singing songs of praise and in the end, before going out into battle, Jehoshaphat encourages his soldiers, saying 'Trust firmly in your God and you will stand firm' (v. 20). That the war lacks a realistic nature is linked to the qualifying element allowing the human system but one role—to call on God.

provides plausible details explaining the victory of the few over the many. He describes the complacency and over-confidence of the Midianite camp that allowed Gideon to capture it with a surprise tactic, terrifying them and using the panic to capture the two kings of Midian Zebah and Zalmunna. The writer even stresses that Gideon terrified the camp without destroying it, although one reasonably assumes that three hundred men would have lacked the strength to destroy an army of 15,000 so merely terrified them, allowing Gideon and his force to capture the two fleeing kings.

Interestingly, the transition from one story block to the other creates no tension. The reader understands that after the great victory in the Jezreel Valley the main purposes of the war was accomplished, with no further need for divine signs or direct intervention. Combining the two blocks with their two different causality systems, then, helps create a deeper understanding of the ways of God and of the complex nature of reality.[19] The poetic test is met in the writer's ability to place the two systems side by side without arousing narrative tension and by adapting the details of each story block to the rules of the overall explanatory framework.

In this context one necessarily recalls the Scroll of Esther, the only book in the Bible where God's name is not mentioned. In terms of quantity, the narrative time devoted to the divine causality system is nil. That said, hardly anyone could imagine that the divine system is not involved in the development of events. M.Z. Segal writes:

> If in Esther we do not specifically hear about the God of Israel, we nonetheless sense His Providence in the world. God is, as it were, behind the scenes of the drama, and hidden away there he causes events to turn, guides human acts and directs events so that they occur at the right moment to save his people from their enemies.[20]

In this late story the divine causality system is only on the plane of suggestion. The reader is free to assume that through the workings of Providence decrees were enacted against the Jews, that when the Jews assemble he is addressed through fasting and prayer, and that God alone is intended in

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19.   Compare with the story of Ehud ben Gera where the divine system acts only in the exposition (Judg. 3.12-15a). Throughout the story itself Ehud mentions God only as a ruse or to summon the army (3.19, 20, 27). God's absence as a causal factor stands out in the conclusion: 'On that day Moab submitted to Israel' (v. 30). This comes across as a most natural conclusion after the series of tactics employed throughout the story. However, influenced by the sequence of the book as a whole, by the exposition of the story and by its formation, the reader is in no doubt that the tactics were successful through the will of God who raised Ehud up as a deliverer. For a full analysis of the episode, see Amit 1999: 171-98.

20.   M.Z. Segal 1960b: 722.

'Relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter' (Est. 4.14). He it was who supported the Jews in the creating and timing of events.

In summary, we can recognize the continuous connection between the human and divine systems that created varied courses of action, from not mentioning God or restricting his presence, through a statement of his role and leaving the stage to human beings, to the point where people became passive in a specific stage of the plot, or active solely on the plane of fears and cries to heaven, leaving the stage to God. As to time frame, stories not considered late, like most stories in Judges, use both systems of causality, as do those unquestionably written later like the stories in Chronicles. Hence double causality is insufficient in differentiating between early and late stories.[21]

2.2. *Development of Characters*

The two systems differ in characterizing the figures involved. Where natural causes are in full view and divine causality is concealed, there is more space for realistic and complex characters. In this context the character's behavior, speech and thoughts are essential for understanding his motives; they are factors in the story and move the plot forward. By contrast, where the divine role is stressed, human characters play a relatively limited part. They are generally flat and less complex, clearing the stage for the appearance of God. Even when the human characters are shown as complex, complexity has its place only until the moment God appears or disappears. The Gideon story cycle clearly shows how the characters change from the moment God disappears.

In the first block of stories God has the central role. From the exposition He acts or He activates. He delivered Israel into the hands of Midian and sent a prophet to the Israelites (Judg. 6.1-10). He sent his angel to talk with Gideon and to perform signs (6.6, 11-24). He even spoke directly to Gideon who is given a test and subsequently interfered in the war (6.25–7.23). In the second block, God disappears behind the scenes and Gideon is at the center of events, acting on his own judgment, [redundant] and activating others—and always aware of God's hidden and significant presence. Gideon's character is naturally presented in a different way in each block. In the first his dominant quality is fear. He feared the Midianites and so was beating wheat in a winepress (6.11). He was afraid of his father's household and the townspeople, so smashed the altar of Baal by night

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21.   Mesha king of Moab in the ninth century BCE also saw the enslavement of his country and his victory as the will of his god Chemosh. See, for example, lines 4-5 of the Moabite Stone in Pritchard 1955: 320.

(6.27). Even the spirit of God that enveloped him was limited to the stage of summoning the army, after which Gideon immediately reverted to his fears and asked for additional signs (6.34-40). He was afraid to descend alone to the Midianite camp so he took his attendant Purah with him (7.10-11). He needed repeated signs to overcome his fear.[22] Quite differently, in the second block of stories Gideon appears as a leader with his own course of action. He acts without any need for signs or other manifestations of encouragement. He is revealed as a diplomat in the negotiation with the men of Ephraim (8.1-3), as a stern ruler *vis-à-vis* the men of Succoth and Penuel (8.4-17), and as a fighter and commander esteemed by his enemies Zebah and Zalmunna and by his own army alike that was prepared to let his dynasty rule (8.18-23). His son Jether is presented as an antithesis to Gideon's heroism in this block (v. 20). From the editorial standpoint, the change from the lowly image of Gideon to the charismatic figure he becomes is explained on the plane of the plot: as the result of the victory in the Jezreel Valley. Put otherwise, the point where the two story blocks come together is the very point that can explain the differences between the two. The change in the presentation is explained as the result of the victory. The dramatic change in the story of Gideon's designation is interesting (6.11-24). At the beginning, when Gideon does not know that before him is an angel of God, he protests, complains against Providence, asks 'if the Lord is with us' and puts the angel to a test. At the end of this story, when he realizes that he has met an angel, he fears the revelation, and this fear accompanies him throughout the first block of stories. In the second part of the cycle, when victory has been achieved, the figure of God disappears and with it Gideon's fear. Presenting Gideon as a charismatic leader whom the people delight to honor requires that the author offer the reader a variety of details about him, such as his appearance (8.18: 'like the sons of a king'), characterizing him by his exploits and words and thus confirming that this person is indeed worthy of the trust and confidence he inspires in his people.

In summary, in the stories whose purpose is to highlight divine causality the human figure is diminished and described in a single dimension, while in stories depicting a quasi-realistic world where God's visible intervention is limited, there is space for more developed human characters whose complexity accords with the chain of causation in their narrated world. In both earlier and later stories the human figure is diminished when there is a one-sided description. The fearful Gideon, dependent

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22.   The fear theme reappears in the water test: will the 300 who lapped the water be 300 cowards or 300 brave men? On different interpretations of the text and on determining that it relates to 300 cowards, see Amit 1999: 257-60.

entirely on an encouraging and strengthening response from his God, is quite different from Gideon the leader who is both diplomat and stern warrior when necessary, both to his people and his enemies, while at the same time he is presented as one who eschews power and rejects the offer of kingship.

2.3. *Relationship to Time Duration*

Time has an important role in the world described here. In the first block of the Gideon story cycle there is a sense of rapid development. The perception of brief time intervals is created by repeating such phrases as 'that night' or 'next morning' (6.25, 28, 38; 7.1, 9). The fast pace increases the sense that the change from subjection to deliverance is close at hand, that is, a miracle is to happen. Thus the editor repeatedly gave time references that stressed the rapid succession of events and their juxtaposition. Building the altar Adonai-shalom to the Lord and destroying the altar of Baal occurred within a day and a night. The signs of the fleece and the reduction of the army, the descent to the Midianite camp and the miraculous war all took place within the shortest possible time. The same technique of employing multiple signs within a short time to enhance the miracle can be found in the episode of the plagues in Egypt (Exod. 7.14–11.10). Rapidly occurring signs also precede the anointing of Saul 'once these signs have happened to you' (1 Sam. 10.1-9). Tightly packed events are in evidence too in 1 Chronicles 11–12, where the conquest is combined with the coronation. A reader trying to reconstruct the reality depicted there will learn that all Israel went up to Hebron to crown David, hurried over to conquer Jerusalem and then right back to Hebron for celebrations that lasted three days. The formulation of the time dimension serves to emphasize God's omnipotence. By contrast, a writer concealing the divine element and highlighting the human one avoids unrealistic details of time. In the second block of Gideon story cycle, while there are no time references, abundant realistic details make it possible for the reader to fill them in. Here too the closeness of events could have been stressed since they are described as a direct response to the war, even before news of Gideon's achievements reached the people of Succoth and Penuel (8.4-9), and before the warriors did what they pleased with the spoils (8.24-26). Nonetheless, as at this stage the writer found it unnecessary to emphasize that events swiftly followed one another, there are no specific references to time.

2.4. *Relationship to Place*

In stories describing a divine appearance we find, besides realistic details, that the place itself is frequently endowed with sacred status. The sacred status of Ophrah as a ritual site in the first block (6.24) may be compared with the lack of reference to the earlier sanctity of Succoth and Penuel in

the second block (8.4-21).[23] The sanctity of Ophrah in the first story block is enhanced by the detailed description of smashing the altar of Baal and cutting down the sacred post beside it (6.25-32). By contrast, the ritual significance of establishing the ephod at Ophrah in the second block of stories emerges only in the tendentious commentary of later editing and does not reflect the intent of Gideon:[24] 'Gideon made an ephod of this gold and set it up in his own town of Ophrah. There all Israel went astray after it, and it became a snare to Gideon and his household' (8.27).

3. *Dual Causality: A Representation of Streams in the World of Biblical Thought*

Most biblical narrative is formulated as a historical sequence that has been subordinated to theological principles purporting to describe and expound the past in a way that can guide the community of future readers. Because of the theological principles served by biblical historiography, it comes as no surprise that the stories depict cooperation between two causality systems as either subjecting the human system to the divine one or making it a pale background for divine activity. Wonder does arise, however, from those stories that push God behind the scenes. These stories raise a question: What was the conceptual world whose principles were applied to prevent substantial amounts of this religious literature from becoming didactic and stereotypical? Or what was the world of beliefs and opinions that demanded an indirect description of the work of God, thus giving the tale a more realistic color within the world described in quasi-realistic terms? Why are all the Bible narratives not written in the spirit of those in the first block of Gideon stories, or in the spirit of Chronicles?

It seems to me that a humanistic spirit of the royal court was not the reason,[25] but rather the need to cope with a distant and abstract conception of a divinity whose temple was not his home but merely the place where his name resides, whose presence is not perceived and even if it watches over all, it is not directly involved in events and does not often reveal itself. This theological confrontation, which characterizes the Deuteronomistic school, led the authors to seek appropriate formulations. Distancing themselves from what was material required transcendence. In literary terms it meant reducing the narrative time devoted to God and

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23.   On the link between the sacredness of these cities and the Patriarchal tradition, see Gen. 32.31 and 33.17.

24.   The reproof appears to be a later reworking of the story, where in its original form the ephod was intended as a memorial to God's deliverance. See Amit 1997: 229-32.

25.   See nn. 6 and 8 above.

having him withdraw behind the scenes by devoting most of the narration time to the human element: most but not all of it. The need to show that God controlled human actions and was the force behind all history led to solutions that scrupulously and continuously combined the two causality systems as they searched for economical, hidden and with that unambiguous ways to make known God's direction and his providence. Naturally, no single solution was found here either. In certain strata one finds the attempt to distance God side by side with stories where he appears and interferes in the course of events. This happens in the Gideon cycle with its two blocks of stories and elsewhere in varying forms throughout the book of Judges.[26] Thus, the formulation of the Deborah section is not like that of the Abimelech stories, nor is the Samson cycle like that of Jephthah. Elsewhere in biblical literature that obviously postdates the book of Judges the Providence of the distant God is embodied in a prophecy or a dream to be realized in the sequence of events that determines the plot of the story told. In this way the stories guide the reader to recognize the existence of God's Providence even when it is not perceptible and events appear to follow everyday rules. In other words, as the operation of the divine system becomes more deeply hidden, the stories are better able to offer a perception of a concealed and distant God. The preference for poetics involving God directly in all aspects of public and private life that is found in later literature like Chronicles arises from the theological needs of the times.[27] It seems impossible to speak of a continuous unwavering line of development from the concrete to the abstract, for at times social needs impel a change of direction towards the concrete. With that it is easy to distinguish between stories formulated later, like those in Chronicles, having no reservations about the role of human beings in the service of God, and the model found from Judges to 1 Samuel 12 with its varying combinations of divine and human causality, as well as the model that truly distances God, for instance in the story of the succession to the throne or the Joseph story.

There is even room for the question as to when the unequivocal demand arose for the literature to formulate a distant divinity. Von Rad's claim that it arose from historical circumstances seems convincing, but the circumstances I postulate are different. Not in the tenth century BCE did it occur but in the eighth century. The ideology behind Hezekiah's reform that removed iconic worship from the Temple (2 Kgs 18.4) and was apparently influenced by the new ideas of the prophets we know as classical. This was the force behind the search for new ways to describe the ties between God and people. From this point the technique develops, improves

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26. See, for example, n. 19 above.
27. See Japhet 1989.

and at times disappoints its readers. But once it emerged it entered the poetic reservoir for writers to use according to their considerations and the changing needs of their environment. In priestly circles, for example, criticism of this technique might have meant a demand for the concrete. Deuteronomistic circles may have asked to what extent God revealed himself to his prophets. No wonder that coping with these issues has remained with biblical historiography for its entire existence.

In conclusion: dual causality is a complex and varied poetic technique designed to formulate various models of a bipolar world, with perpetual affinity between above and below, in which written literature not only gives form to the world but is written for the sake of the world. Therefore this literature too is drawn in two directions—the writers' preferences and the readers' needs.

9

Terms Have Meaning

Retrospective Preface

Word combinations that create potential new and even unexpected meanings have always interested me. And so, when I encountered 'men of Gad' in the Mesha Tablet and noted its resemblance to 'men of Ephraim' or 'men of Judah', as well as their similar contexts, I understood that the phrase had a military significance. An article from 1968 by my teacher, the late Professor Haim Tadmor, reinforced the idea, explaining the combination in military terms as a reference to a people's army based on recruits from the family unit. Tadmor, an Assyriologist and a historian, saw the 'men of Israel' as an institutionalized function active notably during the premonarchic and early monarchic periods.

My ongoing professional activity in biblical historiography in general and the book of Judges in particular indicated that texts could often be assumed to reflect the time when they were written down, rather than the times they described. Moreover, the authors/editors formulating the material often preferred terms with varied and flexible meanings that had to be understood in context. 'Israel', for example, is such a term. It could sometimes refer to the northern kingdom of Israel, sometimes to Judah, and other times to a changing aggregation of tribes. Naturally, this phenomenon has significant implications for the understanding of any particular text. Thus when the children of Israel were said to have done evil in the sight of the Lord, one may ask if it was the entire people of Israel or just the tribes to be mentioned in that particular context. In the case of the book of Judges, this undermines the distinction between the national frameworks for the stories and the stories themselves. I expanded on this in my *The Book of Judges: The Art of Editing* (1999, first published in Hebrew in 1992), and in my Hebrew exegesis on the book of Judges, *Judges—Introduction and Commentary* (1999) in the series Mikra Leyisra'el (A Bible Commentary for Israel), where a section of the Introduction deals with 'Editorial Terms'.

In view of all the foregoing, I concluded that the combination 'men of Israel' may relate to a military force composed of a varying number of tribes. Specifically in the Gideon story cycle, the force assembled to make war on the Midianites, and included men from the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulon and Naphtali, with men from Ephraim at a later stage. In my view, there is no reason why in other circumstances the combination of tribes might have been different, depending on the literary context of the story.

This interpretation helped me to see Gideon's refusal to reign from another angle. Critical commentary is known to view the refusal as a late addition reflecting anti-monarchic tendencies, even though such tendencies can be found as early as Hosea who lived in the eighth century BCE. Harmonistic research, by contrast, interprets the refusal as a seemly refusal or as a ceremonial gesture in which even the Lord is enlisted in the accepted fiction: 'The Lord will reign over you'. Israeli research for many years adopted M. Buber's approach, according to which, historically, the system of government in ancient Israel was application of the rule of God: God's kingship. But for me that solution was never convincing, as it seemed more plausible that in the early days of the Judges, even those who would later be called Israel were still like all the other nations—very, very remote from spiritual governance by the rule of God. Such a possibility, however, would have appealed strongly to anyone who wanted to see the Israelites as a spiritual people from their first beginnings.

As I see it, Gideon's refusal of the monarchy can be explained in realistic terms, though this may not be what actually happened. Gideon the literary hero refused the monarchy because it was offered him by 'the men of Israel', a military group that did not necessarily voice the general will. In other words, Gideon refused to rule formally because he knew that such kingship rested on military power, a kind of junta of the generals that could lead to civil war, although he surrounded himself with royal pomp. This explanation has the advantage of fitting in with the subsequent narrative. While Gideon understood that the time was not yet ripe for monarchy in Israel, his son Abimelech did not. He was supported by 'men of Israel', and the result was bloody civil war in which Abimelech was killed, and the men of Israel dispersed each to his own place.

I still adhere to the interpretation of Gideon portrayed as a wise and realistic leader who sees the true picture, and decides that one can live as a king without being called one, as well as to the importance of editorial terms in interpreting the text.

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THE 'MEN OF ISRAEL' AND GIDEON'S REFUSAL TO REIGN

1. *Introduction*

After Gideon vanquished the Midianite camp and even killed Zebah and Zalmunna (Judg. 8.4-21) the men of Israel turned to him, offering to make him king: 'Rule over us—you, your son, and your grandson as well; for you have saved us from the Midianites' (v. 22). Gideon's instantaneous response was: 'I will not rule over you myself, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord alone shall rule over you' (v. 23).[1] This refusal, contrary to the anticipated human response, has been variously interpreted. Some see it as merely a refusal for the sake of appearances, a matter of a ceremonial courtesy. Gideon was in fact acting like a king, as is evident from his next step, which was to set up the ephod in his own town of Ophrah (vv. 24-27a), and from his life-style described in vv. 29-31. Other commentators do not hesitate to describe Gideon as shirking the burden of kingship, or as objecting in principle because he identifies himself with the democratic spirit of the tribes of Israel. Still others see it as proof positive of historically realized divine rule, 'with God as king in daily life, ruling over Israel, coming and going before them as flesh and blood kings do before other nations'.[2] The common element in all interpretations is an assumption of the event's historical roots: hence every suggestion mentioned above is an attempt to understand the reasons for the unexpected refusal in quasi-realistic terms. With that, most critical researchers regard the negotiation between Gideon and the men of Israel (vv. 22-23) as merely a later insertion reflecting an anti-monarchic ideology. Hence that Gideon's refusal never really occurred except as a metaphor created by later editorial opinion unconnected with the reality as described, and to which it was appended. In fact, this too is historical commentary, since its proponents are disinclined to posit an anti-monarchic ideology in the early history of the Israelites in their own land. According to these scholars, such an

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   1.   While this text does not specifically mention kingship, the reference to a dynastic mechanism of rule transfer and the subsequent use of the root *m-š-l* in the monarchic context (Judg. 9.1-6) indicate that both the proposers and the refuser understand that they are dealing with kingship. Moreover, the roots *m-l-k* and *m-š-l* appear in parallel. Compare with Gen. 37.8: 'Do you mean to reign over us? Do you mean to rule over us?' These roots often appear in nominal parallelism: Pss 22.29; 104.20; 145.13; Mic. 4.8; see also Jer. 34.1.

   2.   Licht 1962b: 1121.

outlook developed through actual encounter with and disappointment by monarchic rule. In their view the disappointment appears first in Hos. 13.10-11, so they do not associate the anti-monarchic trend with any period earlier than the second half of the eighth century BCE.[3] Nonetheless, from the very claim that Gideon's refusal alone is a late editorial insertion, it follows—for those who support this claim—that most of the story is of historical origin written and developed at an earlier date, possibly even close to the time of the events.

This chapter proposes an additional solution based first and foremost on the understanding of the term 'the men of Israel' (איש ישראל) within its literary context. My first assumption, not to be explicated here, is that the entire book of Judges, as a developed historiographic work about the people of Israel as a united group, is tendentious, and its beginnings should be linked to the era after the Assyrian destruction of Samaria.[4] Hence any examination of Judges as a historical source for the period it describes requires additional external evidence such as the archeological record. In the absence of data of this type, any historical reconstruction of the times described is no more than a successful or less successful paraphrase of the text, so I do not attempt to reconstruct the reality of Gideon's time. With that, scrutinizing every unit of text that describes Gideon's times that cannot be ruled out as a historical source requires that we examine both the semantic material it contains and its context, that is, its congruence with the story cycle or book in which it appears. The answer to why Gideon refused to reign will therefore not be limited to the ideological-historical plane of compatibility with the pre-monarchic or some later period, but will be based as well on data as to whether the narrative or character development allows space for the refusal, and how all these integrate into the thematic structure of the general textual context. Yet deciding whether or not such an analysis reflects the historical reality of the times of the Judges can be only a matter of plausibility or faith.

2. *Who Were 'the Men of Israel'?*

'The men of Israel' have already been mentioned as the element that offered Gideon the monarchy. Hence we must to try to clarify the two-word Hebrew term, איש ישראל, that has been interpreted in two different ways. According to the first approach:

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3. For a summary of different opinions, see M. Buber 1990: 59-65. For more up-to-date details and more bibliography, see Amit 1999: 96-99, 260-62.
4. On this issue, see Amit 1999: 360-63.

> The position taken in biblical historiography is to expand the basis of unity, inclusion and agreement at every opportunity, highlighting the (unrealistic) national forum. Thus for example in the assembly at Ramah (1 Sam. 8...). The same is true of 2 Samuel 17, where the last decision of 'the men of Israel' is recorded and by overstatement it becomes the people of Israel, showing that Hushi's advice was generally accepted, nullifying that of Achitopel.[5]

According to this opinion, 'the men of Israel' applied through over-statement to the people of Israel.[6]

H. Tadmor, who offers the second interpretation and whose explanation is less generally accepted, asserts that 'the men of Israel' was an institutional function, within the system of social forces, active chiefly in the pre-monarchic period and in early monarchic times. It appears to have been a people's army based on enlistments from within the family unit.[7] Put otherwise, not only does the term have military significance, but such similar phrases as 'the men of Judah' or 'the men of Ephraim' indeed refer to the warriors of the tribe mentioned in this two-word Hebrew combination.[8]

On Tadmor's proposal there is place for three comments:

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5.   Reviv 1983: 89. In his opinion the biblical account should be rejected, maintaining that the fate of the rebellion was decided not in a general assembly, an inclusive national body, but by the only authorized group—the elders.

6.   Na'aman (1986: 269) thus reiterates that Judg. 9.25, where 'the men of Israel' are mentioned, is a later addition reflecting the view of the Deuteronomistic editor, 'according to which the Judges were leaders of the nation, and hence Abimelech too ruled over all Israel'.

7.   The main source of Tadmor's (1968) argument is the description of Absalom's revolt. He brings further support from three sources he calls 'pre-Davidic': Josh. 9; Judg. 9 (he seems to mean Judg. 8, since the example is from the refusal of kingship) and Judg. 19–20. According to him, 1 Kgs 8.1, which he describes as the only instance where the term has no military significance, is the last use in the historical books. In his view the occurrence of 'the men of Israel' in the story of Absalom's revolt is the last authentic use. Surprisingly, he does not differentiate between the time a source describes and the time it was compiled. For example, Tadmor does not hesitate to call Josh. 9 pre-Davidic, although accepted research attributes it to a Deuteronomistic source.

8.   The combination 'the men of Gad' appears in the Mesha inscription, line 10. Reviv's commentary states: 'The Bible uses the term "the men" (איש) to define tribal units in the process of formation, sometimes mentioned in connection with acts of war (like 'the men of Ephraim' in Judg. 7.24; 12.1 and elsewhere. Compare for our purpose "the men of Tov" in 2 Sam. 10.6, 8, that relates to a tribal element in Aram).' See also Reviv 1975: 20. Line 13 mentions as well 'the men of Siran' and 'the me(n of) Mochrath', apparently Moabite elements that King Mesha settled in the conquered territory. See Reviv 1975: 22-23.

1. A distinction must be made between the term as used in very convincing military contexts (Judg. 7.8, 14, 23; 1 Sam. 13.6; 14.22, 24; 17.2, 19, 24-25 and elsewhere)[9] and instances of its national use (Num. 25.8, 14) or in general contexts (Deut. 27.14; 29.8; and also Josh. 9.6-7; 10.24; 1 Chron. 16.3; 2 Chron. 5.3).[10]

2. 'Men of Israel' as a military term is not limited to only two possibilities—the first and more comprehensive that it is the army of all the Israelites, and the second that it relates to the army of the north, of the Ten Tribes, excluding 'the men of Judah' (2 Sam. 19.43-44; 20.4). To me the term seems flexible. The ancient writer or editor who so desired could use it for differing tribal formations and combinations, whose composition would be determined by the general context.[11] Thus the Gideon story cycle states that the tribes that joined Gideon in the war were Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali (Judg. 6.35 and 7.23) and at a later stage Ephraim too (7.24–8.3). In this context, therefore, 'the men of Israel' were those five tribes. Therefore when 'the men of Israel' offer Gideon the monarchy, one reasonably assumes that they are not the army of the entire nation, but the fighting formation composed of these same tribes. The same is true in the Abimelech episode. There too 'the men of Israel' who supported him were not of the entire nation, but of the military group from the tribes near Shechem, possibly even from the same tribes that earlier approached Gideon.[12]

3. Analyzing occurrences of the combination 'the men of Israel' in Judges 19–21, Tadmor stresses that there is no need to consider the historical reliability of these stories, especially when there is a basis to assume that they were written or edited in the days of David and Solomon for etiological purposes or, better still, as

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9. For Sh. Abramsky (1979: 171-72) it is clear that 'the men of Israel' are a military group. He thinks it was led by Abimelech, not conscripted as kings were wont to do, but volunteers called out from among the Israelites in the hills of Ephraim, apparently the leaders of all the Manassites. He even declares that 'this combination is not to be interpreted otherwise except as regards the men of Shechem, who are not Israelites'.

10. In these cases (except for Josh. 9.6, 7, but compare to the Septuagint and the Vulgate versions) it is preceded by 'all'. The national and general characteristics, then, may be said to come from the later Deuteronomistic or pre-Deuteronomistic sources.

11. On the changeable and flexible use of the term 'Israel' throughout the book of Judges, see Amit 1999: 69-72.

12. Compare with Abramsky, n. 9 above.

polemics.[13] Following his line of thought, then, even if the story itself is not reliable, it bears historical witness to the existence of the institutions it mentions.

Despite these three reservations, the claim that in several texts 'the men of Israel' has a clear military significance seems convincing. However, I do not see the advantage of assuming that 'the men of Israel' was a term used in pre-monarchic and Davidic times designated a specific social function, over the alternative assumption that it arose at the time the books were composed to describe the pre-monarchic period, and served literary purposes only. In other words, 'the men of Israel' may be no more than a literary contrivance used by later authors in describing earlier times for which there were no precise records, the writer deriving it from oral materials and possibly from earlier literary texts. A situation of this type explains why writers would prefer flexible terms embracing various tribal frameworks. No wonder that 'the men of Israel' was the preferred term, for it related to various combinations of tribes, sometimes of military significance, like 'the men of Judah' and 'the men of Benjamin', and also took into account differing degrees of comprehensiveness for the term 'Israel'.

3. *Judges 8.22-23 in the Light of the Military Interpretation*

Turning to Judg. 8.22-23, the assumption that 'the men of Israel' were a military group composed of an indeterminate number of tribes may shed new light on Gideon's refusal. According to this view, Gideon refused an offer that rested on military strength. He could be described as not wanting to base his power on a force that was not supported by the agreement of all Israel, that is, by the inclusive representative body called 'all the elders of Israel'. By contrast, not much later Samuel had to accede to the demand for a king, not only because of the divine command, but because the elders presented it to him: 'All the elders of Israel assembled and came to Samuel at Ramah' (1 Sam. 8.4).

The offer to Gideon is integrated in the story cycle about him at its highest point, as the response to his victory in the last battle against the Midianites.[14] The army that followed Gideon in the war and held the spoils of war offered him the monarchy and was afterwards prepared to hand their booty over to him. This analysis indicates that the offer of the monarchy comes at a natural end point in the story cycle, as an immediate

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13.   Tadmor 1968: 8.

14.   Many of the scholars who reconstruct history regard the war in Judg. 8.4-21 as historical, and as the beginning of Gideon's activity as a military leader. See Studer 1835: 212-16, and following him, many others.

response of the fighting force that achieved the victory. But Gideon refused the offer, for he knew that power not supported by general or at least majority agreement—by a consensus—would lead to a struggle that might end in a bloody civil war. Indeed, the narrative later relates that his son Abimelech, basing his power on partial support, became embroiled in just such a war. At first, only the Shechemites supported him. Eager, however, to expand his power he moved his base outside Shechem and relied on a military force that helped him suppress an attempted rebellion (Judg. 9.22-55). The reader learns of the force that supported Abimelech only through the description of his death: 'When the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, everyone went home' (9.55). From this ending with the specific mention of 'the men of Israel' one concludes that the military body, desiring a monarchy and disappointed by Gideon's refusal, sought the first opportunity to support another candidate. Abimelech, already made king in Shechem by its citizens, seemed suitable, but the resulting civil war in Abimelech's reign showed that Gideon had been right to refuse. The analogical confrontation between Gideon and Abimelech helps formulate the attitude of the reader of the book of Judges to the monarchy, and explains how the attempt to anoint a king was set aside until Samuel's time when a consensus finally emerged.

4. *Conclusion*

The expression 'the men of Israel' in most instances refers to a military framework containing differing combinations of various tribes. It is naturally suited to pre-monarchic and early monarchic times. The book of Judges describes it as the body offering kingship to Gideon so as to explain why he refused. Thus Gideon appears to use diplomatic tactics couched in theocratic language, while according to the writer his hidden reason for refusing was unwillingness to base his power on military support. Gideon is depicted as one who knew that the cost could be the destructive internal wars he wanted to avoid. His power-hungry son Abimelech, however, became embroiled in the type of hostilities Gideon averted a generation earlier, so Abimelech failed. One may even surmise that the author's reservations regarding kingship supported by military force stem from knowledge of the nature and history of the northern monarchy and the plots of rebels against the kings supported by military force (1 Kgs 15.25-29; 16.8-11, 15-21; 2 Kgs 9; 10; 15.8-10, 13-15, 23-25, 30).

Significantly, the refusal is integrated after two stories that show Gideon both as a tactician and diplomat—the confrontation with the tribe of Ephraim (8.1-3)—and as a stern warrior against the men of Succoth and Penuel who would not acknowledge him (8.4-21). These conflicts provide a

fitting background for the offer made by of the military, 'the men of Israel', and for the conclusion arising from Gideon's refusal: that the Israelite tribes were not yet ready for monarchy. At this stage it would have been power guaranteed by force of arms. 'The men of Israel' used in this connection serves the descriptive purpose. In other words, plausible though it may be that there were intertribal military frameworks in pre-monarchic and early monarchic times, they can hardly have been institutionalized and specially designated. Hence I regard the term 'the men of Israel' as a literary or editorial convention at the disposal of later writers and editors. Since they undertook to depict an era of tribal rather than national institutions where unnamed groups were organized ad hoc, general descriptive terms for such groups were created.[15]

As previously stated, and in the absence of further data, the extent to which Gideon's refusal is a historical reality is a question to be examined in terms of faith and/or of plausibility. In our case there is no reason to rule out the possibility of military force involved in pre-monarchic struggles and in the first attempts to establish a monarchy. At the same time, it is unlikely that such a force had a name reflecting a national perspective. 'The men of Israel' is thus the late creation of authors/editors[16] in their attempts to describe a period of fluid military organizations.

15.   A similar system is used in analyzing the pseudo-institution 'Judge'/Judges in Amit 1999: 62-72 (n. 3 above).

16.   On the difficulty of distinguishing author from editor, see Amit 1999: 1-24, especially 15-18.

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The Nazirism Motif and the Editorial Work

Retrospective Preface

This is the first article I translated into English, but at the time it was not accepted for publication. The courteous reply from the editors of the journal, and forgive me if after more than 30 years the name of the journal has slipped my mind, did not ring true to me. My feeling was that they felt it beneath their dignity to publish an article by an unknown scholar who had not yet received a doctorate. I decided, then, to show the article to two of my teachers of whose professionalism I was fully assured, and who, I knew, would find the time to read and react to the article. Professor Moshe Weinfeld's reply was prompt and enthusiastic, despite a few changes he made in the material, and for which I thanked him in the introduction. Professor Alexander Rofé's reply came later (written 7 February 1983, which I have kept to this day). After saying that the article was well written, followed by a few remarks on my Hebrew style, he declared:

> I am not convinced of the main argument, that Samson's nazirism is the outcome of editing. The way of editors is to add stereotyped elements (for example when the spirit of God is made to fall on Jephthah the bandit, Judg. 11.29). But the nazirism of Samson and his mother is a unique element. Hence there is an author here, even if he alters Samson's image from what it was in his sources. It is hard to assume that he invented the nazirite elements. He brings Samson into some familiar and recognized institution.

Maybe Professor Rofé's position is different today. In any case, what he wrote made me the more determined to publish the article.

At the time I was in the midst of my research and attempting to understand the process of editing in the book of Judges, so that I opposed with all my might the idea that editors follow stereotypes, as well as the concept of clear, sharp dividing line between the editor's and the author's role. Most of all I opposed the idea that the nazirism of Samson and his mother was a familiar and recognized institution. Not only was it completely different from the nazirite law in Num. 6.1-21, but there is, in my view, no support for it in the biblical and post-biblical literature.

It amazed me, and amazes me to this day, how easily found are historical examples of biblical institutions, and in our case the institution of lifelong nazirism. Scholars seem so overcome by the desire to understand the social reality of biblical times that imagination overpowers them and thus we face the nazirite war heroes who let their hair grow in the context of war. For example, Kaufmann interpreted the expression בפרע פרעות בישראל (Judg. 5.2) as 'At the time when the numbers becoming nazirites for the wars of the Lord increased...in the time of the Judges there were those who dedicated themselves to the war by a vow to God to let their hair grow as long as the war should last or even until the end of their lives...nazirites who filled a national role as warriors against the Amorite' (Kaufmann 1962: 131-32). Similarly there are those who believe they can describe the democracy of ancient Israel, or the rule of the Judges and even the kingdom of God, as actual reality in Israelite life.

I was convinced, and am convinced to this day, that Samson's nazirism is simply a literary motif, the work of an editor or possibly editors of the Samson story cycle who called him 'nazirite of God' to highlight the divine source of his strength that gives him the aura of a superman, and to tone down his wildly impulsive character. These editors never saw in him a slightest trace of an ascetic and had no hesitation about showing him carousing at banquets, wandering in the vineyards and ever drawn to alien women. The nazirite motif combines with others, such as Samson praying to God, or the spirit of God descending on Samson, all designed to show him relying on God and connected to him. Thus they distanced his image from the mythic giant hero of the Hercules type and brought him into the sphere of the other biblical heroes who depended first and foremost on God.

Lest you be concerned with the article's fate, it was published in 1986 in Hebrew in *Te'uda IV, Studies in Judaica*, edited by Mordechai A. Freedman and Moshe Gil. Now for the first time it is being published in English, and as the prophet Habakkuk wrote, 'though it tarry...it will surely come'.

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LIFELONG NAZIRISM—THE EVOLUTION OF A MOTIF*

Few, meager and difficult to understand are the biblical and post biblical sources dealing with lifelong nazirism.

* My thanks to Professor Weinfeld, who read my previous version and added some important remarks.

1. *Sources in the Hebrew Bible*

1.1. *Samson Story Cycle: Judges 13–16*

The motif of lifelong nazirism appears for the first time at the beginning of the cycle with the story of Samson's birth (Judg. 13.5-7). The angel of God appears before Manoah's wife, announcing to the barren woman: 'For you are going to conceive and bear a son; *let no razor touch his head*, for the boy is to be *a nazirite to God from the womb on*. He shall be the first to deliver Israel from the Philistines.' The woman later repeats the angel's words to her husband, with her own impression and interpretation.[1] She says that the child yet unborn is to be a nazirite for life: 'for the boy is to be *a nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death'*.

   At the end of the cycle the nazirism motif reappears in the story of Samson and Delilah. As he reveals his secret to Delilah (16.17), he repeats what was said by the angel and by his mother in the birth story, with adaptations for the time and the speaker: '*No razor has ever touched my head, for I have been a nazirite to God since I was in my mother's womb'*. This is part of Delilah's fourth, final and finally successful attempt to discover the secret of his strength. His concluding words—'If my hair were cut, my strength would leave me and I should become as weak as an ordinary man'—are not from the revelation of the angel but are characteristic of the story,[2] and well integrated in the three–four model on which the Samson and Delilah narrative was formulated (16.4-21).[3] Samson talks to Delilah only of losing his special strength, in keeping with the story's plot that focuses on 'what makes him so strong'. The story's end illustrates the loss of his strength with the cutting of his hair (16.19-21).

   Finally, in the transition (16.22) to the episode that concludes the cycle, the one in the temple of Dagon (16.23-30), we are told that while Samson was in prison his hair began to grow back. While the narrator does not say so directly, this is a hint that his divine strength also returned, and the reader naturally fills in the gap in light of what the previous episode relates about Samson's very special hair. Hence, when it is said that his hair began to grow, the reader anticipates that during the great sacrifice in Dagon's temple Samson will perform some heroic feat.

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   1.   See Abarbanel 1955: 132 (third question), 133-34 (the solution). Compare Kaufmann 1962: 247.
   2.   Three times Samson repeats, 'I should become as weak as an ordinary man', thus hinting that he is unique, as his deeds show. See vv. 7, 11. In the Septuagint, the *Vetus Latina* and the *Peshitta* this sentence was preserved in the transition between v. 13 and v. 14 and appears the third time; compare with the Hebrew reconstruction in *BHK*. Only the fourth time, in v. 17, does Samson stress that his fate will be that of an ordinary man, and only then does his uniqueness disappear, and he falls into the hands of the Philistines.
   3.   See Zakovitch 1978: 228-33.

Samson's lifelong nazirism appears in this source not as a self-imposed prohibition, but as a divine command that stresses and keeps in mind the origin of his strength. Thus it was that the command was given by the angel who announced his coming birth and hence Samson's power to perform feats beyond the strength of mortal men. From this source we may conclude: (1) that the nazirism would continue 'from the womb to the day of his death'; (2) that Samson the nazirite was limited in only one area—'let no razor touch his head'; (3) that Samson's nazirism was to attain supernatural results. Not by chance, then, does the text repeat 'a nazirite to God' three times (13.5, 7; 16.17) to emphasize Samson's special connection to God through his hair.

With that, two central problems about Samson's lifelong nazirism are intertwined in the story cycle. The first stems from the tenuous connection between the nazirism motif and the fabric of the stories or traditions within the cycle. The Samson stories from ch. 14 to 16.3 are incompatible with the nazirite image. There are no signs whatsoever of restraints on Samson and not the very slightest hint of his unique hair. From this passage, anyone who did not read the story of his birth would never suspect Samson of nazirism of any sort. Samson, who scoops honey out of the lion's skeleton (14.9), wanders by the vineyards (14.5), participates in banquets (14.10-18) and in feats of strength and killings on a heroic scale (14.15–16.3), and whose strength comes from God's spirit resting on him (14.6, 19; 15.14), creates no association with any type of nazirism. After all, no nazirism is associated with the mighty Shamgar son of Anath (Judg. 3.31) or with the mighty men of David (2 Sam. 23.8-23). We hear of Samson's nazirism only in the story of his birth that opens the cycle (13.2-25) and in the concluding episodes: Samson and Delilah (16.4-21) and the accompanying transition verse that links the growth of hair to the destruction of Dagon's temple (16.22).

The second problem is the very tenuous connection between Samson's nazirism and the other prohibitions incumbent on the nazirite, familiar from other cases of nazirism (Num. 6.1-21; Amos 2.11-12). In fact, the only connection between Samson and nazirism is his hair: 'Throughout the term of his vow as a nazirite, no razor shall touch his head; it shall remain consecrated until the completion of his term as nazirite of the Lord, the hair of his head being left to grow untrimmed' (Num. 6.5). Prohibitions as to the fruit of the vine and unclean foods are imposed only on Samson's mother (compare Judg. 13.4, 7, 13 and Num. 6.3-6). From this passage one may infer the nazirism of Samson's mother too,[4] which was closer to the

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4.   Compare Weisman 1968: 210. On the similarity between the nazirism of Samson's mother and of Hannah mother of Samuel, see M.Z. Segal 1956: I.

nazirite prohibitions since it included the aspect of uncleanness.[5] The burden of nazirism that Samson and his mother did not seek out was imposed, and divided between them in different ways: Samson is a lifelong nazirite as regards his hair, while his mother foregoes the vine and unclean foods for a time that seems to end with her son's birth.[6]

In addition, Samson's nazirism appears to be anti-cultic. Differently from the vows and the abstentions connected with nazirism of limited duration anchored in ritual patterns,[7] in Samson's case there is no ritual act.

As an interim summary, then: (1) Samson's nazirism is noted at the beginning and the end of the story cycle, and does not appear in rest of that text; (2) there is a language and a content connection between the instances where the motif of 'a nazirite of God', 'a razor' and 'from the womb' are mentioned; (3) this nazirism is unlike the customs related in the Law and the Prophets, and is expressed in the prohibition against cutting the hair, the advantages of which are realized in Samson's special power in his struggle against the Philistines.

1.2. *The Story of Samuel's Birth: 1 Samuel 1.11*

In this story the nazirism motif appears in the context of a vow,[8] but without mentioning the term 'nazirite'. Hannah the barren wife prays to God and vows: 'if you will look upon the suffering of Your maidservant and will remember me and not forget Your maidservant, and if You will grant Your maidservant a male child, I will dedicate him to the Lord for all the days of his life; and no razor shall ever touch his head' (1 Sam. 1.11). According to this source, Hannah imposes two decrees: (1) the infant will be given to God for all the days of his life, meaning forever; (2) no razor shall ever touch his head. Hannah, then, repeats the statement regarding Samson's nazirism as to the cutting of hair (*terminus technicus*), although she does not impose nazirism on her son.

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5.   The eating of unclean foods is not discussed in Num. 6.1-21, which deals with uncleanness of the dead and not of food. See Radak's commentary on Judg. 13.4. However, there is a resemblance due to the very mention of uncleanness, and the source of differences may lie in different traditions regarding the law.

6.   The story relates nothing about limit of her prohibitions, which can be inferred through the connection between mother and son. As he is a nazirite from the womb, she is subject to the limitations as long as he is in her womb.

7.   See Haran 1968: 786-90, and the bibliography there.

8.   Haran 1968: 790: 'A special type of nazirite prohibition is one in which the maker of the vow dedicates himself to God by letting his hair grow untrimmed and refraining from wine and from contact with uncleanness (Num. 6.1-21). Such a vow Hannah imposed on Samuel before he was born...'

In the Septuagint version of Samuel's birth there is an addition to v. 11 that provides details of Samuel's nazirism and adds the abstention from wine and any strong drink: 'and wine and other intoxicants he shall not drink'.[9]

The Qumran version[10] of our text includes a clearer description of the nazirite. An addition to v. 22 states: 'And I give him as a nazirite forever all the days of his life' ([ונת]תיהו נזיר עד עולם כול ימי [חייו]). This addition possibly reinforces the hypothesis that in this version too v. 11 may have stated other marks of nazirism, such as refraining from wine and other intoxicants, as noted in the Septuagint.

The account offered by Josephus Flavius[11] shows that the version before him was closer to those of the Septuagint and of Qumran, though it is difficult to say which. The end of his story of Samuel's birth relates: 'And the woman, mindful of the vow which she had made concerning the child, delivered him to Eli, dedicating him to God *to become a prophet; so his locks were left to grow, and his drink was water...*' Josephus seems to have been familiar with a version that included Samuel's abstention from wine, and possibly, when he writes 'to become a prophet' the last word replaces 'nazirite' in the Qumran version. Josephus preferred and repeatedly used 'prophet' to impart unity to the image of Samuel in that role.[12]

The foregoing texts show that the attribution of nazirism to Samuel is neither simple nor uniform. It appears to depend on the vow of his barren mother, although his designation as a nazirite is found only in the Qumran version and there too the preserved fragments point to a later stage in the narrative, v. 22. From other parts of the text we infer that the nazirite vow the mother imposes on the son[13] derives from the literary link between this story and Samson's, one depending on the repetition of 'no razor shall ever touch his head'. However, at the same time, in the other stories about

9.   Καὶ οἶνον καὶ μέθυσμα ου πίεται... Compare Codex Vaticanus with its full version that specifically mentions 'nazir' in our text.

10.   Cross 1953; McCarter 1980: 53-54.

11.   Josephus, *Ant.* 5.10.2-3 (341-47).

12.   Josephus, *Ant.* 5.10.3 (351); 6.3.1 (31), 6.3.2 (34), 6.3.3 (35), 6.4.1 (47, 48, 50, 52), 6.4.2 (54, 57), 6.4.4 (64), 6.4.6 (66), 6.5.4 (83), 6.5.6 (92), 6.6.2 (100, 102); and elsewhere. In these passages we witness Samuel as judge, general, seer and priest, while Josephus adheres to the single designation: prophet.

13.   Nonetheless, the phrasing of *m. Nazir* 4.6 is: 'A man may impose the Nazirite-vow on his son, but a woman may not impose the Nazirite-vow on her son' (Danby 1949: 285). {The editor, M.A Freedman, added this note: 'the Mishnah does not deal only with one who consecrates a son already born, for we find in *y. Nazir* 7.1: 'But what if his father sanctified him from the womb?' (Neusner 1985c: 183 [XVII.A]); compare *ibid.* 4.6: 'The law that a man may impose the Nazirite vow on his son applies from birth' (Neusner 1985c: 101 [III.A]). See also Pnei Moshe to both places.}

Samuel there is no reference to him as a nazirite. He is shown as an active priest, prophet and judge but never as a nazirite. The nazirism motif introduced by 'no razor shall ever touch his head' leads to both immediate and peripheral narrative problems. Even in this story one wonders why Hannah did not inform Eli of a nazirite vow regarding her son's hair when she gave him over to the sanctuary. This introduces the peripheral difficulty that in none of the other stories of Samuel is there any reference to his nazirism or to his hair. R. David Kimhi (Radak) highlights these problems in his commentary on v. 11:

> I wonder how her vow that her son should be a nazirite, even before he came into the world applies, and how it applies even if she made it after he was born, as it is said, the man consecrates his son as a nazirite and the woman does not consecrate her son as a nazirite. And even if no one saw any point in it, they said the law relates to the nazirite. And if you say that Elkanah made the vow after he heard it from his wife, we do not see that. And how does the verse come to tell the main point of the vow and write Hannah vowed when it is not a vow—it is remote. And even more I wonder that our Sages of blessed memory did not discuss the matter, for I have not found any sign of it in their writings, not in the Midrash and not in the Talmud.[14]

Jonathan ben Uziel circumvented these difficulties by translating the word מורה not as a 'razor' ('no razor shall ever touch his head') but as 'superior authority' (מרות) meaning there would be no mastery over him. In his view the prohibitions of the nazirite did not apply to Samuel.

Findings from the ancient Near East attest to a custom of consecrating children to temple service, but do not provide material on the prohibitions of temporary or lifelong nazirism[15] of those children. It follows that deleting the nazirite element from v. 11[16] would remove difficulties by creating more congruence between the story of Samuel's birth and what is known of his later life. Moreover, such deletion would integrate the sociological reality the story reflects—consecration of children to temple service—with familiar material from neo-Assyrian legal and other documents.[17]

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14.   Compare with Abarbanel 1955: 169 (fifth question).

15.   Oppenheim (1964: 107) discusses reasons for consecrating children to the temple. See also Elath (1978–79), who stresses his reservations regarding Samuel's nazirism. See there p. 8 n. 1, and Elath's remarks on those 'given over' to the service of king or god, pp. 6-19.

16.   In the Masoretic version the deletion would include 'no razor shall ever touch his head', and in the Septuagint 'wine and other intoxicant he shall not drink and no razor shall ever touch his head'. Ehrlich (1969a: 102) comments on this phrase: 'I suspect these words are redundant...and Jonathan felt this and so changed the meaning of this phrase...'

17.   See n. 15.

1.3. Genesis 49.26; Deuteronomy 33.16; Amos 2.11-12; Lamentations 4.7
Additional references to nazirism in the Bible raise difficulties as well.
Sometimes it is different to determine whether it relates to ritual, or to
metonymic nazirism relating to a perpetually honored and elect status, to
one who is separate or the bearer of special bounties and blessings (Gen.
49.26; Deut. 33.16).[18] Elsewhere the reference to nazirite customs is clear, as
in Amos 2.11-12, which mentions abstaining from wine, and perhaps also
in Lam. 4.7, where nazirism symbolizes purity or an elect state, or may be
connected with mourning customs.[19] Still, these instances do not clarify
whether the reference is to nazirism for life or for a fixed period.

1.4. Absalom's Nazirism (2 Samuel 14.25-26; 15.7-8) and Elijah's (2 Kings 1.8)
In other places where earlier and later interpreters tended to comment on
scriptural passages as cases of lifelong nazirism, the literal meaning of the
texts offers no evidence of it, and the link rests on partial data taken out of
context. Thus it is in the case of Absalom,[20] and thus also in Elijah's[21] case.

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18.   While in both cases Joseph is called נזיר אחיו ('the nazirite of his brothers'), both
earlier and later commentators disagree in interpreting the term נזיר in this context.
The Septuagint, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, the *Peshitta* and the Samaritan Targum reflect the
meaning of prince and ruler. *Onkelos* interprets it as separation from his brothers. The
Vulgate and the Amoraic dispute preserved in *Gen. R.* 98.20 refer to an actual nazirite:
'"…and on the brow of him who was separate from his brothers": For his brothers drove
him out and treated him as an isolate [Nazir, the same word used here]. Said R. Isaac
Madbelaah, "The meaning is, 'you are the crown of your brothers'". R. Levi said, "He
was in fact an actual Nazirite". For R. Levi "during the entire twenty-two years that he
did not see them, he never tasted wine…"' (Neusner 1985b: 370 [8.A.-10.B.]). Similar
disagreement recurs among critical commentators; see, for instance, Skinner 1930: 532-
33. Significantly, Kahana (1969: 138) notes: 'We know virtually nothing about nazirites
in Israel, and have no way to find out why Joseph was compared to a nazirite. That the
text mentions the crown of the head indicates nothing about nazirism and long hair,
because the crown of the head simply parallels "head" that precedes it.'
19.   In this source, as in Gen. 49.26 and Deut. 33.16, one cannot distinguish between
nazirism following a vow and in the broader sense of princes and dignitaries. Some
modern scholars even propose that נזיריה ('her nazirites') should be amended to נעריה
('her young sons'). See *BHK* for our text. Compare with Kraus 1960: 76-77 and Hillers
1972: 20, the latter being unsure that such a correction should be made, while he does
think that the meaning is 'young noblemen' and not 'nazirites'. See also *Midrash Leqah
Tov* (Greenup 1908: 61): 'Maybe they drank [melted] snow…or because her ministers
were distinguished from the people by their wealth and their fine appearance they
were called her nazirites'.
20.   On nazirism and Absalom in post-biblical sources. See below, §2.1 and n. 29.
21.   The frailty of this assumption is evident from the lack of affirmative sources
and its supporters' reliance on multi-faceted associations irrelevant to the nazirite
laws. See Weisman 1967: 213 and there n. 32. Regarding the description of Elijah as 'a
hairy man', Weisman acknowledges the weakness of his claim.

There is no connection between Absalom's abundant hair (2 Sam. 14.25-26) and the vow he made when he lived in Geshur (15.8).[22] Moreover, nothing is said as to whether Absalom's vow in Hebron (15.7) involved any nazirite obligations. In these stories there is no connection between the hair and the vow that provide motives and background details for the narrative. The vow is a justification to go down to Hebron while the hair is linked on one hand to Absalom's handsome appearance[23] and on the other to the story of his death.[24]

Neither does the description of Elijah as 'a hairy man' indicate that 'no razor ever touched his head'.[25] The description may even be assumed to refer to Elijah's *mantle,* a central motif in these stories (see 1 Kgs 19.13, 19; 2 Kgs 2.8, 13, 14). Perhaps it was even a hairy mantle.[26] In any case the nazirism attributed to Elijah rests entirely on this one isolated, unclear verse.

1.5. *Summary of Biblical Material*
The sources in the Hebrew Bible tell of only one person, Samson, who can be described as a nazirite for life, since he was a nazirite from his mother's womb until the day of his death. In the text, however, he is called 'a nazirite to God' (Judg. 13.5). There is no material regarding his nazirism that can add to the knowledge of the rules of nazirism for life, since the stories relate only to his nazirite hair and its connection with his God-given strength.

22.   Even Weisman (1968: 211) admits that the motive for Absalom's nazirite vow at Geshur was fear of a blood feud. In the absence of further details, he posits that literary editing may have erased the tradition of Absalom as a nazirite while in exile.

23.   The handsome leader motif recurs in Samuel: see 1 Sam. 9.2; 16.12; 17.42; and 1 Kgs 1.6. Compare also with Ps. 45.3. Hair as a sign of beauty is mentioned in Song 5.11; 6.5. Compare with Josephus, *Ant.* 8.7.3 (185).

24.   On the link between his hair and his death, see *m. Sot.* 1.8: 'Absalom gloried in his hair—therefore he was hanged by his hair' (Danby 1949: 294).

25.   From Josephus (*Ant.* 9.2.1 [22]) it may be inferred that the hair of the head was meant. Compare with Radak and Metsudat Zion on 2 Kgs 1.8. In neither is there a hint of the hair of the nazirite. Besides, such a link could even lead to the conclusion that the curled locks of the beloved from the Song of Songs were the untrimmed hair of a nazir, and so his eyes are bathed in milk, not in wine (Song 5.9-16). Critical scholars tend to interpret the case of Elijah as 'hairy mantle', see Kittel 1900: 183; Montgomery 1951: 350 and others.

26.   In the Christian tradition aspects of Elijah have been embodied in John the Baptist. Elijah as one summoning to repentance (Mal. 3.23) is conferred on John, who calls for repentance and baptism (Mt. 11.7-14). Some other biographical and external features of Elijah are also those of John the Baptist (compare Mk 1.4-6). In this source hairiness refers not to the head but to a cloak of camel's hair!

The nazirism of Samuel is linked verbally to that of Samson, but creates practical difficulties both as to the story in which it is embedded and in the Samuel stories as a whole.

The other cases of nazirism are nazirites in doubt (Joseph, Absalom and Elijah) or lifelong nazirites in doubt (Amos 2.11-12; Lam. 4.7).[27]

2. *Post-Biblical Sources*

In the varied post-biblical sources available to us, the halakhic as well as the historical, there is scarcely any discussion of the lifelong nazirism. Most of the debate and most examples relate to nazirism for a given period.

2.1. Mishnah Nazir *1.2*

The beginning of the tractate lists the obligations of the lifelong nazirites, and immediately the Mishnah encounters difficulties in Samson's stories, and so differentiates between lifelong nazirism and that of Samson:

> 'I will be like Samson', 'like the son of Manoah', 'like the husband of Delilah', 'like him that tore up the gates of Gaza', or 'like him whose eyes the Philistines put out', he becomes a Nazirite the like of Samson. How does a lifelong Nazirite differ from a Nazirite the like of Samson? If the hair of a lifelong Nazirite becomes too heavy he may lighten it with a razor and he then brings the three [offerings of] cattle, and if he becomes unclean he brings the offering for uncleanness; but a Nazirite the like of Samson, if his hair becomes too heavy he does not lighten it, and if he becomes unclean he does not bring the offering for uncleanness.[28]

The Mishnah characterizes the lifelong nazirite as one who with his razor lightens his heavy hair, which is expounded as a sign of Absalom's lifelong nazirism:

> R. Judah the Patriarch says, 'Absalom was a lifelong Nazir, and he cut his hair once in twelve months, as it is said, And at the end of four years Absalom said to the king, 'pray let me go to and pay my vow, which I have vowed to the Lord, in Hebron. For your servant vowed a vow while I dwelt at Geshur, in Aram, saying…'[29]

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27.   The Rechabites, who also abstained from wine (Jer. 35), practiced other restrictions but not the absolute sign of the nazirite, the untrimmed hair. See Haran 1968: 798 and Talmon 1966. Compare also with Safrai 1979. (My thanks to Professor M.A. Freedman who brought this article to my attention.)

28.   Danby 1949: 281. Compare *y. Nazir* 1.2; *b. Nazir* 4a-b.

29.   The quotation is from *t. Sot.* 3.16 [C] (Neusner 1979: 158). See also *Mekhilta deRabbi Ishmael, Shirata* Chapter 2 (Neusner 1988a: 183 [12]); *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai* (Nelson 2006: 125), and compare with the Braitha in the *b. Nazir* 4a-b. Still, 'R. Yosi

It seems that nazirism of the type R. Judah the Prince attributes to Absalom,[30] the prototype for the rules governing lifelong nazirism, appears to arise from the need to fill a halakhic gap, with no affirmation of it in the biblical text. In any case, as early as the Mishnah, a distinction was made between the ritual elements and the non-ritual nazirism of Samson, who, even if he became unclean, did not bring sacrifice for uncleanness.

2.2. Mishnah Nazir *9.4*
We learned at the end of Tractate Nazir:

> According to R. Nehorai, Samuel was a Nazirite, for it is written, *And there shall no razor come upon his head*. Since it is said of Samson, *And no razor shall come upon his head*, and it is said also of Samuel, *And no razor...*, as the razor spoken of concerning Samson means that he was to be a Nazirite so the razor spoken of concerning Samuel means that he was to be a Nazirite. R. Jose said: But is not [this word] *morah* meant only of flesh and blood? R. Nehorai said to him: But was it not once said, *And Samuel said, How can I go? If Saul hear it, he will kill me*—thus upon him there came once *morah* (the authority) of flesh and blood![31]

R. Nahorai infers Samuel's nazirism via Samson's, specifically through the repetition of the phrase 'and no razor shall touch his head'. He seems to base this on a tradition of commentary prevalent in Second Temple times that has echoes in Ben Sira who calls Samuel 'one consecrated to the Lord in the prophetic office'.[32] So it is in the Septuagint, which attributes abstention from wine or other intoxicant to Samuel, and in the Qumran version, which explicitly states that Samuel was a lifelong nazirite through his mother's vow. By contrast Rabbi Yosi interprets מורה as in *Targum Jonathan* to mean the rule of flesh and blood, denying Samuel's nazirism just as he denies Absalom's, according to Lieberman.

2.3. *Additional Post-biblical Sources*
Additional post biblical sources, such as 1 Maccabees,[33] Josephus Flavius,[34] the New Testament[35] and Philo of Alexandria,[36] deal with ascetic practices:

says, "He would cut his hair every 30". As it says in Scripture, "...he had to have it cut from days to days, etc." [2 Sam. 14.26]' (Nelson 2006: 125). Since 'days' is unspecified, he understands it as a period of thirty days; see *y. Nazir* 1.3 (Neusner 1985c: 24). But according to Lieberman (1973: 642), R. Yosi did not think Absalom was ever a nazirite.

30. On the issue of attribution to R. Judah the Prince or to R. Judah bar Ilai, see Lieberman 1973: 640.

31. Danby 1949: 292-93.

32. Ben Sira 46.13 (Skehan 1987: 516, see also 517-18).

33. 1 Macc. 3.49-51: '...and they shaved the Nazarites who had accomplished their days...' (Charles 1913: 79).

34. Josephus, *Ant.* 5.8.2 (278); 19.6.1 (294); *War* 2.15.1 (313-14).

their examples are nazirites for a period, with not even a hint regarding lifelong nazirism. Any discussion of the nazirism for life in the Sages in the Mishnah, both Talmuds, the Midrash and the *Tosefta*[37] returns to Absalom as the prototype of lifelong narizism and the laws derived from it.

2.4. *Summary of the Post-biblical Material*

From halakhic sources we learn that Samuel's nazirism was like Samson's, which certainly did not resemble lifelong nazirism. Halakhah thus helps to break the link between Samson and Samuel and nazirism for life by showing them as a special and impracticable case.[38]

Halakhic sources encounter such difficulties with the model of the nazirite for life that they resort to the far-fetched case of Absalom for the characteristic example of this kind of nazirism and its laws. Neither do historical sources provide any hint of a case of lifelong nazirism. Both sources, then, cast doubts as to the historical existence of such a phenomenon.

3. *Evolution of a Motif*

It seems to me that the difficulties presented here can be resolved once we assume that lifelong nazirism was never mentioned or even implied in the Bible. Therefore Samson's nazirism should be understood as the product of editing for literary and theological purposes, not as a tradition reflecting any social reality. The nazirism attributed to Samuel attests to later literary influences due to situational and associational circumstances.

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35.   Acts 18.18; 21.23-24. See also the description of Jacob brother of Jesus in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 2.23.4-6.

36.   Philo, *Laws* 1.43-45 (243-49); *Life* 1-11 (1-90).

37.   See nn. 28-31 above. Maimonides, *Laws Concerning Naziriteship* 3.11-12 (Rambam 1962: 131-32), in discussing Absalom and Samson as nazirites, reiterates the expression 'This fact is based on the authority of the tradition'. Compare with Ralbag on 2 Sam. 14.26.

38.   We read in *y. Nazir* 1.2: 'Said R. Hinena, "It is reasonable to suppose that the Nazir vow specified by the Torah should take precedence over the Nazir vow in the manner of Samson. What is the reason in Scripture for this position? "So shall he do according to the Torah for his separation as a Nazirite" (Num. 6.21). This refers to the one whose Naziriteship accords with the specifications of the Torah, thus excluding the one whose Naziriteship follows the example of Samson, which is not the same as that of the Torah. *If a Nazrite in the status of Samson is made unclean, he does not bring an offering on account of uncleanness [M. 1.2H]*. ...R. Simeon says, 'He who says "Lo, I am like Samson" has said nothing'...' (Neusner 1985c: 23 [VII.H-K, VIII.A-F]). Compare also with *b. Nazir* 4b: 'But wasn't Samson a Nazirite [by reason of a vow]? Surely it is written... *In that case it was the angel who said it*' (Neusner 1999: 13 [Chapter 1, 1.5A-B]).

3.1. *How the Leopard Changed His Spots and Samson became a Nazirite of God*
Biblical commentators have no doubts that the image of Samson as a judge in Israel is extraordinary, entirely different from the other judges both in his deeds and his fate. Later commentators are divided as to whether it is extraordinary because the Samson cycle is composed of fragments of myth,[39] or because the stories echo folk tales and traditions.[40] Literary compilation would have been required in view of Samson's extraordinary nature and qualities. The editor who combined the traditions and stories into one cycle within the literary and ideological framework of the book of Judges had to employ a range of techniques to refine the image of so impetuous a hero with superhuman strength, who acts on personal motives only.[41] These needs, along with the difficulties that Samson's nazirism presents, indicate in my opinion that his nazirism was not an element in the ancient tradition, but an editorial tactics purporting to show him as God's emissary in the struggle against the Philistines. Why, then, did the editor choose nazirism as a solution? This motif, as I see it, combines with the ancient one of magical hair as the source of individual power and vitality—in our case, Samson's.[42] The more the magical hair is stressed, the more Samson will be seen as a mythic figure, not as a histori-cal Israelite hero whose deliverance comes from his God. Thus blurring the original significance of the magical hair is part of the de-mythologizing process, accomplished by replacing magic with God's nazirism. The hair, then, is no longer some independent entity but rather the sign of Samson's special connection with his God—the connection of nazirizm. And so the editor of the story created the concept 'a nazirite to God'—one whose head no razor touches from his mother's womb—in order to adapt Samson, that rash, impulsive hero who acts alone, to the specific concepts of restraint in Israelite historiography.[43]

   As the separate stories were worked into a complete cycle, there seems to have been a decision to introduce the motif of Samson the nazirite to God at the beginning and end, to create a circular literary unity and so to emphasize that God's will controlled Samson's fate. Thus Samson appears in his birth story and in the Delilah episode as a nazirite to God, creating a

   39.   See, for example, the commentary by Moore 1895: 364-65; Burney 1970: 391-408, and also those scholars who ask about the origin of the myth. Palmer (1913: 18) connects it with the Babylonian myth, while Gordon (1955) associates it with the Greek myth. There are also those who connect it with ancient Hebrew myth. Thus Dinur 1966: 536-37; Tur-Sinai 1950b and others.
   40.   See Gunkel 1913: 38-64; Gressman 1914: 243-58; Frazer 1923: 269-82 and others.
   41.   See Burney 1970: 336-40; and also M.Z. Segal 1957: 141-42.
   42.   On heroes with magic hair, see Frazer 1923: 272-73.
   43.   Compare Kaufmann 1962: 243. On de-mythologizing the Samson stories without reference to nazirism, see Zakovitch 1982.

close stylistic link between the two passages. In the birth story the editor expanded the connections between Samson's special nazirism and the other laws of nazirism—abstention from wine and unclean foods—but as it did not fit the figure of Samson, he transferred them to his mother. The nazirism of the hair therefore indicates the special relationship of Samson to his God, gracing his image with the unique elements of an Israelite hero. The nazirite motif is thus adapted to its dwelling place in the Samson story cycle, hence there is no reason to seek anthropological evidence for such nazirism.

3.2. *What has Samson's Razor to Do with Samuel?*

A comparison of the Masoretic text, the Septuagint and the Qumran version points to a development and expansion, even a reincarnation, of this motif. In the first there is a brief passage that associates the uncut hair to his mother's vow. In the Septuagint the motif is expanded to include abstention from wine and strong drinks. The Qumran version goes on to add that Samuel was consecrated as a lifelong nazirite by his mother. This snowball effect allows one to assume that the end of 1 Sam. 1.11, 'and no razor shall touch his head', was not part of the original story. Rather, it was an explanatory, didactic editorial expansion,[44] like expansions found in the Septuagint and at Qumran. This hypothetical assumption can be proved if, on one hand, we can show the difficulty inherent in the razor element, and, on the other, point out why it was introduced in its present place. It has already been shown that erasing Samson's forbidden razor from the story of Samuel's birth would eliminate the difficulties noted in the first section of this chapter,[45] and also it would have shown Hannah's vow to be compatible with the ritual culture of the ancient Near East. One can also reconstruct the circumstances that led to the added development. First, Eli suspects Hannah of being drunk (1 Sam. 1.13-14), and she protests that she has taken neither wine nor other intoxicant. At this point there is a similarity to Samson's mother, ordered to abstain from wine and strong drinks. Second, in praying to be freed from her barrenness, Hannah vowed to consecrate her son to God. This recalls the barrenness of Manoah's wife and the way her son was connected to God; (c) The vow and the abstention

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44. Compare with Talmon 1977: 162: 'but one may yet think that among the changes of versions found in the Qumran manuscripts, there are changes resulting from ongoing intra-scriptural literary processes…' See also the comment on p. 163: The above discussion seems to reinforce the claim that was its point of departure, namely that in ancient Hebrew literature there is no clear distinction between the authors' style and the procedures guiding those that handed down and copied their work…'

45. See above, section 1.2.

from wine create a linguistic and substantive association with the nazirite law: linguistic in that combination of vow and nazirism hark back to Num. 6.2, 5 and 21 and form the associative basis for introducing nazirism at point where the vow is mentioned. Substantively, a previously barren woman's unborn child has to be different from his brothers and is destined to be God's emissary in the struggle against the Philistines. All these create the background common to the images of Samson and of Samuel. And so it was that 'no razor shall touch his head' was added to the story of Samuel's birth and Hannah's vow to consecrate her son to God, at the same time forging a close link between this story and Samson's. It is even stronger in the Septuagint and reaches a climax in the Qumran editing. The various editions of these texts indicate the flexibility of the link, that is, the possibility of expansion and development at the hands of different editors, leading naturally to a conclusion as to its original redundancy in the Masoretic version, into which it was introduced in later reworking and editing.

4. *Conclusion*

Nazirism for life is unknown in ancient Near Eastern texts that reflect the reality of religion and ritual. Nor does it exist in the post-biblical reality of the Second Temple and of later times. It is found only in Judges 13–16, where it appears to serve literary and theological needs rather than to depict any social reality. In connection with Samuel's birth story the motif reappears merely because of associative insertion. There is no basis for lifelong nazirism in biblical law and no examples of it in the social reality reflected in the Bible's historiographic literature.

The efforts of the Sages to discover lifelong nazirism in the Absalom stories attest to the absence of better sources. Here is the criticism of Radak:

> ...because it was an accepted tradition for them, for in the verses they did not see it, for it was possible that he grew his hair for its beauty, to be vain... but they of blessed memory accepted that as a nazirite he grew it and [they] learned from it that he who took a nazirite vow for life, when his hair became a burden, eased it with a razor.[46]

The first attempt to institutionalize lifelong nazirism on a biblical basis is in the Mishnah. This may be understood in light of the internal dialectics of the debating system in use among halakhic sources, and the Sages' desire to find even hypothetical prototypes among biblical heroes. Absalom became the prototype of the lifelong nazirite.

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46.   Radak on 2 Sam. 14.26.

Interest in this attempt has flourished in modern studies,[47] apparently because of additional interest and importance being given to all types of asceticism and ascetic life in the Christian tradition. It developed both through the encounter of Near Eastern and Far Eastern ascetic traditions, and because of the tendency to read the Bible as a realistic background for varied anthropological and sociological phenomena.

Auerbuch's view seems appropriate: '*Instances of abstinence among the Talmudic Sages are not relics of an ancient and withered ascetic theory*, but the result of certain events in the history of Israel and of its religion'.[48] Following him I argue too that lifelong nazirism was always against the spirit of the Bible and that there are no roots or even signs of it there. Where some quasi-nazirism seems to be mentioned, a literary motif that serves the editing needs can be disclosed—as in Samson's case—and linguistic and content associations attached it to Samuel as well. Put otherwise, there is no basis whatsoever for the claims of many modern critics that the nazirite law from the book of Numbers did not mention the lifelong nazirite, since he did not bring sacrifices,[49] and that the phenomenon is affirmed through the examples in the Early Prophets.[50] Our own study discloses literary motifs and metaphoric ornamentation on one hand, and quasi-nazirites—Joseph, Samson, Samuel, Absalom and Elijah—on the other. If these are supposed to affirm the presence of lifelong nazirism in the Hebrew Bible, they are the strongest possible proof of its absence.[51]

47.   G.B. Gray 1900; Weber 1952: 94-95; de Vaux 1961: 465-57; Vriezen 1967: 178. For additional bibliography, see Haran 1968: 799 and Gevariahu 1966: 522-35.

48.   Urbach 1960: 48-68. The quotation is from p. 67. The emphasis is mine.

49.   See Haran 1968: 796

50.   See Blumenkrantz 1970, and also n. 47 above. The harmonistic solution accepted by many modern scholars is nazirism of war heroes. See, for instance, Kaufmann 1962: 131-32; Gevariahu 1966: 534-35; Blumenkrantz 1970: 84-85. However, Gevariahu admits: 'Samson's nazirism is the key and the point of departure for understanding the nazirism phenomenon in Israel... [T]hus all the nazirites who arose in Israel were nazirites of war.'

51.   Note the doubt in Haran 1968: 798: 'The basis for the nazirite laws in Second Temple times lay in the nazirite passage in the Torah (Num. 6.1-21). *Lifelong nazirism was possible*, and the law of the Sages recognizes it, but actually it was practiced only for a set time' (emphasis added).

11

Editorial Considerations Regarding Ending

Retrospective Preface

Most critical commentators on the Bible agree that the end of the book of Judges is an appendix divided into two parts: the story of Micah who built a house of God in the hills of Ephraim (Judg. 17–18) and that of the rape of the concubine in the town of Gibeah, which led to civil war between Benjamin and the other Israelite tribes (Judg. 19–21). In my doctoral thesis on the book of Judges, I discussed the differences between the idea of a conclusion, an appendix and an additional unit and, through these distinctions, attempted to prove that the book does not have an appendix. Chapters 17 and 18 alone are the conclusion of the book, while chs. 19–21 are a unit designed to prepare the reader to encounter the book of Samuel, and was added to Judges at a later date. Additionally, I focused on the technique of adjunction that allowed the biblical editors to present chs. 19–21 as if they were a unit affirming the idea that 'In those days there was no king in Israel, and each man did what was right in his own eyes'. The present study was presented at the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies in 1986.

The additional story of the concubine in Gibeah continued to occupy me thanks to my student Dr Cynthia Edinburg, who wrote her doctorate on it with Professor Nadav Na'aman and me as her advisors. In the 1990s I returned to the subject from the perspective of the hidden polemic, presenting it as a story designed from start to finish to slander and denigrate Israel's first king, Saul, in order to justify the divine decision to take the monarchy from him and bestow it on David and his dynasty.

Today I am still convinced that deleting from the story of the concubine in Gibeah the external anti-monarchic envelope concentrated at the beginning (19.1a) and at the end (21.25) we would produce a text that is not about setting a king over Israel. In fact, it describes the tribes of Israel as a politically and religiously united and organized group, needing no king to defend its principles and values or to solve its problems. Thus, if a tribe transgressed, and if the sin was perceived as so dreadful as to resemble that of Sodom and Gomorrah, the entire community would be

organized as one man in all-out war against that tribe. Moreover, even when there was a king in Israel, problems such as rape and internecine strife, including civil war, did not disappear—witness the story of Tamar's rape, which eventually led to Absalom's rebellion, which was also a civil war. In other words, a king is not the solution to problems raised by the concubine in Gibeah episode.

Why was it so important to append the story in chs. 19–21 to the transition between the books of Judges and of Samuel? My answer is based on editorial rhetorical considerations, and on the premise that the editing was not one single process. Today I might have presented the material in a less integrated and harmonious way than I did in the 1980s. With that it still seems to me that the two episodes concluding the book of Judges—the story of Micah's image and the one about the concubine in Gibeah—represent separate functions and separate editorial stages.

Micah's story represents editing at its best, editing that considers the way the tale will serve in resolving the problems the book poses, so that its placement in its present place ranks it as a thematic conclusion and a necessary response to the disappointment over the era of the Judges. Observing the Judges in the light of this story shows them as capable of limited solutions only, solutions that do not prevent anarchy, whether on the ritual, tribal-political or civic-personal levels. Micah has no one to turn to when attacked by the Danites, his fate disclosing a situation of absent judge and absent judgment. The Danites have no one to turn to when forced to seek new territory, since there is no king to defend borders. Ultimately, even the establishment of temples knows no law, for whoever had the means, even if acquired by deceit or by force, could possess themselves of the necessary furnishings and of a priest, and set up a temple. The editor here saw before him the messages conveyed by the book of Judges, and felt that stable dynastic rule was the solution for the problems illustrated by the episode of Micah and the Danites, and the solution for the problems of the entire book of Judges.

The story of the concubine in Gibeah, on the other hand, is linked to issues we find in the book of Samuel that describes the choice of the first king, a Benjaminite whose monarchy fails. This story was added in its present place for rhetorical reasons, to prepare the readers of Samuel for the replacement of a ruler from Gibeah of Benjamin with one from Bethlehem of Judah, for that was what the times demanded. That editor appears to have been familiar with the Deuteronomistic history in which the book of Samuel follows Judges and where the house of David has uncontested supremacy.

But this answer shows that the editor responsible for the adjunction completely ignored the fact that Saul too was a divinely designated king of

Israel and that any complaints on that score should be addressed to divine providence. Close study of the concubine in Gibeah episode, however, reveals that problem as one of several unresolved issues, of which I cite only one. There is no explanation whatever for Israel's repeated failures in the battles against Benjamin, despite having gone forth only after receiving the Lord's assent. Hence in my Hebrew commentary on the book of Judges I presented chs. 19–21 as a unit incompletely reworked and edited. My picture is that some editor took the material from a scribe's desk although work on it was unfinished, and pasted it into its present place. He certainly would have received no prize for distinguished editing. Yet, as everyone knows, all activity involves risk of error and failure, and so I do not hesitate to see the story of the concubine in Gibeah as the failure of an editor who hastened to include unfinished work.

As for me, on the one hand, I promise to expand on the subject in the future, while, on the other hand, I am grateful for the failure that reveals those strong currents of feeling against Saul that continued to flow within Israelite society even in the days of the Second Temple. The book of Chronicles bears witness to it, and on which see further Chapter 18 of the present volume.

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The Ending of the Book of Judges

1. *Some Definitions*

In this study I wish to show that Micah's house of God and the establishing of the temple at Dan (Judg. 17–18) are actually the conclusion to the book of Judges.[1] Differently from chs. 19–21, these belong in my opinion to the previous parts of the book, and, taken together, they form a meaningful unit. However, the story of the concubine at Gibeah, with the ensuing wars (Judg. 19–21), is an addition not congruent with the editorial line of the book. It is there for the sake of the broader context, to lead the reader into issues that will appear only in the book of Samuel, and is unconnected with the formulation of Judges as a whole. With that, the method of attaching these chapters reveals an attempt to adapt them at least externally to the editorial guidelines with an appearance of integration, blurring their

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1.   The remainder of this essay and the definitions I propose will clarify that the exact extent of the conclusion to the book of Judges is Judg. 17.1–18.30, while v. 31 was added as a link to other units.

unsuitability *vis-à-vis* the rest of the book, so as to serve the hidden purpose behind the act of their inclusion.

Research on the book of Judges generally regards these two concluding chapters as an addendum to the book, a fact that requires closer consideration, and a distinction has to be made between the concepts of appendix, ending, and an appended unit or act of addition.[2]

The term 'appendix' relates to a unit not belonging to the story as a whole, either in terms of narrative continuity, which is the sequence of events, or in terms of its content and formulation, where omitting it would not interfere with understanding the story's essence. An appendix helps the author explain and complete what he has to say without interfering with the continuity, structure and proportions the work requires. Naturally there is a clear link between the segment or segments of the appendix and the preceding text, whether relating to plot, characters, themes or the like. A typical example from biblical literature is 2 Samuel 21–24, which conclude the book of Samuel. Dispensing with these chapters does not interfere with understanding what is essential, while the threads that connect them to what comes before are clear and obvious, so that they certainly contribute to a fuller and more comprehensive understanding of the narrative. At the same time, placing them as an appendix rather than in the chronological sequence makes for smooth continuity in describing David's monarchy.

By the term 'end' or 'conclusion' I mean not only the segment that marks the end of the linguistic sequence of the narrative, but the point in time when by whatever means the central problems raised there were either resolved or reached some definitive stage. From that time on, reality either takes a different direction or returns to its habitual state. Sometimes in the final stage the reader returns to the point of departure or to a situation described at the outset, and the narrative gets a cyclical structure. In any case, the conclusion is an integral part of the story's whole compositional structure. Thus, for example, the book of Joshua ends with the conclusion of the problems of conquest and inheritance, with Joshua's farewell addresses and with the ongoing and habitual situation of the days of the elders who survived him.[3] The framework story of the book of Job, however, has a cyclical conclusion, meaning that the new situation of Job,

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2.   In most introductory books, commentaries on Judges, encyclopedia entries and other discussions, terms such as 'appendices', 'supplementary stories', 'later additions' and the like are in common use.

3.   See the Septuagint version of Josh. 24.28-31, where v. 31 appears after v. 28. Compare with Judg. 2.6-9. It seems to me that the verses about the three burials (Joshua, the bones of Joseph and Eleazar son of Aaron) should be examined in the light of definitions to be determined in the present study.

after the horrible temptation, was almost like his previous situation. Many times, in stories with plot development, when the conclusion is in the nature of a cycle, the plot does not return to the exact point of departure, but to a new habitual reality that resembles that point.[4]

Appendixes and conclusions differ in their structural functions. Both are linked to the composition they bring to an end, but while the appendix includes materials previously excluded for compositional reasons, the conclusion is made up of materials especially designed to conclude the literary work. Differently from these two types of segments, the term 'appended unit' points out a discontinuity and unsuitability *vis-à-vis* the other materials in the composition. When such a unit comes at the end of the linguistic continuity, the 'misfit', as it were, is between the unit and the preceding material. That a segment has been appended is particularly clear when it undermines or casts in doubt the significance constructed by the preceding textual materials, and it does not follow the editorial guideline of the book.

These precise definitions are not solely a matter of terminology, but make it possible for the reader of the book of Judges—or any other book in the Bible—to see that the status of the final segments of the various books are not identical, and that their differing roles reflect editing stages and trends. This will be proved, to the extent that I succeed in showing that only chs. 17–18, dealing with the Micah's house of God and the sanctuary established in Dan, are the planned end of the compositional system of the book of Judges, while chs. 19–21 create confrontation and tension with the preceding materials, that is, chs. 17–18, and with the book of Judges as a whole.

2. *The Ending of the Book of Judges*

The accepted argument is that chs. 17–21 were appended to the rest of the book of Judges. This rests on a chronological and the formal principle, since thematically these chapters continue to develop the idea of the Judges' failed leadership. Thus not only are they linked in their subject to what went before, but they direct the reader to the solution that Israel requires a king because 'in those days there was no king in Israel', so that 'everyone did what was right in his own eyes'. In their form, however,

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4.   The narrator in Job 42.12, who maintains, 'Thus the Lord blessed the later years of Job's life more than the former', stresses this principle of return by repeating expositional data, such as Job's wealth and the number of his descendents. However, the details are not exactly the same. For instance, we see the duplication of his wealth and the beauty of his daughters. The deviation from the exact repetition can be explained in this case by the author's desire to highlight Job's reward.

these chapters do not follow the editing directions of the previous chapters, for they break the cyclical structure of sin, punishment, crying out to God, deliverance and tranquility. Additionally, they break with the illusion of a chronological plan created by using connectors such as 'they continued', or 'after' or 'after him', because they are discussing an event from the third post-exodus generation (Judg. 18.30).[5] With that, in my opinion these two justifications, the chronological and the formal, are insufficient for giving these chapters the status of an appendix, for two reasons:

1. Very often the concluding segment of an artistic creation deviates from the forms included earlier, and the formal transition indicates specifically that this is a conclusion or an epilogue, placing the emphasis on the final stage. Hence the expectation that the book of Judges will have to end with another 'sin...tranquility' cycle is not consistent with compositional-structural criteria.

2. When at the end of a book with chronological continuity or an illusion of it, events from the beginning of the period reappear, they may contribute, for example, to its ongoing negative ambience, strengthening the impression that no great changes occurred during that time, so that the return at the end of the period to its beginning completes a cycle.

In our case, at the end as at the beginning of the era of the Judges, there was a return to a leadership vacuum and violations of the covenant. Hence the chronological break not only gives the conclusion of the composition a cyclical character, but fits in with the idea of cyclical history, hinting at the same time at the limitations of the Judges' leadership, which could not change the basically negative character of the era. Thus the editor creates a large circle embracing smaller circles that are the specific cycles. The large circle has another rhetorical effect: the reader becomes convinced that all deliverances brought about by the Judges were of very limited value, so that the end of the period was like its beginning.

We find, then, that the motive behind the system that deprives these chapters of their status as conclusions and relegates them to that of appendices, is not linked to compositional, esthetic or thematic considerations. In fact, the reason for these considerations is only genetic. In other words, perceiving these passages as the additions of a late editor gave them the status of an appendix, not of an integral part of the composition, nor of the message of the book. It follows, then, that as such these

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5.   See 3.12, 31; 4.1; 10.1, 3, 6; 12.8, 11, 13; 13.1. Compare with 8.33, 'they again went astray'. Adherence to the chronological principle is found in Josephus, *Ant.* 5.2.8–3.1 (136-78). See also in *Seder Olam Rabbah* 12.6-8 and many of the traditional commentators.

chapters have secondary status that focuses the attention of scholars and commentators on their component units, the sources and traditions behind them at the time they were composed, and even on the late date of the editor and his ideological circle.[6] Such examinations generally ignore qualitative questions as to the integrative nature of the combination and how such units enter into the overall composition of the book. As I see it, a different point of departure would make for better understanding of the parts and of the book as a whole. By no means do I see the book of Judges as a unified composition from the pen of one single author. What I maintain is that the various stages of editing were guided by compositional principles that influenced the completed structure and the formulation of its parts. Hence in order to understand the book's message, the commentator has to understand how the details serve the significance, that is, the editorial guideline. Examining the conclusion of the book of Judges from this vantage point led me to the conclusions that the story of Micah's house of God and the establishing of the temple at Dan (Judg. 17–18) is the compositional conclusion to the book of Judges. I came to this conclusion only after a precise, detailed analysis of the story, which proved that its main purpose is to present the period of the Judges as an extremely negative period. The author attained this purpose by the following means:

1. *Plot development*—Along the central plot axis of our story, that of establishing the sanctuary at Dan, there are two more plots: the story of Micah and of the Levite. When they are artificially separated it becomes clear that each ends contrary to desirable expectations. Micah, who desires to please his God, is punished; the Levite who accepts the highest offer, setting aside of loyalty and gratitude, is rewarded; while the robbers, the Danites, win and achieve their goal. It is hard to see progress toward any didactic aim in any of these three combined stories. However, developing and combining the three narratives as they advance towards their unexpected conclusion, at least according to the norms of the reader of biblical literature, helps the writer to illustrate the anarchy and the negative aspects of the time.

2. *Characterization*—The narrator presents negative characters only. The negative picture of Micah familiar from the exposition in ch. 17 does not encourage identification and empathy. Thus too in the fourth scene (18.22-26), where he appears as a victim of robbery, but on the other hand ridiculous in his defense of the sculptured

6. These issues have been discussed in introductory volumes and critical commentaries from the nineteenth century to the present. See Soggin (1981: 5, 261-305) who maintains the contemporary view that these additions belong to the Deuteronomistic editing.

and the molten images. As such, Micah appears ridiculous in his defense of the sculptured and the molten images.[7] His cry of despair illustrates the distorted values of the world he lives in. The writer could have used this scene to arouse sympathy for the weak Micah, but chooses to show him in a grotesque light and thus to criticize the values of the time. The exposition presents the seemingly neutral characters of the Levite and the Danites as victims of their time, but throughout the story they are shown in a negative light. The Danites are revealed in their violence both towards Micah and towards the Levite. Even the conquest of Laish is described as an attack by a violent band against a secure, peaceful and helpless town. The author criticizes everything the Danites do: they are greedy, they attack the weak and they worship stolen gods. The Levite, who did not protest but at once embraced the advantages of his new situation as the priest of the tribe of Dan, is also shown negatively. The narrator does not employ existential negative characterization such as 'a hard man and an evil doer' (1 Sam. 25.3). The negative element, in his opinion, lies not in the nature of the protagonists, which does not propel the sequence of events, but in the negative circumstances. These are the key element to consider in understanding the characters and their behavior. The author sees his own role essentially as highlighting the importance of the circumstances. Such an approach is thoroughly congruent with his explicit statement: 'In those days there was no king in Israel, everyone did as he pleased'.

3. *Style*—The use of such expressions as 'a sculptured image and a molten image', 'an ephod and teraphim', 'he had inducted one of this sons', 'the gods that I made' and 'everyone did as he pleased', all criticize the acts committed. The reader connects these expressions with the reproofs of the Law and the Prophets.[8]

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7. The story structure in my analysis is as follows: two units function as an exposition—17.1-5 (Micah's image and his house of God) and 17.7-13 (the Levite serves at Micah's house of God)—and are linked by the narrator's descriptive verse, interpreted as judgmental (v. 6). The main unit is the northward migration of the Danites and the establishment of their temple (18.1-31). The segments are: the exposition—v. 1 (the situation of the tribe of Dan; first scene—vv. 2-6 (encounter between the spies of Dan and the Levite at Micah's sanctuary; second scene—vv. 7-10 (the spies' mission carried out); third scene—vv. 11-21 (what the Danites did in Micah's sanctuary); scene 4—vv. 22-26 (the encounter of Micah and his people with the Danites); and the conclusion—vv. 27-30. Verse 31 is an added unit, which deviates from the editorial line.

8. A few examples: Exod. 34.17; Deut. 27.15; Isa. 48.5, 8-20; Jer. 10.2-9; Hos. 3.7; Nah. 1.14; and others.

4. *A system of analogies*—Events are critically observed from another angle disclosed by the analogical system connecting the story of Micah to the story of the tribe of Dan. This is an indirect way of criticizing what the Danites did by showing it in parallel to Micah's negative acts:

Worship at Micah's house	Worship at the city of Dan
Micah stole	the Danites robbed
Stolen money served to establish a private shrine	Robbery served to establish a tribal shrine
Micah obtains a Levite-priest	The Danites obtain a Levite-priest.
Micah is convinced he is right	The Danites are convinced of the rights of a tribe in Israel
Micah's shrine is destroyed	The Danite shrine is destroyed

In this framework it is impossible to go into the details of the episodes within this story.[9] Suffice it to say that there is a close link between the verses containing the author's judgmental values and the general formulation of the text. These verses appear in the transition between episodes and thus they have at the same time the status of a conclusion and an opening, bringing the various elements together in a single integrated unit centered around, 'In those days there was no king in Israel, everyone did as he pleased'. This reality is in keeping with the editorial line directing the reader to the conclusion that monarchic rule is inevitable. The rhetoric of this story convinces the reader that the external and internal political reality depends upon a strong central government, a conclusion in keeping with the accumulated facts in all the stories of the Judges. The reader of that book is far from surprised that a tribe had to wander forth in search of a territory, given the alienation and intertribal enmity suggested throughout the book. Moreover, the religious reality which saw graven and molten images, ephod and teraphim centered around the worship of God was the lesser evil at a time when the people worshipped other gods as well, and there was no doubt that a strong central authority could alter that situation. We find, then, that the era of the judges in the book of Judges was brought to a conclusion by introducing a story that could shed light on the entire time in question from the standpoint of 'there was no king'. Thus the editor expresses his view as to the desirable solution. Hence we may conclude that chs. 17 and 18 are not an appendix. They function as a planned and carefully formulated conclusion in the compositional system of the book.

9.   Full details are found in my doctoral thesis, which was presented to the Senate of Tel Aviv University in 1984. As the thesis was reworked as a book, see Amit 1999: 317-39. The sixth chapter (pp. 310-57) discusses the issue of the book's ending.

2. *Editorial Deviation or Added Unit*

Similar treatment of chs. 19–21 led me to the second conclusion: that these chapters are not a thematic continuation of chs. 17 and 18, in view mainly of the following points:

1. The story of the concubine at Gibeah indicates idealization of the tribal frameworks. Military and religious unity is achieved without intervention by any central authority.[10] The extraordinary nature of the Gibeah incident and the shock it caused, show that at the time—that is, at the time when there was no king in Israel—people could by no means do as they pleased.

2. The story of the concubine at Gibeah idealizes the ritual reality. The tribes are all united around a priest and an ark, and they seek counsel from God (20.18, 23, 26-28; 21.2-4; see also 21.19).

3. The story of the concubine at Gibeah also idealizes moral awareness. Rape, murder and lack of hospitality cause a civil war in an attempt to root out such evils, almost wiping out an Israelite tribe in the process.[11]

This information creates the impression that the times of the Judges were ideal from the standpoint of central tribal organization, and of religion and morality, all of which is not in keeping with the contents of chs. 17 and 18 or of the book of Judges as a whole. A question arises, then: If the writer wanted to show the days of the Judges negatively, why did he add these chapters about a horribly deviant event during an ideal period rather than making that event a sign of the times? If the aim of the book is to propose a king as the solution for the ills of the time, why is the Israelite community shown as a group seeking divine counsel in the solution of its problems, and ultimately succeeding, without the help of a king?

The answer seems to lie in assuming that the episode of the concubine in Gibeah is an editorial deviation, that is, an addition forced upon the continuity of the book.[12] Close reading of these chapters reveals them as a polemic against the tribe of Benjamin, effected inter alia through a series of hints, as for example: comparing the act in Gibeah to Sodom and Gomorrah (ch. 19), or the fact that the narrator dwells on the townspeople's terrible abuse of the concubine (19.25). These chapters may have been formulated as an accusation against the town of Gibeah and the tribe

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10.   Hence many scholars tended to point out the signs of the P source, or at least priestly editing. See the conclusions of Jüngling 1981: 1-29.

11.   Wellhausen noted ironically the disproportion between crime and punishment, an argument leading him to doubt the story's historicity.

12.   The first to raise this view was Güdemann 1869.

of Benjamin, the native place of King Saul, in general. To me it appears that the polemic was added to prepare the reader for the issue of Saul's kingship. If so, these chapters appear to be an editorial deviation not in keeping with the immediate context, which is the book of Judges, but rather with the broader one—Saul's status in the Israelite monarchy.

Examining the way the addition was made leads me to a third conclusion, that the addition of the chapters in that particular place is artificial and external. For instance, the judgmental statement 'In those days there was no king in Israel' appears in those chapters as the opening and closing of the episode (19.1; 21.25), which undoubtedly poses a difficulty. When it precedes mention of the Levite living in the hills of Ephraim, the impression is that when there was a king in Israel a Levite living in the hills of Ephraim would not marry a woman from Bethlehem. In other words, the judgmental weight of the statement is incongruent with what immediately follows in ch. 19. And we have already seen this same statement used in chs. 17–18 as a connection, a conclusion and an opening. An additional example: to link our story to the material before it, the author makes the protagonist a Levite. However, while in the story of Dan the Levite's appearance is integral to the narrative dealing with shrines and their attendants, in our story, that the master of the concubine is a Levite is of no consequence. Moreover, to give chs. 19–21 an integrative structural status, the author links them to the exposition of the book, in keeping with the circular principle. Reiterating data from the exposition helps create a sense that chs. 19–21 are the natural circular conclusion of the composition of the book. With that, these circular connecting links create tensions in the continuity of plot and significance, showing that they are either an alien element or an artificial technical device employed to formulate the episode as a conclusion to the book of Judges. One illustration will suffice: the similarity between 20.18 and 1.1-2 creates a difficulty in ch. 20. The Lord's reply, 'Judah first' (20.18), is like a voice crying in the wilderness, because right after that we read 'so the Israelites arose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. And the men of Israel took to the field...' (29.19-20). From this description one cannot learn that the Lord's command was carried out or of Judah's role. However, the failure in battle is not described as the result of disobeying the divine command, that is, by going into battle without Judah in the lead. Hence I venture to contend that in this case, as in similar ones, the addition in v. 18, which relates to the preference of Judah (1.1-2), was intended to create a kind of circular closure to the entire book by means of the concubine in the Gibeah story. This careless insertion, which introduces a difficulty in the development of the plot, shows that the connection is an artificial one.

We find, then, that whoever introduced the unit of the concubine in Gibeah used a technique of integrative placement, thus blurring the fact that the natural end of the book of Judges is the story of the temple of Dan. That episode sums up an era, revealing it through the new prism of 'there was no king'. Such an ending would even have a circular nature, since the exposition of the book of Judges closes with a description of the special situation of the tribe of Dan (1.34-35), and of its relation to the house of Joseph, and our story closes the circle, announcing that in the end Dan had to leave its place and wander north, taking the tribe through the lands of the house of Joseph. In addition, the temple built in Dan, which stood 'until the land went into exile' (18.30), explains that the chain of events whose purpose was to show negatively the anarchy of the time of the Judges, was not a combination of chance or marginal events. These episodes tell of events that determined reality for generations, and the reader becomes convinced of the need to change the course of history.

3. *Conclusions*

If my proposal to regard chs. 17–18 as the conclusion of the book of Judges is accepted, it follows that 'until the land went into exile' (18.30), that highly significant milestone in the composition and editing of the story (*terminus ad quem*), concludes the book. One can then compare this conclusion with that of Kings (2 Kgs 25.27-30), telling of the 37th year of Jehoiachin's exile and his death there, and with the conclusion of Chronicles relating to the kingdom of Persia and the fulfillment of 70 years (2 Chron. 36.22-23). However, the mention of Shiloh in Judg. 18.31 is an addition designed to link our story to those that begin the next book, Samuel, taking place around the religious center at Shiloh (1 Sam. 1–4), and with the additional episode of the concubine, which concludes with the link of Shiloh and Jabesh Gilead to the remnants of Benjamin.

To sum up: chs. 17–18 are the compositional and thematic end of the book of Judges; chs. 19–21, like 18.31, are units added to Judges for rhetorical purposes of linkage with external material. We find no appendix to the book of Judges. Its circular ending is achieved both by the chronological hiatus and through links to the exposition. Chapters 17–18 are the conclusion to the book, in both senses of the word, achieved by working three episodes into a single story, all of which depict the negative aspects of the times and the inevitable solution: a king. When this conclusion appears at the end of the book, it becomes a vantage point for looking at the entire epoch, and the background for what is to follow: establishing a monarchy in Israel.

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Who Knows the 'One'? The Editor!

Retrospective Preface

Language and its users are fond of linguistic formulas because they enhance, clarify and at the same time shorten dialogue. The formula creates a familiar context that unites language users and directs their expectations. Hence it does not surprise that biblical authors-editors too used such formulas as 'He raised his eyes and beheld...', 'For three things...and for four...', and 'These are the generations of X, X...', and many more. Deviation from the usual components of the formula creates an estrangement that serves to capture the attention of readers or hearers, to dispel routine, and leads to the unexpected, thus causing them to think more carefully about what follows. For example, using the formula 'These are the generations of X, X...' and then switching from its usual complement to a different subject—'These are the generations of X, Y...'—is a deviation, as in the case of Gen. 37.2: 'And these are the generations of *Jacob. Joseph* was seventeen years old and tended the flocks with his brothers...' Deviation from the accepted formula requires the reader to conjecture: What does this tell us? Why the deviation? Of which generations or what history will the story tell us? What made the editor create this sort of combined formulation?

The book of Samuel, which begins with Samuel's birth story, also starts with a deviated formula—'There was a certain man...and his name was...'—which repeats the opening of Samson's birth story, while the usual formulations or similar ones do not use the element 'certain', but rather state 'There was a man...and his name was', or the like. Thus a question arises as to the function of the word 'certain'. The following article discusses this very point, but right now I would like to relate how I found the answer to the question and what lesson I learned in the process.

It was in the early 1980s. I finished a lesson on the book of Samuel, during which a student asked why in the text the element 'a man' sometimes includes 'certain' and sometimes does not. Not knowing at the moment how to answer her, I replied, 'A very good question. We'll discuss it at the next lesson, and so I ask everyone to look up the formula 'There

was a man…and his name was' in the Concordance. So too the phrase 'There was a certain man…and his name was'. The lesson came to an end. On the way home I was bothered by the student's question and I felt that I was close to the answer. At home I looked it up, and that was the beginning of the present article. I sensed personally what a student's question can do, and perceived just how necessary this type of intellectual cross-fertilization was. Students' questions may embody that special unspoiled curiosity of children who are not ashamed to ask; the need to answer student questions may lead to etiological stories on one hand, and to different directions in research studies on the other. Hence students must be encouraged to ask, and more important still, one has to listen closely to the fine points of their questions. I came to the conclusion shortly after the student's question was posed to me that, despite eagerness to devote my time entirely to research, I could not give up teaching and the ongoing contact with inquisitive students. And as for those who do not know how to question, the Passover Haggadah told us long ago 'For him who knows not how to inquire, you must begin to discourse…'

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'There was a certain man…, whose name was…': Variation of Editing and its Purpose

1. *The Issue*

'There was a certain man…and his name was…' (ויהי איש אחד…ושמו) is a formulation that occurs only twice in the Hebrew Bible. The first instance is in the exposition of the birth of Samson: 'There was a certain man from Zorah, of the stock of Dan, whose name was Manoah' (Judg. 13.2). The second appearance is at the beginning of the birth story of Samuel: 'There was a certain man from Ramathaim of the Zuphites, in the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of…an Ephraimite' (1 Sam. 1.1).

Other opening structures or introductions of new characters with an indefinite subject begin 'There was a man (איש)…', later stating his name, but without the word 'certain' (אחד):

(1) A similar opening formulation is 'There was a man…and his name was…' It occurs in Judg. 17.1, 'There was a man in the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah'; and in 1 Sam. 9.1, 'There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish…'

(2) Replacing the *wayiph'al* form (ויהי) with the *pa'al* (היה) introduces no change, as in Job 1.1, 'There was a man in the land of Uz named Job', and

Est. 2.5, 'In the fortress of Shushan lived a Jew by the name of Mordecai son of...'[1]

To these structures one can compare the following presentation of new characters to the reader or to the protagonists of the narrated world:

> A member of Saul's clan—a man named Shimei son of Gera—came out...
> (2 Sam. 16.5)

> A scoundrel named Sheba son of Bichri, a Benjaminite... (2 Sam. 20.1)

> ...a man from the hill country of Ephraim, named Sheba son of Bichri...'
> (2 Sam. 20.21)[2]

(3) In another form of introduction, the name does not appear. For example, Judg. 19.1 reads '...a Levite residing...', and 2 Sam. 21.20 reads 'There was a giant of a man...'[3]

This third formulation, without the form 'his name'/'and his name' is used for anonymous figures who generally remain so.[4] However, the mention of even an unnamed individual indicates special regard for the man and his deeds, separating from the community at large.[5]

In the first examples, which are not anonymous, beside the element 'a man...and his name was', the narrator introduces specific details about the protagonist, such as his name, his native place, or his tribe and sometimes even his ancestry. These formulations beginning with the indefinite subject, a man, and going on to give his name, progress from the impersonal

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1.   Hurvitz (1974a: 28-30) regards this as a later formulation typical of post-exilic Hebrew.

2.   See Josh. 2.1; Judg. 16.4; Ruth 2.1.

3.   The Hebrew *madin* is uncertain; the *Qere* is *madon*, which means 'a man of strife'. The translation 'a giant of a man' is from 1 Chron. 21.20 and *Targum Jonathan*.

4.   For inclusion of other anonymous figures, see 1 Kgs 22.34 (= 2 Chron. 18.33); 2 Kgs 4.42. In 2 Kgs 1, Elijah is unknown to the king of Samaria's messengers so they report on 'a man' whom the king identifies as Elijah the Tishbite. See also 2 Sam. 18.24-28. When the men are far off and unidentified, they are 'a man running alone' and 'another man running'. Only rarely is anonymity lifted at the end of the story or in the next one, and the impression is that the name was added at a later stage of editing. Thus in Judg. 18.30: 'The Danites set up the sculptured image for themselves, and Jonathan son of Gershom...' This solves the riddle regarding the anonymous 'young man from Bethlehem of Judea, from the clan seat of Judah; he was a Levite *and had resided there as a souourner*' (17.7). The Hebrew of the emphasized words is וְהוּא גָר שָׁם, which recalls the name: *Gershom*. In addition, the name of the Israelite man who slew the Midianite woman (Num. 25.6-9) is given only in the following episode, which explains the choice of Phinehas son of Eleazar son of Aaron (Num. 25.10-15). Similarly Moses' father's name is not revealed in the story of his birth (Exod. 2.1-10), but later in the Levite genealogy (6.18-27).

5.   See Judg. 19.16; 2 Sam. 20.11-13, and elsewhere.

to the specific. Identifying details replace the indefinite, linking the hitherto unknown man to a place, a tribe and a family.

When the narrator mentions some anonymous figure, whose narrative role may be given to other chance figures that are part of the same situation, differently from the examples in sub-paragraph (3) above, the situation is designated by the element 'certain' in the masculine form (אחד) or in the feminine form (אחת), in the sense of unspecified or unidentified: 'a certain man' or 'a certain woman'.[6]

Indeed, there may also be a quantitative connotation, as in Deut. 1.23: 'I selected...one (איש אחד) from each tribe; Josh. 22.2: 'he was not the only one (איש אחד) who perished for that sin'; Josh. 23.10: 'One man of you (איש אחד) shall chase a thousand'; 1 Kgs 22.8 (=2 Chron. 18.7): '...there is one more man (איש אחד) through whom we may inquire...Micaiah son of Imlah'. There are many more examples.

However, our interest is not in such examples and combinations, but in those where the indefinite article 'certain man' or 'certain woman' serves to add strength and emphasis to the undefined quality of the subject.[7] In such instances it serves as an indefinite article that the Hebrew lacks, not indicating a number but rather emphasizing an indefinite nature,[8] 'some man' or 'some woman'.[9] For instance, 2 Sam. 18.10 reads: 'One of the men saw it and told Joab, "I have just seen Absalom hanging from a terebinth"'; Judg. 9.23 reads: 'But a woman dropped a millstone on Abimelech's head and cracked his skull'.[10]

In these instances the indefinite subject has an anonymous and random quality. The narrator leaves the character nameless and the reader learns no more about him or her at the end of the story. The nameless figure fills its narrative function and disappears.

This linguistic finding highlights the deviance of the formulation 'there was a certain man...and his name was...' in the only two verses where the

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6. For the definitions, see Fruchtman 1979.

7. On the double role of the article אחד/אחת, see Fruchtman 1979: 93-95. Cowley, in his edition of *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (1910: 401; §125b), relates to its uncommon use as an indefinite article using these examples: Exod. 16.33; Judg. 9.53; 13.2; 1 Sam. 1.1; 7.9, 12; 1 Kgs 13.11; 19.4; 20.13; 22.9; 2 Kgs 4.1; 8.6; 12.10; Ezek. 8.8; Dan. 8.3; 10.5. See also Ribag 1964: 390, 'it is not about the numerical quantity, but it is an unnecessary form...'

8. The two syntactic functions of the article אחד/אחת as a number and as an indefinite article are general and do not necessarily refer to a human subject, man or woman. See, for example, Gen. 11.1; 40.5, in which the function is numerical, as against 1 Sam. 24.15; 26.20; 27.1; 1 Kgs 18.6; 19.4 and others, where I regard it as an indefinite article.

9. Fruchtman (see nn. 6, 7) adds that Modern Hebrew uses the article איזה to express a totally indefinite article. See the bibliography there.

10. Compare the references cited with Driver 1913: 1.

article 'certain' (אחד) appears. It can hardly be quantitative, since 'a man' followed by his name indicates one person. Nor can it be a reference to an indefinite, anonymous subject, in which case anonymity would be maintained, while here the anonymity of Elkanah and Manoah is dispelled with other specific details. Even had the author wished to move from the anonymous to the specific, as in 'There was a man...whose name was...', it is difficult to understand why he would have inserted an indefinite article when anonymity was to be dispelled in the same opening sentence.

What, then, is the role of this variant, a combination of opposites that highlights the impersonal and then cancels it with additions in the form of a locative phrase and a linking attributive sentence?

It arouses special notice due to its occurrence in two stories close in their historical background and subject, their common motifs and style. Both Judges 13 and 1 Samuel 1 deal with a chosen son born in a time when Israel was in subjection to the Philistines. In both cases the mother was barren and the son destined to be a nazir,[11] and of both it was said, 'No razor shall touch his head'.[12] Research has noted this, and some scholars maintain that the story of Samuel's birth was formulated under the influence of the Samson story.[13] Setting aside the issue of the similarities between the two, I note here only that assuming there were stylistic influences that may have led to this highly specific use of אחד in the sense of 'a certain' in one of the two stories only reinforces my question. Even asserting that 1 Sam. 1.1 was influenced by Judg. 13.2, or vice versa, does not solve the problem—on the contrary. The structure under discussion is rarely used and its deviance increases as a *hapax legomenon*. Furthermore, why of all the editing options and possible borrowings would the editor select such a rare and problematic construction? In my opinion, then, one should examine the principle behind the use of the anonymous 'a certain' in a formulation that moves towards the specifically identified.

2. *Existing Interpretations*

The Sages were aware of the deviance of the אחד as 'a certain' and interpreted it variously. In the Babylonian Talmud, tractate *Megillah* 14a, they seperate the individual from the community: 'And there was a [certain] man from HaRamataym Tzofim..., one of two hundred prophets that prophesied to Israel'. R. Samuel bar Nahmani confronts the אחד with the

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11.   On Samuel as a nazirite, see Ben Sira 46.3; Josephus, *Ant.* 5.10.2-3 (341-47). Compare with Cross (1953), who brings a Qumran biblical fragment to 1 Sam. 1.22. See also R. Nehorai in *m. Nazir* 9.5.

12.   See Burney 1970: 340.

13.   See McCarter 1980: 51.

double number implied in the place name Ramathayim: 'A man who comes from two heights that face each other'. R. Hanin explicates it as uniqueness: 'A man who comes from people who stand at the top of the world'.[14] The exegesis from *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10.5 is similar:

> In every instance where *eḥad* (one) occurs it denotes that the one to whom the term is applied was great, Of the Holy One, blessed be He, it says, *'eḥad,'* for it is written, *The Lord is one* (Deut. VI,4), implying that there is none in the world like Him. It was the same with Abraham, *Abraham was one* (Ezek. XXXIII, 24): in those days there was none like him... So also of Elkanah it says *eḥad*-one 'a certain' man (1 Sam. I, 1) because there was none in his generation like him.

Don Isaac Abarbanel adopts this and notes in his commentary on Samuel: 'And in Bemidbar Rabbah it is said, "Wherever אחד is used, it means a great man, and many examples were given, including Elkanah, he was אחד from Ramathayim, meaning great in his generation"'.[15]

Most commentators chose to ignore this usage of the article אחד, 'a certain', although some interpret it as indicating indefiniteness.[16] However, I have already shown there is a problem with this explanation, as there is no point in stressing the indefiniteness and impersonality of one who is becoming a specific person.

The deviant use of אחד as 'a certain' caused Burney to attribute it to a northern Hebrew dialect (E).[17] Kaufmann's commentary on Judg. 13.2 interprets this construct as an expansion of the short construct: 'And there was a man'.[18]

There is an additional explanation, not dealing with the meaning of אחד in our text but rather pointing to a late addition, in McCarter's commentary on 1 Sam. 1.1.[19] He states his preference for 'There was a man...' (איש היה), as in Codex Vaticanus of the Septuagint, replaced in the Masoretic Text, in his opinion, by the more common sequence 'and there

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14.   For the citations see Neusner 1995: 69.

15.   For the citations from *Bemidbar Rabbah*, see Slotki 1961: 360; Abarbanel 1955: 170.

16.   M.Z. Segal 1956: 2. Thus many other critical scholars, who follow Moore 1895: 316. Budde (1890: 2) emphasizes that אחד could be omitted, since it is more appropriately used for anonymous individuals. Ehrlich (1969b: 65, 100) is of a different opinion. See his commentary on Judg. 8.5; 9.5, and on 1 Sam. 1.1.

17.   See Burney 1970: 340 and, in the same book, his commentary on Kings (p. 209). Nevertheless, he attributes Judg. 13 to the J school, noting that 1 Sam. 1 is more compatible stylistically with J than with E.

18.   Kaufmann 1962: 245. He attributes the frequent use of this construction to Ezek. 17.7. Most scholars, however, prefer 'another' (אחר) as used in the Septuagint, the Peshitta and the Vulgate, probably due to the similarity of the final letters ר/ד in אחד/אחר. See *BHK*.

19.   McCarter 1980: 51.

was a man...' (ויהי איש), to which אחד, '(a) certain', was added. The addition in his opinion does not indicate a preference for a more common reading over a rare one, but rather the influence of Judg. 13.2. A preference should be shown, in his view, for 'And there was a man...' over 'And there was a certain man...', but 'There was a man...' is preferable to either of them. Thus he solves the problem of the *wāw* consecutive.[20] He sees 'a certain' as a late addition, not asking its purpose, or whether it has any significance in Judg. 13.2.

Resolution of the issue, in my opinion, lies in recognizing the tensions and the struggles between the early Israelite narrative and the motifs, traditions and world views of the surrounding cultures that infiltrated and influenced the Israelite popular traditions. It seems to me that the function of 'a certain' in Judg. 13.2 and 1 Sam. 1.1 is to highlight the fathers' anonymity and the secondary importance of Manoah and Elkanah, and thereby to focus the reader's attention on their sons Samson and Samuel. The fathers are pale sketches whose sole claim to greatness is fathering elect sons: Samson the deliverer and Samuel the prophet.[21] In the combination 'a certain man...whose name was...' the word 'certain' deprives that man of his status and makes him anonymous. Paradoxically, his name is also given, sometimes with a lineage. Actually this is a compromise that the Israelite narrative in confrontation with the popular tradition demanded.[22] The popular tradition tended to obscure the father's place in the story of the chosen son's birth, and the means in this confrontation was not to ignore the lineage of the father, or at least to mention his name.

3. *The Father's Inferior Place in Birth Stories*

The ancient legend concerning the birth of Sargon king of Agade[23] and the later story of the birth of Jesus[24] both bear witness to a continuous ancient tradition that diminishes the father's role in the birth of the chosen son.

20.   See Radak on 1 Sam. 1.1; M.Z. Segal 1956: 2. Hurvitz (1974a) has a different view.

21.   Contrast the homiletic-didactic commentary of Schroeder (1953: 876): 'Elkanah was an undistinguished man; but he achieves historical immortality by being the father of Samuel'. Numerous midrashim expound Elkanah's righteousness: *Agadath Bereshith* 49–50 (Sh. Buber 1903: 100-103); *Midrash Shmuel* 1.5 (Sh. Buber 1965: 42-43); *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10.5 (Slotki 1961: 360); L. Ginzberg 1968, vol. IV, 57 nn. 1-3 (for the notes, see vol. VI, 215). See also the commentaries of Rashi and Radak on 1 Sam. 1.1. However, the commentaries hesitate in Manoah's case to attribute righteousness. See also L. Ginzberg 1968, vol. IV, 47, but see *Bemidbar Rabbah* 10.5 (Slotki 1961: 360).

22.   Cassuto's and Loewenstamm's research describe such confrontations at length. See Cassuto 1972c; Loewenstamm 1968, and others.

23.   Pritchard 1955: 119.

24.   Mt. 1. Compare with Lk. 1.26-38.

That tradition seems to echo clearly in ancient Israelite narrative. While the biblical stories do not ignore the existence of the biological father, they tend to present him as secondary and marginal by stressing the close ties between the mother and God, which led to the appearance of the savior son.

Extra-biblical narrative states specifically just how marginal the father is. Sargon declares that he never knew his father. Joseph the father of Jesus is called 'Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah [or the Christ]'. He is denied even the right to be called the father-begetter, as Mary is expressly declared to have conceived by the Holy Ghost.[25]

This comparison shows that marginalizing or even removing the father, then, allows room for God's intervention and protection in the birth of the chosen son. To bring this about, increased use was made of motifs like the barren mother, so frequent in biblical literature, where her transition to fertility depended in folk belief on direct intervention of the divine will.[26] Along with this motif another develops (not integral to our subject), that of the successful younger son.[27] In both, the reader's normative anticipation is overturned, usually by divine will.

Additionally, in birth stories of leaders and important figures in the life of the people, on whom God's spirit rested from birth till death, the Bible employs a technique similar to that of extra-biblical literature—diminishing the father's image. While the extra-biblical sources use diverse means to get rid of the father, including denial of his physical fatherhood, the

25.   Mt. 1.16-18; Lk. 1.34-35. The story of John the Baptist's birth in Luke also stresses the marginality of the father Zacharias the priest (Lk. 1.5-25, 39-80), who is described as having little faith, is punished by the angel Gabriel and stricken dumb, a punishment from which he is released only after the son is born. The child's name is determined by his mother, who refused to name him Zacharias (1.29). An echo of the tradition of sons of God in whom the divine spirit abides seems to exist in the mythic fragment of the sons of God marrying daughters of man and begetting Nephilim, heroes in whom for a time God's spirit resided (Gen. 6.1-4). See the critical commentaries on Genesis. See also Cassuto 1972b. Against accepted opinion, Cassuto attempts to show that this legend is not a remnant of ancient Near Eastern mythology, but as an attempt to combat it. See especially p. 107. An echo of the mythic view is to be found in Josephus description of Manoah's wife's encounter with the angel: 'The woman... reported what she had heard from the angel, extolling the young man's comeliness and stature in such ways that he in his jealousy was driven by these praises to distraction and to conceive the suspicions that such passion arouses...', see Josephus, *Ant.* 5.8.3 (279). See also Zakovitch 1982: 19-84, especially 74-84.

26.   See R.C. Thompson 1971: 77-78; S. Thompson 1956–57: D. 1925, T. 548, M. 311. Raglan (2003: 171-85) emphasizes the divine intervention.

27.   See Brin 1971: 225-26, and more bibliography there.

Bible is more tactful, employing stylistic and literary devices to relegate him to the sidelines, while preserving his natural biological role. This technique expresses the tendency to use de-mythologization in the stories of the Hebrew Bible. This literature is interested in retaining the father as begetter while at the same time stressing the son's election and God's preference for him. Such refined, sophisticated devices are in play in the birth stories of Moses, Samson and Samuel.

3.1. *Moses*

The birth story of Moses begins with the father: 'A certain man of the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son' (Exod. 2.1-2). From this point on the story ignores the father's existence and concentrates on the mother's deeds: '...when *she saw* how beautiful he was *she hid him* for three months. When *she could hide him* no longer, *she got* a wicker basket for him *and caulked* it with bitumen and pitch. *She put* the child into it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the Nile.' The child's mother reappears when she is called to nurse the child, and finally, when she brings him to Pharaoh's daughter.

The efforts of post-biblical such sources as the Septuagint, Philo of Alexandria in *The Life of Moses* (*De Vita Mosis*), Josephus Flavius in *Jewish Antiquities* and midrashim of all types to expand the father's role and the information about him all serve to highlight the contrary tendency of the Bible, which is to diminish that role.[28] If it were not so obvious, the later sources would not have been swept into the effort to fill the gaps relating to who Amram was and what he did.

The Septuagint gives the father a more active role simply by using the plural in Exod. 2.2-3: 'And *they saw* how beautiful he was and [they] *hid him* for three months. When *they could no longer hide him...*'

Josephus expands upon Amram's place and role, describing him as 'Amaram(es), a Hebrew of noble birth', one who cared for his people, prayed and was granted a revelation in his dream.[29] Nor is Josephus satisfied with the plural of the Septuagint, but charges Amram with the decision to 'to commit the salvation and protection of the child to Him'. The parallels between his story and the content of the midrashim show that his story is interwoven and expanded in the spirit of contemporary and even later midrashim and traditions.[30]

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28. Loewenstamm 1979. For the Septuagint and Josephus, see below, and see Philo, *Moses* 1.2-3 (7-11).

29. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.9.3-4 (210-16). Compare with the book of *Jub.* 47.1-9.

30. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.9.4 (219). For midrashim on Amram, see *b. Sot.* 12a; *Exod. R.* 1.19; for more, see Kasher 1954 (vol. 8), pp. 50-52; Philo, *Moses* 1.2-3 (7-11); Pseudo-Philo's *LAB* 9.2-14 (see Jacobson 1996: 104-106).

To sum up, the biblical story of Moses' birth as opposed to later traditions limits the father's role to marriage and fathering the son.[31] As far as the reader is concerned, the father at this stage is anonymous, an unknown Levite, and since he is not mentioned again in the course of the story, he remains unimportant. The narrative emphasizes the roles of mother and sister. From Moses' extraordinary deliverance from the fate of male infants of the time—'If it is a boy, kill him'—one infers he was saved by divine will. Providentially too he was privileged both to nurse from his mother and to grow up in Pharaoh's household.[32] As Josephus says, 'Then once again did God plainly show that human intelligence is nothing worth, but that all that He wills to accomplish reaches its perfect end'.[33]

3.2. *Samson*

Another method is used in Samson's birth story to diminish the father's importance. Here the father is not pushed out. He appears throughout the story, but his status is reduced by giving him a negative image and qualities.[34] Manoah is shown as an analogical negative to his wise and understanding wife. The angel appears to her twice, and although the second appearance is at Manoah's request and one would expect the angel to appear to him, he has to follow his wife to meet the angel: 'Manoah promptly followed his wife' (Judg. 13.11). So eager is the narrator to show Manoah in a negative light that he makes ironic use of the prohibition against seeing the face of God.[35] Thus even after he realizes the angel has appeared to him his response is characteristic: 'We shall surely die, for we have seen a divine being' (13.22). He then hears his wife's intelligent logic: 'Had the Lord meant to take our lives, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and meal offering from us, nor let us see all these things; and He would not have made such an announcement to us' (13.23). The analogical confrontation between Manoah and his wife highlights his inferiority. The wife sensed at the first meeting with the angel that 'he looked like an angel of God, very frightening' (13.6). By contrast, Manoah is depicted as one

31.   Begetting is not specifically mentioned, but is inferred from the sequence: 'and married...and she conceived'. Compare, e.g., with Exod. 2.21-22; 6.20, 23, 25; Hos. 1.3; 2 Chron. 11.18-20.

32.   Parallels to the motif of the deliverance of future leaders by miracle are found in Greenberg 1968: 30.

33.   Josephus, *Ant.* 2.9.4 (222).

34.   Zakovitch (1982: 19-84) maintains that Manoah's image is diminished also by mentioning 'of the Danites', without a genealogy and the father's name.

35.   Compare Gen. 32.31; Exod. 3.6; 24.11; 33.20; Lev. 16.2; Judg. 6.22; 1 Kgs 19.13. See also Isa. 6.5; Tobit 12.16-17.

who does not see, and even when he sees, he fails to understand what is before him.[36]

And like Amram, Manoah receives compensation from Josephus, who states that Manoah was: 'Among the most notable of the Danaites and without question the first in his native place'.[37] The effort to say something favorable about Manoah emphasizes his inferior status in the biblical story, where he is simply a certain man, and if he has any unique feature it is that he is impervious to events around him.

3.3. *Samuel*

In Samuel's birth story as well, the image of Elkanah is overshadowed by the faith, the plea and the hope of Hannah his wife. He appears as one who has accepted reality and does not understand why Hannah suffers from it, reasoning with her: '...Am I not more devoted to you than ten sons?' (1 Sam. 1.8). Differently from Isaac (Gen. 25.21), he does not pray to God to end his wife's barrenness. In all that concerns the child's destiny, he follows Hannah's lead. She it is who determines that 'When the child is weaned, I will bring him. For when he has appeared before the Lord, he must remain there for good' (1 Sam. 1.22). She brings the child to the sanctuary and gives him into the hands of Eli the priest (vv. 24-28).[38] God's place *vis-à-vis* the boy is evident in several ways:

(1) The expression 'the Lord remembered her' (v. 19) in the context of Hannah's conception shows the part God played in Samuel's birth. While Elkanah is the biological father, for 'Elkanah knew Hannah his wife', Hannah conceived because of the divine memory.[39]

(2) The explication of the name Samuel—'I asked the Lord for Him' (v. 20)—also emphasizes the link between Samuel and God.[40]

(3) The development of the plot, illustrating a situation in which Samuel was lent by God to his mother until he was dedicated to the sanctuary, and afterwards lent to the Lord for the rest of his life, stresses the threefold

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36.   Midrashim faithful to the spirit of the Bible present Manoah as an ignoramus. See n. 21 above and compare with the *b. Ber.* 61a. This midrash too explains that Manoah is negatively presented in the biblical story because he is 'an ignorant man'.

37.   Josephus, *Ant.* 5.8.2 (276). See also Burney 1970: 340.

38.   The tie between mother and child is stressed in the Codex Vaticanus of the Septuagint. See also McCarter's commentary on vv. 24-25 (1980: 57-58).

39.   The order of the elements within the verses in the Septuagint version reinforces the link between memory and conception: 'And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife and God remembered her, and she conceived and after the set time she gave birth to a son'. See Driver's commentary on v. 20 (1913: 16). Compare with Gen. 30.22.

40.   This is not the place to discuss the complex issue of the name and its interpretation, and whether the story originally belonged to the Saul cycle.

link between the mother, the son and the Lord. The father, by contrast, remains 'a certain man' who has been pushed into the background.

4. *Conclusion*

The father is distanced from Moses' birth story both by removing him from the narrative and by leaving him in anonymity, while the problem of Moses' descent being resolved, as noted earlier, by the genealogy introduced at a later stage (Exod. 6.20-27). Undoubtedly these strategies manifest the father's secondary status in the story. In the birth stories of Samson and Samuel the father's name or a genealogy is given with his first appearance in the exposition, which may highlight his status and draw attention to his personality. Therefore the author uses a special technique to diminish him despite having mentioned his name and his place—by introducing the indefinite subject 'a certain' before the biographical detail. Thus emerges the somewhat strange formulation 'There was a certain man...and his name was...', unusual because it indicates that the man, despite his pedigree, is unimportant. Elkanah or Manoah is no more than 'a certain man', that is, a marginal figure. And since the ancestry of Samson, and particularly of Moses and Samuel, who are great leaders and prophets of their people, is worthy of mention, on the one hand the author endeavored to provide details of their origin and ancestry, but on the other hand he reinforced the assertion that they were no more than 'a certain man' through the marginal place accorded them in the story.

Mentioning the biological father as ancient Israelite narrative does, under the influence of folk traditions that reduce the father's image and stress divine intervention in the birth of the chosen son, gave rise to the paradoxical formulation that joins unlike elements: 'And there was a certain man.../ from...and his name was...'

It seems to me that the birth stories of Samson and Samuel underwent a common editing process, and that regarding this point one should not seek an influence of one on the other.[41] The tradition of the two birth stories with identical backgrounds and motifs led to an identical solution that differs from the solution for the Moses stories.[42] There the father's total absence from the narrative led to the introduction of a genealogy at a later stage. The marginal position left to the father did not require further

41.   Contrary to McCarter's thesis (1980: 51).
42.   I do not deny that later editors were influenced by the resemblance between the two stories. In my lecture on lifelong nazirism (memorial lecture in honor of Professor Grintz, Tel Aviv University, 1981) I maintained that 1 Sam. 1.11 had absorbed common motifs foreign to the life stories of both Samuel and Saul, that penetrated from Judg. 13.

emphasis by the indefinite 'a certain'. In the Samson and Samuel stories the appearance of the father at other stages created suitable conditions for mentioning his name at the stage of exposition. Lest such details unduly emphasize the father's place, the author prefaced them with the indefinite 'a certain'. We can therefore sum up and say that the appearance of 'a certain', in addition to developing the father figure as a lesser one in these birth stories, is impressive testimony to the sophistication and refinement of the techniques employed in ancient editing as reflected in the Masoretic version before us.

13

Who Is Lent to the Lord? Ask the Editor

Retrospective Preface

Samuel's birth story ends with Hannah's phrase 'I, in turn, hereby lend him to the Lord. For as long as he lives he is lent to the Lord' (1 Sam. 1.28). The Hebrew of the words 'is lent' is homonymous with the Hebrew name Shaul, in English Saul. This verse, therefore, led many scholars to assume that Samuel's birth story originally belonged to the Saul traditions. But because of the hostile relationship to Saul, the story of his birth was taken from him and attached to Samuel, that outstanding example of the prophetic approach who was thus preferred by the Deuteronomistic school.

The tendency of research to rely on a hidden world of traditions that no eye has seen nor ear has heard, then grant them an assured existence, restoring them and relying on them, has never convinced me, although I always liked following their creative imagination, at times reminiscent of the Midrashic authors. For my part, I avoided relying on traditions and preferred following the editing process of the text in question, relating also to textual criticism and the considerations it involved. As far as I am concerned, those ancient editors are responsible for the material that has come down to us, and at times it is most difficult to distinguish between them and the authors themselves. Of course it is hard to determine how faithful they were to oral tradition, and hence where reworking begins or, alternatively, where authors' creative imaginations start to interfere with their materials.

Actually, the previous chapter has already shown the sophistication of these editors and the refinement of their methods as expressed in the variations they created of 'There was a man...and his name was'. The added word 'certain' gives the narrative a new significance. However, in this chapter I present the connective hint as an editorial system that holds together different texts throughout a given sequence. According to Martin Buber, such a verbal means may be seen as a 'leading word', pointing to the literary sensitivity of these ancient editors. They repeated the root *š-'-l* in the unit that begins with Samuel's birth story and ends with the account of Saul's death, which opens with the encounter between him and Samuel—in

fact their last meeting—in the presence of the necromancer. Preceding this is the description of Saul's vain attempts to elicit a reply from the God of Israel, so that in his distress he reaches the woman who talks to ghosts. That encounter thus highlights the network of relationships between Samuel, whose mother lent him to the Lord, and Saul, who entreated the Lord and instead of a direct answer from him, received the bitter tidings from Samuel in God's name.

The entire discussion in this chapter relates to the names of Saul and Samuel, and their midrashic interpretation. The affair of the names reminds me of a great Israeli poet of the modern age, Shaul Tchernichovsky, and the four ballads he wrote about King Saul, among the most beautiful and most sensitive in Hebrew. The modern poet, suffering over Saul's fate, feels that the biblical description that favored David did wrong by Saul, Israel's first king. Some think that the affinity for Saul is due only to the name they both share. May be so. But with his wonderful ballads about Saul that tragic, majestic king, Tchernichovsky supports the line of commentary that prefers Saul over David. Secular commentary in Israel in recent generations, which pulls against the traditional current and does not accept the text as given, but reads between and even behind the lines, has found supporting argument in Tchernichovsky's ballads. There were times when some of the ballads were compulsory reading in high schools— I remember parts of his ballads by heart to this day. My students at the university will bear witness than when teaching passages about Saul, whether from Samuel or from Chronicles, I always return to those ballads and present their author's interpretation as the one in keeping with the complexity in the biblical description.

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'HE IS LENT TO THE LORD'—CONNECTING HINT: A LITERARY TOOL

Seven times the root *š-'-l* ('ask, request') is repeated in the story of Samuel's birth (1 Sam. 1.1–2.11a).[1] The explanation for it in v. 28, which rests on its passive participle and hints more at Saul's name than at Samuel's, has puzzled commentators and led many scholars to conclude that Samuel's birth story originally belonged to traditions relating to Saul. That conclusion was reinforced by accentuating possible connections between the image of Saul the deliverer, on whom God's spirit rested

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1. 1 Sam. 1.17 (×2), 20, 27 (×2), 28 (×2).

(1 Sam. 11.6), and that of Samson the nazirite (Judg. 13).[2] However, differing from this theory which depends mainly on the close formal similarity between the explanation of Samuel's name in 1 Sam. 1.20, 27-28 and Saul's name, other scholars see only a tenuous connection between the name Samuel and midrashic name derivation, which generally depend on phonetic similarity and word-play.[3]

Although the proposal to interpret the story of Samuel's birth as a reworking of Saul's nazirite birth is attractive, it seems to me that to accept it is to fly on the wings of imagination into the world of homiletic interpretation and unfounded assumptions that would fill gaps and reconstruct the childhood of Saul the nazirite. Even if one agrees that the story is based on Saul's midrashic name derivation, it must be admitted that:

1. The story before us has been reworked to correspond to the story cycle about Samuel's childhood in the sanctuary (1 Sam. 1–3).
2. If the narrator or editor managed to fit the plot details into the story of Samuel's childhood, one can reasonably assume that he could devise a midrash explication of the name, or at least remove it from direct association with Saul's name. Perhaps he did not do so because he saw no difficulty in explaining the name, perceiving it as a direct continuation of the name derivation tradition. Moreover, he may have wanted this particular interpretation of Saul's name, which connects the birth of Samuel with the name of Saul, because it suited his editorial purpose.

In other words, it is plausible to assume that the link between the two names is not accidental, and that it does not bear witness to a different ancient tradition. Rather, it is a means of editing, where the editor uses the connecting hints in advance to hold together different parts of his story and to suggest hidden connections between them.

1. *Links between the Story and the Midrashic Name Derivation*

The *š-'-l* root appears for the first time when Eli blesses Hannah: 'and may the God of Israel grant what you have *asked* of *Him*' (1 Sam. 1.17).[4]

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2.   See M. Buber 1978: 246-47, and there nn. 19, 20. This theory recurs, for example, in Seeligmann 1992a: 29. Later scholars are more moderate and maintain that our story borrowed elements from a story of the birth of Saul. See McCarter 1980: 62-66 and the bibliography there.

3.   See, e.g., M.Z. Segal (1956: 10): 'But like many explanations of biblical given names, it is expounded according to similar sound and meaning, and not necessarily according to the etymology'.

4.   In the Hebrew this root appears twice, and the literal translation would be: 'your request you have requested him'.

Afterwards, the narrator repeats the root in reporting the birth of Samuel and in the interpretation of the infant's name: 'Hannah...bore a son. She named him *Samuel*,[5] meaning "I *asked* the Lord for *him*"' (v. 20).

Hannah repeats the name derivation to Eli when, a few years later, she returns to Shiloh, bringing her son to the house of God: 'It was this boy I prayed for, and the Lord has granted me what I *asked* of *Him*' (v. 27),[6] thus returning to Eli's first remarks:

> He begins with: 'and may the God of Israel grant what you have *asked* of *Him*', and she concludes 'and the Lord has granted me what I *asked* of *Him*'.

The common element in the three repetitions coming from Eli, the narrator and from Hannah is the *š-'- l* root with the relative מ: meaning of or from God/Him.

Hannah is not satisfied simply to repeat what Eli says, but in ending the conversation with the priest she adds: 'I, in turn, hereby lend him to the Lord. For as long as he lives he is lent to the Lord' (v. 28).[7] Only these last words, 'is lent', reflect the name of Saul, to reappear in ch. 9.

It would seem that the name derivation in vv. 17, 20 and 27 is based on the phonetic similarity that arises when Samuel's name is broken down into its *š-'-l* root with the addition of the letter *m* for the object.[8] The elements favoring the preference for separating the root out of Samuel's name are linked to the narrative of asking from God by means of a vow, and finally lending to God by surrendering him to the sanctuary. Thus the story joins with the name derivation to add an element that fits into and completes it. Indeed, the story of Samuel's birth as the result of his mother's vow, and his consequent dedication to the sanctuary could furnish enough narrative elements and word-plays for several differing name derivations.[9] Hence one asks whether placing the *š-'-l* root at the center is not deliberately done to serve as a connection with the name Saul, and if so, the conclusion is not necessarily that the source of the story is the birth of Saul. Possibly the similar sound of the names and the link between the fates of the two men were primary facts that led the narrator or the editor to hint at a connection as early as Samuel's birth.

The story and the accompanying midrash clarify that Samuel grew up in the sanctuary at Shiloh with Eli and his sons, thus laying the foundation

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5.   The name 'Samuel' contains the three Hebrew letters of the root *š-'-l*, and the letter *m*, which represents here 'because', meaning: 'because I asked him from God'.

6.   Here again the root *š-'-l* appears twice, and the literal translation would be: 'the Lord has granted me the request I requested of him'.

7.   The meaning of the same root *š-'-l*, but in the *hiphil* stem is 'to lend'.

8.   According to McCarter (1980: 62) the important element is the object, not the verb.

9.   For proposals, see Driver 1913: 16-19, and more recently McCarter 1980.

for the negative parallel in 2.11b–4.1a[10] that contrasts the youth of Samuel 'who grew in esteem and favor both with God and with men', with the aging Eli and his sons who had fallen into evil ways.[11] This passage also prepares the background for the image of Samuel as priest,[12] an image to recur in chs. 7 and 13, as in ch. 3 whose purpose is to invest Samuel with his central role as a prophet. The relationships in chs. 1 to 4 are undoubtedly those of cause and effect. Events are developed to link and even become intertwined. Giving Samuel to the Sanctuary is a condition for status comparable to that of Eli's sons. His presence in the sanctuary close to Eli is the background for consecration as a prophet in ch. 3, while ch. 4 discloses the fulfillment of the prophecies made in chs. 2 and 3. These multiple connections cast doubt on any hastily adopted solution that this is a link displaced from the Saul story tradition.

2. *A Hypothetical Reduction of the Problem*

If v. 28 at the end of 1 Samuel 1 had ended 'I in turn hereby lend him to the Lord' or 'I too lend him to the Lord for as long as he lives', and the relative clause 'and he is lent to the Lord'[13] were missing, it would be doubtful whether we would perceive the very close connection between the

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10.   On the placing of the first part of 1 Sam. 4.1, see Driver 1913: 45; and M.Z. Segal 1956: 38. For the longer text of 4.1 see the Septuagint version and the commentary of McCarter 1980: 97,103.

11.

2.11—'The boy entered the service of the Lord under the priest Eli'.	2.12—'Eli's sons were scoundrels; they paid no heed to the Lord'.
2.18—'Samuel was engaged in the service of the Lord as an attendant, girded with a linen ephod'.	2.17—'The sin of the young men against the Lord was very great'.
2.21—'Young Samuel meanwhile grew up in the service of the Lord'.	2.23—'I get evil reports about you from the people on all hands'.
2.26—Young Samuel, meanwhile, grew in esteem and favor both with God and with men'.	2.27-36—A man of God tells Eli about the sins of his house.
3.1—'Young Samuel was in the service of the Lord under Eli'.	3.13—And I declare to him...that his sons committed sacrilege'.
3.19-21—'Samuel grew up and the Lord was with him... And the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh...'	4.1 (according to the Septuagint)—'And Eli grew very old, and his sons continued to act more and more wickedly in the presence of Yahweh'.

12.   On the related problems, see M. Buber 1978: 244, and the bibliography there.

13.   Compare to the preferable version of the Septuagint and the *Peshitta* that read: 'For as long as he *lives*, he is lent to the Lord'. The Masoretic text is: 'For as long as he *was*, he is lent to the Lord'. See also M.Z. Segal 1956: 15 and McCarter 1980: 57.

midrashic derivation on Samuel's name and the name of Saul, and we would hardly be looking for ties to Saul's birth story. Were it not for the relative clause with the word 'lent'e (*šā'ûl*), one would probably relate to that midrash of the name Samuel (*šmû'ēl*) according to the usual criteria of creating midrashic derivations, noting the close relationship between the narrative flow, and the root š-'-l with the addition of the מ for the object and Samuel's name. In that case the problem should be reduced to the mention of Saul's name in v. 28—'and he is lent (*šā'ûl*) to the Lord'—which puzzles at this point: Why indeed did the narrator introduce another name, Saul, into the midrashic derivation of Samuel's birth story?

An additional dimension is added to this puzzlement only in retrospect, since in ch. 1 we cannot know that a hero named Saul will appear later in the narrative. Only on reaching ch. 9 might the reader recall the story of Samuel's birth and the midrash on his name, which repeated that of Saul. Then questions arise, for instance, if Samuel was lent to the Lord, what is Saul's status? Was Saul too lent to the Lord? These and other questions bring the two figures into confrontation and require the reader to examine Saul's status *vis-à-vis* Samuel's and to the Lord as well: Is Saul too lent to him? Absence of the relative clause giving rise to these questions would have avoided the link between Samuel's birth story and Saul's subsequent appearance. But the relative clause is there, and is interpreted in the second and the third reading, or any repeated reading[14] as an early hint at Saul even at this stage of the reading process, that is, it provides an advance hint.[15] The midrashic authors too made good the hint, as we can see in *Midrash Shemuel:* 'At that time the Holy Spirit shone on her: as long as Samuel exists Saul exists too'.[16]

It appears, then, that the editor saw the similar names; he noted the š-'-l root and knew how the lives of the two leaders came to be linked. He it was who introduced the additional relative clause and thus created ties between them at an early stage in the reading process.

Samuel's birth story is congruent with the stories about his childhood. The midrashic name derivation follows the tradition of stressing the phonetics and relating to the name's components—the š-'-l root and the added מ. Only the conspicuous hint at Saul in the additional and apparently redundant relative clause in v. 28 suggests that the discussion is about Saul and not about Samuel. However, this additional element turns out to derive from literary editing whose purpose is to strengthen the basis for the linking parallels that will emerge in the course of the reading.

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14.   On the significance of repeated readings, see Perry 1979.

15.   There is a similar term in Rivlin 1978: 61 (entry: רמז אפי = epic hint).

16.   M. Buber 1965: 53. See also Yalqut Shim'oni on 1 Sam. 1, paragraph (hint) 80.

We see here evidence for another means employed in ancient editing that took into account not only theological and interpretive but also literary considerations.[17] I suggest regarding the element 'as long as he lives he is lent to the Lord' as literary editing designed to strengthen the link between earlier and later events, preparing the reader and letting him/her know that Samuel was the one who was lent to the Lord, and later, when he/she advances in the reading process and first encounters Saul's name in ch. 9, he/she will associate it with the midrash on the name Samuel, describing him as one who is lent to the Lord. Even at this stage the reader will have to distinguish between the person called Saul and the one called Samuel, but who was lent (*šāʾûl*) to the Lord. This in turn provides a background for future confrontation between the two, in which Samuel, having been lent to the Lord, has the advantage over Saul, who was not.

3. *An Additional Use of the š-ʾ-l Root in 1 Samuel 12.13*

Literary editing seems to be responsible for the double version in v. 13 of ch. 12: 'Here is the king *that you have chosen / that you have asked for*'.[18]

This verse preserves double version, meaning that the scribe could not decide between 'that you have chosen' and 'that you have asked for', and so used the two versions side-by-side, when one of them would have sufficed. Driver thinks that the phrase 'That you have asked for' could have been omitted as it is in the Vaticanus manuscript of the Septuagint.[19] Many other Masoretic manuscripts add the connector *wāw* ('and'), producing the text 'the king that you have chosen and that you have asked for'. However, M.Z. Segal[20] maintains: 'It seems that to resolve the contradiction [compare 10.24] the writer introduced "that you have asked for"'. In my view his opinion is convincing. In this instance the editor who selected 'that you have chosen' tried to emphasize that Saul was chosen by the people (compare 8.18). At the same time another editor could not ignore all the coronation stories stressing that Saul was chosen by God (9.1–10.16; 10.17-27; 11.1-15). Hence he preferred to use the *š-ʾ-l* root, which hints at Saul's

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17.   See Ridout 1971: 1-21. In this introduction he deals with the history of the approach focused on the poetics of biblical prose, calling it 'rhetorical criticism'. Those who follow this approach relate the use of different poetics to the biblical author. One must note that the editor is not necessarily the author, and the discovery of different methods of writing and editing may signify late editing too. See Garsiel 1981: 325 n. 1.

18.   On the phenomenon of double versions, see Talmon 1960, though his work does not relate to this particular double reading.

19.   Driver 1913: 94.

20.   M.Z. Segal 1956: 89.

name and characterizes the situation in which the people ask for a king and Saul is set over them, after he is asked by them. By using 'that you have asked for' the editor stresses that parallel of contrast between Saul and Samuel. The first is asked for by the people, and the other is lent to the Lord. That Samuel is lent to the Lord is reiterated in 2.20: 'Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say "May the Lord grant you offspring by this woman *in place of the loan she made to the Lord*"'.[21]

The drama comes to a climax in 1 Samuel 28, when Saul inquired (*šā'al*) of the Lord 'and the Lord did not answer him' (v. 6), after which he felt that he had no other option but to look for a woman who consults ghosts and to ask Samuel through her. Samuel's answer was: 'Why do you *ask* me, seeing that the Lord has turned away from you and has become your adversary?' (v. 16). This ending explains clearly who is lent to the Lord, and who the people asked for.

The links between Samuel and Saul, and the preference for the former over the latter are woven like tendentious threads through 1 Samuel from beginning to end. The literary editing sought to reinforce the connection between the opening of the book and subsequent developments in it. By hinting at Saul in the story of Samuel's birth the editing created a hidden basis for setting forth their differences, and for their anticipated confrontation. When we get to the stories about Saul, we shall recall to mind the similarity of the names between Saul (*šā'ûl*) and Samuel who was lent (*šā'ûl*) to God. Only after reading further does it finally become clear that Saul was asked for by the people, while Samuel was lent to God, as hinted from ch. 1.

If someone thinks that this explanation is no more than a midrashic one, our counterclaim is that the insights and literary understanding of the midrashic authors, the Sages, are often congruent with the literary editing of both stories and books in the Hebrew Bible. The connecting hint is one of many tools that served the editors of old, while the quick, sensitive midrashic authors were the first to heed the hint and use it for their own ends.

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21. The Masoretic text uses the root *š-'- l* twice here. See McCarter 1980: 80, 84. He emphasized that 'This statement echoes the play on *šā'al* in c[hapter] 1...'

14

WHEN WAS PROPHETIC THOUGHT DOMINANT?

Retrospective Preface

Note 3 of this chapter mentions that the term 'prophetic thought' comes from the work of my teacher and colleague Professor Alexander Rofé, who connected it with the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, that is, the end of the First Temple and the beginning of the Second Temple eras. He relates it to the philosophic literature that flourished in Israel at that time, dealing extensively with issues of prophecy. My views differ from his with regard to the scope and the timeframe he assigns to this type of thought, which I believe was broader and should be linked to the development of classical prophecy from the eighth to the fifth centuries BCE.

My claim assumes that the traumatic Assyrian conquest of the entire region, with its policy of mass deportations, which began in the ninth century BCE, and which continued into the following century, uprooted also many inhabitants of the northern kingdom of Israel from their native place (733–732; 722–720 BCE), created a new view of reality. This in turn led to new attitudes to the divinity, the king and the prophets and the way in which these acted and manifested themselves. Prophets as early as Amos and Hosea revealed the new spirit, which continued to develop in First Isaiah and the prophets who followed him. The people of Judah worried greatly lest what befell Israel would befall them as well, the prophets had the need to warn and to try to lead their society to a brighter future, and that society needed to define itself in the imperial world of changing identities. All these gave rise to new ways of thinking whose most conspicuous results were: the development of prophetic thought, literary writing which criticizes the royal court, and the creation of new laws relating to the worship of God.

Despite more than 40 years having elapsed since I first presented these views, my mind has not changed. More than once I have wondered whether this relates to some personal quality that leads me to grasp a position and not deviate from it, or whether it is the result of some scientific stubbornness leading me to cling at all costs to a position that I

once took. As far as self-awareness allows me to see, that does not seem to be the case. Of late I have even embarked on a small campaign to voice these opinions in every venue with an audience willing to hear them.

Following the title of Borges' novel, *A Hundred Years of Solitude*, I ask myself: Is it possible that there were a hundred years of silence between Israel's exile under Sargon king of Assyria and Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel (722 BCE), and king Josiah's revolution in Judah that centralized religious ritual (622)? As I see it, these were years in which new literary genres flourished in Judah. Historiographic works, the first of them the book of Judges, were written. So were the first prophetic writings, those of the classical prophets like Amos, Hosea, First Isaiah and Micah. Legal literature appeared in the first version of Deuteronomy that included laws not specifically civic that certainly do not voice the king's concern for his people. These hundred years, therefore, were not years of silence. The flourishing literary activity of the time included the beginnings of pro-phetic thought that continued for many years into the time of the Second Temple.

From this point on we have to examine the time of every story that expresses prophetic thought. Does it belong to the beginning of the period or to some stage of the Second Temple era? As for the story before us, of Samuel's consecration to prophecy, I found no reason to date it to the time of the Second Temple and good reason to regard it as a product of the first hundred years of prophetic thought, which were by no means a hundred years of silence.

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The Story of Samuel's Dedication to Prophecy in Light of Prophetic Thought

1. *Introduction*

In two recent comprehensive analyses following the 'close reading' method the purpose of the story describing the dedication of Samuel to prophecy was presumed to be either a story of how the youth Samuel came to be designated,[1] or to explain 'the removal of authority from Eli and his

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1.   Simon (1981) shows that although this story lacks most elements of dedication stories, it has to be included in this genre. He thinks that deviations from the typical mode are the result of adapting Samuel's story to the specific case of 'the only biblical description of a youth of tender years dedicated as a prophet' (p. 88).

house to rest on Samuel'.[2] These and other studies tend in my opinion to ignore another purpose, which is also expressed by the shaping of the story. I propose to show that the story's structure, style and content indicate theological editing with a view to finding answers to issues at the center of prophetic thought.[3] From this story of revelation, the reader learns about various ways of knowing and accepting God's will, their degrees of significance, the preparatory stages granted to the inexperienced youth about to enter the world of prophecy, and the hierarchic relations between priest and prophet as to the knowledge of God's word and will.

2. *The Story Structure: A Study of its Two Parts (1 Samuel 3.1–4.1a)*

Our story has a clear and detailed beginning (vv. 1-3) and ending (3.19-4.1a).[4] Between these two parts are two scenes: the central scene of the revelation (3.4-15a)[5] and an additional scene that describes the meeting

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2.   Zakovitch (1978: 93-100) notes that the purpose of this literary unit 'is not to explain the transmission of God's message from the priest, who is assisted by technical tools in order to get the words of God, to the prophet who achieves a direct revelation'. Zakovitch does not define the transferred authority, and simply declares that 'in the stories of Samuel there is no distinction between prophetic and priestly functions, maintaining that 'Samuel himself performs duties that are clearly a priest's' (p. 94).

3.   The term 'prophetic thought' is from Rofé 1979: 52-54. He states: 'In the 6th and 5th centuries, at the end of the First Temple and the beginning of the Second Temple eras, philosophical literature flourished and dealt at length with prophetic thought'. He related some biblical texts—1 Kgs 12.33–13.32; 22.1-28; the book of Jonah and 'The Book of Balaam' (Num. 22.2–24.25)—to this literature. Although this is not the place to discuss the time and the extent of this literature, I view its extent as broader and its time as earlier, beginning with the awareness of the distinction and uniqueness of the classical prophets of rebuke, meaning the end of the eighth or the beginning of the seventh century BCE.

4.   The story's end appears to include the phrase 'Samuel's word went forth to all of Israel' (4.1a) while the story of the Philistine war immediately following begins with 'Israel marched out to engage the Philistines'. Compare the Septuagint opening: 'And it came to pass in those days that the Philistines gathered themselves together against Israel to war on; And Israel went out…' (see *BHK*). Samuel's appearance at the beginning of the war story seems redundant since he has no role in it. This distinction is accepted by most critical interpreters; see, for example, Driver 1913: 35 and McCarter 1980: 95-97.

5.   The description 'And Samuel slept till morning' (v. 15a) concludes the first scene, clarifying that through the night Samuel lay awake and did not sleep, apparently due to the intense emotion of the revelation. As this establishes the setting in time for the second scene, I use it as a boundary of that scene. The Septuagint adds 'and he rose early in the morning' after v. 15a, making it unnecessary to use the same element as the end and the opening. See, for example, Driver 1913: 44 and McCarter 1980: 95-96.

between Samuel and Eli in the morning after the revelation (3.15b-18). Scrutiny of each part of the story discloses the editing in the light of prophetic thought.

2.1. *Expositional Data*

The exposition of this story is divided into a first part describing the general situation at that time, 'In those days' (v. 1a), and a second specific part regarding the background of that particular day, 'One day' (vv. 2-3). In the first part of the general introduction (v. 1a), Samuel and Eli, the central figures, are presented, and the hierarchic relation between them is suggested. It is expressed by '*Young* Samuel was in the service of the Lord *under Eli*'. This shows absence of direct contact between Samuel and God, and that the figure of Eli the priest stands between them.[6] In the second part (v. 2a), the focus is on the period from the standpoint of the revelation of God's word. The narrator notes that the two main means of receiving prophecy—by word or through a vision—were rare: 'In those days the word of the Lord was rare; visions were not widespread'. From the relation to 'the word of the Lord' and to 'visions' one learns that prophecy is transmitted by hearing or by seeing, and not by technical means such as the Urim and Thummim, the Ephod or the Ark.[7]

The vision and the Ark are important in the specific exposition as well (vv. 2-3). The preceding description of the Temple ambience states that Eli's sight was failing so that despite the burning lamp he could not see.[8] By contrast, Samuel could see both because the lamp of God had not yet gone out and because the atmosphere of the Sanctuary was not one of complete darkness. This choice of an opening focused on seeing—eyes and visibility in the sanctuary—creates the infrastructure for a revelation in which, ironically, both include the blind priest, who was later to understand but not to see, and Samuel, who does not understand but later is to hear and see. Also stressed is the sleeping place of the protagonists: 'Eli was asleep in his usual place...and Samuel was sleeping in the Temple of the Lord where the Ark of God was', clearly showing the preference given to

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6.   Compare 3.1a with 2.11b, 18, 21b, 26 and see also 3.19 and the Septuagint addition to v. 21. It is plausible to assume that in this use of the connecting and editing technique the editor's purpose was to highlight the story of Samuel's consecration to prophecy as part of a story complex on Samuel's time at the Sanctuary of Shiloh (1.1–4.1a). See Chapter 19 in this book.

7.   See Tur-Sinai 1950c, 1950a; Gevaryahu 1950; and Seeligmann 1992d: 172-75.

8.   Most commentators explain that Eli's blindness is mentioned to explain his need for Samuel. See, for example, Kara 1972: 59. It also explains why Samuel slept in the Sanctuary; see Hertzberg 1972: 41. Zakovitch (1978: 95 especially n. 7) considers the possibility of spiritual blindness.

Samuel. The narrator also sets the stage for the revelation to take place before the Ark, the innermost core of the priestly rites.[9]

2.2. *The Revelation Scene*
From the start and throughout the description of the revelation experience, the auditory phenomena of calling and hearing are stressed. The blind Eli, to whom the revelation is not addressed, also fails to hear; while the inexperienced Samuel relates the call he has heard to Eli who, given his condition, may need some kind of help. Between the second and third summons the narrator introduces his own comment, which is simply a delayed introductory remark: 'Samuel had not experienced the Lord; the word of God had not yet been revealed to him' (v. 7).[10] The narrator did not blame Samuel, who is 'growing up with God' (2.21, 26; 3.19), for not knowing him. What Samuel does not yet know is the experience of seeing. The use of the root *y-d-'* replaces the root *r-'-h* in this text to show that Samuel had not yet seen God.[11] Possible too is that the preference of the root *y-d-'* was intended to stress the contradictory analogy between Samuel and Eli's sons, who '...paid no heed to the Lord' (2.12), meaning that they did evil in his sight.

At this point there is a radical change.[12] Eli, blind but experienced, who did not hear the call, 'understood that the Lord was calling to the boy' (v. 8). The continued calling made it clear to Eli that this was no chance occurrence and that Samuel was to hear the word of the Lord. And so Eli commands him, 'If you are called again, say "Speak Lord, for Your servant is listening"' (v. 9). We find, then, that the priest relies on signs while the prophet is actually to hear the word of God.

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9.   The description of the Sanctuary as a sleeping place presented difficulties for some commentators. See, however, the decisive view of Ehrlich (1969b: 108-109), who maintains: 'The text in the form before us is wiser than all the earlier and later sages who distort it'. M. Buber (1978: 251-52) notes that the verb *š-k-b* appears seven times, in his view to highlight the connection between Samuel and the Ark.

10.   See Zakovitch (1978: 174-93) for a detailed analysis of the three–four model in revelation stories, with special reference to the third and fourth scenes in this model.

11.   On the connection between these two verbs, see Seeligmann (1992b: 106-107 and n. 13), who sums up: 'Many are the texts in which knowing is parallel to seeing or derives from it...' Compare, for example, Josh. 24.31 with Judg. 2.7. See also 1 Sam. 12.16-17; 24.12. Roots may also appear in parallel (Ps. 31.8) and in a unified sequence (1 Sam. 12.7; 14.38; 23.22-23; 24.12; 1 Kgs 20.7, 12) and elsewhere.

12.   On the turning point in the third element of the numerical pattern three and four, see also Zakovitch 1978: 523-25. According to Licht (1978: 54), this expression provides balance and variety.

A visual manifestation accompanies that fourth and critical appearance. According to the narrator, God came, stood there, called and spoke (v. 10).[13] Samuel then was vouchsafed a revelation that combined both seeing and hearing. Significantly, it did not come to him in a dream but while awake, and he remained awake, as one understands from the conclusion of the scene, till morning.[14]

2.3. *The Encounter between Samuel and Eli*

The narrator's comment as the scene opens confirms that Samuel experienced the revelation as visual: 'Samuel was afraid to report the vision to Eli' (v. 15).[15]

The encounter between Eli and Samuel, a conclusion formulated as a contrasting analogy to the opening data, guides the reader into the new situation, where the priest is subordinate to the prophet. The prophet it was who received God's word and the priest knows it. Hence if the priest desires to know its message, he has to hear it from the prophet. From now on the situation has changed. No longer does Samuel serve the Lord under Eli, but Samuel receives the word of the Lord and imparts it to Eli. He does not want to hurt Eli, but a true prophet is obliged to pass on the words of Him who sent him, even if they constitute a sharp reproof. The prophet is forbidden to delete any detail. Eli makes Samuel swear to tell him the whole truth, thus preparing him for such a conflict.

2.4. *The End of the Story*

The story's end emphasizes Samuel's status as a prophet among his people. In contrast with the opening of ch. 3, stating that the word of God was rare, the end declares that through Samuel there was ongoing contact between God and His people (v. 21). As God was with Samuel, his prophecies were

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13.   Compare with Exod. 34.5; Num. 22.22, 34; Amos 7.7; 9.1. See also Job 4.16 and *Yalqut Shimoni* Part 1, paragraph 232: '...and there is no standing anywhere save for the Holy Sprit as it is said...the Lord came and stood there and He called as before...' Compare with Ehrlich 1969b: 109.

14.   Oppenheim 1956: 186-97; see also Oppenheim 1958, where he maintains that the descriptive elements of revelation indicate a dream situation in this text too. I think, however, that prophetic thought sought to describe the revelation as a direct communication and not as a dream, where the dreamer is passive. Compare, for example, with Gen. 15.12-17; 28.12-19, by contrast with 1 Kgs 19.9-14 and Isa. 6. There is a suggestion of criticism regarding dreams and dreaming prophets in Deut. 13.2-6; Jer. 23.25-28; 27.9; 29.8 and perhaps in Num. 12.6. See also later writings: Zech. 10.2 and Eccl. 5.2, 6.

15.   The link between the motifs of awe and of seeing is evident as well in, for example, Exod. 14.30-31; 20.18-20; Judg. 6.22-23; 13.20-22; Isa. 6.5. See also Deut. 5.4-5, and elsewhere.

fulfilled and he was regarded as a trustworthy prophet (v. 20).[16] In other words, the people recognized Samuel, having seen that his prophecies were fulfilled.[17]

3. *A Provisional Summary*

We have seen, then, that the story of Samuel's consecration sets forth to the reader the various means for receiving God's word, which the people receive from the prophet. The narrator stresses that the people came to know that Samuel was a faithful prophet only when his prophecies came to pass (vv. 19-21). And this proof fits the Deuteronomistic law: 'And you should ask yourselves, "How can we know that the oracle was not spoken by the Lord?"—if the prophet speaks it in the name of the Lord and the oracle does not come true, that oracle was not spoken by the Lord...' (Deut. 18.21-22).[18] Only because Samuel's prophecies were proved true, was he considered as a true prophet by all Israel.

Eli the experienced priest understood the reality as it unfolded in an exceptional and repeated occurrence, and knew that from then on Samuel would be the legitimate source of God's word. The priest therefore would have to be content with signs.

As for Samuel, he went through an integrated and gradual transition that began with hearing a voice and concluded with both seeing a vision and hearing a voice. Undoubtedly such a transition from hearing to seeing is significant for one who for the first time experiences a divine revelation. Eli's demand from Samuel to hear the whole truth even if the truth is harsh is another preparation technique.[19]

The story also informs the reader that revelation is a personal experience. Even though Eli was nearby, he heard neither the repeated calls to Samuel nor the divine message.

The various parts of the story all emphasize the great change during that period, from the days when the word of the Lord was rare to a time of direct divine revelation to Samuel at Shiloh, and from a time when contact with God was through the priests to a time when the people and their priests depended on the word of the prophet.

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16.   The Septuagint version of vv. 20-21 is different, but it does not change the sense of the above passages. See Driver 1913: 45 and McCarter 1980: 97.

17.   Compare the words of Samuel's servant in 1 Sam. 9.6: 'There is a man of God in the town and he is highly esteemed; everything that he says comes true'.

18.   The negative formulation in Deuteronomy declares fulfillment a necessary but not a sufficient condition for identifying a true prophet. According to 13.2-6 the content and purpose of the prophecy must be considered too.

19.   On the preparatory steps and the guidance Samuel received, see Simon 1981.

4. *The Story Style*

The vocabulary and expressions that make up the story are rich in styles from the field of prophecy, and one cannot accurately state that is true for every story of revelation or consecration:[20]

1. Language linked to prophecy transmitted through hearing: 'to hear'—vv. 9, 10; 'to call' (when the subject of the verb is God)—vv. 4, 6, 8, 9, 10; 'the word of the Lord'—vv. 1, 7, 17, 18, 19, 21; 'to speak' (when God is the subject of the verb)—vv. 9, 10, 17.

2. Language linked to prophecy transmitted through seeing: 'to see'—v. 21; 'sight'—v. 15; 'to know'—vv. 7, 20; 'to be revealed'—vv. 7, 21; 'vision'—v. 1.

3. Expressions from related fields that reinforce situations of seeing and hearing: 'his eyes had begun to fail and he could barely see'—v. 2; 'the lamp of the Lord had not gone out'—v. 3; 'then Eli understood'—v. 8; 'to report'—vv. 15, 18; 'to keep from'—vv. 17, 18.

The root 'to call' (*q-r-'*) occurs often in the dialogues of Eli and Samuel, when Eli is the action's subject, and thus it strengthens his appearance in point 1. above where its status becomes that of a leading word—vv. 5 (×2), 6 (×2), 8, 16.

5. *Conclusion*

The shaping of Samuel's designation story seems to reflect the issues and conflicts current in the world of prophetic thought. The story explains why a young and inexperienced person need not fear revelation, how the Lord reveals his will to human beings, and the extent to which the prophet is superior to the priest. From the exposition the reader learns that temples and people who serve there do not assure a revelation of God's word,[21] and that Eli the priest, not chosen to receive it, had to be content with signs that Samuel was chosen by God. As the priesthood was taken from Eli and his sons, and Samuel was designated as a prophet, one cannot properly speak of transferring authority in this case. Young Samuel served in the

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20.   See, for example, the revelation connected with Gideon's designation (Judg. 6.11-24) or the revelation stories in the book of Genesis (17.1-21; 18.1-16 and elsewhere).

21.   The attempt to reduce the importance of the Sanctuary is typical of Deuteronomy and of Deuteronomistic literature which attaches little importance to God's presence in the Sanctuary and stresses that the name of God abides in the Sanctuary. See, e.g., Deut. 12.5; 1 Kgs 8.17-20; 9.3, 7; Jer. 7.26. Among extensive studies of the subject are von Rad 1953: 37-44 and Weinfeld 1972: 191-209.

sanctuary as a priest not on the strength of a revelation, and Ahijah son of Ahitub of Eli's priestly family wore an ephod and served before the Ark of God even in Samuel's time (1 Sam. 14.3, 18-19). Our story, then, deals with a new concept of relations with the divine. If formerly they depended on the priestly dynasty and ritual objects, henceforth they would be carried out through direct communication of the divinity to its chosen individual. The prophetic connection does not rule out the priestly-technical one, but from this episode one can infer the degree to which the first is superior to the second due to a change in the hierarchic relationship.[22] Our story clarifies that the desirable, ongoing connection between the people and their God is mediated by a prophet, not a priest. The validity of the Sanctuary at Shiloh stems from God's revelations to Samuel there. The Sanctuary and its priests are secondary to prophetic thought, as written in Deut. 18.18: 'I will raise up a prophet for them from among their own people... I will put My words in his mouth and he will speak to them all that I command him.'[23] This perception undoubtedly serves to introduce the story of the death of the priests of Shiloh and of the capture and the subsequent wanderings of the Ark. Absence of the Ark and of the priests did not sever the connection with God because Israel heeded Samuel's word, the word of God.

The story of Samuel's revelation, then, is not only a story of designation, nor is it a story of the transfer of authority. It is a story edited in the spirit of prophetic thought, some of whose main purposes were to determine: when in Israelite history the principle that God's word came only through His prophetic messengers came to be applied; since what time were the prophets shown as the head of the leadership hierarchy; and since what period was history been described as the fulfillment of a prophecy. The answers to these questions are critical in understanding the book of Samuel, and are also critical to an understanding of the Israelite monarchy in the light of prophetic thought.[24]

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22.   See M. Buber 1978: 244-54; Seeligmann 1992d: 174-75; Newman 1962.
23.   This approach differs from that of Chronicles. See Amit 2006a.
24.   On the prophetic reworking of the book of Samuel, see McCarter 1980: 12-30.

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Did Saul Die Three Times?

Retrospective Preface

The Bible gives three reports of Saul's death, and through them it is possible to illustrate the need for both source criticism and narrative criticism.

Two of these accounts are in the book of Samuel. The first (1 Sam. 31), by the trustworthy narrator describes the tragic and heroic death of Israel's first king. The second (2 Sam. 1.6-10) is by the Amalekite youth, a robber of corpses, who, convinced he is a bearer of good tidings to David, hastens to reach him in high hopes of a fitting reward. There is no need for the two juxtaposed accounts, for the author could have reported briefly that news of Saul's death reached David and concluded with the moving lament on the death of Saul and his son Jonathan (2 Sam. 1.17-27). The question is: What would have been lost by omitting the Amalekite youth's report, or, put otherwise, what does that report contribute to the narrative? In my view, it contributes on the literary-factual plane. Through it David is seen as a sophisticated political figure who does not hesitate to extract the maximum from any and every event. The appearance of the young Amalekite gave him a chance to appear as grieving Saul's death, avenging the king's lost honor (vv. 11-16) and even lamenting over him. The sensitive reader will find gaps in the story of the Amalekite youth, wondering why David failed to question him and why he did not investigate further, instead hastening to kill him. Such a reader may wonder whether David's lament is even congruent with the preceding material. For example, were Saul and Jonathan really loving and pleasant in their lives? Doubts of this type lead to the conclusion that David needed no spokesman or public relations staff or advisers to pave his way to power. He did that exceedingly well himself. The literary reading that does not assume two reports representing two different sources or traditions, impels the reader to discover the intention of the trustworthy narrator and the additional aspects of David's character as revealed by the Amalekite youth's report.

The situation is quite different in the third report in the book of Chronicles (1 Chron. 10). This time it is clear that the Chronicler, who lived hundreds of years after the book of Samuel was composed, represents a

different source that aims to defame Saul and exalt David. Writing and editing in the fourth century BCE, as most researchers are convinced, the Chronicler therefore used what materials he had as he saw fit, indeed, as clay in the potter's hands. He did not hesitate to contradict, deny or ignore sources, which indicates the force of editing and the liberties it took. It also shows that in the fourth century the Deuteronomistic account was not regarded as incontrovertible canonical literature.

In my years of university teaching I enjoyed giving a course titled 'The Book of Chronicles as a Laboratory'. By comparing texts from Chronicles with earlier texts that the Chronicler would likely have had as sources I was able to convince my students, even the conservatives among them, that during that very late time the editing process could continue and new sources could even be created, sources in the spirit of the 'reference library' that their authors used. Moreover, through this late book I could at the same time show that the literature of the Torah was already considered canonical. In the laboratory of Chronicles both lower and higher criticism became intensely alive and convincing.

Most of all I liked the students to question why the biblical editors included the book of Chronicles alongside Samuel and Kings in the canon. Here was an opening for a discussion in praise of biblical editing that was never phased by contradictions and discrepancies, but rather focused on the contribution of each text to belief and knowledge within the biblical world. Such editing anticipated readers with differing needs, and even had faith in the sophistication of the commentators. It would seem, then, that to a large extent due to the openness of its editing the Bible became a guide for living.

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THREE VARIATIONS ON THE DEATH OF SAUL:
STUDIES IN THE FASHIONING OF THE WORLD, IN RELIABILITY AND IN THE TENDENTIOUSNESS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

The death of Saul is described three times in biblical literature. In the first instance the narrator tells the tragic story of the death of Saul and his three sons on Mt Gilboa (1 Sam. 31), concluding the description of Saul and his monarchy that began in chs. 8–9. The second version (2 Sam. 1.4-10) comes from a figure from the world of the story, an Amalekite youth who reaches David on his third day in Ziklag, 'his clothing rent and earth on his head', to report the latest events on the battlefield. The details he reports

do not correspond with those of the previous narrator. The author of Chronicles too presents a version of Saul's death and defeat, similar to the one in 1 Samuel 31. However, a comparison reveals differences not only on the level of possible textual errors, or style and vocabulary, but also differences in the information shared that could be interpreted as tendentious. What, then, can one learn from the readiness of the biblical editors to include three variations on a single theme, each raising questions as to the world it presents, reliability and tendentiousness?

1. *The Narrator's Story and the Character's Report*
(1 Samuel 31 and 2 Samuel 1.4-10)

The narrator's story and that of the Amalekite youth are two variations, coming one after the other, creating a picture that alerts even the hasty reader who overlooks details to confirm what he has learned. He at once notices that the youth reports details absent from the narrator's account. This allows the reader four hypothetical options for examining the relationship between the narrator's story and the report of a character from the described world: (1) both story and report are reliable and reflect the reality described; (2) the narrator's story is reliable while the report contains false details; (3) the story is not reliable while the report from the battlefield reflects reality; (4) neither story nor report is reliable.[1]

Since neither of the last two options is relevant for the biblical narrative, where the narrator appears as the reliable authority presenting what 'really' happened, the first two options remain to be examined.[2]

2. *Story and Report are Reliable*

This possibility is the point of departure for Josephus Flavius, who combines the two descriptions:

> He himself, after fighting magnificently and receiving numerous wounds, until he could no longer hold out nor endure under these blows, was too weak to kill himself and bade his armour-bearer draw his sword and thrust it through him before the enemy should take him alive. But, as the armour-bearer did not dare to slay his master, Saul drew his own sword himself and,

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1.   The word 'reliable' is not a synonym for 'historical', and refers simply to the relationship between reader, narrator and the world presented, without asking whether that described world reflects historical reality. That issue is the business of historians and outside the present framework.

2.   On trustworthiness of the narrator in biblical narrative, see Sternberg 1977: 133-49 (follow also the entry 'Narrator, reliability of' in the Index of Sternberg 1985). See also Chapter 16 in the present work (pp. 205-19).

fixing it with its point toward him, sought to fling himself upon it, but was unable either to push it in or, by leaning upon it, to drive the weapon home. Then he turned and, seeing a youth standing there, asked him who he was, and on learning that he was an Amalekite, begged him to force the sword in, since he could not do this with his own hands, and so procure him such a death as he desired. This he did, and after stripping off the bracelet of gold on Saul's arm and his royal crown, disappeared. Then the armour-bearer, seeing that Saul was dead, killed himself.[3]

In biblical terms one might say that Josephus combined the Amalekite youth's report with 1 Samuel 31 between vv. 5 and 6, and only afterwards reconstructed the story, indicating that both story and report are reliable. Combining them is legitimate because it completes a text previously shortened with one from another source. Put otherwise, Josephus is convinced that concentrating information in a suitable chronological framework and reorganizing the biblical order of its presentation makes it possible to present a world more precise, systematic and reliable.

Among our traditional commentators, who are well aware of the tensions that exist between the two descriptions, there is a widespread tendency to synchronize them. Abarbanel's commentary clearly points to this:

> Who killed Saul? If we say that the Amalekite killed him as he told David, why does the text not tell it in the description of the event?... And if we admit that it happened so, sad to say, that he killed himself, the story of the Amalekite youth is very difficult... And if we say that he lied and deceived in his report, how can anyone say that the horsemen closed in on him? And how did he bring the crown from his head and the armlet from his arm to David?...[4]

Abarbanel's penetrating questions point to his reasons for regarding the Amalekite youth's report as reliable and for adapting it to the narrator's version. In his view, the reader cannot doubt all he said in his report, for he describes the chariots and the horsemen closing in on Saul (2 Sam. 1.6), which corresponds with the narrator's version in 1 Sam. 31.3. Moreover, the youth comes bearing proof from the battlefield: the crown and the armlet of the king, leading many commentators to try to reconstruct what happened in the battlefield and thus to give the Amalekite's report the status of a complementary account. Here are two examples:

Ralbag's (Gersonides) commentary gives the reader to understand that there is no point in distinguishing between the sword and the spear. Saul in his opinion was not stabbed when he fell on his sword (= his spear), and

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3.   Josephus, *Ant.* 6.14.7 (370-72). Hereafter (7.1.1 [1-4]), Josephus repeats the story of the Amalekite in connection with events in Ziklag (there: Sikella).

4.   Abarbanel 1955: 305.

so to complete the penetration, he leaned with full force on the sword. The problem, he reasoned, arose from the barrier of the 'armor' that the Amalekite reported: 'The clothing that he [Saul] wore was checkered to reinforce it and to make it stronger, so that the sword could not cut through it easily'.[5]

Abarbanel, by contrast, describes Saul's condition after the injury as between life and death. On one hand, Saul was seized by the fatal *šābāṣ*, meaning a killing disease, while on the other hand he did not die of the wound and was still breathing, so he had to be slain.[6]

Such solutions show that commentators ultimately tend to accept the Amalekite youth's report as reliable, and also how important it is for them to interpret the texts as congruent, completing the fashioning of the world.

The usual critical interpretation since the end of the nineteenth century is to explain tensions as the result of different sources or traditions. Says Ehrlich, 'You see two parallels regarding the death of Saul. One reports what is written at the end of the previous book, and belongs to the house of Saul, and the second to present events, to the house of David...'[7]

Smith even asserts:

> It seems impossible to reconcile the two accounts. The easiest hypothesis is that the Amalekite fabricated his story. But the whole narrative seems against this. David has no inkling that the man is not truthful, nor does the author suggest it. The natural conclusion is that we have here a document different from the one just preceding.[8]

Even solutions in the spirit of the sources or the traditions, then, avoid casting doubt on the reliability of either story, granting each its own 'truth', drawing a line of similarity between traditional and critical commentary. Both tend to interpret the narrator's story and the eye-witness report as reliable; neither finds any cogent reason to accuse the Amalekite youth of a false report. And should anyone ask why the author or editor decided to combine the two traditions side-by-side, Ehrlich replies: 'And this author took the two traditions together to show that there are two,

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5.   See Ralbag's (Rabbi Levi Ben Gershon) commentary on 2 Sam. 1.6, 9. The meaning of שבת is not known, and most commentators tend to interpret it as the name of an illness. See, e.g., Driver 1913: 232; M.Z. Segal 1956: 232-33. It seems that Ralbag is influenced by the use of the root in Exod. 28.4, 13, 39, meaning some kind of interweaving. Is it possible that in his time he imagined something like a crusaders shield? McCarter (1984: 60) is influenced by the ancient translations and assumes that 'the Amalekite means that Saul was saying he is too giddy from his wounds to dispatch himself'.

6.   Abarbanel 1955: 310.

7.   Ehrlich 1969b: 180.

8.   Smith 1951: 254.

and used each one as his purpose required...'[9] This commentary does not propose to coordinate the texts. Rather, it aims to accentuate differences so as to convince readers that different sources reflect different views of the world, and to provide whoever is interested with data for historical reconstruction.

M.Z. Segal, however, takes a different view. Although he also premises that the book is not the original work of one author, but a collection of materials and sources coming from different writers, he is convinced that the book was reworked by an editor who had his own plan.[10] What is important for our case is that Segal does not infer that the Amalekite's report is reliable:

> Indeed there may be one source here, i.e. that of the history of David, while in 1 Samuel 31 the source is from the history of Saul. This, however, is no reason to say that the author of that source believed the Amalekite's story, or that David himself believed it. *The truth is that the Amalekite lied and invented the story to find favor with David*.[11]

According to Segal, the narrator's story from the Saul chronicle reflects the reality while the witness's report from the David chronicle is false and should be regarded as a pragmatic device designed to take full advantage of the situation. As he says afterwards:

> For in fact the Amalekite was one of the thieving rabble that used to follow the army swooping down onto the battlefield after the fighting like birds of prey, stripping the fallen and killing the mortally wounded for the sake of plunder. That is how the Amalekite found Saul at Gilboa, and possibly stabbed him a second time to make sure he was dead, then stripped the royal accoutrements from his body and brought them to David in the hope of a rich reward.[12]

Thus Segal chose the second possibility I have presented: that the narrator's story is reliable and the witness's report is false, or contains false details. The question, then, is whether and how he shows that the Amalekite's claim is false—and after a close reading of his arguments, not one of them convinces.[13]

Segal argues that 'there is not the slightest hint that what he [the Amalekite] says is true'. This invites a question: Was not the fact that the Amalekite brought items of the royal regalia something more than 'the slightest hint'? In Segal's view, had David believed that the Amalekite slew

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9.   See n. 7. With that, he does not say what the editor's changing purpose is.
10.   M.Z. Segal 1956: vi-xxviii.
11.   M.Z. Segal 1956: 231-32 (emphasis original).
12.   M.Z. Segal 1956: 232.
13.   All Segal's arguments are to be found in 1956: 232.

Saul, he would have asked him how Jonathan died. My reply is that David did not even ask how Saul died, therefore it was not necessary to ask how Jonathan died. David's question was directly to the information source: 'How do you know...that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?' (2 Sam. 1.5). Segal even refers to 2 Sam. 4.10 where David quotes the Amalekite youth saying 'Saul was dead' and noting that he did not say that he killed Saul. But there are other contradictions in what David said. He says he killed the Amalekite youth, contrary to 2 Sam. 1.11, where one of the attendants is said to have killed him. On this contradiction Segal writes: 'The truth is that in his great emotion David did not choose his words carefully...'[14] On the strength of this explanation one might say that his emotional state led David to quote the messenger as saying 'Saul was dead' and not: 'I killed Saul'. Segal's last argument comes from 1 Chronicles 10, which is close to 1 Samuel 31 and does not allude to the story of the Amalekite. He sees the Chronicler's preference for 1 Samuel 31 as proof that this story is reliable. This does not withstand criticism, for there is no evidence that the Chronicler selects his sources and prefers reliable ones, nor that his details are outstanding for their credibility.[15]

At the same time, even if Segal does not succeed in proving that the Amalekite lied and deceived, the reader senses that the critic is right to some extent, and that the messenger's words are not to be taken at face value. Let me try to show why.

Ehrlich asks 'And why would Saul, who is about to die, know who the man was? You would be forced to say that Saul asked who the man was, for *poetical reasons*'.[16] Ehrlich finds, then, that the report is structured with implausible remarks that would hardly have been made in the circumstances described. Their presence, he thinks, indicates the scribe's needs (i.e. from a poetical point of view). No doubt either that the expression 'I happened to be on Mt Gilboa' (2 Sam. 1.6) suggests something dubious about the Amalekite, since one does not just happen to arrive at a battlefield with its mortal dangers.[17] Nor does David accuse the youth of killing Saul, only of assuming the guilt: 'And David said to him, 'Your blood be on your own head! Your own mouth testified against you when you said, "I put the Lord's anointed to death"' (v. 16). Moreover, 1 Samuel 31 states that only on 'the next day' did the Philistines arrive to strip the slain (v. 8). One can reasonably assume, then, that only in the evening or at night,

14. M.Z. Segal 1956: 257.
15. For general discussion and bibliography on this subject, see Japhet 1989: 1-10.
16. Ehrlich 1969b: 180 (emphasis added).
17. Ehrlich (1969b: 179-80) thus inclines towards the understanding of the root *q-r-h* ('to happen') as if it is *q-r-'*. It occurs with verbs that end with *aleph* or *he*. He interprets this expression as: 'I heard a voice on Mount Gilboa calling out...'

when the battle was over but before the Philistines would arrive, did types like the Amalekite appear in search of loot. The Amalekite was very, very cautious, insisting that he slew the king at the king's request and for his own good, 'for I knew that he would never arise from where he was lying' (2 Sam. 1.10), and, in addition, taking care to appear in tattered clothes with earth on his head (2 Sam. 1.2). On the one hand, he hastens to announce Saul's death to David, but on the other, he hesitates to act like a bearer of tidings and finds it necessary to justify what he did.[18]

None of the foregoing statements, however, contain incontrovertible proof, and one can only say that interpreting the Amalekite youth's words through them reinforces the sense that besides caution, his behavior indicates elements of pretense, and hope of a special reward from David. The doubts that the reader finds in the Amalekite youth's report could also, theoretically, be the doubts of David. With that, the fact that David does not continue to question him and pursue the investigation, condemning him only out of his own mouth (2 Sam. 1.16), does not prove that he believed him. Possibly David decided that for his own purposes the report he had was preferable to disclosure of the whole truth. Thus the Amalekite gives David a pretext to kill him along with a chance to demonstrate to the community at large his concern and sensitivity regarding the Lord's anointed. Unquestionably David's response undermines any possible argument that he sought to benefit from Saul's death, and under the circumstances a response of this type could only enhance his public relations. In any case, concluding that the report is unreliable does not undermine the world of the narrator of 1 Samuel 31. Rather, it provides other details that help flesh out the image of David as he confronts an unexpected new situation. By contrast, however, to accept the report as reliable would not only have obliged the reader to complete the narrator's report with other details the Amalekite related, but would have raised a new series of questions: Why did the narrator prefer to ignore these details? Does their absence help fashion the world described in 1 Samuel 31? Does putting them off into another story that immediately follows, and voicing them from the mouth of a character, mar the narrator's story or is the opposite is true: the second story highlights the purposes of the first one?

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18. In a lecture by J.P. Fokkelman in December 1982 at Bar Ilan University, he stressed that the Amalekite foreigner, unlike Saul's armor-bearer, did not hesitate to kill the Lord's anointed. Hence the Amalekite made a point of reporting his conversation with Saul, from which his alien origin is inferred. Fokkelman too maintained that the Amalekite's reported dialogue with Saul, and noting his claim that he had killed Saul, are the false part of his testimony. Compare with Hertzberg 1972: 236-37.

Up to now, Abarbanel's questions remain open and it is difficult to decide conclusively whether we are looking at a reliable narration and report, or whether the report contains false details and the narration is unreliable. However, it appears that the decision to confront the narrator's story with the report from a character of naturally dubious reliability, and certainly one whose reliability cannot be proved, is designed to make the reader weigh the options, consider their contributions to the world being fashioned, and then to trace the intentions of the author who took pains to highlight them.

3. *A Story of Two Narrators (1 Samuel 31 and 1 Chronicles 10)*

Comparing the two stories of 1 Samuel 31 and 1 Chronicles 10 creates a complication. Both accounts are given by narrators and not by figures from the world of the story itself. And, as I have said, the principal norm in a biblical narrative is the reliability of the narrator, what happens when narrators tell stories about the same event that do not corroborate one another?

Modern commentary usually contents itself with the solution that the Chronicler adapted his sources to his needs, and in many instances included unreliable details, passages and even stories, from which the narrator's intent may be surmised. As I see it, such changes are just as true as regards the narrator's intentions in Samuel.

In four cases at least where the Chronicles story deviates from the source in Samuel, one can discern a common tendency:[19]

1. 1 Sam. 31.5 / 1 Chron. 10.5—In 1 Samuel the narrator takes pains to stress that Saul's armor-bearer died *with him*. Chronicles lacks the expression 'with him'. In 1 Samuel the word is part of the description of the death of all Saul's forces, 'together on that day' (v. 6), a description arousing esteem and identification, enhancing the tragic dimension of the death of the king with his men around him. Stylistic refinements that help achieve this ambience are absent from the Chronicles account.

2. 1 Sam. 31.6 / 1 Chron. 10.6—There is no description of the death of all the king's men in Chronicles, which states: 'Thus Saul and his three sons and his entire house died together'. The Chronicler hints to the reader that the loss of Saul's entire house creates a leadership vacuum and the immediate need for a transfer of the monarchy (see 1 Chron. 10.14).[20]

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19. In the present framework I see no need to list all the changes, and certainly not those that are not tendentious.

20. Compare with Ehrlich 1969b: 438. However Curtis 1910: 181 thinks differently.

3. 1 Sam. 31.9-12 / 1 Chron. 10.9-12—According to Chronicles, the Philistines mounted Saul's head on a pike in Bet Dagon. The inference is that the men of Jabesh buried the bodies of Saul and his sons that they found on the battlefield, but did not take Saul's head from Bet Dagon. This both diminishes the heroism of the men of Jabesh, who did not remove the bodies of Saul and his sons from the ramparts of Bet Shaan, and detracts from the respect shown the dead king, whose skull was not buried with his bones.[21]

4. The Chronicler persists in explaining his systematic reworking of the material by adding a verse describing Saul as a sinful king worthy of losing the monarchy: 'Saul died for the trespass he had committed against the Lord in not having fulfilled the command of the Lord; moreover, he had consulted a ghost to seek advice; and did not seek the advice of the Lord; so He had him slain and the kingdom transferred to David son of Jesse' (10.13-14).

In other words, the monarchy was given over to David, according to the Chronicler, simply because Saul sinned and was punished. A specific instance is given to accentuate the sins: 'he had consulted a ghost…', to which two hints are added. The first is in the sequence 'not having fulfilled the commandment of the Lord' where the root *m-'-l* brings to mind the story of Achan who violated the proscription of Ai (Josh. 7) and creates an association with the episode of Saul and the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15.3, 8-9, 15, 18, 20-21). The second hint is in the verse: '…in not having fulfilled the commandment of the Lord'. This text refers to Saul's conduct and Samuel's rebuke before the battle of Michmas: '…in not keeping the commandments that the Lord your God laid upon you…because you did not abide by what the Lord had commanded you' (1 Sam. 13.13-14). First Chronicles 10.13, then, looks for sin in Saul throughout his reign: from the battle at Michmas to consulting a ghost on the eve of the battle on Mt Gilboa. Significantly, in 1 Samuel 28 raising the ghost is not considered a sin but a last resort.[22] The description by the Chronicler, by contrast, is influenced by legal literature (Deut. 18.11; Lev. 19.31; 20.6, 27), and historiographic texts (2 Kgs 21.6; 23.24), all of which specify that raising spirits of the dead is a sin in the eyes of God. Another outrageous sinner is none other than Manasseh king of Judah who was responsible for the destruction of the First Temple (2 Kgs 21; 23.26; 24.3; Jer. 15.4). First Chronicles 10.13-14 reveal a writer who is not content with the detracting from the tragic majesty of Saul's death and burial, but who has an additional interest in raising the reader's antagonism against Saul even at the price of creating an analogy with Manasseh.

21. Compare with Curtis 1910: 181.
22. See Curtis 1910: 182-83; Ehrlich 1969b: 438.

One can therefore sum up the discrepancies between the two books as the result of different editorial approaches with different guidelines. In our case it is evident that the narrator of Samuel had no interest in detracting from the dignity of Saul's death as the conclusion of a life replete with struggle, heroism and suffering. The Chronicler, by contrast, took advantage of the story of Saul's death to justify giving the monarchy over to David technically (the whole royal house was dead) and ideologically (he [Saul] did not seek the advice of the Lord).

4. *Story and Polemic—What Links Them?*

To say that the fashioning of the world in Chronicles is tendentious may create the mistaken impression that the world fashioned in Samuel is objective and unbiased, faithfully reflecting the historical reality it depicts. It is more reasonable to assume that the authors of both books had their messages and purposes that were served by the world they fashioned. The polemic quality of Chronicles helps create a world of extremes, a world in black and white, of good people and bad people. Saul the sinner who failed, who consulted a ghost and did not seek the advice of the Lord, must leave the stage and give place to David, the good and the successful, who is the very embodiment of walking in the ways of the Lord. To avoid raising in the reader any thoughts about David in the time of the Philistine wars and how he obtained the monarchy, the Chronicler completely ignores the episode of the Amalekite youth's sojourn with David at Ziklag.

The narrator of the book of Samuel fashions a world more realistic and hence more complex, where black and white, like good and evil, touch one another. Throughout that book tension exists between complex characters who have both weaknesses and noble qualities, and between events that are not of a piece, but rather a mosaic formed from numerous elements. In Samuel, Saul's death on Mt Gilboa constitutes an end and summation from which to fashion a comprehensive picture of his nature and his struggles, as indeed he appears throughout the book (1 Sam. 9–31). Saul's character is positive, sensitive and upright, though he could not cope simultaneously with hostile external pressures, notably the Philistines—and internal pressures centered around Samuel and beside him, David. The author, who wants to highlight the tragic nature of Saul, Israel's first king, strives to dignify the story of his death both by depicting his men who died with him and the armor-bearer who killed himself at his side. He also describes Saul's burial at the hands of warriors faithful to him from Jabesh Gilead, and refrains at this point from any reference to the Amalekite youth. But with that, and because the narrator wants to emphasize that God has discarded Saul and prefers David, he introduces the youth's story too. As Ehrlich says,

> This death more than any other death in the world, teaches us how profoundly God has rejected Saul and chosen David. While David defeated Amalek whom God hated, an Amalekite slew Saul. And as if there was not shame enough for Saul in that, [the writer] has him ask who are you, making the shame greater for knowing that an Amalekite killed him, one whom the Lord proscribed.[23]

Ehrlich also stresses the youth's answer to David, 'I am the son of a resident alien, an Amalekite' (2 Sam. 1.13), which serves to recall Saul's sin 'in not proscribing Amalek and thus not fulfilling the Lord's commandment through the prophet Samuel. Not only that—he even allowed Amalekites to reside in the land of Israel...'[24] Thus with the story of the youth who is an Amalekite, the narrator of Samuel concludes the history of Saul and the Amalekites that begins in ch. 15. Additionally, one should note here the different demands made on David and on Saul. Of Saul it was required to proscribe the Amalekites and their property. David, however, was entitled to distribute the Amalekite spoils among the warriors and those who remained in the rear, even to send some booty to the elders of Judah (1 Sam. 30.20-31). Thus Saul's principal sin was not the issue of the spoils but failing to heed the message of the prophet that was the word of God. And so the Amalekite circle in the life of Saul was closed. Saul was punished by losing the kingdom because he did not heed the word of God on the Amalekite issue. Then the Amalekite brings the royal regalia to David who was to inherit the kingship.

David's response in the story of the Amalekite youth is the analogical basis for the murder of Ish-Bosheth by the Beerothites (2 Sam. 4). Through these two episodes, variations on the same motif, the author highlights the means David used to clear himself of suspicion of an attempt to build his kingdom at the expense of the downfall of Saul and his house.[25] Such caution was not part of his later conduct, as indicated in the story of the Gibeonites (2 Sam. 21).[26]

The author of the book of Samuel, who shapes a world resembling reality, with its tensions between complex characters, full of multi-faceted events that must be studied from different angles and cannot be indubitably resolved, required both the tragic and heroic description of King Saul's

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23.   Ehrlich 1969b: 438.

24.   Ehrlich 1969b: 180.

25.   David's response to Abner's death brings to mind his response to the death of Saul and Jonathan. Compare with 2 Sam. 3.28-39. At the same time, David wishes to unite with those remnants of Saul's house that do not endanger his own rule. See 2 Sam. 3.13-16 and ch. 9.

26.   Discussion of the date of this episode relies chiefly on 2 Sam. 21.7. See, e.g., M.Z. Segal 1956: 366.

death, and the first shrewd steps of David as the one God chose to continue the monarchy in Israel. The author's esthetic solution was to combine and to juxtapose the two variations of Saul's death and make them inter-dependent. The first variation, as we have seen, concludes the heroic cycle of the king who knowingly advances towards his bitter fate (1 Sam. 28), the king who is admired by those who surround him and receives final act or mercy from those who are most loyal to him. Adding the second variation helps the writer illuminate other aspects that show the complexity of the world he fashions. Certainties are cast in doubt there. The puzzled reader asks him-/herself whether to consider the Amalekite youth's report or not. I do not doubt that the decision to see Saul as having died a hero's death and the Amalekite as a robber of corpses seeking to profit from it, is influenced not only by analyzing the youth's report, but also by the reader's attitude to Saul, structured throughout the book. The reader who watched Saul's collapse with mixed feelings desires for him the final grace of a hero's death. Additionally, intertwining the story of his death speci-fically with the figure of an Amalekite bearing the symbols of royalty gives signals to the reader regarding Saul's sin and the fulfillment of God's word. This final point is an important message transmitted from the beginning to the end of the book of Samuel, from the fulfilled message of the man of God to Eli and Samuel (1 Sam. 2–3) to Nathan's fulfilled prediction regarding David's sins (2 Sam. 11–1 Kgs 2). The second variation centered around the Amalekite thus contributes to the understanding of God's mysterious ways as they work behind events and direct them. Moreover, this description in turn leads to David's shrewd response combining spontaneous grief (2 Sam. 1.11-12)[27] with an interest in clearing his name (vv. 13-16), as well as turning grief into a national interest through his lament (vv. 17-27). All serve to emphasize additional aspects of the com-plex sophisticated personality of David, the center of events throughout the second book of Samuel.

   The Chronicler, by contrast, decided to ignore almost completely the history of Saul and David until the transfer of the monarchy, as well as David's early history before all the tribes of Israel reached Hebron. Hence he does not need the story of the Amalekite youth that is designed to close circles and complete the analogical fabric linked specifically to those times. As his point of departure he chose the transfer of the monarchy from Saul to David by God's word because of Saul's heavy sin, which is why

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   27.   Fokkelman (see n. 18) thinks that the sequence expresses the importance of the events and not the chronological order. While David, according to his approach, killed the Amalekite before he and his began to mourn, the importance of the mourning led to it being related first. Compare Ehrlich 1969b: 180. For other solutions, see Hertzberg 1972: 237-38.

he prefers to create a third variation that simultaneously mutes Saul's glorious death while highlighting his sin and divine justice.

The three variations on the death of Saul are proof of the different ways in which biblical literature fashions the world, of the varied purposes that different authors represent and of the reliability or unreliability designed to serve the needs of a particular text and the world depicted in it. No wonder, then, that in the complex world of the book of Samuel the narrator's words appear side-by-side with those of a character from the story, obliging the reader to ponder, to weigh up and to decide. The one-sided world of Chronicles is different. Its needs are met by the scrupulous selection of its material or by changes and additions in accordance with the purpose at hand.

16

TO INCLUDE OR NOT TO INCLUDE?
EDITORIAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE WHOLE

Retrospective Preface

It was never clear to me why most readers of the book of Samuel do not like Absalom. Some criticize his aggressive behavior towards his brother Amnon, expressed in a carefully planned murder. Others do not care for his vanity and his custom of weighing the tresses after his annual haircut. Others find fault with the rebellion against David his father, and certainly with his acts following the rebellion. Let us not forget that had the rebellion succeeded, we could not have cultivated the myth of the Messiah son of David. Even so, I tend, even today, to accept positive qualities in Absalom that justify a more balanced view of whatever concerns him, which in turn leads to the rediscovery of means of character development in biblical literature. No doubt there is reason to censure Absalom, just as there is reason to highlight David's positive qualities, but the ability to bring together materials that display the complexity of the human spirit in its positive and negative aspects bears witness to the greatness of these ancient authors.

Absalom's sensitivity to his sister Tamar, the protection he gave her, and his decision to take the law into his own hands and avenge her— impressed me. The beautiful Tamar became a desolate woman after the rape, and Absalom suffered for her. True, what he said immediately after the event was hardly consoling: 'For the present, sister, keep quiet about it; he is your brother. Don't brood over the matter' (2 Sam. 13.20). How could she keep quiet and not cry out? How could she possibly not brood over 'the matter' that determined her fate? To me that reaction seems to reflect his wrath, his inability to find words of comfort, and the engagement of his thoughts at that very moment in seeking out a way to avenge her violated honor. He then and there grants her his protection and brings her to his house. The claim that Absalom murdered Amnon to dispose of an heir to the throne never convinced me, for he too knew that a murder in his CV

would distance him from the crown. Hence I suggest a different understanding of Absalom, whose anger towards and disapproval of his father only increased during the two years preceding the murder, and certainly after three years of exile in Geshur, and two years of being ignored by his father, by whose order he had returned to Jerusalem. In a seemingly parenthetical remark, the writer adds that Absalom had 'a daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a beautiful woman' (2 Sam. 14.27). I have no doubt that in this sentence he informs us of the strong ties between Absalom and Tamar, Absalom's deep sensitivity to her bitter fate and his pain undiminished by the passing years.

By sharp contrast, I still see David's indifference over the rape as a terrible thing, a situation of absent law and absent judge. It was David who sent Tamar to Amnon and he was also the highest judge in the kingdom, and in the Septuagint we even find the reason for David's behavior. According to that translation though David abhorred the act, he did not rebuke Amnon because he loved his firstborn son. It was clear to me that not only would I not have cared to have such a man as a father or as the father of my children, but that he could hardly be regarded as wise as an angel of God, or as a righteous judge (see, e.g., 2 Sam. 8.15; 14.20), since he was not guided by standards of wisdom or of justice.

Tamar's story could have ended differently, if for instance, Amnon married her according to the spirit of the law in Deut. 22.28-29 instead of sending her away. The text indicates that Tamar would have accepted such a solution and that she saw her expulsion as an evil greater than the rape itself. One of the most provoking passages in the story is the description of Amnon ordering his servant to drive her out in these words: '[Please] get *that woman* out of my presence, and bar the door behind her' (13.17). Note the language. In the Hebrew version Amnon uses a courtesy form in addressing the servant, but calls Tamar 'that woman', not even mentioning her name, and ordering the door barred behind her. Amnon's extreme callousness appears here as the antithesis of Absalom's sensitivity.

We appear to have before us a love story of a prince and a princess. However, the Sages (*Avot* 5.16) defined Amnon's love as one that depended on a benefit; if the benefit is absent, the love is absent too. Thus they censured his love, presenting it as merely sexual attraction and satisfaction of lust. In my opinion what we have here is a story full of hatred: that of Amnon for Tamar, of Absalom for Amnon, of Tamar for Amnon and perhaps for her father David. Of Amnon it is said: 'Then Amnon felt a very great loathing for her; indeed, his loathing for her was greater than the passion he had felt for her' (2 Sam. 13.15). He could not bear Tamar's accusing presence reflecting his own weakness and inability to control his

impulses. Absalom hated Amnon 'because he had violated his sister Tamar' (v. 22). Tamar's hatred is not mentioned explicitly, for of what importance are a woman's feelings in that male patriarchal world? I have no doubt, however, that throughout those desolate years, when she was as one dead, she hated him who had brought this on her, and him who did not protect her when obliged to do so.

More than 2500 years have passed since the story of the rape of Tamar was written and only in recent years has Western society begun to understand that rapists should not easily go unpunished, and that in the woman raped, something has been killed, and hence she like Tamar remains desolate. Surely this was not why the biblical editors included the episode with all its emotional force. But the attempt to respond to this issue leads me even today to conclude that the story's function is to serve as a reservoir of sympathy for Absalom.

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The Story of Amnon and Tamar: Reservoir of Sympathy for Absalom

Two new interpretations of the Amnon and Tamar story (2 Sam. 13.1-22) have appeared recently. One is the sixth chapter of Shimon Bar-Efrat's book on *Narrative Art in the Bible*,[1] and the other in Ariella Deem article: '"Cupboard Love": The Story of Amnon and Tamar' (1979).

In the first work the author states 'the literary design of the narrative sequence will be examined step by step...', afterwards discussing 'several literary characteristics of the narrative as a whole in general'.[2] Systematic engagement with formulation for its own sake has almost made the author forget the significance of the story, even if his introduction states 'It is through the techniques that the meaning of the facts of the narrative is determined... [They] constitute the principle means whereby the narrative impresses itself upon the reader, directing the attitude and reaction to what is related.'[3] Yet these pronouncements do not help Bar-Efrat integrate the formulation methods with the meaning of the story. Concluding his study he notes that:

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1. Bar-Efrat 1989: 239-82. The Hebrew book was published in 1979, but for the convenience of the English reader I quote the translated version.
2. Bar-Efrat 1989: 139.
3. Bar-Efrat 1989: 10.

This features serve to invest the narrative of Amnon and Tamar with significance extending beyond the limits of the narrative itself and fitting its wider context. In the light of these connections and the thematic parallel between this narrative and that of Bathsheba and Uriah (which both deal with unlawful intercourse) *Amnon's abuse of Tamar is to be interpreted as David's retribution for his behaviour towards Bathsheba.*[4]

In other words, the significance of the story is ultimately determined not by the autonomous criteria congruent with the story itself, such as integration of formulation methods or the influence of textual continuity on the reading process, but on the basis of its broad context—meaning that the context imposes on our story the significance of a punishment for David for his act with Bathsheba. This Bar-Efrat regards has proved by (1) repetition of the two verbs *š-k-b* and *b-r-h*; (2) the story's link to the one before it by the formulation 'After that', which for the purpose at hand changed from a mechanical connector to 'a sign of qualitative affinity'; (3) the thematic analogy emphasized by the space dimension—movement from house to house for the purposes of unlawful intercourse in both the Tamar and Bathsheba episodes.[5] Why, then, should these same criteria not be expanded so as to find for the Amnon and Tamar story significance based on linguistic and thematic connections with the story of the rape of Dinah or the story of David and Abishag the Shunammite? It seems to me that not determining the broad context precisely,[6] and basing it on flimsy criteria,[7] while ignoring the meaning that the story derives from its structural elements, have led to failure to grant meaning to the Amnon and Tamar text itself, while limiting its significance to its context only. The result is disconnect between the study of techniques and formulation methods as components creating significance, and the significance that the story of David and Bathsheba already imposed on our own.

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4. Bar-Efrat 1989: 282 (emphasis added). His method is a link in the tradition that rests on the general contexts, such as those of Hertzberg 1972: 332 or M.Z. Segal 1956: 309.

5. Bar-Efrat 1989: 281. He notes that the root *š-k-b* appears ten times in 2 Sam. 11–12 and six additional times in ch. 13. The root *b-r-h* is repeated six times in ch. 13 and once in ch. 12. To highlight the link between the two stories, Bar-Efrat even compares Tamar's unwillingness to leave Amnon's house with the refusal of Uriah the Hittite to leave the king's house for his own home.

6. Bar-Efrat (1989) seems to expect the reader to be familiar with his doctoral thesis, submitted in 1978. There he discusses the broad context, including 2 Sam. 10–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2, while in the analysis in question there is no hint of it.

7. Linguistic and analogical repetitions are criteria for determining links between parts of the same composition or between different ones. They may also reinforce accumulating evidence, but are insufficient to determine the significance of the work in question. Compare, for example, with Sternberg 1973: 197 n. 14.

Deem's article concentrates mainly on the type of love Amnon had for Tamar. She agrees with the Sages that it was a love that expected benefit, a 'Love which depended on some [transitory] thing' (*Avot* 5.16).[8] However, while the Sages' saying deals with the literal meaning of the text, the 'benefit' Tamar confers in Deem's article is that she is Absalom's sister.[9] As she sees it, from the beginning Amnon had no intention other than to make Tamar a whore and to make her brother Absalom the brother of a whore. Deem thinks that casting aspersions on Absalom's close family ties could do away with David's bright political dreams of an Israelite–Aramean empire headed by Absalom, the son of Aramean descent. In conclusion Deem maintains:

> The story of Amnon and Tamar seems to visit the sins of the woman on David, wresting his great dream out of his hand. Disguised as a love story, the tale of Amnon and Tamar conceals another one: taking away David's dream of a kingdom divinely favored, headed by his chosen heir and stamped with Patriarchal approval, of a king's son with an Aramean mother—Absalom.[10]

Through the Aramean political vision the author relates to a genetic horizon going back to the time of the Patriarchs.[11] Within this broad framework she finds the Amnon and Tamar story worthy of typological symbols from the Patriarchal tradition, a strategic turning point in the people's history presented in the guise of a love story. Amnon becomes a narrow-minded nationalist idealist, or a native son who feels deprived because power was taken from him, and he chooses to defend his status by sexual means. Thus neither love nor lust has any place in the story. According to Deem, the narrator feigns innocence and is unreliable, tempting readers with 'psychological explanations' but actually having something different in mind—historical changes.[12] Deem appears to under-estimate the importance of her declaration as to the unreliability of the

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8.   Danby 1949: 457: 'If love depends on some [transitory] thing, and the [transitory] thing passes away, the love passes away too; but if it does not depend on some [transitory] thing it will never pass away. Which love depended on some [transitory] thing? This was the love of Amnon and Tamar. And which did not depend on some [transitory] thing? This was the love of David and Jonathan.'

9.   Deem 1979: 104.

10.   Deem 1979: 107.

11.   Deem 1979: 103.

12.   Definitions are from Deem 1979: 106-107. To show that her thesis corresponds with the narrator's method in Samuel, she cites irrelevant examples without connection to of either love or lust: Abner and Ritzpah daughter of Ayah (2 Sam. 3.6-11), Adoniyah and Abishag the Shunammite (1 Kgs 2.13-14), and similarly Absalom and his father's concubine (2 Sam. 16.20-23). However, the reliable narrator in the Bible seems to have expressed his intentions, and did not mix purposeful political marriage alliances with tales of love or lust.

biblical narrator. Henceforth she has to suspect the narrator's moral experiences regarding God and his thoughts.[13] Significantly, the Aramean vision that the author attributes to David rests mainly on a basis of gaps, not on specific data in the text.[14]

The present study proceeds in two stages. In the first I try to interpret the story of Amnon and Tamar without the broad context, relating the structural significance according to progress in the sequence of the text. I examine its congruence from the retrospective standpoint.[15] Only at the end do I mention how this fits into the broader context, limited this time to those chapters dealing with the internal struggles in David's kingdom,[16] 2 Samuel 11 to 1 Kings 2.

1. *The Story Structure*

The story of Amnon and Tamar is made up of four scenes[17] enclosed by an exposition and conclusion expressing the narrator's judgment and inner

13. Compare with Simon (1970: 606): 'The historiographer seeks to increase, not to undermine his reliability as a narrator...although his clearly didactic aim does not allow for deliberate blurring...'

14. Geshur is mentioned in Deut. 3.14; Josh. 12.5; 13.11, 13; 2 Sam. 3.3; 13.37-38; 14.21-23, 32; 15.8; 1 Chron. 2.23, all of which lead to the conclusion that the Israelites did not conquer it during the initial conquest of Canaan, and that in David's time Geshur was an independent Aramean kingdom that did not join the covenant of the Aramean kingdoms at war with David (Loewenstamm 1954b). The Aramean vision attributed to David of a union between Geshur and Israel was constructed on the narrow basis of uniting Geshur with Israel that has no textual foundation. However, Absalom knows that he can find refuge in Geshur. The sporadic data on David's relations with Aram support a different theory of Yeivin 1964: 159-60. In such studies the preferred method is that of Malamat (1953) and others who add an epigraphic finding from the second or first millennium BCE to biblical data before drawing conclusions.

15. Perry 1979.

16. Much has been written about the broader context in the study to the books of Samuel. From Wellhausen (1871; 1957: 245-72) and many others, up to the present, many tend to discuss the inheritance of David's throne (2 Sam. 9–20 + 1 Kgs 1–2) within a broad context as a story in itself. More recently, doubts have been raised, for example, by Kaufmann 1966; Bar-Efrat 1975: 230-60; Zakovitch 1978: 49-60. I agree with Bar-Efrat's claim that the chapters from 2 Sam. 11 to 1 Kgs 2 (except for the additional chapters 2 Sam. 21–24) may be regarded as a special period of David's life, but not that 2 Sam. 10 belongs to this section. In my view 2 Sam. 11 contains a turning point in David's life. If earlier the writer or editor focused on David's kingdom at its greatest, from ch. 11 internal power struggles form the context. In my view this division does not indicate that the context-framework is an independent story, but only that it is part of the great drama beginning with Samuel's birth (1 Sam. 1).

17. A scene is defined as a story segment focused on a single place and time with specific protagonists. When one of these changes, so does the scene.

understanding. The first three scenes are consecutive in time, and linked in a causal relationship through the advice of Jonadab. The fourth scene differs in that both Amnon and Jonadab's advice are absent:

Exposition:		vv. 1-2
Scene 1:	Amnon and Jonadab	vv. 3-5
Scene 2:	Amnon and David encounter and its outcome	vv. 6-7
Scene 3:	Amnon and Tamar, in three stages	vv. 8-18
	Preparing (setting) the trap	vv. 8-9
	The rape	vv. 10-14
	The expulsion	vv. 15-18
Scene 4:	Absalom and Tamar	vv. 19-20
Conclusion:		vv. 21-22

The 3 + 1 scene structure suggests the common biblical literary model of three and four, where the fourth element is the deviant one.[18] That choices made by the narrator therefore show the importance he attached to the fourth scene—the encounter between Tamar and Absalom after the rape. The presence of four elements influences the symmetry of the story without detracting from the uniqueness of the fourth one:[19]

1. There is an analogical connection between the first and fourth scenes—in both plans are laid. Apposed to Jonadab's revealed plan in the first scene is the suggestion in the fourth one that Absalom has designs of his own. Unlike Amnon, Absalom needs no clever friend to lay out a course of action. Absalom's comforting words to his sister in the fourth scene are puzzling, given the honor and revenge norms of the time and her bitter scream. What he said may be understood as the beginning of comprehensive clandestine plan that requires for the present that as far as possible the rape episode be hushed up and forgotten. Although it may be claimed that Absalom's moderate response simply covers up his fears, the structural symmetric links specifically support the interpretation that it is part of a secret plan.

2. There is even a strong link between the second and third scenes that belong to the action field—Amnon carries out Jonadab's advice, then David Amnon's and finally Amnon carries out his designs.

18.   Zakovitch 1978.

19.   Zakovitch 1978: 528-29. Additional symmetry is shown by Bar-Efrat (1989: 278), who infers that the Amnon and Tamar story is a unit in itself. Chiastic symmetry is demonstrated in Ridout 1974: 80-83. In my opinion, however, identifying symmetrical structures without any formal criterion of scenes or status, as shown here, turns every text into an area on which almost any desired structure can be imposed.

First scene ——————————
Second scene ——————————┐   area of   planning
Third scene —————————— ┘   realization   and plotting
Fourth scene ——————————
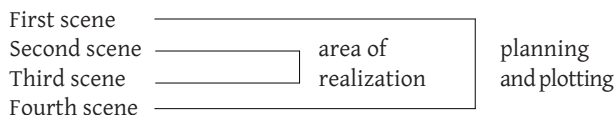
A structure like this is designed to highlight the uniqueness of the fourth scene. Absalom's calm, measured response, after the detailed account of the rape and the screams of his violated sister, puzzle the reader and arouse compassion for Tamar, who sits desolate in her brother Absalom's house. Bewilderment increases too with the closing verses, in which denial and concealment continue. David heard, was upset—and kept silent, and 'Absalom didn't utter a word to Amnon, good or bad' (2 Sam. 13.22a). But the story does not end with that silence. The narrator adds: 'Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar' (v. 22b). This supports a view of the situation as the calm before the storm, and of Absalom's response in the fourth scene as part of a future plan.

2. *Analysis of the Story Segments*[20]

2.1. *Exposition (vv. 1-2)*

In the exposition the narrator sets forth for his reader the question of what kind of love the story describes: Is it love that seeks to benefit, or love that seeks no benefit? Seeking the answer creates the tension and interest that accompanies the process of reading.

Verses 1 and 2 represent two contrary opinions: v. 1 tells of love by using the verb to love, which in biblical language has generally positive connotations.[21] Moreover, according to biblical narrative conventions a brother's love for his sister is not to be regarded negatively.[22] Hence v. 1

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20.   In the analysis of the story's parts, I shall try as far as possible not to repeat material from the studies of Bar-Efrat 1989 and Deem 1979, preferring to focus on support of my own interpretational preferences.

21.   On positive connotations, see Bar-Efrat 1989: 242-43. However, one cannot ignore negative connotations in Hos. 3.1; 8.9; Jer. 2.25, 33; Prov. 7.18 and elsewhere. The noun 'lover' too has negative connotations in the Bible. Thus if the reader decides in favor of the second hypothesis, he/she will have to return to give v. 1 the rarer negative interpretation.

22.   See Bar-Efrat 1989: 239-40. Later commentators think that our verse as well as Gen. 20.12 points to an earlier social convention cited in Lev. 18.9; 20.17 and in Deut. 27.22. Most traditional commentators tend to accept the harmonistic approach found as early as the Sages (see *Sanh.* 21a; *Yeb.* 23a), according to which Tamar was permitted to Amnon because she was born before her mother converted to Judaism. Others, including Ibn-Caspi and Abarbanel, follow Josephus' approach (*Ant.* 7.8.1 [169]) and think that such marriage was not permitted. See also Sternberg 1979: 128 n. 12.

may be regarded as the routine opening of a love story about princes as distinguished from servants. Immediately the heavy shadow of v. 2 falls upon the opening, with hints in its content, grammar and syntax that this is purely an affair of lust. In respect of content there is the element present in Amnon's mind: 'it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her'. Love that was mainly 'doing', with previous mention of Tamar's virginity reinforces that interpretation.[23] Grammatically, the root *ḥ-l-h* in the reflexive form suggests pretense and prior intent.[24] As for syntax, use of the causal element 'for she was a virgin' after describing Amnon's pretense of illness, and not after the element that 'reads' his thoughts, indicates the narrator's view that Amnon's illness was not so much rooted in love as directed towards Tamar's virginity.[25]

At the end of the exposition the reader suspects or even tends to decide that the story is not about true love but of love that seeks to benefit, given Amnon's desire to 'do something to her'. From the start it is most important to fix the reader's interest on him and on continuing to read. Verses 1 and 2 do not follow one another as forces of equal weight. Verse 2 is fraught with hints and intimations that hold the reader back and create a solid basis for his suspicions as to the nature of Amnon's love. At this stage the reader wonders why the biblical narrator, one not suspected of unreliability, begins his story by mentioning Absalom on one hand, and with a description of Amnon's love for Tamar on the other, regarding which reservations will arise in the next verse. Resolution will be found only in continuing to read, or when retrospective aspects are introduced.

2.2. *The First Two Scenes (vv. 3-7)*

The first scene opens with a direct description of Jonadab by the narrator: 'Jonadab was a very clever man'. Since in the Bible this quality is always positive,[26] the reader tends to accept Jonadab's advice as that of a wise man designed to help his friend and kinsman Amnon, not to create trouble for him.[27] Put otherwise, it gives Amnon the chance to see Tamar.[28] The efficacy of this harmless advice is shown in three ways:

23.   Here the text's order is central. See the perplexity in the commentaries of Rashi, Ibn-Caspi and M.Z. Segal 1956: 310, and compare the deep analysis of Sternberg 1979: 127-29.

24.   Driver (1913: 297) takes the view that there is no error in the verb form in this verse. In my opinion the special use of this verb form already interpreted in the exposition stage is deliberate, and reinforces the second hypothesis. See Deem 1979: 101.

25.   Compare Bar-Efrat 1989: 243-44; Deem 1979: 101.

26.   The use of a concordance shows that the adjective *ḥakam* ('wise') and the noun *ḥokmah* ('wisdom') have positive connotations.

27.   However, the Sages (*Sanh.* 21a) and many traditional commentators raise the possibility that Jonadab was clever in evil-doing. Compare also Perry and Sternberg

1. The idea that Tamar should visit the home of her brother Amnon and prepare food before him does not arouse the slightest suspicion in David. Quite the contrary, he at once sends an order that she should come to prepare special food her brother.

2. The way Amnon repeats Jonadab's advice to David indicates a bad conscience. He omits the root *r-'-h* ('to see') and reduces the meal to a couple of cakes. Amnon in the midst of his plotting tries to sound more guileless than the words the narrator gives to Jonadab. In addition, when David instructs Tamar to go to her brother's house the language is more like that of Jonadab, 'prepare some food for him', not merely Amnon's 'couple of cakes'.

3. Finally, one assumes that had the wise Jonadab been a party to the rape plan, his advice would have suggested the problem of the others present in the room.

Using the repetition model (Jonadab to Amnon, Amnon to David, David to Tamar) and characterizing Jonadab as a wise man both serve to distance any suspicion from Jonadab and to insinuate that any departure of Amnon's from Jonadab's advice was entirely Amnon's affair. In addition, the repetition model helps the narrator to highlight the shrewdness of the advice, that is, to show Jonadab's cleverness.[29]

2.3. *The Third Scene (vv. 8-18)*

This scene shows without a doubt that only Amnon is guilty. The detailed information of what Tamar did in Amnon's house illustrates the time she took and her confident frame of mind as she prepared the food. The turning point comes when Amnon orders the others to leave the room, which was not even suggested in Amnon's effective and harmless advice. The new detail about others who were present confirms in retrospect the harmless dimension of that advice, and also explains why David was confident, suspecting nothing. Nonetheless one may ask: Why Tamar does not react to that order? Her conduct can be explained as stupidity or as joy at being alone with him, or as a sister's complete trust in her brother. The

1970: 644 n. 56. These proposals rest on one of two assumptions: either the narrator is unreliable and his characterization is false or ironic, or the narrator uses 'a very clever man' in an ambivalent sense. Both assumptions appear to ignore the biblical usage that describes wisdom as possessed by God and as characteristic of his angels. Compare 2 Sam. 14.20; 1 Kgs 3.28; Prov. 8; Job 28; and elsewhere.

28. Josephus, *Ant.* 7.8.1 (163), states: 'since he could not obtain his desire because of her virginity and because she was closely guarded...' Compare with commentaries of Rashi and Radak.

29. See Bar-Efrat's (1989: 252-55) detailed analysis of Jonadab's advice, highlighting its cleverness.

first two possibilities are swiftly eliminated as Tamar objects at once to what Amnon is doing. She makes logical attempts to dissuade him, showing that she too is clever, and disgusted by her brother's act. She does not flee the room on the order for those present to leave, for she trusted her brother and had no idea of what was about to happen. The development of the hypotheses and ruling out the first two leave the third as the only possibility, reinforcing the reader's identification with Tamar and his sense of witnessing a disgusting, treacherous and deliberately violent act that totally condemns Amnon.[30] True, Amnon made some initial attempts to convince her to acquiesce, but then the narrator says that he caught hold of her, leaving Tamar with the sole possibility of trying to dissuade him through pleading and persuasion. The formulation of Tamar's reasoning includes other aspects of the problem. She begins with the personal 'Don't force me', then addresses Amnon's public image: 'Such things are not done in Israel!' Then she moves to the judgmental aspect, 'Don't do such a vile thing!', and again to a twofold personal plea, 'Where will I carry my shame? You will be like one of the scoundrels in Israel!' She concludes with a rational proposal, 'Please, speak to the king. He will not refuse me to you.'

Despite her pleading, Tamar is raped and the narrator closes the scene not with the detailed experience of the rape, but with a declaration (v. 14) in four ascending stages: 'But he would not listen to her / he overpowered her / and lay with her / by force'. After such a description attributing to Amnon this cruel rape, the narrator, with much commentary of his own, describes how Tamar is driven from the house by Amnon. He compares Amnon's present hatred with his love before he lay with her. Using the root *a-h-b* after the rape indicates the negative use of the term 'love', helping to affirm the decision made in the exposition that Amnon's love is one that seeks its own benefit. The narrator expands on the humiliating expulsion: the king's daughter is driven from the room by a young attendant. Amnon calls her 'that woman' and orders that the door be barred behind her.[31] The common denominator in these rich, detailed descriptions is in selecting items that evoke outrage that lead not only to identification with Tamar and accusation and criminalization of Amnon, but also to the expectations of the punishment and vengeance that await such a scoundrel. The narrator judges Amnon not only through Tamar's plea, 'Please don't commit this wrong; to send me away would be even worse than the first wrong you committed against me...',[32] showing that the rape episode

30. On gaps and hypotheses, see Sternberg 1979.
31. See Bar-Efrat 1989: 268-69; Ridout 1974: 77.
32. The Masoretic text of v. 16, as Driver (1913: 298) writes, is 'untranslatable'. The present JPS translation is based mainly on the Septuagint.

was the less serious of Amnon's crimes, as well as alluding to the law that states, '...she shall be his wife. Because he has violated her, he can never have the right to divorce her' (Deut. 22.29).

2.4. *Fourth Scene (vv. 19-20)*

The scene opens with a description pointing out the mourning customs Tamar observed. She tore the ornamented tunic worn by the virgin princesses, indicating what she was mourning for. The reader understands, takes pity and is enraged by Tamar's cries. And just when the reader works up his negative attitude to Amnon, Absalom appears, having been mentioned in the first scene as Tamar's brother. His response is calculated and restrained: Absalom consoles his sister and grants her his protection. No wonder that he gains the reader's increasing sympathy, also due to the delicacy with which he addresses Tamar: 'Was it your brother Amnon?'—not 'Did he lie with you?'. With that, his measured response is astonishing given the severe punishments meted out for sexual offenses. On top of that, his words 'Don't brood over it' in an extreme situation like this sound unconvincing even in an attempt to console. It all indicates that readers are to anticipate a vengeful response from Absalom. His restrained response together with the narrator's explicit final statement—'Absalom didn't utter a word to Amnon, good or bad; but Absalom hated Amnon because he had violated his sister Tamar'—shows that the silence is temporary and that the hatred is to be made manifest. Be that as it may, the reader's anticipation of the development will mitigate his response when he hears that Absalom has murdered Amnon.

2.5. *Conclusion (vv. 21-22)*

The narrator's concluding remarks also direct objections against David, who heard, grew angry—and held his peace. According to some versions, the conclusion exacerbates the criticism of David, the narrator interpreting David's response by declaring 'he did not reprove Amnon his son because he loved him as he was the firstborn'.[33] This formulation serves as a declaration that David's love sought to benefit, for it depended on the primogeniture. The king does not want to sadden Amnon, he does not reprove him and passes over the vile act in silence. The two purpose clauses give morally invalid reasons for David's conduct, when the reader expects a just response, so they are the basis for sharp criticism of him and

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33.   Thus in the Septuagint, the *Vetus Latina* and in the Vulgate and see *BHK*. Compare with the Qumran version and Josephus (*Ant.* 7.8.2 [173]): 'Now when her father David learned of this, he was grieved by what had happened, but, as he loved Amnon greatly—for he was his eldest son—he was compelled not to make him suffer'. It seems that in the Masoretic text a *homoioteleuton* occurred.

make the reader identify the more strongly with Absalom. The narrator also takes pains to stress in conclusion that what Amnon did to Tamar is the reason Absalom hates him: 'Absalom didn't utter a word to Amnon, good or bad; but Absalom hated Amnon because he violated his sister Tamar' (v. 22). Absalom's future response would express protest against violation of the law at the highest judgmental level, and would prove that justice must be seen as well as done.

3. *The Link between Formulation and Story Significance*

Our study shows that the author of this story used different means with one purpose: to show Amnon as guilty in every respect, and indirectly to construct a positive basis, or a reservoir of sympathy for the figure of Absalom.

3.1. *Plot Material*
The narrator chose an instance of deliberate, humiliating rape with one individual behind it—Amnon.

3.2. *Plot Sequence*
The chronological backbone of the plot is the rape. All the component scenes are concentrated around it. The first two describe the planning stage and rule out the possibility of a unique and sudden surge of desire. The actual rape, in the third scene, is brutal and emphasizes Amnon's utter lack of consideration. This scene too takes place in stages, the rape followed by the expulsion stage, where the narrator points out, in Tamar's own words (v. 16), that this, not the rape itself, climaxes Amnon's debasing conduct. It accentuates Amnon's cruelty, his lawlessness and absolute lack of consideration. The fourth scene and the conclusion are devoted to responses. Tamar's response reinforces the dimension of horror and disgust, while David's and Absalom's make the reader feel the absence of an appropriate reaction. With that, the three–four formula in organization of the plot stresses the particular importance the narrator attaches to the responses.

3.3. *Shaping the Characters*
There is an inverse correlation in the development of Amnon's and Tamar's characters. The worse Amnon's image appears, the more positive Tamar's. Yet, despite her understanding, and although justice is on her side she cannot save herself, thus stressing the advantage in violence. Since this is against biblical morality norms, whoever represents it becomes a negative character.

The seemingly minor characters too—Jonadab, David and Absalom—are worthy of attention. Characterizing Jonadab as clever and emphasizing his advice through the repetition technique are part of the means for putting all the blame on Amnon. David's image and response as apposed to Absalom's serve to divide the characters so that the negative Amnon and the silent David covering up his son's sin are on one side of the barrier, while Absalom and Tamar are on the other. No wonder that Absalom gains sympathy both as a devoted brother and as one the reader trusts to fulfill the moral norms. While at this point Absalom keeps silent, wonder over the silence is merely a stage preparing the reader to identify with him in the future.

3.4. *Emphasis on Space Details and Time Duration*
Details such as Amnon's house, Tamar's house, the room where Amnon is lying and the presence of others in it all illustrate that Amnon plotted the rape stage by stage. The first one, when Tamar goes to Amnon's house, arouses no suspicion because other people were present. Conditions for rape occurred only in the second stage, when Amnon went beyond Jonadab's advice, sent the others away and called Tamar to his bedside to feed him. Additionally, driving her out and having the door barred behind her show Amnon's conduct in all its brutality. All these details show that everything related to the rape initiative and the brutality that followed are linked to Amnon and to him only.

The time frame in which the story is told indicates that the author chose to dwell in detail on the scenes of Tamar's rape and expulsion that highlight Amnon's guilt. By intensifying the negative aspects, the time dimension as well, then, serves to construct a negative opinion of Amnon.

3.5. *The Narrator's Revealed and Concealed Methods*
The narrator's exposition apposes the innocuous declaration of love within the family (v. 1), as against the accumulating details regarding the deviant nature of that love (v. 2). He presents the two hypotheses to the reader who has to decide between them as he reads, although the narrator has already decided to a very considerable extent in favor of the second one, as disclosed in his techniques: choice of words (pretend to be sick, do something to her), the narrator's judgment (for she was a virgin), syntactical structures (causation clause and its location), directly characterizing the perpetrator's deed (v. 2a) and getting into Amnon's thoughts (v. 2b). The unbalanced presentation of the hypotheses exposes the narrator's bias, while any additional information to the reader reinforces the second hypothesis as it invalidates the first one. After the first two scenes Amnon appears as a conspirator because of the way Jonadab's advice is reported,

and, additionally, in the light of the correlation between Jonadab's report and David's interpretation of it (use of the repetition technique). After the rape and expulsion scenes the reader has no further doubt that the second hypothesis is preferable. The narrator's judgmental statements (v. 15) clarify that the dubious love forced on Tamar at the outset turned to great hatred. Starting out with two contrary hypotheses in which the first one crumbles is a way to augment Amnon's guilt. Retrospection only strengthens this conclusion. The reader learns later that Amnon's love for Tamar sought benefit, and that Amnon, lustful and heartless, is not even punished for what he did. The love mentioned in v. 1 is given a negative connotation in retrospect.[34] The narrator employs the unusual significance of this term to construct and then destroy the first hypothesis in a process that sharpens and deepens our examination of Amnon's conduct.

The narrator reveals himself in his many explanatory sentences: 'for she was a virgin' (v. 2), 'for his loathing for her was greater' (v. 15), 'as he loved Amnon greatly—for he was his eldest son',[35] 'for he hated', 'for what he had done' (v. 22). Where the reader may have his own suspicions about the actions of any particular character, the narrator is at hand to intervene with a direct statement as in: 'Jonadab was a very clever man' (v. 2).

The narrator uses less direct means as well, offering opinions voiced by the character of Tamar, including: 'Such things are not done in Israel', 'Don't do such a vile thing' (v. 12), and 'to send me away would be even worse than the first wrong' (v. 16).

The value judgments made by the narrator and his characters, reading the characters' minds, and the affirmation of thoughts with deeds, all structure the reader's response. Vocabulary choice must also be considered. It favors such words as 'vile', 'scoundrels', 'shame', 'overpowered', 'lay with her by force', and the like. Those expressions combine in an analogical system of judgment as they remind the reader of similar linguistic and thematic situations: Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19), the rape of Dinah (Gen. 34), the rape of the concubine (Judg. 19), as well as the laws against sex offenses (Deut. 22.13-20).

The narrator's silences are significant too. He avoids rating Amnon as a scoundrel. He gives the reader all the details to do that by himself. At the same time, when he lets the reader know that no other character took any drastic action—not David, not Absalom—he is guiding the reader to think that such action was indeed required.

One can thus conclude that the narrator's means and methods combine to construct an accusation against Amnon. The story becomes a document

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34. The narrator's reliability does not suffer through the dual use of the root *'-h-b*. See also n. 21 above.

35. For the addition to v. 21, see n. 33 above.

that criticizes Amnon and David on the one hand, and on the other it structures the reader's identification with Absalom in preparation for events to follow.

Only at the end of the process can the reader explain why the story began with Absalom 'This happened sometime afterward: Absalom son of David had a beautiful sister named Tamar...' (v. 1). It might just as well have begun 'This happened sometime afterward: Amnon son of David loved his sister Tamar daughter of Ma'achah for she was fair'. This hypothetical opening would have given information about Tamar's beauty, that she was Amnon's sister and that loving one's father's daughter was legitimate. But it would have entirely ignored Absalom. His presence as early as the exposition and the first scene, then his central presence in the fourth and most significant one, and finally in the narrator's conclusion—all show his centrality in the episode. The reader is quite clear that Absalom is not there just as a point of ascription. The story leads the reader stage by stage to realize that Absalom's hatred for Amnon is justified, and that it will yet bear bitter fruit.[36] The reader criticizes Amnon and David, awaiting Absalom's vengeance that justice may triumph. Put otherwise, through the Amnon and Tamar story the narrator structures Absalom as a proud, moral figure, preparing a background of support and identification for him.

4. *The Significance of the Story within the Broader Context*

The story's significance, as I see it, is full incrimination of Amnon, with preparation of the background for a positive image of Absalom, central to his complicated confrontation with David that is to follow. The reader will thus understand the ambiguity in David's relationship to Absalom, and Absalom's stern criticism of his father both in the Tamar episode and as regards himself after he was brought back from Geshur and was not allowed to see his father for two years.

Absalom's sensitivity to the wrong done to his sister is shown later by providing the detail that he had a daughter whom he called Tamar (2 Sam. 14.27). His sense that he himself has done justly is shown also when he tells Joab: 'Now let me appear before the king, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death' (2 Sam. 14.22). When Absalom stands later by the road to the city gates and says, '...no one is assigned to you by the king to hear it [your claim]' (15.1-6), his words will be interpreted not only as incitement to rebel against the king but also as an expression of his unhappy personal experience and mounting protest.

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36.   See the twenty-second question in Abarbanel's introduction to the story, 1955: 352-53.

Absalom's rebellion, given the events in chs. 13–14, cannot be explained as the war of a handsome, corrupt and power-hungry youth against an aged and helpless father. As in any complicated confrontation, this one cannot be seen understood only in terms of black and white, for light and shadow mingle. The reader who identified with Absalom in chs. 13 and 14, criticized David's conduct toward his sons, his total dependence on Joab along with his loss of ability to judge and to act, now understands the drastic situation of a son rising against his father. Each side has its own truth and its own justice and the encounter between the two will be harsh and fatal. This situation illuminates the complexity of David's attitude to Absalom; even though Absalom rebelled against David, a father–son relationship remained—something that was deeply misunderstood by that consummate man of action, Joab. Thus Absalom's rebellion changes from a simplistic matter of a young man who wants to inherit his father's throne to a complicated affair on different levels, involving both personal and national elements, from past and present, from the emotions and from the force of circumstances. In this highly complex development the story of Amnon and Tamar is central, an important and critical layer in constructing the reader's feeling about Absalom as a positive, sensitive and just figure. It shows that the dispute between Amnon and Absalom is not just about inheriting the crown but first and foremost about violated family honor, for which Amnon bears the guilt. The reader who follows the text to the description of Absalom winning the people's hearts (2 Sam. 15.6) learns that Absalom's struggle against his father is justified by feelings of revenge, grievance and unjust discrimination.

17

CHRONICLES AND ITS UNIQUE POETICS

Retrospective Preface

A sense of gratitude and esteem fills me at times when I think of the Sages as editors, because they included Chronicles in the biblical canon, and did not censor and exclude it because it contradicted other writings. Indeed, could one keep out a book that is a paean of praise to David, founder of the kingdom and planner of the Temple, to his son Solomon, who built the Temple, and to so many of their model descendants who helped glorify the state as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation? If something had to be kept out, it would have been better to keep out the books of Samuel and Kings, which do not spare criticism of the kings of Israel and Judah who are accused of destroying their kingdoms. Consider for a moment how those books criticize David and his son Solomon. A quick reckoning shows that David's empire gets only four chapters of description (2 Sam. 5–8). By contrast, the civil strife in his time, whether the struggle for kingship or the suppression of Absalom's rebellion and the surrounding circumstances (the war against the Ammonites and the Bathsheba–Uriah episode, 2 Sam. 9–19) and its outcome (Sheba son of Bichri's rebellion, ch. 20) bear witness to a dictatorial regime in which the majority was willing to depose David and crown Absalom as their ruler. The book of Samuel does not even tell us that David chose Jerusalem as the site of the main Temple: only from 1 Chronicles 21 do we learn that. Similarly, the reader of the book of Kings cannot wax enthusiastic about Solomon's rule, which planted the roots of idol worship in Jerusalem as related in 1 Kings 11, and also laid the foundation for dividing the kingdom (ch. 12) in his son's time. And in Chronicles, as usual, all this was in the nature of reparation.

To the joy of scholars and readers generally, the Sages did not give up their own right to edit any of these books. Their work gave us a lifelike impression of the books of Samuel and Kings that describe lustful, over-bearing and even megalomaniac monarchs who are therefore thoroughly human and vulnerable to criticism. What a contrast to the righteous one-dimensional kings in the book of Chronicles! Furthermore, we have gained

two types of literature in a single collection of books. There is the Deuteronomistic literature with its aims, and chronological literature with its own aims, so that critical scholars of the future could compare the two and reach their different conclusions, one of which casts doubt on the value of Chronicles as a historical source for the period it describes. As a result, historians have not fallen upon Chronicles as a great treasure, while for biblical scholars it is the diamond among the crown jewels. From it one sees into the world of its authors' beliefs and opinions, observing their attitude to the scrolls they found in their library and the way they used them, as well as their use of poetics to establish their own world view. Some will maintain that the Sages simply could not rule out the books of Samuel and Kings, which had already acquired canonical status, but I think that in their hearts those editors also knew they must not give up such great literature as the book of Samuel.

   That content and form reinforce one another is an assumption behind all my research. Thus a change in content can lead to changes in forms that may come from an existing store or may be created by the writers. The Chronicler, who distanced himself from much of the Deuteronomistic content, had to use forms that met his needs. You will read about them in the article that follows.

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<p style="text-align:center">Studies in the Poetics of the Book of Chronicles</p>

<p style="text-align:center">1. *Introduction*</p>

A close look at the teachings of the book of Chronicles reveals that although it continues the beliefs and opinion of earlier biblical traditions, it is also highly innovative. Basic themes that would seem to have earned a permanent place and unambiguous esteem receive new treatment in Chronicles. This is true of the tradition of the Exodus, as well as of the role of prophecy and of the prophets, to cite two examples.[1] The subject has been dealt with in a limited fashion, and I shall now try to illuminate another facet, that of form—the way the formulation methods and techniques served the Chronicler.

   The main argument I attempt to prove is that different messages and contents led the writer to use different forms. The forms are not necessarily new, but they generally differ or deviate from those typical of the

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1.   See Chapter 19 of the present volume, as well as Amit 2006a.

traditional literary material that that reached the Chronicler. I refer to elements such as development of plot and characters, relation to time and space, ordering of the material and style.

2. *The Plot*

The Chronicler is under stringent limitations in developing his plots—first and foremost because he has bound himself to the law of direct and immediate retribution.[2] When divine judgment has to appear at once, the characters' freedom of movement is limited. Systematically implementing the retribution system and the keen desire to show its advantages, which frequently demands outside interventions, led to an implausible chain of events and hence to fixed and repetitious plot formulas. The pattern in 2 Chron. 12.1-12 repeats itself throughout the book. According to the narrative, Rehoboam abandoned the law of God and Shishak king of Egypt rose against Jerusalem 'for they had trespassed against the Lord'. The prophet Shemaiah intervened, explaining to Rehoboam and his ministers the causal relationship between the events. Ministers and king submitted to God, who announced through Shemaiah the annulment of the evil decree. Elsewhere the same sequence appears with variations in the cast of characters, the events and causes of the events. A condition in all cases is that a spokesman has to intervene and stress the link between the specific event and the loyalty or otherwise to the Lord. Sometimes it is not a prophet but a king who pleads with God. In such a case God's immediate response is designed to reiterate the important lesson of loyalty and inquiring of the Lord. Sometimes the point of departure is the loyalty of king and people to the Lord, which is followed by times of peace or victory over enemies. The result is not only that the Chronicler's preaching is stereotyped, but that the plots are more or less uniform.[3]

The uniform pattern is especially conspicuous when comparing the conclusion of the war of Ahab king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah on Ramoth-Gilead in 1 Kgs 22.29-35 with its parallel in 2 Chron. 18.28-34. In both descriptions, in the preparatory stage before the battle, Michaiah son of Imlah announced that the Lord had spoken ill of Ahab. Ahab then sought to escape his fate and asked Jehoshaphat to allow him to disguise himself by exchanging robes with him. According to Kings, in the course of the battle the charioteers drew close to Jehoshaphat, thinking he was Ahab and wanting to kill him; then he cried out, and so they understood that he

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2. See Japhet 1989: 125-36, 165-76 and the included bibliography.

3. Compare, for instance, the events in Asa's time (2 Chron. 14–15) with those from the days of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19–20), of Amaziah (2 Chron. 25.14-24), of Uziah (2 Chron. 26), of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29–32) and others.

was not the king of Israel and turned back. The king of Israel was later killed by a man who drew his bow at random. The Chronicles parallel is quite different. After Jehoshaphat cries out, the narrator makes a point of adding that 'the Lord helped him and God diverted them from him'. Actually, this is totally superfluous, since the reader of Kings already understands that apart from the realistic reasons (his cry, their identification of him) that the charioteers did not kill Jehoshaphat, the event reflects fulfillment of the pre-battle prophecy and workings of God's Providence. What appears to be chance in the eyes of the protagonists is nothing less than divine planning. This technique of separating the description of reality operating under its own laws, and knowledge that ultimately these laws are the result of God's will, is called double causality, and characterizes large sections of the Chronicles sources.[4] Nevertheless, the Chronicler does not use it. He fears the reader will miss the divine intervention, cast doubts on it and give undue weight to realistic explanations of events. And so the Chronicler makes his narrator proclaim that God entered the field to help Jehoshaphat, and he it was who diverted the charioteers. Thus, the narrator also explains how a seemingly random arrow-shot was the result of direct and immediate intervention. The common becomes wondrous and a random event conceals a miracle.

The Chronicler's desire to emphasize the wondrous, the impossible and the recognized miracle goes beyond reworking narrative details. That the angel of God appeared during the siege of Sennacherib, causing mass deaths in the Assyrian camp, could be explained by the writer in the book of Kings as the outbreak of a calamitous epidemic caused by the angel (2 Kgs 19.35-36). The Chronicler is not content to highlight the timing—divine intervention as the result of the king's prayer and the prophet's pronouncement—but goes further when he emphasizes the selection made by the angel 'who annihilated every mighty warrior, commander and officer in the army of the king of Assyria' (2 Chron. 32.21). The emphasis is on the selection, as it was with the plague of the firstborn, the high point of divine intervention in the Ten Plagues. The Chronicler's wars were designed to illustrate the principle: '...the battle is God's not yours' (2 Chron. 20.15). The principle is not new. We find it, for example, in the wars of Joshua and Gideon.[5] While there the narrator frequently mentions some tactic, even an artificial one such as dividing the army into three groups, clay jars, ram's horns, a sudden night attack or one at daybreak, in Chronicles all this becomes superfluous as it may obscure divine intervention. Consequently prayer or repentance replaces tactics, and miracle

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4. Seeligmann 1992b; Kaufmann 1963: 128. See also Amit 1987 and Chapter 8 of the present volume.

5. Compare with Deut. 2.30; Josh. 10.14, 42; 23.10; Judg. 7.21-22, and other texts.

the military confrontation. Human intervention is restricted to two stages: contemplation of the divine deliverance—'It is not for you to fight this battle; stand by, wait, and witness your deliverance by the Lord' (2 Chron. 20.17)—and its results, when Judah looked out over the wilderness they saw their enemies 'lying on the ground as corpses; not one had survived' (v. 24). Again, the reader clearly sees that the war of the Lord is a miraculous one in which there is no escape from punishment. The next stage in such combat is pursuit or plunder, increasing the magnitude of the miracle. Thus war narratives in Chronicles take on a stereotypical form, with no difference in principle between the war of Jehoshaphat, or Asa's war against the Cushites or Abijah's against Jeroboam.

3. *The Characters*

Character formulation in Chronicles may be described as a maneuver depending on the data typical of the period, the length of the protagonist's reign and the central events of his life. These are crucial, since they have to fit into the Chronicler's rigid theory of divine retribution. If according to his sources there were no extraordinary political events in the protagonist's life, if the figure did not fall ill and also enjoyed a long reign, here were the ideal circumstances for creating a positive character worthy of reward. In such cases the Chronicler would be likely to attribute to him a number of good deeds, if only to justify the data and highlight the retribution principle, even if these same deeds were absent from the sources. The reverse was also true. If the character did good deeds but war broke out during his rule or he fell ill, the Chronicler spared no effort to justify such negative compensation. The Chronicler's great difficulties lay in deciding what to erase, what to retain or what to add in order to create the all-important threefold congruence between the characters, the happenings in their time and the laws of reward and punishment. The examples are many. Solomon according to the Chronicler's view performed a great deed—he built the Temple. Therefore not only did the Chronicler ignore the king's negative deeds reported in the sources, such as his penchant for foreign women and other gods, but also obscured internal and external political problems that erupted during his reign (see 1 Kgs 11). In the Chronicler's restricted and one-sided world Solomon had to appear as an exalted figure, because he was chosen to build the Temple. The fact that Solomon received such a reward obliged the author to erase and to distance any hint of a sin he committed or a punishment he received. So extreme was this ultra-virtuous formulation that it omitted the celebrated trial of the two prostitutes (1 Kgs 3.16-28), originally included as a shining example of the wisdom of Solomon.

Following this principle, Sennacherib's failed invasion in the time of the righteous king Hezekiah becomes a vehicle for a boastful absurdity in Chronicles. For example, Sennacherib, who did not know what Hezekiah had done regarding purification and the Passover celebration, gave orders to breach the walls of the fortified Judean cities; of course, he failed (compare 2 Chron. 28–32 with 2 Kgs 18–19). Sennacherib's failure, on the one hand, and on the other the fulsome praise of Hezekiah ('there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those before him', 2 Kgs 18.5)—data which characterized the Chronicler's source—served as a basis and an opportunity to attribute to Hezekiah all sorts of desirable ritual acts, including: the cleansing and purifying of the Temple, establishing the service of the priests and Levites, and establishing the Passover festival.

Manasseh, who reigned for 55 years, was obliged to justify the length of days he was granted, so whatever effort was necessary, a righteous deed had to be found for him. Thus emerged the story that he humbled himself before the Lord and prayed to God, which made him a repentant sinner (2 Chron. 33),[6] one example among many similar ones.

4. *The Time*

The time frame in Chronicles is often surrealistic. Not content with typological data, such as the repeated references to 'three days' (1 Sam. 30.12; 1 Kgs 12.5; 2 Kgs 2.17; Jon. 2.1; Ezra 8.15, 32; Neh. 2.11), the editor frequently ignores time formulations that would reinforce the dimension of reality in the narrative. This omission allows the impossible to be presented as possible and helps create the rigid framework for retribution.

For instance, when Sennacherib was camped outside the fortified cities of Judea, Hezekiah in consultation with his ministers and warriors decided to stop up the springs outside the city and the flowing streams in the open country. This was done at once, before Sennacherib sent his servants to Jerusalem (2 Chron. 32.1-9). The description appears to relate to digging the conduit of Shiloh (2 Chron. 32.30; compare with 2 Kgs 20.20). Beyond any doubt such a project would have taken not days but years. However, as Hezekiah 'acted in a way that was good, upright, and faithful before the Lord his God. Every work he undertook in the service of the House of God or in the Teaching and the Commandment, to worship his God, he did with all his heart; and he prospered' (2 Chron. 31.20-21), Sennacherib did not

6. Most commentators see this description as serving the Chronicler's needs. However, some regard the description of Manasseh's reign in Chronicles as reliable. See, e.g., Elath 1967; Liver 1968 and the bibliography given there, and more recently Oded 1984: 168.

have any chance, when he dared to come to Jerusalem to make war; no wonder that Hezekiah could cut a channel through the bedrock in a few days. According to the Chronicler, the successes of the king are the result of his righteousness.[7] The impossible or the miracle becomes possible when natural laws are superseded by the accounting system of the law of retribution that acts directly and at once. Time in such cases adapts itself to the narrative's demands. Furthermore, it is even distasteful to describe a righteous king like Hezekiah as one who took pains and planned ahead in the face of impending destruction, then dug a channel. One might even ask why he did not trust in God and await his sudden deliverance. The Chronicler's solution is that the channel was dug in a few days.

Release from the restrictive laws of real time resolves in Chronicles other problems too. In describing David's coronation by all of Israel, for example, the Chronicler wishes to depict the event in the most impressive way possible. His sources (2 Sam. 5.1-3), however, relate only that at Hebron David made a covenant with all the elders of Israel. Yet, according to 1 Chronicles 11–12, the coronation ceremony and the accompanying festivities went on for three days, during which Jerusalem might even have been conquered! The Chronicles narrative states that all Israel accompanied David to Hebron (1 Chron. 11.1) after the covenant with the elders: 'David and all Israel set out for Jerusalem...' (11.4-9). Repeating 'David and all Israel' even creates the impression that the same people set out to conquer Jerusalem as a capital for David. After naming various groups of mighty men (11.10–12.23), the editor introduces another list of '[men of the] armed bands who joined David at Hebron to transfer Saul's kingdom to him, in accordance with the word of the Lord' (12.24). At the end of the list are 'All these, fighting men, manning the battle line with whole heart, came to Hebron to make David king over all Israel...' (12.39-41). It appears, then, that lists of representatives of all Israel were included to show their participation in the coronation ceremony.[8] Creating an opening and closing framework for the event grants chs. 11 and 12, with all their units and paragraphs, the status of being parts of the same whole, a whole which is focused on the coronation. And so emerges the impression that during David's coronation ceremonies Jerusalem was conquered.

Treatment of the time dimension also functions to create a narrative continuity, and here too the Chronicler frees himself from the constraints of reality. The first thing David and all of Israel set out to do after the coronation is to return the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. The ideological importance of bringing it to the city where the Temple is to be built gives it priority. The Chronicler, however, gives no thought to the

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7. On Hezekiah's tactic in this war, see Luria 1987: 244.
8. Wellhausen 1957: 174-75; Curtis 1910: 200.

pragmatic question of what the Philistines will say. That such a project could be carried out only after the Philistine wars is a matter that does not concern the Chronicler. Moreover, he goes ahead to engage Israelites from areas David had not yet conquered, from Shihor of Egypt to Lebo-hamath (1 Chron. 13.2-5) in the undertaking.

5. *The Space*

This last example shows that when a historical description at times becomes an implausible sequence of events, the space dimension too functions to highlight the narrator's purposes more than it does to anchor the narrative in any concrete reality.

The borders above, where the land of Israel stretches from the Nile to the Lebo-hamath, is indeed a maximalist description. It appears to reflect political ambition rather than historical reality, as the Chronicler crosses the border between what is or was real, and what he imagines is just that: wishful thinking.[9]

Disregard for the space element as the narrative's anchor in a concrete reality is evident as well in the lack of clarity as to where the angel of God wiped out the warriors of Assyria. Was it near Jerusalem or perhaps at Lachish? It was said of Sennacherib that he sent officers to Jerusalem, 'he and all his staff being at Lachish' (2 Chron. 32.9). At the same time, the Chronicler refrains for his own reasons from describing Jerusalem as a city under siege. Hence open questions remain: Who arrived at Jerusalem and where did the angel smite Sennacherib's army?[10]

The common use of place names as a link to a specific reality is less usual in the book of Chronicles.[11] The author prefers to use the technique of the Midrash, seeking out openly or secretly place names that accentuate his messages. Thus it comes as no surprise that the war in Jehoshaphat's time was fought in the wilderness of Jeruel (2 Chron. 20.16), that is, the wilderness in which God's work was seen,[12] and ended at the Valley of Berakah (= 'Blessing') (v. 26), where they blessed the Lord.[13] Through his place names he expounds in the midrashic manner and even interprets his

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9. Lebo-hamath is mentioned in Num. 13.21; 2 Kgs 14.25; Amos 6.14; and elsewhere. See also Japhet 1989: 356-59.

10. The problem does not arise in the book of Kings, which does not avoid mentioning the siege of Jerusalem. See 2 Kgs 18.17–19.35.

11. See Amit 1985.

12. The name is *hapax legomenon*. On doubts as to the identification of the place, see Loewenstamm 1958. The Chronicler plays here on the root *r-'-h* ('to see').

13. On theories that the valley was once called 'the Pool (=Berakah) Valley' after the abundant stream that ran through it, see Loewenstamm 1954a.

sources. Thus, for example, he informs the reader that Hazazon Tamar (v. 2), reached by the Moabites, the Ammonites and perhaps those from Seir in their war against Jehoshaphat, is actually Ein Gedi. With this explanation he 'resolves' a geographical difficulty in Gen. 14.7, identifying Hazazon Tamar. Moreover, mentioning that ancient name, the Chronicler hints at a possible connection between the event in Jehoshaphat's time and the war of the four against the five in Abraham's day, indicating that the people of Israel have historical rights to the land of Israel.[14]

6. *Organization of the Material*

Use and development of existing forms is characteristic of the location and arrangement of material within the book. Two typical examples will suffice to illustrate.

Lists of names serve as openings to books of the Bible in two other instances. Exodus opens with a list of Jacob's descendants shortened from the one in Gen. 46.8-27, and Judges opens with a list of inheritances and non-inheritances (Judg. 1). There are echoes in later literature influenced in content and form by the Bible. The Gospel according to Matthew, for example, begins with a genealogy that points out the link between Jesus, Abraham and David (Mt. 1.1-7). The list as an opening has two obvious functions: (1) to provide background information succinctly for the rest of the story, through (2) its organization to indicate and prepare the first basis for the author's thematic preference. The Chronicler's opening list also indicates Israel's place among the nations, its tribal components and the territory where it has settled (1 Chron. 1.1-9). It emphasizes the tribe of Judah and the city of Jerusalem by detailed reference to them in the introduction and conclusion (see chs. 2–4 and 9.3-34).[15] The tribe of Levi, preferred because of its service in the Temple, is granted a central place in the transition between the tribes settled east of the Jordan and those settled west of it. The length of the list too should be considered (5.27–6.66). Towards the end there is special mention of Benjamin and Saul's city Gibeon (8.29-40; 9.35–44). Each of these topics will of course be discussed and expanded throughout the book, but even in this early stage of the lists

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14.   The war against the people of the east raises the question of Israel's rights east of the Jordan, on which the Chronicler seems to have had an opinion as well. There is a fundamental discussion of this question when Jephthah argues with the king of Ammon (Judg. 11.12-28), also alluded to in the expression 'what the Lord our God has given us to possess', and see Judg. 11.24.

15.   For an attempt to justify changes in the order of presenting the tribes—the oldest in the order of his seniority and the youngest in the order of his youth—see 1 Chron. 5.1-2.

the author directs the editor's attention to specific data by giving them longer narrative time, referring to them more often and by the order of their transmission.

The Chronicler also uses the chiasmus technique, for example in describing the reign of Solomon. He begins by describing the wise king who preferred to ask of God wisdom and knowledge (2 Chron. 1.1-13). Second Chronicles 9, which concludes the period of Solomon, also deals with his wisdom, describing the visit of the Queen of Sheba who heard of Solomon's wisdom and came to try him with riddles. Between these, 2 Chron. 1.18-2.17 and ch. 8 deal with Solomon's foreign relations, his conquests and his power. The heart of the description (chs. 3–7), however, is devoted to building and consecrating the Temple. In the circular nature of the chiastic structure, the Chronicler demonstrates the connection between Solomon's achievements and his connection to God. The basis of it all is wisdom, the encompassing framework. Through wisdom come Solomon's diplomatic achievements and huge wealth (the internal elements) and all are made possible by his crowning achievement—building the Temple.

These examples show that in organizing his material too, the Chronicler follows existing forms and structures, and, as is his wont, he employs them to highlight his purposes.

7. Style

Bypassing such self-evident phenomena as late language, I concentrate in this section on two distinctive characteristics of the Chronicler.

He makes extensive use of sermon-type speeches with fixed structure and content that refer to events of the times and expectations for the future. Von Rad called this literary genre 'Levite sermons'. He saw the Levites as responsible for creating it, mainly because he did not give the Chronicler credit for creativity. Even so, these Chronicles sermons appear to be an innovation of the author, who saw them as a means to explain and implant his ideological innovations.[16]

Another characteristic feature of the Chronicler's style is what is called the quotation or embedding technique, as he takes what he needs from earlier literature, reusing it in a new and sophisticated way for his purposes.[17] Close reading of just two verses (1 Chron. 10.13-14) shows how the editor's stylistic sophistication settles accounts with Saul: 'Saul died for the trespass that he had committed against the Lord / in not having fulfilled

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16. Von Rad 1966c; Amit 2006a: 87-89.
17. Willi 1972: 106.

the commandment of the Lord / and Saul consulted a ghost...'[18] Using the root *m-'-l* ('trespass') brings to mind the story of Aachan who seized battle spoils, creating an analogical infrastructure for the story of Saul's failure to confiscate everything that belonged to Amalek (1 Sam. 15). 'Not having fulfilled the commandment of the Lord' suggests Saul's conduct before the battle of Michmas (1 Sam. 13.13-14): '...in not keeping the commandments that the Lord your God laid upon you...' And more serious, more outrageous, as the Chronicler sees it, is Saul's consulting a ghost, forbidden several times in the Torah.[19] All these stylistic references to older sources make the accusations against Saul more serious, more harmful. The Chronicler attacks Saul from the outset of his rule at the battle of Michmas until the consulting of the ghost before the fatal battle on Mt Gilboa. Thus there lurks within this sophisticated and suggestive style, usually ornamented with an accurate quotation or technical insertion, a precise accounting with Saul designed to justify the transfer of the monarchy from him to David. This example is just one of many to show that when the Chronicler enters an intellectual confrontation with earlier literature, it becomes clay in the potter's hands.[20]

8. *Conclusion*

The world and the belief system of Chronicles, as I have shown, led to a preference for some formulation methods over others, a conclusion that must be weighed in any reference to the book's reliability as a historical source. A study of the methods of formulation showed that to make the historical description fit his own world-view, the Chronicler would use forms that often distanced the narrative from any plausible concrete reality. Nonetheless, this critical assessment can in no way detract from the influence of the book. It was written to meet the needs of a particular society in the time of the Second Temple, a society accepting of irrational answers in the spirit of the apocalyptic literature. Hence one may reasonably assume that the formulation of the book of Chronicles represents a very early stage in this developmental path. It begins with the need to adapt facts that were known about history to a particular ideological structure, and continues with a preference for intensive engagement with the distant and isolating worlds of apocalyptic literature.

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18.   See Chapter 15 of the present study.
19.   Deut. 18.11; Lev. 19.31; 20.6, 27; and elsewhere. See also 2 Kgs 21.6; 23.24.
20.   See *inter alia* n. 14 above for another example; and 2 Chron. 20.20 as compared with Isa. 7.9.

18

WHY DENIGRATE SAUL?

Retrospective Preface

The article on Saul in the book of Chronicles was originally dedicated to Professor Sara Japhet. Why? It is not because of any special relationship to Saul on her part, but because of her contribution to the research on Chronicles, and its influence on me just as I was beginning to do research of my own.

The development of research scholars is a complex process, involving various factors that include the teachers who taught them, the world of knowledge that opened up for them, the surroundings in which they grew up and of course, the individual personality. My choice to become a biblical scholar is linked to my individual needs, to the society I grew up in and to the period in which I was educated. I was born during the Second World War, experienced the establishment of the state of Israel, and grew up in a society of immigrants. The main language of my childhood home was Yiddish. I and the friends from my generation had the sense of creating a new Hebrew-speaking Jewish model that challenged the culture of the past, and that was building its own Israeli identity. As the Bible was central to that identity, I felt an obligation to deepen and widen my knowledge in Jewish history and biblical studies, which soon became my central field of interest.

While I had many outstanding teachers when I began my university education in 1961, writing this preface brings to mind especially the late Professor Isac Leo Seeligmann, who introduced me to the world of Bible research with its scholars and schools. It was Seeligmann's classroom practice to mention not only the giants who advanced biblical research in the past, but also his students currently engaged in research, whom he saw as having future worth. Generally these chosen ones would be attending his classes, whether as teaching assistants or young tutors, and we all used to look at them in envy and admiration. Even then Seeligmann mentioned Sara Japhet, whose master's thesis on the distinctions between Chronicles and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah he supervised.

The formative teachers are like parents, whose influence enables one to stand alone, providing the first tools for facing life. Those teachers provide the professional tools. Once you sense command of these tools you go your own way and encounter ideas and studies that you accept or reject, creating an independent synthesis. In this context I would like to mention one of the studies that contributed significantly to biblical research in Israel and in general, and certainly to my own development as a biblical scholar. This seminal and enriching study was Sara Japhet's doctoral thesis completed at 1973 and published as a book in Hebrew in 1977: *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*.

Regrettably, I did not attend any of Sara's classes, as I left Jerusalem for family reasons in 1966, with work still pending on my Master's thesis, to be completed in Tel Aviv. There my husband and I established our family, bringing four children into the world. However, there I had the chance to learn with another great teacher, Meir Sternberg, whose instruction is recognizable in much of my work relating to literary aspects of biblical texts. I came to know him only in 1976, when I was a teaching assistant at Tel Aviv University. From Meir I learned literature, acquiring the tools to analyze any text, and in particular I learned about the contribution of literary studies or the science of literature to understanding the poetics of biblical narratives. He supervised my doctoral thesis, going step-by-step with me to the final stage, till I became a faculty member at Tel Aviv University.

Although in this period of my life I was occupied mainly with the study of literature, I engaged deeply with Sara's work when I was asked to write a review of her book, following its publication in 1977. The ideas she developed there have remained with me to this day. My views are in the opening statement of the article that follows, which first appeared in an anniversary volume in her honor in 2007.

The article itself deals with Saul's place in the book of Chronicles. It astonished me that Saul not only continued to occupy authors' and editors' minds in Second Temple times, but they would even compose a strange, hallucinatory story like that of the concubine in Gibeah; and, as if that were not enough, even in the fourth century BCE, in that late period when the book of Chronicles was composed, they were prepared to deny what was written in the book of Samuel if only it would denigrate Saul. Just how much they denigrated him, and why, you may read in the article that follows.

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SAUL IN THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES[*]

The book of Chronicles is generally known to focus on the house of David and its activities, giving little parallel attention to Saul and his kingship. Nonetheless, the Chronicler does not ignore Saul's reign: he even mentions Saul where he could have side-stepped the possibility of doing so.[1] Given this literary reality, what was the role and the significance of the attention given to Saul in the book of Chronicles? Was it only to clarify the transition from Saul's dynasty to David's, or was there an additional message? In an attempt to answer these questions I first trace the instances where Saul is mentioned in order of their appearance, afterwards seeking to explain the purpose of their inclusion.

1. The Twofold Inclusion of the House of Saul in the Genealogical Lists

Twice the house of Saul appears in the genealogies of Chronicles, first in 1 Chron. 8.29-40 in the genealogies of the tribe of Benjamin in the Gibeon context, and the second in a similar list in 1 Chron. 9.35-44, beside the list of Jerusalem's inhabitants in the Persian period (vv. 1-34). The minimal difference between the two and their close proximity in the text raises the question of why they were repeated.[2] According to many commentators, the list in ch. 8 is included in discussing the tribe of Benjamin,[3] while the

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*   An enthusiastic book review I wrote at the outset of my career (1978: 752) on Sara Japhet's *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* ended thus: 'In his book *Theological-Political Treatise* Spinoza wrote (Spinoza 2007: 144): "About the two books of Chronicles, I have nothing to say that is certain and worth anything, other than that they were composed long after Ezra... But nothing seems to be established about their true author or their authority, utility or doctrine".' Sarah Japhet's research clarifies the importance, the utility and the doctrine of that book. She even opens a new window up on a unique stream in the national and spiritual experience of the people of Israel at the end of the Persian rule in the Second Temple era. With the passage of time, I do not retract what I wrote then, and I thank her for all I have learned from her.

1.   Japhet counts the places where Saul appears in Chronicles and points out: 'Saul is not passed over in complete silence; his figure and reign are significant for understanding the historical process that led to David' (1993: 260).

2.   On the differences, see Japhet 1993: 218-19.

3.   Myers (1965: 59-60), following Rudolf, is convinced that the two lists are from different periods. However, in the list of 1 Chron. 7.6-11 Saul is not mentioned at all.

repetition in ch. 9 is a preface to ch. 10 that deals with Saul's death, moderating the transition from the genealogical lists to the historical narrative.[4]

The twofold inclusion of the list seems to me designed to highlight themes explaining why the monarchy was taken from Saul: one is the connection to Gibeon whose prominence would yield to that of Jerusalem, and the second the shortcomings of Saul's dynasty that justify transfer of the monarchy to David.

1.1. *Gibeon*

The chapters on Saul in the book of Samuel (1 Sam. 9–31) give the impression that Gibeah, his city and dwelling place served him as a capital of sorts, within the limitations of the first days of the monarchy and its establishment as an institution (1 Sam. 10.10, 26; 22.6; 23.19; 26.1). The book of Samuel also has synonymous designations, such as 'Gibeah of Saul', 'Gibeah of Benjamin' or 'Gibeah of God'.[5] The Chronicler, by contrast, completely ignores the connection of Saul to the town of Gibeah, linking Saul with Gibeon,[6] which in his version was God's recognized and legitimate sanctuary before its removal to Jerusalem, 'Then Solomon, and all the assemblage with him, went to the shrine at Gibeon, for the Tent of Meeting, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, had made in the wilderness, was there... The bronze altar which Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur had

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4.   Thus, for example, Japhet (1993: 205-206) presents it as a familiar poetical technique, known from the introduction to the Flood story (Gen. 5.32) and to the stories of Abraham (11.31-32). Gershon Galil and Michael Kochman (in Galil, Garsiel and Kochman 1996: 130-31) emphasize that the Chronicler 'included this list twice intentionally'. Kochman (1996a) calls the second list a 'resumptive repetition'. Walters (1991: 73-75) argues that one has to examine the lists in their context. In ch. 8 the list indicates geographical and not genealogical connection of Saul to Benjamin, while in ch. 9 its role is to stress the contrast between the legitimate cult in Jerusalem and that in Gibeon, which represents the Canaanite cult.

5.   'Gibeah of Saul' is mentioned in 1 Sam. 11.4; 15.34; 2 Sam. 21.6 (in the Septuagint, 'Gibeah on the mountain of God'); Isa. 10.29. 'Gibeah of Benjamin' or 'Gibeah of the sons of Benjamin' in 1 Sam. 13.2, 15; 14.16; 2 Sam. 23.29 [=1 Chron. 11.31], see also Judg. 20.4 and 'Hill of God' in 1 Sam. 10.5. I omit the instances where the name is obviously corrupted as e.g. in 1 Sam. 10.13 (see the Septuagint), 13.3 and elsewhere. The name Gibeah appears 22 times in the episode of the concubine of Gibeah and the subsequent war (Judg. 19–21), and is connected with the hidden polemic against the house of Saul. See Amit 2000: 167-88, especially 179.

6.   Gibeon is identified with the Arab village of El-Jib. Excavations have not disclosed remains from the early Israelite period, but from the eighth–seventh centuries BCE. On the genealogical and archeological discussion see Edelman 2001 and additional bibliography there. On Gibeon's place in post exilic times see Curtis 1910: 164-67.

made was also there' (2 Chron. 1.3-5).[7] The legitimacy the Chronicler grants to Gibeon in fact emphasizes the change in divine preference: the house of David is chosen over the house of Saul, and Jerusalem, not Gibeon, is to be God's recognized sanctuary. Thus emphasizing the link between Saul and Gibeon reflects the Chronicler's will and purpose, highlighting the full significance of the historic change, according to which there is a clear, direct connection between the change of dynasties and the change in the cultic center.[8] The Chronicler sees Gibeon as the cultic center during the transition period between Saul's time and the building of Solomon's temple. Possibly such an interpretation also reflects the position of Benjaminite Gibeon in the first days of the Second Temple, after the murder of Gedaliah son of Ahikam.[9] In any case, if Gibeon is connected to Saul's dynasty even while many Benjaminite families settled in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 8.14-27; 9.3, 7-9), then the purpose of repeating the list is to show that after the Exile most inhabitants of Benjamin moved to Jerusalem, meaning that they recognized the status of Jerusalem and preferred that city. However, in Gibeon, having lost its status, there remained only some supporters of Saul's house, which had no known descendants at that time.[10]

1.2. *Saul's Dynasty and its Descendants*
The genealogies of the house of Saul that mention Eshbaal (1 Chron. 8.33; 9.39), that is, Ish-boshet, who died without issue, concludes the Chronicler's version of the death of Saul's sons (1 Chron. 10.6). From these writings one learns that when Saul's three sons died in battle with him he had no legitimate heir, since Eshbaal had no heir and Meribaal, that is,

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7.   Compare 1 Chron. 16.29; 21.29; 2 Chron. 1.13. The Chronicler again emphasizes that the Ark of God was in Jerusalem at the time, because David had it brought there (1 Chron. 13–15). The parallel text in 1 Kgs 3.4 stresses that Solomon went to sacrifice in Gibeon 'for that was the largest shrine; on that altar Solomon presented a thousand burnt offerings', and 'At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night' (v. 5). The Chronicler stresses 'that altar' was the copper one made by Bezalel son of Uri, although from his description one cannot ascertain whether the dream revelation took place at Gibeon.

8.   For a view of the link between Saul and Canaanite Gibeon as a means to delegitimize his monarchy, see Walters 1991.

9.   Edelman (2001: 77), following Blenkinsopp (1974), is convinced that Gibeon was the ancient capital of Saul and raises the assumption that after the murder of Gedaliah, the town of Mizpah lost its previous status and Gibeon became the competitor of Jerusalem serving as an administrative center. Nehemiah mentions 'men of Gibeon' among the builders of the city walls (Neh. 3.7).

10.   See the next section.

Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, was lame in both feet (2 Sam. 9.3, 13).[11] Put otherwise, these lists reinforces the conclusion that although there were descendants of Saul's house, their limitations opened the way to the monarchy for David.

The twofold genealogy of the house of Saul in Chronicles embraces fifteen generations, eleven of which come after the death of Saul and his sons, including Eshbaal. In David's line, by contrast, eighteen generations are listed between David and the Destruction, and at least eight additional generations after it (1 Chron. 3.11-24).[12] Hence, according to Chronicles, Saul's line—differently from David's[13]—disappeared before the destruction of the First Temple and was no longer historically relevant in Second Temple times.

The genealogies reveal that Saul was more closely connected to Gibeon than to the tribe of Benjamin. The names of Saul's ancestors in 1 Sam. 9.1 are not linked to the Benjamin genealogies in Chronicles,[14] but to the father of Gibeon who lived in Gibeon. David, by contrast, appears as the descendant of Perez son of Judah (1 Chron. 2.4-15), and his descendants are also the heart and core of the Judah genealogies (3.1-24). Furthermore, the confrontation between Gibeon and Jerusalem emerges both from the wording in 1 Chron. 8.28-29 and in 8.34-35: '...These chiefs dwelt in Jerusalem. And in Gibeon dwelt...' One may conclude, then, that Saul in

11. Traditional commentary accepts the identification of Eshbaal with Ishbosheth (see the commentaries on 2 Sam. 2.8-10 and also on 1 Sam. 14.49) as does the critical commentary. Similarly, Meribaal is identified with Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9.1-3; 21.2-9). Both names contain the theophoric element 'baal'. Abramsky (1977: 376) and others think 'that in the book of Samuel the component "baal" was changed into "boshet" meaning: shame, in order to denigrate... [T]he Chronicler returned to the original name, because in his days he was no longer afraid to mention names with the component "baal".' My view, one Abramsky rejects, is that the Chronicler used the names with the element 'baal' to show contempt for Saul and his dynasty. Abramsky thinks that 'such an intention does not fit the general tendency of the Chronicler'. However, I am convinced that this is precisely the Chronicler's purpose, as it supports the impression of Saul's affinity for idol worship and his unsuitability as a leader of the people.

12. The number of generations after Jehoiakin depends on textual and interpretational decisions. See Liver 1959: 5-19. Athalyah is significantly absent from Chronicles.

13. Compare with Japhet 1993: 198-99. Differently, Abramsky (1977: 374-75, 380-82) makes the utmost effort to prolong Saul's line. He saw it as a means to exalt the tribe of Benjamin and its connection to Judah. In his opinion the descendants of the house of Saul integrated into the monarchy of Judah, like the chief of the clans of Benjamin and the people in Gibeon who dwelt in Jerusalem. Thus, even David's vow to Jonathan was honored (1 Sam. 24.20-22).

14. Compare also with 1 Chron. 7.6-12.

Chronicles was a Benjaminite by residence but not by descent.[15] Thus the Israelite tribes' declaration to David, 'We are your own flesh and blood' (1 Chron. 11.1), may be interpreted as a hint as to the difference between the two kings, David the Judean against Saul the Gibeonite, the northern king who betrayed the Lord and is hence naturally unworthy of reigning over Israel.

We may therefore draw conclusions from the twofold genealogies of the house of Saul: that it had no suitable heirs in David's generation; that Saul's line disappeared before the destruction of the First Temple; and that Gibeon, a city settled by Hivites, was the city of Saul. Although for a time Gibeon was a legitimate cultic center, Jerusalem was preferred and chosen as the place where God would dwell. Jerusalem was therefore the place in which the returnees from the Babylonian exile settled. They included families from Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh (1 Chron. 9.1-3), along with 'the chiefs of the Levitical clans according to their lines, these chiefs lived in Jerusalem' (v. 34).

2. *The Death of Saul*

2.1. *The End of the Description in Chronicles*

The Chronicler opens his historical sequence with the description of Saul's death (ch. 10) as an explanatory background for the transfer of the monarchy to David son of Jesse (v. 14b).[16] Yet, although his account continues the line of 1 Samuel 31 and creates a picture of a leadership vacuum with David chosen to fill the void, his account is not identical with the one in Samuel. The Chronicler reworked 1 Samuel 31 to become an unequivocal document against the house of Saul, contributing to the view of Saul's death as divine retribution in the spirit of 'thus shall be done to the leader who has done evil'.[17]

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15.   Walters (1991: 72) emphasized the special case of Saul in the lists of Chronicles: 'his family's links with the tribe are genealogical rather than genetic'. According to his approach, the Chronicler sees in Gibeon the Canaanite ethos and in Saul, a son of a Canaanite city with its negative connotations (cf. Josh. 9), in contrast with Saul, son of the city Gibeah, who is associated with prophetical traditions. Abramsky's approach is different (1977: 371-83; 1983: 41-46, 51-54).

16.   For reasons why the death of Saul is included in Chronicles, see Zalewski 1989, and more recently Trotter (1999), who pays attention to the addressees. He also emphasizes the place of the Temple in the Persian period and the importance of its original builder; in other words, according to him, the reader thus learns that David and not Saul was chosen by God to erect the Temple.

17.   Japhet (1989: 133) stresses the theological reworking, whose purpose is to highlight the divine intervention in Saul's death.

According to the Chronicler, Saul sinned against God, and because of his great sins he was punished and hence the monarchy was given to David: 'Saul died for the trespass he had committed against the Lord in not having fulfilled the command of the Lord; moreover he had consulted a ghost to seek advice, and did not seek advice of the Lord; so He had him slain and the kingdom transferred to David son of Jesse' (1 Chron. 10.13-14).[18] Yet a reader who knows or has access to the materials of the book of Samuel knows that on the eve of the battle against the Philistines, Saul consulted the Lord who 'did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets' (1 Sam. 28.6). In his deep distress, after entreating God in the accepted ways in vain,[19] he turned to the woman who consulted with ghosts. A reader familiar with the Deuteronomistic literature[20] and sensitive to the use of allusions, may understand the phrase 'the trespass he had committed against the Lord' to indicate Saul's taking booty from the Amalekite war (1 Sam. 15.2-3, 8-9, 15, 18, 20-21) because the root *m-'-l* ('trespass') occurs beside *ḥerem* ('the proscribed thing') in 1 Chron. 2.7 in the context of the Achan episode: 'The sons of Carmi: Achar, the troubler of Israel, who committed a trespass against the proscribed thing'.[21] Similarly the phrase 'in not having fulfilled the command of the Lord' may be connected with the confrontation between Saul and Samuel at Gilgal on the eve of the battle of Michmas (1 Sam. 13.13-14): 'in not keeping the commandments that the Lord your God laid upon you!... [B]ecause you did not abide by what the Lord had commanded you.' A reader aware of the allusions realizes that the wording of v. 13 in Chronicles is not happenstance, but is used to criminalize Saul throughout his reign, from the battle

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18.   Close reading of these verses reveals that they serve as a comprehensive and concise summation of Saul's failures; see Chapter 15 of the present volume, especially pp. 198-99. See also Zalewski 1989: 456-60, 462-66.

19.   See Ehrlich 1969b: 438. On the words 'did not seek the advice of the Lord', Ehrlich says: 'From this, one sees how far the author goes in disparaging Saul, for the first author who was before him said "Saul inquired of the Lord..."' Moreover, the story in 1 Sam. 28 begins by reporting that Saul 'had forbidden [recourse to] ghosts and familiar spirits in the land' (v. 3), highlighting Saul's attitude to witches and necromancers on the one hand, and the deep distress in which he sought out the woman who consulted with ghosts on the other.

20.   On the Deuteronomistic history that existed as texts that the Chronicler could use, see Na'aman 2002.

21.   This verse hints at Josh. 7.25-26. The root *m-'-l* in the context of possessing booty is repeated in the context of Achan episode—see Josh. 7.1; 22.20. In 1 Sam. 15 the root *ḥ-r-m* recurs seven times. Compare also with *Leviticus Rabbah* 26.7 (Freedman and Simon 1961: 336): 'Our Rabbis learned: That righteous man [Saul] was slain because of five sins...' On the connection of *m-'-l with ḥ-r-m* and with Josh. 7, see also Walters 1991: 62 and there n. 2.

of Michmas to raising the ghost before his defeat and death on Gilboa.[22] The same attentive reader senses the intensity of Saul's criminalization from the choice of expressions in Chronicles that stress transgression against God.[23] So eager was the Chronicler to denigrate Saul that his style and allusions became unambiguous and he would deviate from or alter his sources in order to defame Saul even with sins he never committed.[24]

2.2. *Saul's Death and Burial*
A comparison between 1 Chronicles 10 and 1 Samuel 31 shows the relentless bias of the Chronicler. Not content with his concluding verses against Saul and his house, he carefully introduces slight changes throughout the story in order to formulate the account of Saul's death as an incriminating document, obliterating its heroic and tragic effect.[25] The reader observes the changes, even the subtle ones, when comparing the two descriptions, and finds that the Chronicler uses varied means to diminish the persona of Saul and erase the tragic majesty from his death.

The description in Samuel emphasizes that Saul's armor-bearer died with him after he saw Saul fall upon his sword: 'When his arms-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him' (1 Sam. 31.5). The armor-bearer's sense of veneration and of identification with his king, whose death deprived his own life of purpose, led him to die with the king. In Chronicles, however, 'with him' is missing (1 Chron. 10.5).[26] This

22. Awareness of allusions may be found in Curtis 1910: 182-83; Williamson 1982: 95 and others. But see also Garsiel (1996a: 148), who maintains that 'the sins of Saul are presented in Chronicles by means of the general expression 'in not having fulfilled the command of the Lord' (v. 13), which has no concrete content nor details relating to his sins, except the brief mention of the sin of consulting the ghost'.

23. See 1 Chron. 2.7; 5.25, 9.1; 2 Chron. 12.2; 26.16, 18; 28.19, 22; 29.5, 19; 30.7; 33.19; 36.14. See also 2 Chron. 34.21. Mosis (1973: 29-33) examines the use of the root *m-ʿ-l* in Chronicles; Williamson (1982: 94-95) and Japhet (1993: 229-30) follow him. But see also Zalewski's criticism (1989: 451-56). Walters (1991: 63-69) emphasizes especially the appearance of the root in the historical context of exile and return (1 Chron. 9.1; 2 Chron. 34.14) and in the transition from 1 Chron. 9 to the description of Saul's death in 1 Chron. 10. He is influenced by Johnstone 1997: 115-17 and 1998: 95-99.

24. On 1 Chron. 10.13-14 as the Chronicler's addition, see, e.g., Williamson 1982: 94-96; Japhet 1993: 229-30, and many others.

25. This is in complete contradiction to Josephus who regards Saul's death as a climactic moment depicting him as a model for the generations: 'Such a man alone, in my opinion, is just, valiant and wise, and he if any has been or shall be such, deserves to have all men acknowledge his virtue, ...but the terms "stout-hearted", "greatly daring", "contemptuous of danger" can justly be applied only to such as have emulated Saul...' See the complete text in Josephus, *Ant.* 6.14.5 (343-50). The quotation is from sections 346-47.

26. Zalewski 1989: 461.

does not alter the facts in the narrative, but makes for a more alienated picture, to be reinforced by the changes in v. 6.

For 'as well as all his men' (1 Sam. 31.6), the Chronicler substitutes 'and his entire house (1 Chron. 10.6). While the narrator in Samuel chooses to emphasize the huge scale of the defeat, and the brotherhood of warriors who died together, the Chronicler creates the impression that all Saul's house died together, all at once, so that in the absence of an heir, the way was clear for David's ascent.[27] Furthermore, the reduced scope of the defeat in Chronicles (compare 1 Sam. 31.7 with 1 Chron. 10.7) reinforces the sense that this was not a great defeat for the Israelites,[28] but rather the end of a royal dynasty soon to be shown unworthy of its place on the stage of history.

In the book of Samuel the burial of Saul and his sons includes an emotionally charged description of the stalwart men of Jabesh Gilead who, risking their lives, marched all night and removed the bodies from the walls of Beth-shan, a Philistine stronghold, to give their admired king and his sons an honorable burial. The Chronicler, by contrast, ignores the night march of the people of Jabesh Gilead, stressing that the Philistines were interested only in the head and the armor of the king, so that only Saul's skull was impaled in the temple of Dagon (1 Chron. 10.9-10). From this description, therefore, one can understand that the Gileadites brought to Jabesh only the bodies of Saul and his sons abandoned on the battlefield, which is not an especially heroic feat, since the skull was left where it was (vv. 11-12). A comparison with the version in Samuel shows that the Chronicler wanted to reduce the heroic feat of the men of Jabesh Gilead to an ordinary occurrence, and those who performed it to a status less than that of the Amalekite who reached the battlefield when he could still possess himself of the king's crown and armlet (2 Sam. 1.6-10). Belittling the Gileadites' valor in this way strips the description of its aura of identification with Saul, and the heroism of his faithful warriors prepared to risk life itself for their king.[29]

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27.   The twofold genealogies indeed show the existence of Eshbaal son of Saul, whose descendants are not mentioned (1 Chron. 8.33; 9.39; see also above, 1.1–1.2). With that, Chronicles does not tell of Eshbaal's (Ishboshet's) reign, leaving the reader to fill the gap. The reader may think that perhaps this was a very young or unworthy son, or one who died in some non-military circumstance, since he is not mentioned as taking part in the war. The list continues with Jonathan's line and his son was known to be lame (2 Sam. 9.3, 13).

28.   Japhet 1989: 133-36, especially n. 381. Japhet emphasizes that 'The only purpose of this war against Philistia was the downfall of Saul and his house, punishment for the king's transgression'. I view the reduced scope of the war in Chronicles as the necessary quick transition to ch. 11 where David is crowned king by all of Israel.

29.   A ballad of the Hebrew poet Saul (Shaul) Tchernichovsky (1966) celebrates the heroism of the men of Jabesh Gilead. Perhaps he deliberately ignores the diminution of

The polemic of the Chronicler against Saul and his house is an open one (vv. 13-14) that makes use of indirect means (vv. 5, 6-7, 8-12). It focuses on the death of Saul, the preface and the introduction to the Chronicler's historical narrative. His purpose is to show that the house of Saul rightly gave way to the house of David, and that Saul's death with the transfer of the monarchy to David was no less than an act of providential justice.

3. *Additional References to Saul in Describing the First Days of David*

The Chronicler goes beyond the above techniques in reworking an entire story, integrating new information to show the extent to which Saul's entire reign was a failure.[30]

When all Israel came to David in Hebron and offered him the monarchy, they said: 'Long before now, even when Saul was king, you were the leader of Israel' (1 Chron. 11.2, compare with 2 Sam. 5.2). With the Chronicler's addition of the word 'even' he created a new continuity in which David led the people when Saul was king and 'long before now', that is, long before the inter regnum between Saul's death and until he himself was crowned.

Because of the Chronicler's chosen time sequence and his strategic preference, beginning his narrative with Saul's death, he does not describe the time when Saul pursued David—nor does he refrain from hinting at it by reporting on 'The following joined David at Ziklag while he was still in hiding from Saul son of Kish' (1 Chron. 12.1). That is, he reports briefly that before Saul vacated the throne David had to take refuge in Ziklag.[31] The Chronicler even relates that he was joined by valiant warriors from Saul's army who could 'use both right hand and left hand to sling stones or shoot arrows with the bow; they were kinsmen of Saul from Benjamin' (12.2).[32] In other words, these warriors, some of them relatives of Saul, deserted from Saul's army in favor of David. Additionally, we are told of Benjaminites who deserted to David's side at the early stage of his wanderings in the Judean desert (12.17). Thus the Chronicler creates the impression that support for David included the tribe of Benjamin and Saul's kinsmen even

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Saul in Chronicles and relates only to the motto of the ballad, which mentions the difference in the trees. In Samuel he is buried under a tamarisk (1 Sam. 31.13), in Chronicles under an oak (1 Chron. 10.12).

30.   See Japhet 1993: 259-61.

31.   Using the root '-ṣ-r to describe David's sojourn in Ziklag suggests a place of captivity (compare Jer. 33.1) and emphasizes the harsh conditions of David.

32.   Compare with Judg. 3.15, 21; 20.16. Some commentators also interpret Judges on the basis of this text (see the Septuagint translation of Judg. 3.15), regarding use of the left hand as the result of training to use both hands with equal skill.

in very early stages of David's rule.[33] While reading the book of Samuel might suggest that David's conduct was a matter of survival and, at a later stage, on the eve of the war on Gilboa, was even tainted with treason, the book of Chronicles is quite different. There the author's desire is to present the superiority of David, beloved of the people, whose camp included people from all the tribes, with Benjamin at their head, sought to join David: 'Day in day out, people came to David to give him support, until there was an army as vast as the army of God' (12.23).[34]

As if that were not enough, the Chronicler notes that among those who came to David in Hebron 'to transfer Saul's kingdom to him, in accordance with the word of the Lord' (12.24) there were 'Of the Benjaminites, kinsmen of Saul, in their great numbers, 3000 hitherto protecting the interests of the house of Saul' (12.30). David's coronation turns out to have been supported even by those of Saul's tribe who were closest to the late king.[35]

Nor does the Chronicler refrain from reproving Saul when he describes bringing the Ark from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem (13.1-5). He begins the description with a segment that has no parallel in Samuel and points out that in Saul's time no regard was paid to the Ark (13.3). This information complements the last verses describing Saul's death (10.13-14), where the root *d-r-š* is also repeated. Here two conclusions may be derived: that in Saul's time ghosts and necromancers were preferred over seeking guidance from God,[36] and that David, unlike Saul, acted from the outset of his reign to serve God in the right and accepted way. Hence David's first act following his coronation was to conquer Jerusalem, and immediately thereafter to bring the Ark to the city.

The Chronicler dispensed with the extensive material on Saul from the book of Samuel—but did not ignore the description of Michal daughter of Saul who despised the Ark of God (15.29), conveying to his reader the idea that the apple does not fall far from the tree. Michal, who grew up in the house of Saul, in whose time guidance from God was not sought, despised David's reverent behavior during the transfer of the Ark (15.27-29). And as if that were not enough, she regarded his conduct as antics and games. Her contempt is diametrically opposite to the impressive ceremony accompanied by 'blasts of the horn, with trumpets and cymbals, playing on harps

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33.   See Williamson 1982: 106.

34.   See Japhet 1993: 267.

35.   On the small numbers, see Williamson 1982: 111-12. Josephus notes that 'From the tribe of Benjamin came four thousand armed men; for (the rest of) the tribe hesitated in the expectation that someone of the family of Saul would still be king', see Josephus, *Ant.* 7.2.2 (56).

36.   The Masoretic version of 1 Sam. 14.18-19 notes that the Ark was in the camp. The information in Chronicles is inconsistent with that in 1 Sam. 28.

and lyres' (15.28), with the participation of the Levites, the singers and all of Israel. Obviously Michal's reaction to that most impressive ceremony exacerbates the critical judgment against this daughter of Saul's house.[37]

According to 1 Chron. 26.28, Samuel the seer, Saul son of Kish and Abner son of Ner consecrated the booty of their wars to the Temple. The information accompanies the description of 'all the treasuries of dedicated things that were dedicated by King David and the chiefs of the clans, and the officers of thousands and hundreds and the other army officers; they dedicated some of the booty of the wars to maintain the house of the Lord' (vv. 26-27). Thus began the accumulation of the Temple treasure. Not only in David's time and before the Temple was built, but even before David was crowned and before Jerusalem was conquered, in the time of Samuel the seer, Saul son of Kish and Abner son of Ner consecrated some of the booty of their wars to the Temple, even before the order to build it was given. To attribute consecrating the spoils of war to David, who initiated the building of the Temple, is congruent with the approach of the Chronicler, who relates that 'Solomon brought the things that his father David had consecrated to the House of God—the silver and the gold and the utensils—and deposited them in the treasury of the House of God' (2 Chron. 5.1-2).[38] However, it is difficult to attribute this initiative to Saul and Abner because Saul, described as having trespassed against the Lord in this matter, now becomes in the twinkling of an eye a founder of the Temple treasury.[39] Moreover, such an inclination, as we have seen, is incongruent with the Chronicler's description of Saul and also because this possibility is built on the assumption that treasure to the Lord was dedicated outside Jerusalem. Moreover, Chronicles does not even hint that the contributions of Samuel and Saul were ever brought to the treasury in Jerusalem, nor does it give

37.   See Garsiel (1996b: 186) for apologetics regarding Michal's conduct. He explains Michal's contempt in these words: 'Since she saw him prancing about for no reason, and did not perceive he was doing so before the Ark of God'. Garsiel even raises the possibility that 'Differently from in 2 Samuel 6.16 the Chronicler did not mention that David was dancing before the Ark of God—perhaps to reduce the severity of Michal's reaction'. Nor would the Chronicler have found it worthwhile to expand on David's antics. So he made do with his own brief and balanced remark (1 Chron. 15.27) and with Michal's point of view (v. 29). He also omits the dialogue between David and Michal, which could have highlighted her perspective (2 Sam. 6.20-23).

38.   Regarding this information Japhet (1993: 462) writes: 'As there is no Temple in David's time, this is clearly an anachronism, but it conforms to the Chronicler's view of David's actions as focused entirely on the "house of the Lord"'.

39.   The founder of the treasury according to 1 Chron. 26.28 is Samuel, but the only battle this prophet managed is described in 1 Sam. 7.2-17, and many scholars doubt about its origin and think it is a late anti-monarchic material; see Wellhausen 1957: 247-49; Hertzberg 1972: 65-66; McCarter 1980: 148-51, and many others.

any idea of when they were brought to Jerusalem and where they were kept until the time of David and Solomon.[40] It seems to me, therefore, that v. 28 is not the work of the Chronicler.[41] Even if this is not a convincing argument, in that it alludes to a positive act of Saul's, the verse is an exception that proves the rule, quite atypical of the Chronicler who 'hasn't a good word to say about Saul'.[42]

4. *The Explanation*

Biblical literature had to deal with the problem of what was wrong with the first royal dynasty and why it was right and proper to establish the house of David. The result was reactions for and against the house of Saul, and at the same time reactions for and against the house of David. The struggle was carried on by direct, open means, and also by indirect and concealed ones. The episode of the concubine in Gibeah at the end of Judges (ch. 19–21) and the fighting against the tribe of Benjamin and against Gibeah, Saul's city, is carried out by open and direct means leaving no doubt that this is a fight against evil doers. Yet in the same textual frame there is also a hidden polemic, in which Saul's name is not even mentioned. Nonetheless, whoever discerns the polemic against Saul's house can have no doubt that its purpose is to defame Saul, and the questions will be about the means the writer employed to this end.[43] The author of the book of Samuel shows the human frailties of the kings in a comprehensive way. He does not sidestep the positive qualities of Saul or the negative ones of David, so that readers through the generations have occasionally felt compassion for the deprived Saul, and sharp criticism for David's maneuvering against Saul from the time he entered Saul's court to the time he bequeathed the throne to Solomon.[44] The book of Chronicles is

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40.   See Kochman 1996b: 260. Nor does the book of Samuel contain any suggestion that Samuel demanded that Saul dedicate booty to the Lord or that Saul took any initiative in this regard, despite its importance in 1 Sam. 15.

41.   See, for instance, Myers (1965: 178), who assumes that this addition is intended to reinforce the 'all Israel' purpose in Chronicles by stressing the combined contributions made to the central institution of the nation. Possibly too the addition expresses a pro-Saul polemic in the time of the Second Temple. See also Amit 2006b.

42.   Myers 1965: 178.

43.   On the hidden polemic in the story of the concubine in Gibeah, see Amit 2000: 169-88.

44.   Even the Sages in the Babylonian Talmud (*Yoma* 22b) asked why Saul's monarchy did not continue: 'Said R. Judah said Samuel, "Why did the kingdom of Saul not last? It was because there was not a single flaw in his genealogy." For said R. Yohanan in the name of R. Simeon b. Yehosedeq, "An administrator over community affairs is

different. The Chronicler writing in the Persian era,[45] a time of low political status, expresses through David and his house a real hope for political independence.[46] Hence he chose an openly one-sided, ideal image of David who replaced a king who failed because of his sins.[47]

The Chronicler obviously concentrates his attack on Saul around the change of dynasties (1 Chron. 8–13). The background is laid out in the detailed genealogies, moving into direct accusation through the account of Saul's death. Then, by weaving in new information, the author reinforces the disappointment Saul and the blame he bears.

Questions therefore arise as to why he is not satisfied with vague language such as 'for God had brought it about' (2 Chron. 10.15) or a standard formulation referring to a change of sovereign: 'in order that the Lord might fulfill the promise that he had made through the prophet X...to Y...' (v. 15)? Alternatively, why did the Chronicler not take the heroic version of Saul's last days from the book of Samuel? Or why did he not omit the description of Saul's death entirely when he could just as well have begun the history of David's reign with his coronation by all Israel (1 Chron. 11.1-3)? Why indeed was it so important to present Saul negatively, and to show his reign as a period of remoteness from God?

It seems to me that this one-sided negative attitude to Saul in Chronicles expresses not only the need to justify the change of dynasty, but also responds to an awakening in the tribe of Benjamin following the destruction and the Babylonian exile, leading its members to desire local Benjaminite leadership.

Biblical testimony from the end of the First Temple era and early Second Temple times, with the archeological findings, show that Mitzpah in Benjamin was established to serve as a center of government after Jerusalem's

appointed only if a bag of snakes is suspended from his back, so that, should he turn arrogant, people can say to him, 'So turn around'"' (Neusner 1994: 75 [6.A.B.]). See also Luria (1989) who blames the scribes of David's house in the hardly complimentary depiction of Saul. Malul (1996) strengthens the tendency to criticize David. He even raises the possibility that David was involved in the death of Saul, and see there his rich bibliography on the development of this tendency.

45.   Most critics agree that Chronicles was written in the fourth century BCE. See, e.g., Williamson 1982: 15-16.

46.   As to whether the book expresses a concrete or an eschatological hope, see Japhet 1989: 493-504; and see also Urbach 1975: 653-59.

47.   On the few flaws in David's image in Chronicles, see Japhet 1993: 397-401. For a different view on the structure of Saul's image in Chronicles, see Garsiel 1996a: 148. He thinks that the Chronicler is softer in relation to Saul than is the book of Samuel. See also a similar view in Abramsky 1977: 53-54. This view ignores ambiguity in Samuel, see Amit 2001: 81-82.

destruction and of almost continuous settlement in the Benjamin region.[48] As well, there were many regime changes in that period. Following the defeat of Zedekiah's rebellion and the destruction of the First Temple, the Babylonian authorities appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan the Jerusalemite to rule the remnant left in Judah (2 Kgs 25.22-26; Jer. 40.7–41.18). His appointment ended in assassination because it aroused the opposition of one of David's house, 'Ishmael son of Nethaniah of royal descent' (Jer. 25.25; 41.1). In Babylon at the same time were Jehoiachin and his sons, and when a new Babylonian ruler Evil-Merodach came to power in 561 BCE, in the 37th year of Jehoiachin's exile, his status improved (2 Kgs 25.27-30). Concurrently, the powers dominating the region changed as Babylon gave way to Persia ruled by the king Cyrus. Apparently at this time too attitudes to the house of David deteriorated, as seen in the prophecies of Second Isaiah (Isa. 40–55), in which David's house is barely mentioned.[49] In Isaiah's prophecies Cyrus is God's Messiah, he is the intended savior to be followed by the 'servant of God' and not by a scion of David's house. Nor are Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel mentioned in the books of Ezra, Haggai and Zechariah as belonging to that house, and were it not for the list in 1 Chron. 3.17-24, it is doubtful whether they would be regarded as legitimate members of David's dynasty.[50] Additionally, Sheshbazzar who led the returned exiles in the first years is no longer mentioned in the story of the building of the altar (Ezra 3.1–4.5) which is attributed to Zerubbabel, often mentioned together with Jeshua the high priest.[51]

This appears to have been a shifting time, one of regime changes and of diminished status for David's dynasty, when there was room for controversy on the subject of leadership. Hence, plausibly, under those circumstances the population of Benjaminite descent looked forward to leadership reflecting their status and economic strength in the resurgent province of Judah, in view of the disappointment with David's line. Such expectations were expressed by using the name of Saul, Israel's first monarch, even though no legitimate heir to his house could be found. We have not the slightest hint of any remnants of Saul's house who threatened the rule of David's dynasty in Judah during the First Temple period, hence when the kingdom disintegrated the house of Saul was no longer an alternative or a source of polemic in the Judean kingdom. The polemic known to us from the Deuteronomistic literature was waged openly against the northern

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48. See Lipschits 2005: 88-97, 149-53, 368-74 and more; Blenkinsopp 1998; 2003: 96; Amit 2003: 146; Lipschits 1999; Edelman 2001: 73-82.

49. The house of David is mentioned only in Isa. 55.3-5.

50. On the identity of Sheshbazzar with Shenezzar, see Liver 1959: 8-11, 80; Berger 1971; Japhet 1993: 99.

51. *3 Ezra* mentions Zerubbabel only after Jeshua son of Jozadak.

kingdom and its rulers who were not of Saul's house and not linked to the tribe of Benjamin—and names from Saul's dynasty are found no later than the seventh century BCE.[52]

Thus the book of Chronicles openly reflects the polemic with the house of Saul and absolute support for David and his dynasty. The controversy itself shows, on one hand, the leadership issue and the need to justify choosing David's dynasty—gone after Zerubbabel's time—and, on the other, the need for an alternative, continued to occupy Israelite society during the Persian era.

At the same time, the polemic against Saul does not seem to indicate any real concern that his descendants could return to power. Rather, it shows the need of supporters of David's house to deal with their disappointment, as well as their fear of the Benjaminite position that challenged the idea of David's dynasty as the only possible rulers.

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52.   See above, pp. 236-37.

19

How to Relate to a Formative Tradition

Retrospective Preface

In the preface to Chapter 18 I noted that a researcher influenced by earlier studies need not accept them in all. On the way to create his/her independent synthesis, there are ideas and studies that the researcher accepts or rejects. Here, I want to emphasize that even when a researcher accepts a specific thesis, this does not necessarily mean that it is accepted in all its details. When I wrote my review (1978) of Sara Japhet's book (1977), I felt she had missed the point regarding the Exodus. Since, as an integral part of the Torah literature, this was a formative tradition in the time of the Chronicler, it was already binding then. My assumption was that the Chronicler could not ignore a tradition centuries old, even if he wanted to, because it was incompatible with his world view, and as a sophisticated writer he would find his own ways of relating to it.

And so I decided to re-examine the issue. Scrutiny of all the references in the book of Chronicles to the Exodus showed that it was not a question of a tradition ignored, but one had to understand the references and their purpose. It became clear to me that the Chronicler had very great ambitions. He sought to replace the Exodus with a new formative tradition built around the Temple, because that suited his ideological world in which the Temple was the heart and core of national life.

Imagine for a moment what would have happened had the Chronicler succeeded. Families in the house of Israel would not be gathering around their tables for the Passover Seder, reading from the Hagaddah about the Exodus until the small hours. Instead, from morning to night, the year round, they would be anticipating the renewal of the Temple sacrifices.

Be that as it may, the Chronicler did not invent the attempt to replace one tradition with another. It was done even by the ancients who replaced the festival of spring and of the lambing season with the Exodus tradition.

It appears to be typical of ideologists attempting to put across their ideas, and those who did so without violence, compulsion and terrifying penalties, should be remembered for good. At the same time, one should be grateful for the failures of despotic ideologies. Take for example the

Catholic Church, which, through the mighty arm of the Inquisition, created a new model of crypto-Jews who maintained ancestral traditions in secret. When the Communist regime fell, the Russian churches emerged and flourished. There was also the Nazi ideology, which, had it not failed, would have resulted in the book being left unwritten. The examples are endless, as our prophet Isaiah said: 'The couch is too short for stretching out. And the cover too narrow for curling up!' Who knows, perhaps because the Chronicler failed, Jews in all generations continued to see themselves, as the Passover Haggadah directs, as if they themselves had come out of Egypt. And thus too, perhaps, we were privileged to witness the modern Exodus and the establishment of the state of Israel to a great extent through the boldness of a modern David—David ben Gurion.

Even so, I cannot possibly ignore the Chronicler's success in everything connected with David. If the Messiah is to be the son of David, the book of Chronicles, not the book of Samuel, made the substantial contribution. If almost every commentary on the cave of Machpelah episode today places the binding of Isaac on Mt Moriah, seen as the Temple site that David chose, it is due to the commentary and the varied poetical means the Chronicler used to illuminate David with the primordial splendor of Abraham, father of the nation (see Amit 2011).

Answers to the questions as to what the Chronicler disliked about the Exodus tradition, and how and why he linked it to the tradition he preferred, are found in the article that follows.

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The Position of the Exodus Tradition in the Book of Chronicles

1. *Introduction*

The relation of the Chronicler to the Exodus tradition may be seen from three standpoints: (1) the numerical—few references in the course of the work; (2) the scope—each reference offers a limited description; (3) the context—most references are in relation to the construction and dedication of the Temple. Taken together, they indicate a different approach to the Exodus tradition that is central in other historiographic descriptions in the Bible.[1] These textual data raise the question of whether this attitude of

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1.   Thus in the Torah and the Deuteronomistic literature. Exodus has a central role in the prophetic literature and Psalms. See, e.g., von Rad 1953: 121-28; Loewenstamm 1992: 53-68.

the Chronicler should be regarded as pure chance—or understood and interpreted in the light of a particular historiosophic approach that leads him to assign his particular values to various events in the national history? In other words, is there significance in the paucity and limited nature of the references and their focus around the Temple theme?

Several studies dealing with the book of Chronicles have already shown this reduction and limitation.[2] Some scholars relate it to the Chronicler's polemic with the Samaritans,[3] while others[4] interpret it as proof of preference for the house of David over the covenant at Sinai, and see it as a preference of central importance in a book with an eschatological purpose.[5] Japhet proposes an original and innovative approach, linking it to the theological-political orientation of the Chronicler: 'Chronicles presents a different view of history: the dimensions of the Babylonian conquest and exile are reduced considerably, the people's settlement in the land is portrayed as an uninterrupted continuum, and in the same way the constitutive force of the Exodus from Egypt is eliminated. Chronicles simply omits the entire historical context…slavery, Exodus and conquest…'[6] Japhet reaches this interesting conclusion after a careful comparison of the book of Chronicles with its sources. With that, the comparison in her research reveals itself as tendentious by directing the reader's attention specifically to the places where the Exodus has been omitted, which offer affirmation that the Chronicler is interested in ignoring that historical tradition.[7]

It seems to me that objective presentation of data from the book may highlight the complexity of the problem and even allow for a different theological solution.

2. *Texts in Chronicles that Tell of the Exodus*

At times the Chronicler, mentioning the Exodus, is faithful to his sources. In such cases he gives his reader the source almost word-for-word:

1. 1 Chron. 17.21: 'And who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth, whom God went and redeemed as His people,

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2. For details, see Japhet 1989: 379 n. 91.

3. Noth 1981: 174-75; Rudolph 1955: ix.

4. Brunet 1954: 368-69; North 1963: 377-78.

5. On the eschatological orientation of Chronicles, see the bibliography in Japhet 1989: 493-94 nn. 1-3.

6. Japhet 1989: 386.

7. Japhet 1989: 379-86. Her line of argument (1) gives minimum attention to four passages where the Exodus is mentioned explicitly, although there are five or six of these (see p. 380 and n. 97 there); and means that (2) the possibility of textual errors is virtually ignored in this specific case. See n. 13 below.

winning renown for Yourself for great and marvelous deeds, driving out nations before Your people whom You redeemed from Egypt'.[8]

2. 2 Chron. 5.10: 'There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets that Moses placed [there] at Horeb, when the Lord made [a Covenant] with the Israelites after their departure from Egypt'.[9]

3. 2 Chron. 6.5-6: 'From the time I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I never chose a city from among all the tribes of Israel to build a House where My name might abide; nor did I choose anyone to be a leader of My people Israel. But then I chose Jerusalem for My name to abide there, and I chose David to rule My people Israel.'[10]

4. 2 Chron. 7.22: 'And the reply will be, "It is because they forsook the Lord God of their fathers who freed them from the land of Egypt, and adopted other Gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore He brought all this calamity upon them"'.[11]

5. 2 Chron. 20.10: 'Now the people of Ammon, Moab, and the hill country of Seir, into whose [land] You did not let Israel come when they came from Egypt, but they turned aside from them and did not wipe them out'.[12]

6. 1 Chron. 17.5 in our opinion is also included in the list of texts that, while they do not explicitly include the expression 'from Egypt'[13] explain that 'From the day I brought out Israel to this day,

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8.   Compare 2 Sam. 7.23. On the textual errors both in the books of Samuel and Chronicles and the intentional changes especially in Chronicles, see Curtis 1910: 230, 232. Kittel (in Curtis 1910: 232; see also *BHK*) considers that 'whom you redeemed from Egypt' is a gloss, which seems to me a baseless suggestion. Even if this phrase were absent the verse includes many motifs from the Exodus tradition. Attention should be given to the intentional change of the possessive pronoun in Chronicles. In Samuel the possessive pronoun emphasizes that it was done for the Lord. The Chronicler preserves a definition that points to one-sided relations, hence he moves the possessive pronoun from God to the people.

9.   Compare with 1 Kgs 8.9. In the Septuagint after 'at Horeb', 'the tables of the covenant' are mentioned. Von Rad (1930: 65 n. 5) thinks that this omission is tendentious, but Japhet's objection is convincing.

10.   Compare with 1 Kgs 8.16-17. The shorter Kings version seems to be the result of *homoioteleuton*. See J. Gray 1977: 214 and there n. b.

11.   Compare with 1 Kgs 9.9.

12.   Jehoshaphat's speech belongs to a pattern of the original sermons in Chronicles, but here, differently from his sources, the writer did not ignore the Exodus tradition.

13.   Japhet's statement that the absence of the Exodus in this context is tendentious ignores the flaws in the verse. In my view the absence of the word 'Egypt' is coincidental, a scribe's error, as supported by the general character of the verse and its idiomatic style. Comparing 1 Chron. 17.5 with 2 Sam. 7.6, we can see that the verb 'go' is

> I have not dwelt in a house, but have [gone] from tent to tent and from one Tabernacle [to another]'.

Two conspicuous phenomena are evident: (1) in all six texts the Exodus from Egypt is embedded in a dependent clause; (2) five of the six are concentrated around the Temple theme.[14]

In 1 Chron. 17.5 the Exodus is part of Nathan's prophecy whose central message is 'You are not the one to build a house for Me to dwell in' (1 Chron. 17.4, compare with 2 Sam. 7.6). In this case the Exodus serves as a point in the history of the Ark, which has been wandering ever since. The reference accentuates the importance of the present, transferring the center of gravity from past wanderings to the change about to take place in the present—the building of a house of cedar for the Lord by David's son.[15]

In David's prayer too (2 Sam. 7.18-19; 1 Chron. 17.16-27), included in response to Nathan's prophecy, the Exodus tradition is recalled. However, while in the book of Samuel this historical event blazes God's great name abroad in the world,[16] in the Chronicler's approach there is no connection between God's name and the people's fate. Hence the Exodus is mentioned along with the conquest of the land as important way stations in a history that reached its climax in present events, in which 'You have made known all these great things' (1 Chron. 17.19).

Second Chronicles 5.10 relates to the Exodus in describing the dedication of the Temple and bringing the Ark into the sanctuary. History has now come full circle. Nathan's prophecy has been fulfilled and the Ark, whose history and wanderings began with the Covenant entered into in

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missing, as is the indirect object that should follow 'Tabernacle'. Hence the verse is incorrect it its syntax and meaning. See the correct suggestion in Curtis 1910: 228; *BHK* and *BHS*; compare also with the commentaries of Rashi and Radak. Although the correct suggestions do not relate to the absence of Egypt, they emphasize the problems in this verse. The coincidental absence of 'Egypt' is learnt also from the appearance of the verb *'-l-h* in *hiphil*, typical of the Exodus tradition; see Exod. 17.3; 32.1, 7, 23; 33.1; Judg. 6.8, 13; 1 Sam. 10.18; 12.6; 2 Kgs 17.36; Hos. 13.14; Jer. 16.14, 15; 23.7, 8; Amos 2.18; 3.1; 9.7; Neh. 9.18 and many other examples.

14.   Although the Temple as a subject that appears throughout the book of Chronicles (see n. 22 below), a central block within the book deals with all the stages of planning and building, up to and including the dedication: 1 Chron. 13–2 Chron. 8. Information about secular issues is meager here. 2 Chron. 20.10, not included in this context, also has an indirect connection to the Temple; see n. 19 below.

15.   Past events are a means to strengthen present ones in Nathan's vision, from the political standpoint as well. Mentioning the periods of the conquest and the Judges (2 Sam. 7.10-11 and 1 Chron. 17.9-10) serves to highlight the end of the historical process in the time of David (2 Sam. 7.9, 11 and 1 Chron. 17.8, 10).

16.   Compare also with Isa. 63.12; Jer. 32.20-21; Dan. 9.10; and see also Exod. 9.16.

the Exodus, is now in a permanent abode. In this context too the Exodus is an important historical event whose purpose is to highlight and emphasize an event yet more important—the dedication of the Ark's permanent abode.

The approach in 2 Chron. 6.5 offers a similar interpretation of events. The Exodus is a past occurrence of limited importance, since it has no connection with the choice either of the city or of the house of David. Solomon's prayer clarifies that with the completion of the Temple all God's past promises are fulfilled. From this time forth a new era in the relationship between the people and their God, centered around the Temple as a house of prayer and repentance (1 Kgs 8.23-53; 2 Chron. 6.14-42) and a center for sacrifices (2 Chron. 7.12), is initiated. Additional references to the Exodus, as in the prayer in 1 Kgs 8.50-53, with its conclusion, highlight on the one hand the importance of the event, and on the other its diminished importance in the perception of the Chronicler.[17] Moreover, additions to the account of the dedication of the Temple, like the consecration of the altar (2 Chron. 7.7-11) and the description of the fire descending from heaven before the eyes of all Israel (vv. 1-3), also change perceptions of past events.

God's answer to Solomon's prayer stresses that abandoning the God who brought them out of Egypt will lead to the Temple's destruction (v. 22). Here the Exodus from Egypt is a reminder and an example of the positive connection between God and his people, as against the punishment that awaits them should they abandon him.[18]

In one text only, 2 Chron. 20.10, is there an allusion to the Exodus not directly connected to the Temple.[19] Significantly, most of the motifs characteristic of the Exodus from Egypt are conspicuously absent here both on the planes of language and of content.[20] The author uses 'when they came from Egypt', taking the deliverance away from God and making the departure from Egypt an ordinary event, to be mentioned in this specific context only because of the appearance of the past enemy in the present situation. In this verse the theological significance and associations of the Exodus have been deleted. The Chronicler does not refer to the broad context of the Exodus tradition but to a limited occurrence among

17.   See pp. 260-65, section 5, below.
18.   The slight difference between the books of Kings and Chronicles relate to the Chronicler's tendency to highlight the ongoing relationship between God and his people. See Japhet 1989: 14-19.
19.   The indirect connection between Jehoshaphat's prayer and the Temple is with the Temple as the place and background of the prayer, proving the power of the Temple as a house of prayer.
20.   See Japhet 1989: 383-84 and n. 108 there.

the events of the wanderings in the wilderness (compare Num. 20.14-21; Deut 2.5-9) that have a certain point of contact with the circumstances of Jehoshaphat's war. Furthermore in this outpouring, which is a historical survey, Jehoshaphat mentions important milestones—driving out the inhabitants of the land and granting it to the seed of Abraham, settling the land and building the Temple (2 Chron. 20.7-9). Here one would expect a reference to the Exodus tradition, but it does not appear. There is simply 'when they came from Egypt', bringing in an analogous circumstance with a common factor—the ungrateful Ammonites and Moabites—in the king's attempt to convince the Lord to save his people.

To summarize thus far: the Exodus from Egypt is recalled in events related to the building and dedication of the Temple, not so much to show the importance the Chronicler attributes to it as to show the importance he attributes to building the Temple. He takes care to include and not omit the references in order to present a new theological approach: the Exodus is an important past event, while building the Temple symbolizes God's presence among his people and the direct and continuous link between him and them.[21] In Chronicles, building the Temple is the central and most important tradition in the nation's history.

In the framework of the new central tradition the Exodus is an analogous element helping to enhance the event to which it is attached. One may assume that the Exodus concept would arouse theologically significant memories in readers to whom the book was addressed. The Chronicler gives it just five verses in his book dealing mainly with the Temple and those who serve in it,[22] attaching the Exodus references to the main tradition of building the Temple. The Exodus is always a past event, introduced in dependent clauses that by their syntax relate merely additional and complementary information regarding what they describe.[23] All this emphasizes the revolution in the Chronicler's approach, which transfers the main theological weight to the new central tradition. The book of Chronicles makes the Exodus a secondary event, where the preferred central tradition is building of the Temple. Nor was that created out of nothing. The Chronicler's sources in 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Kings 6–9 provided the foundation for the Temple tradition, and he innovated by making it central to the historiography of the nation. We may describe his means as: (1) selection—reducing and restricting references to the central tradition in his sources; (2) combination—concentrating references to the rejected

21.　Compare 2 Chron. 7.1-3 with 2 Chron. 20.8-9.

22.　1 Chron. 5.27; 6.10; 9.10-34; 13.15-17; 21–26; 28–29; 2 Chron. 2–7; 23–24; 29–31; 34–35. In addition, there are short passages in chapters that deal mainly with politics and administration.

23.　See Peretz 1967: 73-74.

tradition around the one now preferred, with a view to transferring their theological weight; (3) creating a common syntax for the references to events from the past in the dependent clause.

In fact, not ignoring such subjects as the Exodus or the conquest of the land, but rather mentioning them alongside his new central tradition, serves to clarify their secondary nature. The establishment of the Temple as a house of prayer and sacrifice is now the preferred tradition.

3. *Texts in Chronicles that Omit the Exodus Tradition*

In several instances, (1) 1 Chron. 16.16-18; (2) 2 Chron. 3.1-2; (3) 2 Chron. 6.11; (4) 2 Chron. 6.39-40, Chronicles avoids even mentioning the Exodus, although it appears in its own sources.[24]

These examples too are concentrated around the Temple theme and it seems appropriate to cite them in this context. However, as will soon be shown, theological motives led to its omission in these specific places:

1. 1 Chron. 16.8-36 is a psalm the Chronicler attributes to David. While made up of passages from several other psalms,[25] it interestingly omits the references to the Exodus in Psalms 105 and 106[26] from the composite psalm in Chronicles.[27] It includes the whole first part of Psalm 105 containing details on God's covenant with the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: 'that he made with Abraham, swore to Isaac, and confirmed in a decree for Jacob, as an eternal Covenant' (Ps. 105.9-10 = 1 Chron. 16.16-17). The covenant is described as eternal: 'Be ever mindful of His covenant, the promise He gave for a thousand generations' (Ps. 105.8 = 1 Chron. 16.15). It is even the basis for the link between the people and their land (Ps. 105.11). Precisely the era of the Patriarchs and the covenant with them were found worthy of full consideration in the composite psalm in the book of Chronicles.

2. 2 Chron. 3.1-2 (compare with 1 Kgs 6.1) each cite a date that links building the Temple with an event in the past. The book of Kings links it to the Exodus: 'In the four hundred and eightieth year

24.   The list does not include cases where the Exodus is not mentioned for circumstantial reasons, and see Japhet 1989: 383 n. 104. Likewise I do not relate to the single and unclear tradition in 1 Chron. 7.21-24 dealing with the sons of Ephraim, which is difficult to connect with the tendency to conceal their presence in Egypt. See Rudolph 1955: 72-73 and the bibliography there.

25.   1 Chron. 16.8-22 / Ps. 105.1-15; 1 Chron. 16.23-33 / Ps. 96.1-13; 1 Chron. 16.34-35 / Ps. 106.47-48.

26.   Pss. 105.16-45; 106.7-33(34).

27.   It does not concern me whether the Chronicler composed the psalm or found it complete.

after the Israelites left the land of Egypt, in the month of Ziv—that is, the second month—in the fourth year of his reign over Israel, Solomon began to build the house of the Lord'. The reference in Chronicles is not to a time but to a place: 'Then Solomon began to build the House of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mt Moriah, where [the Lord] had appeared to his father David, at the place which David had designated, at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. He began to build on the second day of the second month of the fourth year of his reign'.[28] Replacing time with place meant a change in the historical link. Instead of the Exodus, two events from the tradition of the place are mentioned: one is explicit, the revelation of the angel to David on Ornan's threshing floor; and the other alludes to the binding of Isaac on Mt Moriah.[29] Once again the Chronicler prefers the connection to the Patriarchs and to David over the connection with the Exodus. The long period in the specific time reference in the book of Kings, four hundred and eighty years from the Exodus until the building of the Temple, appears to have been a problem for the Chronicler, and raises doubts as to other long periods that he fails to mention. Hence he preferred a local tradition alluding to the time of the Patriarchs.

3. 2 Chron 6.11 (compare with 1 Kgs 8.21) discusses the removal of the Ark to its permanent resting place. The dependent clause defining the Ark in the book of Kings notes that it symbolizes the Exodus covenant. The Chronicler omits that link and makes do with 'the Ark containing the Covenant that the Lord made with the Israelites'. The omission follows mention of the Exodus in v. 5, so it can hardly be maintained that the uniform system and method in the book is to avoid referring to that event. The author does not avoid the Exodus tradition as a designation of a past time, as in v. 5. In 1 Kgs 8.21, by contrast, the Exodus as a unique event, the background for the covenant between God and the people, having significant theological weight deriving from that unique covenant made in the past. Severing the Covenant from the Exodus and its theological weight therefore gives the Covenant a new more general significance and makes the present generation a party to it.

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28.   On correct suggestions to the verse, for instance adding 'the Lord' as the subject of the 'had appeared' (haplography), or omitting 'the second day' (dittography), see Curtis 1910: 325.

29.   For midrashic traditions that connect between the binding and the Temple site, see Josephus, *Ant.* 1.13.2 (226-27); 7.13.4 (333-34); *Jub.* 18.13; see also Rashi's commentary on Gen. 22.2, and Kasher 1934: 774-77, 906-908. Compare also with Loewenstamm 1968.

4.   2 Chron. 6.39-40 (compare 1 Kgs 8.49-53) is a short form of the Kings
     source. That conclusion derives from the very similar vocabulary in
     the two versions throughout the entire prayer and also from the
     close link between shortened Chronicles version to the full text in
     Kings.[30] It is hard to assume that the changes in Chronicles are not
     tendentious. Shortening the text allows the editor to omit the two
     references to the Exodus that do not accord with his outlook. The
     author of 1 Kgs 8.50-53 stresses that God's forgiveness is not solely
     the result of repentance (vv. 48-49), but of a historic link deter-
     mined at the Exodus from Egypt in God's choosing of the people:
     'grant them mercy...for they are Your very own people that You
     freed from Egypt... May You heed them when they call upon You.
     For You, O Lord God, have set them apart for Yourself from all the
     peoples of the earth...' (from vv. 50-53). According to the shortened
     Chronicles form, divine forgiveness depends solely on repentance,
     while Kings introduces an arbitrary element into the relationship
     between the people and God, compelling him to answer his people
     because of their historical tie. The choosing of Israel as his people
     and the Exodus as elements that God must take into account reduce
     the importance of the repentance previously described. In the
     shorter version in Chronicles, forgiveness is the direct and immedi-
     ate result of repentance. Thus one assumes that the Chronicler
     preferred to leave out elements that ran contrary to his principle of
     retribution, and of the critical role of repentance as part of it,[31]
     which I am now about to discuss.

In all four cases the Exodus tradition has been omitted in Chronicles but
not in its sources. All relate to the theme of bringing the Ark into its
appointed place. In the first two instances the author chose to replace the
omission with another ancient tradition, that of the Patriarchs. In the
other two places, where mentioning the Exodus had significant theological
weight, the writer preferred to bypass it. Hence one concludes that desire
to ignore the theological weight of the Exodus tradition guided the
Chronicler in these two editing projects.

4. *The Exodus Tradition and the Principle of Retribution*

Both the earlier and later scholars noted the special nature of the book of
Chronicles and its unique system of historical description.[32] History

30.   See Curtis 1910: 344-45; Rudolph 1955: 213.
31.   See Japhet 1989: 165-91.
32.   See Wellhausen 1957: 203-10; Curtis 1910: 9; von Rad 1930: 10-15; Rudolph 1955:
xiv, xix; Eichrodt 1961: 487; and many others.

unfolds, according to this system, in keeping with a strict principle of retribution. Every human sin leads to punishment and all desirable human conduct, like following the ways of the Lord or repentance for sin, gives a period of political reward. The Chronicler tries to apply his principles to all the events of history, and this system is only affirmed by the few exceptions to the rule.[33]

The Exodus is by its very nature a central historical event at the beginning of the nation's history. It is also impossible to describe, interpret or understand that event in terms of the retribution theory that goes against everything known from other historiographical texts. Examination of the link between the Exodus and slavery in Egypt shows that: 'It is the basis for all biblical historiography, which accordingly refrains throughout from presenting the Egyptian bondage in conformity with the conventional model, in which all suffering inflicted upon Israel is divine penalty for sin'.[34] In Loewenstamm's opinion this is no coincidence, but results from the significance in biblical historiography of the Exodus, a turning point in the relationship between God and the people: 'Only then did the Lord become Israel's God *de facto*—no longer merely aware of Israel's plight, He became a God acting directly in history, waging war on His people's behalf and revealing, at one and the same time, both His dominion over Nature and His supremacy over the gods of mighty Egypt'.[35] And just as the slavery in Egypt cannot be described in terms of retribution, it is hard to describe the Exodus in those terms. There is no answer in the central tradition of the book of Exodus[36] to questions as to by what grace did Israel's God bring deliver his people from slavery, did the people cry out to God or did they repent? The unequivocal reply from the texts is: 'the merits of the

33.   Rudolph (1955: xix) mentions two exceptions to the comprehensive conception of retribution: 1 Chron. 25.13 and 2 Chron. 32 (Sennacherib's campaign). By contrast, Japhet (1989: 154-55) argues that the Sennacherib campaign belong to the testing category that is also part of the retribution concept, and so is not exceptional. She points to another 'exception': 1 Chron. 7.21-22. As I see it, the importance of these exceptions should not be exaggerated. 1 Chron. 7.21-22 is included in the genealogies of the book's introduction, and it is not part of the historical description. In 2 Chron. 25.13, however, one discerns retribution, because the story of Amaziah's sin is attached to this punishment.

34.   Loewenstamm 1992: 24-25.

35.   Loewenstamm 1992: 29.

36.   The description of Israel crying to God is not mentioned in the precise phrasing of Exod. 2.23-24 (compare with Exod. 6.5). Thus the one-sided deliverance of God is highlighted. Loewenstamm (1992: 27) thinks, therefore, that at this stage God was not yet the Lord of Israel. Other texts, such as Deut. 26.7; Judg. 10.11; 1 Sam. 12.8, tell about people who cried out to God, highlighting his prompt response, and indicating a return to the worship of the Lord.

Fathers'.[37] The Exodus traditions describe an arbitrary and one-sided relationship between God and his people, ruled by 'merits of the Fathers'. The Exodus generation is passive in the relationship, privileged to experience all the signs and wonders not because it was worthy, but because it could draw on those ancient merits of its Fathers, and because God decided to make them available at precisely that time. God's intervention in the Exodus, then, bears witness to His might and to the grace and mercy he extends to his people. And at the same time, the Exodus and the wanderings in the wilderness show proof positive of the limited faith and the perpetual impatience of the people. Thus any attempt to apply the retribution principle to the Exodus runs entirely counter to the basic theological nature of that tradition.

Nonetheless, the Exodus episode creates some theological problems in a few isolated Bible texts:

In the Covenant between the Parts (Gen. 15) the narrator attempts to explain the duration of Egyptian slavery on moral grounds: 'And they shall return there in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete' (Gen. 15.16). Strangely, in this text moral criteria are applied regarding the Amorites and not the Israelites. Thus the duration of slavery was determined in terms of universal justice at the expense of justice that is particular and national, leaving unresolved a simple question: Why did God not find a better solution to the four-generation period? Instead of an answer comes a facile and compensatory solution: 'and in the end they shall go free with great wealth' (v. 14). The reader learns of the advantages of slavery, which brings benefits. Similar 'palliative' solutions in Exod. 11.2-3 and 12.35-36 also indicate theological quandaries, echoing as they do the results of examining these episodes from the perspective of retribution theory.

In his review of the nation's history in Ezekiel 20, the prophet dispenses with the stages before the enslavement in Egypt, beginning with the election of Israel and God making himself known to them in the land of Egypt (v. 5). According to Ezekiel, the Israelites had already sinned in Egypt and the Lord was unable to prevent it, but nonetheless he decided to free them and not destroy them. Such conduct does not accord with a retribution system, and Ezekiel explains it by God's concern for his good name: 'But I acted for the sake of My name, that it might not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they were. For it was before their eyes that I had made Myself known to Israel to bring them out of the land of Egypt' (v. 9). While Ezekiel's description may be interpreted as explaining the duration of the Egyptian slavery as punishment for the people's sins,

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37.　See Exod. 3.24; 6.3-5.

in no way does the prophet resolve the issue of why the seed of Jacob arrived in Egypt. Hence Ezekiel represents the accepted approach that at the time of the Exodus the Israelites were unworthy of God's mercy.[38] His innovation is in adding new data: sins that the Israelites committed in Egypt, even after God made himself known to them, and God's failure to return them to himself there.

There is even a passage where prophetic commentary defends the Israelites of the Exodus: 'I accounted to your favor the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride—How you followed me in the wilderness in a land not sown' (Jer. 2.2). According to the prophet Jeremiah the Israelites were worthy of deliverance because they showed unconditional loyalty, although only after the fact. According to this view the people's single instance of unique devotion at the time of the Exodus justifies God's special relationship with them: 'Israel was holy to the Lord … all who ate of it [Israel] were held guilty…' (v. 3). Nonetheless, it is hard to regard this unique text as a principled theological evaluation, for Jeremiah himself expresses another view in 7.24-25: '…they have gone backward, not forward, from the day your fathers left the land of Egypt until today…' It appears that the prophetic homilies teach us only of their flexible use of the Exodus motif.

Contrary to these few isolated texts, all other biblical descriptions of the Exodus reject the idea of examining it by retribution theory standards. From the outset the Exodus is shown as an extraordinary event not to be contemplated through the lens of retribution principles. It is all about God's greatness and his great love for his people, the purpose of the description being to exalt the Lord and his love for a people unworthy of it. In summary, then, in the Exodus story retribution is a superfluous element from the start, and perhaps even interferes with the establishing the relationship between God and his people.

5. *The Chronicler's Special Approach to the Exodus Tradition*

The arbitrary element, inexplicable by moral standards, is a difficulty to the historian, whose purpose is to weave every event into the fabric of the retribution principle. Actually, he has just two possibilities: (1) to report the events with corrections and 'improvements' of the historical sequence, which means in particularly difficult cases even adding events, and in less difficult ones adding his own commentary or introducing slight changes in the order or the course of occurrences; (2) to dispense with the

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38.   See Hoffman (1975: 483), who argues that: '…as a matter of fact what directs the development of history is not the consideration of reward and punishment…'

problematic element or to refer to it as little as possible, and even then to focus on aspects that reveal no difficulties.

All variations of both possibilities appear in the book of Chronicles.[39] In our case too the author could have gone the first way, namely, adding appropriate events. For instance, he could have told of the sin of Jacob's sons or of the Israelite repentance in Egypt. Yet he preferred the second option and there too did not ignore the difficulties entirely, preferring to restrict, to minimize and to observe events in a special way.

It seems to me that the canonization of the Exodus tradition kept the Chronicler from obliterating it or trying to distort it through additions, as he did with events from the time of the kings. When describing occurrences from Saul's time to the time of Cyrus, he felt free to employ varied and flexible methods, whereas when discussing the pre-monarchic era from the Patriarchs to the Judges—periods whose traditions were apparently already regarded as sacred[40]—he avoided free reworking of the material, perhaps in view of anticipated reactions to extreme innovations. Such reservations are implied in his descriptions of this time far past: reduction rather than omission, limitation and not distortion and change. He dares not omit the sacred tradition of the Exodus, but since he cannot relate to it as it appears in his sources, he chooses to employ a new, sophisticated commentary that may be characterized this way:

5.1. *Preference for the Tradition of Abraham*
The Chronicler prefers the Abrahamic to the Exodus tradition as the beginning of the link between God and His people.

The Abrahamic tradition enjoys relative prominence in the Chronicler's description and is depicted as the beginning of the historical link between God and his people. The Lord as God of the Fathers shows that the connection is both ancient and continuous.[41] This choice of a starting point other than the Exodus echoes even in the emphasis on Abraham's name in the genealogical lists (1 Chron. 1.27) and stands out in 1 Chron. 16.16; 2 Chron. 3.1-2, and 20.7. In all three texts the author stresses the connection of the present and the establishment of the Temple with the ancient

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39.   One example for each possibility will suffice: adding an event—Uzziah's leprosy (2 Chron. 26.16-21); inserting interpretation—the war in Baal Perazim (1 Chron. 14.10-12); changes in the description of an event—Sennacherib's siege (2 Chron. 32); omitting events—David's sin with Bathsheba and its results (2 Sam. 11–20); minimizing an event—the exile of Northern Israel (1 Chron. 5.25-26).

40.   The view of Mazar (1954: 606) is convincing: 'It seems that he had Moses' Torah as a whole'. This view contrasts with directions emphasizing that the Chronicler used only partial Priestly or Deuteronomistic sources. Compare with Willi 1972.

41.   Compare with Japhet 1989: 14-19 and the bibliography there.

time of the Patriarchs. On the day the Ark of the Covenant is brought to Jerusalem, David and the Levites give thanks to God and recall the everlasting covenant with Abraham on the strength of which the people received the land of Canaan (1 Chron. 16.15-18). Solomon's Temple was built on Mount Moriah, where the binding of Isaac took place (2 Chron. 3.1) and for the sake of Abraham's seed God drove out the inhabitants of the land, giving it forever to Israel, who built the Temple there (2 Chron. 20.7-9).

The Chronicler prefers the Abrahamic tradition to that of the Exodus because it can be integrated into the retribution system. Descriptions in the Torah show that the election of Abraham was not arbitrary. Abraham withstood trials.[42] Abraham is portrayed as a righteous man,[43] worthy of recompense. Thus the covenant with him coheres with the principles of compensation and retribution in the theology of the Chronicler. That relationship is evident in the careful wording of Jehoshaphat's prayer, where Abraham is described as a friend of God.[44] The land of Israel, then, was given 'to the descendants of Your friend Abraham forever' not on some arbitrary basis.[45] Moreover, the description emphasizes that when Israel settled in the land they built the Temple of God, and thus the mutual relations of compensation were maintained. This text highlights the direct connection between Abraham, who represents the beginning of the people's history, and the building of the Temple. Beyond any shadow of a doubt, the Abraham tradition was preferred to that of the Exodus. In both of the first two texts mentioned (1 Chron. 16.5-36; 2 Chron. 3.1-2) the first tradition of Abraham displaced the second one of the Exodus in the earlier sources. One can summarize and say that the preference is linked to the place of the retribution system as a selective principle in the course of history in Chronicles.

The Chronicler did not ignore the sacred traditions of the past, but quite legitimately and in a sophisticated manner he created new proportions. While to ignore the Exodus tradition entirely would have raised opposition and would obviously have been difficult for him as well, preferring the

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42.   Gen. 22.1, 16-18. See also *The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* ch. 33 and Kasher 1931: 542 and especially n. 4 there.

43.   Gen. 15.6; 18.19; 26.5. See also Polak 1978, who emphasizes that even Gen. 15.8 does not destroy the trust of Abraham and his confidence in the Lord. This issue is central to the chapter both from the literary and thematic points of view.

44.   See Japhet 1989: 95-96 and especially nn. 276-77. She accepts Willi's argument (1972: 177) regarding the connection between 2 Chron. 20.7 and Isa. 48.8 and prefers here the Masoretic version to that of the Septuagint.

45.   According to the phrasing of 2 Chron. 20.7, dispossessing the inhabitants of the land was a reward of the Lord to Abraham who loved him.

sacred tradition of the Patriarchs is not so serious an injury to accepted values. One recalls that the tradition of the Patriarchs is closely linked to the Exodus, since their merits were the source of the people's deliverance.

5.2. *Formulating the Temple Tradition as Central to the Nation's History*
Examination of the structure and content of the book of Chronicles reveals that the central tradition to which a comprehensive block of chapters is devoted,[46] towards which the first part of the book[47] progresses, and which occupy the book's second part[48] and the conclusion[49]—is the tradition of the Temple. It may even be put this way: the book of Chronicles is the history of the Temple, and since that is bound up with the house of David and deals with the kings of that dynasty, the interest and discussion in Chronicles is devoted mainly to the kings who established the status of the Temple. The author's detailed attention to the Temple and its functionaries, to the reforms and purifications it underwent, and his own hopes for its renewal, all indicate the centrality of the Temple in the Chronicler's world view.[50]

So that the Temple tradition will acquire central status, the Chronicler is not content with emphasizing its quantitative aspect: he is careful to stress its quality as well. A comparison of Chronicles with its sources discloses meticulous and tendentious planning to enhance the Temple tradition by two means:

5.2.1. *Close attention to retribution criteria in the formation of the Temple tradition.* Since the Temple tradition must live up to the standards of

46.   See n. 14 above.
47.   Examination of 1 Chron. 1–9 indicates that the three conditions for the establishment of the Temple—David's descendents, the Levites and Jerusalem—have a central place in these genealogical chapters. See, for instance, 1 Chron. 5.36; 6.16-17; 9.2-34. The comparison to Second Samuel reveals changes in the sequence: for example, the insertion of David's wars with the Philistines after transferring the Ark (compare 2 Sam. 5–6 with 1 Chron. 13–14, and see Curtis 1910: 204). These all show that the beginning of the book of Chronicles is the background for the central agenda of erecting the Temple.
48.   On the place of the Temple as a selective principle in the second part of the book one learns from comparison with the book of Kings. See Japhet 1989: 223-25.
49.   2 Chron. 36.23 reads: '...and [He] has charged me with building Him a House in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Any one of you of all His people, the Lord his God be with him and let him go up.' This ending, similar to the genealogies in the opening section (1 Chron. 1–9), appears to be part of the original plan of the book. The scope of the present chapter precludes discussion of that issue, which is included in other commentaries and research studies.
50.   Thus de Wette 1806: 102; Wellhausen 1957: 190-91; Curtis 1910: 7; von Rad 1953: 119 and more. See also Japhet 1989: 222-25.

retribution principles, the Chronicler had to describe the builder of the Temple as flawless and exemplary. Accordingly he omitted all the dubious features that could impair the image of Solomon and his reign. Solomon, not David, is the perfect hero of the book of Chronicles. The Temple was built only by one worthy to build it. Therefore the postponement of its building from David's time to Solomon's was not justified by external circumstances in Chronicles as it was in Kings: 'You know that my father David could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of his enemies that encompassed him, until the Lord has placed them under the soles of his feet' (1 Kgs 5.17). The Chronicler scrutinizes that reasoning in the light of retribution and concludes that David had been unworthy of building the Temple. Attributing such faults to David emphasizes Solomon's perfection. That Chronicles was prepared to report a few of David's sins is evident too from his relation to the Temple (note the episode of the population census in 1 Chron. 21; compare with 2 Sam. 24). The Chronicler is interested in the etiological story of Araunah's threshing floor because it describes the choosing of the site of the Temple. Similarly, the episode of bringing the Ark to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 13; 15.1-16, 28, and compare with 2 Sam. 6). The God of Chronicles is depicted as one who holds closely to stern criteria of retribution, and hence he punishes those responsible for transporting the Ark without following the laws of the Torah—Uzzah and David—and so the Chronicler succeeds in explaining why the founder of the chosen dynasty did not build the Temple. Solomon in the Chronicles description is the fulfillment of the retribution principle in his character, in his works and in the peaceful political situation that marked his reign. He was worthy of the Temple and the Temple was worthy of him.

5.2.2. Transferring motifs from the broad accepted Exodus tradition to that of the Temple. To reinforce the Temple tradition, the Chronicler attaches to it several motifs from the earlier sacred Exodus narrative—constructing and erecting the Tabernacle,[51] the assembly at Mount Sinai,[52] the concept of chosenness[53] and fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant renewed with the Exodus.[54] These have now all become the permanent spiritual possessions

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51.   Compare Exod. 40.34-35 with 1 Kgs 8.11, and see Mosis 1973: 130, 151.

52.   See Japhet 1989: 73-74.

53.   Von Rad (1953: 64) mentions the absence from Chronicles of the Israelite nation as the chosen people. The 'chosen' of Chronicles are Jerusalem and the Temple, the house of David and the Levites. For a detailed discussion of this dramatic change, see Japhet 1989: 88-96.

54.   The covenant is fulfilled in the Temple dedication ceremony and the transfer of the Ark to its permanent abode: 1 Chron. 16.15-16; 2 Chron. 6.11; 20.7-8.

of the new Temple tradition according to the view of the book of Chronicles. The dedication of the Temple completes a process begun with the Covenant of Patriarchal times, renewed with the Exodus from Egypt with the addition of the Ark, and concluded with the transfer of the Ark to its permanent abode. Therefore the Exodus is mentioned in the new Temple tradition just five times, and only then as a time reference. The reader learns that what began with the Exodus has only now reached full completion with building the Temple, transferring the Ark to it, and its dedication. Presenting the Temple tradition as a conclusive stage, the climax of processes, highlights at the same time the limited nature of the earlier stages, and especially the intermediate stage of the Exodus. Gracing the Temple with the characters and symbols of the wilderness Tabernacle, which means transferring the chosenness theme from all Israel to David's line, to Jerusalem, and to the Levites and the Temple, and painting the dedication ceremony in the glorious hues of the assembly at Sinai, when taken all together constitute a literary-polemic device designed to create a new central tradition—the Temple tradition! This tradition does not belong to the veiled past, and its advantage lies in its daily and hourly reality in the life of the present. The Temple, according to Chronicles, is the very heart of Israelite life in the Land of Israel. It is the existing, continuous and tangible link between the people and their God, as expressed in Jehoshaphat's prayer and the events that followed: 'They settled in it and in it built for You a House for Your name. They said, "should misfortune befall us—the punishing sword, pestilence, or famine, we shall stand before this House and before You—for Your name is in this House— and we shall cry out to you in our distress, and You will listen and deliver us"' (2 Chron. 20.8-9).

6. *Conclusion*

Preference for the Abrahamic tradition over that of the Exodus, and preference of the Temple tradition over both, relegated the Exodus tradition to a limited and secondary status in the nation's history according to Chronicles. Besides, transferring the theological weight of the Exodus tradition to that of the Temple emptied the former of its spiritual content, leaving it a mere temporal reference point in the past rather than a central event in the nation's life. Henceforth the developed and central Exodus tradition, which does not meet the stern criteria of retribution, was no longer an obstacle to formulating history in the spirit of the book of Chronicles. Thus its author could draw a continuous and consistent picture of God's working in history not within a deterministic and arbitrary system, but as a direct and immediate response to the conduct of the people and of their king.

Epilogue

Today we relate to the library of ancient Israel as a single book along a linear continuum of the Pentateuch, the Prophets and the Writings, ending with the book of Chronicles and its hope of redemption. The final verses of Chronicles and of the entire canon return the reader to the opening of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, to the declaration of Cyrus and the opportunity it opened for the return to Zion. Scholars debate whether this was the original conclusion of Chronicles or an editing endeavor designed to bring about a positive end—as, for example, in the books of Amos or Job. To me, it seems that the specific editorial decision to conclude the entire canon with Chronicles and not with Ezra and Nehemiah led to this development. We thus have an unequivocal answer and a conclusion quite different from that of the Deuteronomistic history, describing as it does the authorization to rebuild the Temple and indicating the end of the Exile. Moreover, it shows that one must never lose hope. In the spirit of Isaiah, 'Truly the Lord has comforted Zion, Comforting all her ruins; He has made her wilderness like Eden, Her desert like the garden of the Lord. Gladness and joy shall abide there, Thanksgiving and the sound of music' (51.3).

The biblical canon, following editorial activities opens, with the creation of the Sabbath and concludes with the renewal of Jerusalem. The editors of the Torah thus determined that it should begin with the Creation Story whose climax is the Sabbath, an incontrovertible sign of Jewish identity that helped those expelled from Judah, even under exilic conditions, to live in a time frame of their own. The editors responsible for concluding the canon decided to end it with the declaration of Cyrus that represents the renewal of national life and calls upon the people of Israel to return to their land. A canonical circle is therefore created, one preserving Jewish identity and the emerging Israelite identity. No wonder, then, that this editing outcome made the Bible a seminal and formative book for all those who hold dear the idea of a national home for the Jewish people.

All honor to the editing enterprise!

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INDEX OF REFERENCES

INDEX OF AUTHORS