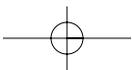
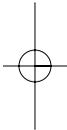
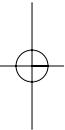


TYNDALE OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES

VOLUME 6

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JOSHUA



TYNDALE OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES

VOLUME 6

GENERAL EDITOR: DONALD J. WISEMAN

JOSHUA

AN INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY

RICHARD S. HESS



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World Wide Web: www.ivpress.com
Email: email@ivpress.com

Inter-Varsity Press, England
Norton Street, Nottingham NG7 3HR, England
Website: www.ivpbooks.com
Email: ivp@ivpbooks.com

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First published 1996
Printed in this format 2008

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USA ISBN 978-0-8308-4206-3
UK ISBN 978-1-84474-261-5

Set in Garamond 11/13pt
Typeset in Great Britain by Avocet Typeset, Chilton, Aylesbury, Bucks

Printed and bound in the United States of America ∞



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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hess, Richard S.
Joshua : an introduction and commentary / Richard S. Hess.
p. cm. — (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries; v. 6)
Originally published: 1996.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 978-0-8308-4206-3 (pbk.: alk. paper)
1. Bible. O.T. Joshua—Commentaries. I. Title.
BS1295.53.H47 2008
222'.207—dc22
2008031514

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

P	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
Y	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10		

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GENERAL PREFACE

The aim of this series of Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, as it was in the companion volumes on the New Testament, is to provide the student of the Bible with a handy, up-to-date commentary on each book, with the primary emphasis on exegesis. Major critical questions are discussed in the introductions and additional notes, while undue technicalities have been avoided.

In this series individual authors are, of course, free to make their own distinct contributions and express their own point of view on all debated issues. Within the necessary limits of space they frequently draw attention to interpretations which they themselves do not hold but which represent the stated conclusions of sincere fellow Christians.

Dr Richard Hess has brought his special knowledge of the languages, archaeology and culture of the Ancient Near East to the elucidation of the book of Joshua. In doing this he faces problems which have concerned many thoughtful readers. These include Israel's entry into the Promised Land, the concept of 'holy war', the total ban on its Canaanite opponents, the fall of Jericho and the role of Rahab. At the same time he unhesitatingly makes the application of the book relevant to today's Christian church and reader.

In the Old Testament in particular no single English translation is adequate to reflect the original text. The version on which this commentary is based is the New International Version, but other translations are frequently referred to as well, and on occasion the author supplies his own. Where necessary, words are transliterated

in order to help the reader who is unfamiliar with Hebrew to identify the precise word under discussion. It is assumed throughout that the reader will have ready access to one, or more, reliable renderings of the Bible in English.

Interest in the meaning and message of the Old Testament continues undiminished, and it is hoped that this series will thus further the systematic study of the revelation of God and his will and ways as seen in these records. It is the prayer of the editor and publisher, as of the authors, that these books will help many to understand, and to respond to, the Word of God today.

D. J. Wiseman

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The stories of Joshua are among the most exciting in the Bible. Who has not thrilled to the drama of the march around Jericho and the collapse of the wall? Or who has not pictured in the mind the drama of the battle of the 'longest day', when the sun stood in its place and Joshua fought the kings of the south? Mixed in with these colourful accounts are the accounts of the founding of a nation in its land, the covenant ceremonies with all Israel meeting before Joshua and renewing their commitment to God, and the detailed allocations of land, that great visible symbol of the blessing of God to the chosen people. This is the book of Joshua and today more than ever its message bears hearing.

The exciting results of archaeology have provided the Bible reader with a sharper and more detailed view of the world of early Israel than was available even a few years ago. There are the great sites of generations of archaeological exploration: Jericho, Lachish and Hazor, and their insights and challenges to the interpretation of the period. There are analyses that probe into the structure and form of key textual sources from outside the Bible: the Merneptah stele and its first mention of 'Israel', the Amarna texts and their picture of the political world of Canaan, and the newly discovered cuneiform texts from Hazor, Hebron and elsewhere that add insights to the reader's understanding

of the biblical text. And then there is the important emergence of social archaeology and, with it, the site surveys of the past few decades. For the first time there is available a more complete understanding of how people lived, of where they lived and of how many of them actually settled in the hill country and elsewhere. With this new evidence to draw upon, the book of Joshua can be rooted in the early Israelite world in a more accurate and detailed manner than was ever possible before.

In addition, the impact of literary approaches to the Bible in general and to Joshua in particular has meant new understandings of old problems. Questions such as 'How many times does Israel actually cross the Jordan?' and with it the inevitable 'How many sources make up this account?' can be approached in more satisfying ways than by assuming incompetent writers in order to answer them.

More important than all these opportunities, however, is the message that this book contains for the Christian. Here is encouragement to faith in God in the midst of impossible odds, warning of the terrible consequences of sin upon family and community, and the encouragement to receive and accept God's new covenant in Christ and to appropriate its blessings in the same way that the Israelites of Joshua dedicated themselves to the occupation and allocation of the Promised Land.

I am grateful to the principal and staff of Glasgow Bible College for their support during the preparation of this study, and especially to the students with whom I was able to discuss many of the ideas found here. Others have also contributed thoughts and ideas to this small commentary, and so it is a privilege to thank especially the following people: Revd David Kingdon for his suggestions and comments on the initial drafts of the manuscript; Dr K. Lawson Younger, Jr, for his careful reading of much of the work and his important insights; and Professor Donald Wiseman who continued to provide helpful suggestions throughout the various phases of this manuscript. I would also like to thank Dr Graeme Auld for bibliographic suggestions. Professor Alan Millard and Dr Nicolai Winther-Nielsen kindly shared with me portions of their unpublished manuscripts. The work is dedicated to Jean who has helped me to see beyond pages and screens of text to a life lived in faithfulness.

Richard S. Hess

Roehampton Institute London, 1995

CHIEF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Analecta Biblica.
ABD	D. N. Freedman et al. (eds.), <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , 6 vols. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1992).
Aharoni, <i>Land</i>	Y. Aharoni, <i>The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography</i> , reviser and tr. A. F. Rainey (Westminster: Philadelphia, 1979).
ANEP	J. B. Pritchard (ed.), <i>The Ancient Near East in Pictures</i> (Princeton University Press, ² 1969).
ANET	J. B. Pritchard (ed.), <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament</i> (Princeton University Press, ³ 1969).
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament.
ASOR	American Schools of Oriental Research.
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i> .
Barthélemy	D. Barthélemy, <i>Critique textuelle de l'ancien testament. 1. Josué, Juges, Ruth, Samuel, Rois, Chroniques, Esdras, Néhémie, Esthèr</i> , OBO 50/ 1 (Fribourg Suisse: Editions Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982).
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i> .
BAT	A. Biran and J. Aviram (eds.), <i>Biblical Archaeology Today, 1990. Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology. Jerusalem</i> ,

- June–July 1990* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993).
- BETL Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium.
- Bib* *Biblica*.
- Blaikie W. G. Blaikie, *The Book of Joshua* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1908).
- Boling and Wright R. G. Boling and G. E. Wright, *Joshua. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 6 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1982).
- BR* *Bible Review*.
- Butler T. C. Butler, *Joshua*, WBC 7 (Waco: Word, 1988).
- BZ* *Biblische Zeitschrift*.
- BZAW Beiheft sur ZAW.
- CAD* E. Reiner *et al.* (eds.), *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* (Chicago: The Oriental Institute; Glückstadt: J.J. Augustin, 1956–).
- CBOTS Coniectanea Biblica Old Testament Series.
- CBQ* *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*.
- ch. chapter.
- Das Land* G. Strecker (ed.), *Das Land Israel in biblischer Zeit. Jerusalem-Symposium 1981 der Hebräischen Universität und der Georg-August-Universität*, Göttinger Theologische Arbeiten 25 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983).
- Fritz V. Fritz, *Das Buch Josua*, Handbuch zum Alten Testament 1/7 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994).
- FTH* A. R. Millard, J. K. Hoffmeier and D. W. Baker (eds.), *Faith, Tradition, History: Old Testament Historiography in Its Near Eastern Context* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994).
- Garstang J. Garstang, *The Foundations of Biblical History: Joshua, Judges* (London: Constable, 1931).
- Gottwald N. K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel 1250–1050 BCE* (London: SCM, 1980).
- Gray J. Gray, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*, New Century Bible

- Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1986).
- Hamlin E. J. Hamlin, *Joshua. Inheriting the Land*, International Theological Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1983).
- HAR* *Hebrew Annual Review*.
- Hawk L. D. Hawk, *Every Promise Fulfilled. Contesting Plots in Joshua*, Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox, 1991).
- Heb. Hebrew.
- Hertzberg H. W. Hertzberg, *Die Bücher Josua, Richter, Ruth*, Das Alte Testament Deutsch 9 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973).
- HHI* H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld (eds.), *History, Historiography and Interpretation. Studies in Biblical and Cuneiform Literatures* (Jerusalem: Magnes; Leiden: Brill, 1983).
- HSM Harvard Semitic Monographs.
- HTR* *Harvard Theological Review*.
- IDB* G. Buttrick et al. (eds.), *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962).
- IES Israel Exploration Society.
- IEJ* *Israel Exploration Journal*.
- IOS* *Israel Oriental Studies*.
- JBL* *Journal of Biblical Literature*.
- JPOS* *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society*.
- JSOT* *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*.
- KAI* H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1973–1979).
- Kallai Z. Kallai, *Historical Geography of the Bible: The Tribal Territories of Israel* (Jerusalem: Magnes; Leiden: Brill, 1986).
- Keil and Delitzsch C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes II. Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel*, tr. J. Martin (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, n.d.).
- Kh. Khirbet (Hirbet).

- Koopmans, W. T. Koopmans, *Joshua 24 as Poetic Narrative*, JSOT Supplement 93 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990).
- Koorevaar H. J. Koorevaar, *De Opbouw van het Boek Jozua* (Heverlee: Centrum voor Bijbelse Vorming België, 1990).
- KS A. Alt, *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1953).
- LXX Septuagint (pre-Christian Greek version of the Old Testament).
- LXX A Septuagint Codex Alexandrinus.
- LXX B Septuagint Codex Vaticanus.
- Madvid D. H. Madvid, *Joshua*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary 3 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1992).
- Mazar B. Mazar, *The Early Biblical Period. Historical Essays*, eds. S. Ahituv and B. A. Levine (Jerusalem: IES, 1986).
- Mitchell G. Mitchell, *Together in the Land. A Reading of the Book of Joshua*, JSOT Supplement 134 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).
- Moab A. Dearman (ed.), *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, Archaeology and Biblical Studies 2 (Adanta: Scholars Press, 1989).
- MT Massoretic Text (the standard Hebrew text of the Old Testament).
- Na'aman, Borders N. Na'aman, *Borders and Districts in Biblical Historiography*, Jerusalem Biblical Studies 4 (Jerusalem: Simor, 1986).
- NIV New International Version, 1984.
- NJPS New Jewish Publication Society, 1978.
- Noth M. Noth, *Das Buch Josua*, Handbuch zur Alten Testament, 1/7 (Tübingen: Universitätsverlag, 1953).
- NRSV New Revised Standard Version, 1989.
- OBO Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis.
- Ottosson M. Ottosson, *Josuboken: En programskrift for davidisk restauration*, Acta Universitatis upsaliensis, Studia biblica pusaliensia 1 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1991).

- OTS *Oudtestamentische Studien.*
 PEQ *Palestine Exploration Quarterly.*
 Polzin R. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist. A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History: Part One. Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).
 POTT D. J. Wiseman (ed.). *Peoples of Old Testament Times* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973).
 Power M. T. Larsen (ed.), *Power and Propaganda. A Symposium on Ancient Empires, MESOPOTAMIA*, Copenhagen Studies in Assyriology 7 (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1979).
 RB *Revue Biblique.*
 RSV Revised Standard Version, 1952.
 SBLSCSS Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series.
 Schäfer-Lichtenberger C. Schäfer-Lichtenberger, *Josu und Salomo. Eine Studie zu Autorität und Legitimität des Nachfolgers im Alten Testament*, VT Supplement 58 (Leiden: Brill, 1995).
 SJOT *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament.*
 Soggin J. A. Soggin, *Joshua. A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972).
 Steuernagel C. Steuernagel, *Deuteronomium und Josua*, Hand Kommentar zum Alten Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, ²1923).
 Svensson J. Svensson, *Towns and Toponyms in the Old Testament with Special Emphasis on Joshua 14–21*, CBOTS 38 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1994).
 SWBA Social World of Biblical Antiquity.
 T Tell (Tel).
 TDOT G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1974–).
 TOTC Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries.
 TynB *Tyndale Bulletin.*
 UF *Ugarit Forschungen*

- Ugarit and the Bible* G. Brooke, A. Curtis and J. Healey (eds.), *Ugarit and the Bible: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Ugarit and the Bible. Manchester, September 1992*, Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur Band 11 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1994).
- v./vv. verse/verses.
- VT* *Vetus Testamentum*.
- WBC Word Biblical Commentary.
- Weinfeld, M. Weinfeld, *The Promise of the Land. The Inheritance of the Land of Canaan by the Israelites*, The Taubman Lectures in Jewish Studies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
- Winther-Nielsen N. Winther-Nielsen, *A Functional Discourse Grammar of Joshua. A Computer-Assisted Rhetorical Structure Analysis*, CBOTS 40 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995).
- World of Ancient Israel* R. E. Clements (ed.), *The World of Ancient Israel. Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- Woudstra M. H. Woudstra, *The Book of Joshua*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1981).
- WTJ* *Westminster Theological Journal*.
- Younger K. L. Younger, Jr, *Ancient Conquest Accounts. A Study in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical History Writing*, JSOT Supplement 98 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990).
- ZA* *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*.
- ZAW* *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*.
- ZDPV* *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*.

INTRODUCTION

Title and text

The title of the book is the same as its major human character, Joshua. The name 'Joshua' is composed of two parts. The first part is a shortened form of the divine name 'LORD', (Heb. *yhwh*). The second part is the Hebrew word for 'salvation'. Thus the name means 'the Lord is salvation'.¹ Names made of the word for 'LORD' are common in Israel for all of its later history. However, at the beginning of Israel's history these names are fewer. As might be expected (see Exod. 6:3), the new awareness of Israel's God and his salvation led later generations to name their children in ways that confessed the power and love of their God. But in the period of

1. J. D. Fowler, *Theophoric Personal Names in Ancient Hebrew. A Comparative Study*, JSOT Supplement 49 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), pp. 114–115. The Greek transliteration of this name is identical to 'Jesus' in the New Testament.

Moses this practice was rare.² The name describes a special role that Moses wished Joshua to have when he renamed him in Numbers 13:16. Joshua's earlier name, Hoshea, simply means 'he has saved'. In the name Hoshea, the person or god who saves is not made clear. Moses specified the LORD as the source of salvation by renaming Joshua.

The book of Joshua in the Massoretic Text (MT) of the Hebrew Bible, as preserved in Codex Aleppo and Codex Leningrad, is the primary text used in this commentary. These codices date from 925 and 1008 AD.³ They represent a form of the Hebrew text that agrees for the most part with other Hebrew manuscripts and with most ancient versions. There are two important groups of ancient texts that differ from this tradition: the Greek translation of Joshua preserved in the Septuagint (LXX) and the Dead Sea Scroll fragments from Cave 4 at Qumran, 4Q Jos^A and 4Q Jos^B.⁴

Textual criticism of the LXX of Joshua owes a great deal to Margolis.⁵ Further study has confirmed many of his restorations of the Old Greek. However, it has called into question earlier conclusions that the translator worked with a Hebrew text identical to the MT.⁶ The

-
2. J. C. de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism. The Roots of Israelite Monotheism*, BETL 91 (Leuven: University Press and Peeters, 1990), pp. 13–34. De Moor identifies only one personal name in the Bible from the time of Moses (p. 33).
 3. E. R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism. A Practical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), pp. 56–57.
 4. E. Tov, 'The Growth of the Book of Joshua in the Light of the Evidence of the LXX Translation', *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, XXXI. *Studies in the Bible* 1986 (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1986), p. 321.
 5. M. L. Margolis (ed.), *The Book of Joshua in Greek* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1931); idem, *The Book of Joshua in Greek. Part V: Joshua 19:39–24:33* (Philadelphia: Annenberg Research Institute, 1992). The restoration of the Old Greek translation relies upon Codex Vaticanus and upon the readings from Theodotion's translation in Origen's Hexapla.
 6. See, among others, L. J. Greenspoon, *Textual Studies in the Book of Joshua*, HSM 28 (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1983).

LXX preserves a shorter text of Joshua than does the MT and, since many textual critics view longer texts as later, several scholars have proposed that the LXX preserves a more original text.⁷ The LXX and the MT preserve two separate editions of the text of Joshua.⁸ The differences between the two editions are minor. Textual critics identify secondary elements in both texts.

One should not assume the priority of one text over the other in any particular instance. For example, in Joshua 7, 'Achan' in the MT is replaced by the name 'Achar' in the LXX. Achar appears as Achan's name in 1 Chronicles 2:7 in both versions. However, Achan is the original reading in Joshua. This is because Achan occurs as a personal name elsewhere in the Ancient Near East but the root carries no meaning in Hebrew; Achar, however, is a wordplay on the Valley of Achor (see comments on Joshua 7, pp. 170–171) and becomes a 'nickname' for Achan in 1 Chronicles 2:7. Thus, while the development from Achan to Achar is easily explained by the Bible's tendency to nickname, a shift from Achar to Achan is anomalous. Nor is it likely that Achar is a scribal error for Achan, since the name occurs more than once in Joshua 7. In this instance, at least, the MT preserves a more original reading.⁹

Nevertheless, the LXX preserves early readings and interpretations of the biblical text. For this reason some of the more important additions (e.g. the one at the end of ch. 24) are included at their appropriate places in the commentary.

-
7. A. G. Auld, *Studies in Joshua: Text and Literary Relations* (Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Edinburgh, 1976); idem, 'Cities of Refuge in Israelite Tradition', *JOT*, 10, 1978, pp. 26–40; idem, 'Textual and Literary Studies in the Book of Joshua', *ZAW*, 90, 1978, pp. 412–417; idem, 'The Levitical Cities: Text and History', *ZAW*, 91, 1979, pp. 194–206; A. Rofé, 'The End of the Book of Joshua in the Septuagint', *Henoah*, 4, 1982, pp. 17–35; idem, 'Joshua 20: Historico-literary Criticism Illustrated' in J. H. Tigay (ed.), *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 131–147.
 8. E. Tov, 'The Growth of the Book of Joshua in the Light of the Evidence of the LXX Translation', pp. 321–339.
 9. R. S. Hess, 'Achan and Achor: Names and Wordplay in Joshua 7', *HAR*, 14, 1994, pp. 89–98.

Fragments from two scrolls at Qumran contain the text of Joshua.¹⁰ They may be dated to c. 100 BC. Greenspoon's analysis of a selection of readings from both scrolls led him to several conclusions, two of which are relevant here.

(1) This material shows a wide acquaintance with distinctive readings preserved in the MT, usually in the direction of full texts judged to be secondary expansions. (2) The scribe(s) responsible for these scrolls were not reluctant to incorporate material of their own creation, material I judge to be 'in the spirit' of the MT.¹¹

A similar conclusion is reached by Tov in his analysis of 4QJos^B.¹² With regard to the relation of the Qumran texts to the LXX, Greenspoon concludes: 'In the absence of any (many?) 4Q-LXX agreements in the more significant area of secondary readings, it is not necessary to posit any acquaintance on the part of these scribes with the distinctive features of the LXX tradition.'¹³

The most significant Dead Sea Scroll variant is found in 4QJos^A. Ulrich's publication of this text indicates that fragments contain the following verses and additional non-biblical text (= X) in this order: 8:34-35; X; 5:2-7; 6:5-10; 7:12-17; 8:3-14, (18[?]); 10:2-5, 8-11.¹⁴

-
10. L. J. Greenspoon, 'The Qumran Fragments of Joshua: Which Puzzle Are They Part of and Where Do They Fit?' in G. J. Brooke and B. Lindars (eds.), *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings. Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings* (Manchester, 1990), SBLSCSS 33 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), pp. 159-204; E. Tov, '4QJosh^B', in Z. J. Kapera (ed.), *Intertestamental Essays in Honour of Józef Tadeusz Milič* (Cracow: Enigma, 1992), pp. 205-212.
 11. L. J. Greenspoon, 'The Qumran Fragments of Joshua: Which Puzzle Are They Part of and Where Do They Fit?', pp. 174-175.
 12. E. Tov, '4QJosh^B', p. 212.
 13. L. J. Greenspoon, 'The Qumran Fragments of Joshua: Which Puzzle Are They Part of and Where Do They Fit?', p. 175.
 14. E. Ulrich, '4QJoshua^A and Joshua's First Altar in the Promised Land' in G. J. Brooke and F. Garcia Martínez (eds.), *New Qumran Texts and Studies*:

Joshua 8:34–35, the account of the building of the altar on Mount Ebal, is out of its Massoretic sequence in this text. It occurs immediately after the crossing of the Jordan River. In the Septuagint, 8:30–35 follows 9:1, a text similar to 5:1. This variation leads Rofé to see the presence of several different recensions or editions of the text.¹⁵ Auld argues that this demonstrates that 8:30–35 is a late text inserted by different editors into different places in the text.¹⁶ However, the fragmentary nature of this text and the difficulty of assigning any of the X material that follows to a biblical text in Joshua or elsewhere suggest that caution is necessary regarding even the nature of the Qumran document. Could this be a midrashic style of text or a ‘parabiblical’ text, containing a collection of various biblical quotations along with additional notes and explanations?

The person of Joshua

(a) *The Pentateuch*

Joshua is mentioned twenty-seven times in the Pentateuch.¹⁷ He is introduced in the account of the war with the Amalekites (Exod. 17:8–13) as a warrior who fights on behalf of Moses and who leads Israel to victory. In fact, this is Israel’s first war after the exodus from Egypt. Joshua appears in what will become a characteristic role as general of the armies with an authority approved by Moses and is

Proceedings of the First Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Paris 1992. Studies in Texts from the Desert of Judea 15 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 89–104.

15. A. Rofé, ‘The Editing of the Book of Joshua in the Light of 4Q Josh^{A7}’ in G.J. Brooke and F. García Martínez (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 73–80.
16. A. Graeme Auld, ‘Reading Joshua after Kings’ in J. Davies, G. Harvey and W. G. E. Watson (eds.), *Words Remembered, Texts Renewed: Essays in Honour of John F. A. Sawyer, JSOT Supplement 195* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1995), pp. 167–181.
17. These include: Exod. 17:9, 10, 13, 14; 24:13; 32:17; 33:11; Num. 11:28; 13:16; 14:6, 30, 38; 26:65; 27:18, 22; 32:12, 28; 34:17; Deut. 1:38; 3:21, 28; 31:3, 7, 14 (twice), 23; 34:9.

mentioned without introduction or epithet.¹⁸ He personifies the struggle as he alone is mentioned as selecting the army and as fighting and overcoming the enemy. Israel is mentioned as an army once (v. 11). In Exodus 24:13, Moses ascends the mountain of God with Joshua, who is designated ‘his assistant’ (Heb. *měšsārēto*)¹⁹ and who first speaks with him of the noise in the camp when Moses returns from the summit (32:17). He is kept separate from Israel’s sin with the golden calf.²⁰ Joshua appears to have had a place at the tent of meeting. In 33:11, he is described as ‘the son of Nun’ and as a ‘youth’ (Heb. *na’ar*; perhaps a better translation would be ‘squire’), as he prepares to succeed Moses.

Joshua does not appear again until Numbers 11:28 where he protests against the prophesying of Israelites not selected by Moses. As if to reintroduce him, he is once again described as ‘son of Nun’ and ‘Moses’ aide since youth’. Moses rejects the protest. Despite his closeness to Moses and his earlier presence on the holy mountain, Joshua still has much to learn before he will assume the leadership.

When the spies are sent to explore the land of Canaan, we learn for the first time that Moses renamed Hoshea from the tribe of Ephraim as Joshua (Num. 13:16; also in Deut. 32:44). Moses’ act of renaming may be compared with God’s actions in renaming the patriarchs Abram and Jacob. In such cases, a quality of the person’s character or future role is discerned. Is this a confession of a special act of God’s salvation of Joshua or

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18. Schäfer-Lichtenberger, p. 112, suggests that this attests to the importance of Joshua and his similarity to Moses, who is also introduced without a father’s name. Schäfer-Lichtenberger emphasizes the twin roles of Joshua as under authority to his (eventual) predecessor, Moses, and as acting as an independent military leader. These twin roles will reappear in the first chapter of Joshua.
19. This is a legally free person who nevertheless functions in a relationship of service to another. See Schäfer-Lichtenberger, p. 121.
20. Schäfer-Lichtenberger, p. 124, who also observes the correspondence between Joshua’s distance from Israel and his closeness to the holy things of God (p. 130).

a desire by Moses to affirm the salvation that the LORD gives to Israel?²¹

When only Joshua and Caleb provide a positive evaluation of Israel's ability to conquer Canaan, these two alone are spared the plague that puts to death the other spies and they alone of that generation are promised entrance to the land of Canaan (Num. 14:6, 30, 38). Joshua is commissioned to succeed Moses in Numbers 27:18–23.²² There he is referred to as someone in whom is the spirit. The public commissioning involves Moses' laying of his hands upon Joshua and commissioning him (Heb. *wayšawwēhū*, v. 23). The public transfer of Moses' authority (Heb. *hōd*) is partial, as Moses will continue to lead the people for a time.²³ As part of his responsibilities, Joshua will stand before Eleazar the priest who will discern God's will through the Urim. Joshua is to command the people. In 34:17, it becomes clear that the work of Eleazar and Joshua is specifically concerned with the assignment of the Promised Land. The instructions regarding the allotment of the Transjordanian tribes in chapter 32 are passed along to Joshua and to Eleazar.

The first appearance of Joshua in Deuteronomy is also heralded with a special epithet. In addition to his designation as the son of Nun, he is also described as one who 'stands before' Moses, just as he would stand before Eleazar. In 1:38, God commands Moses to 'strengthen' (Heb. *hazzeq*) Joshua because he will cause Israel to inherit the land. When this is retold in 3:28, and linked with the verb 'to encourage' (Heb. *'mē*), it creates the familiar double form 'encourage and strengthen'. This formula is repeated three times when Moses passes the leadership to Joshua (31:6, 7, 23). God speaks to Joshua in 31:23 with the encouragement to 'be strong and

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21. Ibid., p. 140, observes that the name Hosea suggests that Joshua had a tribal leadership role separate from his special relationship with Moses.
 22. Ibid., pp. 144, 154, suggests that as of Num. 14 it is unclear whether Caleb or Joshua will be chosen as Moses' successor. Num. 27 makes clear that God, not Moses, does the choosing.
 23. Ibid., pp. 166, 174–175, suggests that the full authority of Moses, received directly from God, is unique and cannot be completely transferred. See Deut. 34:10.

courageous' and with the promise of his presence. However, God's address centres on the promise to Joshua that 'you will bring the Israelites into the land I promised'. Here for the first time Joshua is told to 'bring' the people into the land.²⁴ As the end of Moses' time on earth approaches, God assures Joshua that his role will include leadership of the people as they enter the Promised Land. Deuteronomy 32:44 describes how 'Moses came with Joshua son of Nun' to teach the people the song of that chapter. However, Joshua's name is spelled 'Hoshea', like his original name (Num. 13:16). In contrast to the kings of other lands, Joshua does not take a new name as he prepares to assume leadership. Instead, he reverts to his first name, a sign of his own independence from Moses even at the point where he is about to succeed him.²⁵ In Deuteronomy 34:9 the spirit of wisdom fills Joshua when Moses lays hands on him. The intention of these events in Deuteronomy is to demonstrate that Joshua's leadership is based upon God's instructions, through Moses, to appoint him.

Barstad has identified the 'prophet like Moses' of Deuteronomy 18:15–19 as Joshua.²⁶ He separates 18:20–22 from verses 15–19. The later verses address the unrelated issue of false prophets and their detection. Deuteronomy 3:23–29 had already prepared the reader to accept Joshua as Moses' successor. Deuteronomy 34:10, which describes the absence of someone like Moses whom the Lord knew face to face, anticipates the book of Joshua and Joshua's stewardship of the Mosaic law. The similarities between Joshua and Moses further demonstrate the distinctive relationship of the two.²⁷ Barstad uses this argument to support his thesis that Deuteronomy places prophets in a secondary relationship to the law of Moses. However, there is nothing in the argument that Joshua is a fulfilment of Deuteronomy 18:15–19 that excludes

24. See Deut. 31:7 where Joshua is told, 'You must go with this people into the land.' Schäfer-Lichtenberger, pp. 177–178.

25. Schäfer-Lichtenberger, pp. 186–187.

26. H. M. Barstad, 'The Understanding of the Prophets in Deuteronomy', *SJOT*, 8, 1994, pp. 236–251.

27. Barstad cites Polzin, pp. 74ff., and Ottosson, pp. 21–23.

the possibility that other prophets might also have been envisaged.²⁸

For the Christian, this background exemplifies the preparation of a leader for Christian ministry. The leader is someone who, like Joshua, has already undertaken specific tasks successfully and who has demonstrated a loyalty to God's Word even when that means standing out from the crowd. Such a leader, who acts with independent judgment, can make mistakes. However, it is important to learn from those mistakes. A leader like Joshua is someone recognized by the people of God and, most important of all, someone whom God clearly chooses.

(b) The book of Joshua

Joshua 1 has a view of its chief character that is repeated throughout the book. It is found in God's charge, *Only be strong and courageous* (1:7, 18). This serves three purposes: (1) to confirm Joshua's leadership with a statement exhorting him to lead; (2) to recognize God's choice of Joshua as Moses' successor by repeating this to both Moses and Joshua; and (3) to bring to a close the first two actions of Joshua in which he effectively exerts his leadership over all the people through (1) commanding the officers of Israel and thereby implicitly all of Israel, and (2) gaining full recognition of his leadership from the Transjordanian tribes. Joshua sends the spies to Jericho and receives their report (2:1, 23–24; see 7:2–3; 18:3–10). Joshua continues to receive and obey directions from God (3:7–13). The opening sentence of Joshua 4:10 specifies the place of Joshua in guiding the people. Repeated statements in this passage confirm these actions as a response to earlier instructions of Moses and to God's plan for his people. This culminates in verse 14 where God exalts Joshua before all Israel. Joshua's role as the chosen intermediary between the LORD and the people continues in the crossing of the Jordan with its miracle of the stopping of the waters, itself a response to Joshua's instructions (chs. 3–4). Once across the Jordan and encamped at Gilgal (ch. 5), Joshua is again leader and

28. A point made by K. Jeppesen, 'Is Deuteronomy Hostile Towards Prophets?', *SJOT*, 8, 1994, pp. 252–256.

God's representative to Israel. His position is confirmed in Canaan, just as he had been confirmed as Moses' successor in Transjordan.

In Joshua 5:13 – 6:27, the confrontation with the commander of the LORD's army suggests a scene not unlike that of the commissioning of Moses and of later prophets. It thus gave Joshua new authority and responsibility before God, which continued in Israel's defeat of Jericho and in the salvation of Rahab. Israel obeyed God's word through Joshua.

Joshua 7 enhances the role of Israel's leader in several ways: (1) he is not named in the disastrous assault on Ai; (2) he leads the elders in penitence before God; (3) he receives divine instructions on how to identify the perpetrator and what to do when he is identified; and (4) he leads Israel in carrying out those instructions. Thus Joshua's religious and political leadership is not marred by the incident with Achan. On the contrary, it is enhanced. This is surprising when compared with Moses' time. With each new problem that Israel faced in the wilderness, they complained and grumbled. The difference is in the object of the complaint. Israel in the wilderness constantly complained about what God had provided, whether food, or the Promised Land, or the leadership of Moses. In the case of Achan's sin, the concern focused on following the divine direction. Israel could not do this unless they removed the sin from their midst. Thus Israel in the wilderness brought sin into their midst whereas the Israel of Joshua 7 sought to remove it. The purpose of Joshua in seeking direction to remove the sin coincided with Israel's desire to receive divine favour in order to possess the land.

In Joshua 8:1–29, Joshua receives God's word, instructs the Israelite army, deploys his forces, launches the attack with the signal from his weapon and directs the destruction of the enemy. In contrast to chapter 7, where he is not named in sending the forces who are defeated, chapter 8 positions Joshua as the initiator of each part of the battle. The repeated words 'see' and 'hand' describe Joshua's strategy. Because of divine revelation, he sees clearly what strategy to launch and he commands Israel to join him in 'seeing' this. Because of divine initiative, Joshua's 'hand' becomes the power by which the enemy is defeated. This occurs literally, as the weapon in his hand becomes the turning point in the narrative. It occurs symbolically, as the army of Israel, under his control, defeats the forces of Bethel and Ai.

The concern of chapter 9 to magnify Joshua's role as leader is evident. He appears at the beginning as the one in charge of negotiations. At the end of the account, he pronounces judgment on the Gibeonites, describing their servitude but thereby rescuing them from the wrath of Israel who wish to put them to death. Even though Israel's leadership is discredited in its dealings with outsiders, Joshua's position remains secure.

Chapters 10 – 12 argue that the southern and northern parts of Canaan were given to the nation by its God who fought for it. The key to this success was Joshua who heard God's word and obeyed it, just as God heard Joshua's prayer and answered it (11:12).

Joshua's key role continues as he presides over the allotments (chs. 13 – 21; especially 14:1, 6, 13–15; 18:1–10; 19:51; 20:1–3; 21:1–2), sends away the Transjordanian tribes (22:1–8), gathers Israel for a final exhortation (23:1–2), renews the covenant with Israel (24:1) and sends Israel to their inheritance (24:18). At the end of his life, like Moses, he receives the accolade *servant of the LORD* (24:29).

Antiquity

The following items in the book of Joshua cannot otherwise be explained than, or can best be explained, by tracing their origin to the second millennium BC:²⁹

1. The description of the borders of Canaan in the Pentateuch and in Joshua 1:4 matches the Egyptian understanding of Canaan in second-millennium BC sources, where the cities of Byblos, Tyre, Sidon, Acco and Hazor form part of the land.³⁰ The northern

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29. Some of this material is developed further in R. S. Hess, 'West Semitic Texts and the Book of Joshua', *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, forthcoming.
30. See Mazar, pp. 192–193; Aharoni, *Land*, p. 69. The relevant sources are found in the satirical letter Papyrus Anastasi I and in the Amarna letters, especially EA 148 and 151 from the leader of Tyre, but including at least nine other letters from Byblos, Babylon, Alashia, and Amurru. See R. Hess, *Amarna Proper Names* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1984), p. 460; E. Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), pp. 106–109. The attempt of N. P. Lemche to

boundary never was clear because the Egyptians, who saw Canaan as part of their empire, were in conflict with the Hittites on the northern border of the land. The Mediterranean Sea formed the western border of Canaan and the Jordan River formed the eastern border (though north of the Sea of Galilee the region included areas farther east). The biblical concept of the Promised Land in Joshua agrees with the Egyptian usage of Canaan during their New Kingdom empire.

2. M. Weinfeld argues for the antiquity of Joshua 2, citing examples of parallels with Ancient Near Eastern cultures of the second millennium BC:³¹

Sending out men for reconnaissance was a widespread phenomenon in the east. Moreover, a prostitute's or innkeeper's house was the accustomed place for meeting with spies, conspirators, and the like. Thus, for example, we read in Hammurabi's Code: 'If scoundrels plot together [in conspiratorial relationships] in an innkeeper's house, and she does not seize them and bring them to the palace, that innkeeper shall be put to death' (law § 109). In a Mari letter we read about two men who sow fear and panic and cause rebellion in an army. Also, the pattern of a three-day stay in an area when pursuing escapees has support in ancient eastern sources; for example the instructions to the Hittite tower commanders specify that if an enemy invades a place he must be pursued for three days. In the same collection of instructions we find that it is forbidden to build an inn (*aršana*) in which prostitutes live near the fortress wall, apparently because of the kind of danger described in Joshua 2.

dispute this depends on his alternative interpretation of a passage in EA 151, which he takes to mean that Cilician Danuna is part of Canaan. See N. P. Lemche, *The Canaanites and Their Land*, JSOT Supplement 110 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), pp. 25–52. Given the agreement of the other sources, however, A. F. Rainey's translation of this passage, which avoids such a conclusion, is to be preferred. See A. F. Rainey, 'Ugarit and the Canaanites again', *IEJ*, 14, 1964, p. 101.

31. Weinfeld, *Promise*, pp. 141–143. On the laws of Hammurabi, see also P. Hieronymus Horn, 'Josua 2, 1–24 im Milieu einer "dimorphic society"', *BZ*, 31, 1987, pp. 264–270.

3. Joshua 3:10 lists the groups of people whom God will drive out before Israel. Among these are three groups that have a distinctive association with the second millennium BC: the Hivites, the Perizzites and the Girgashites. The Hivites may be associated with Hurrian peoples who were among city leaders in Palestine in the fourteenth century and whose legacy remained to the time of David.³² In Joshua 9:7 and 11:19, they are identified with the Gibeonites. A possible association has been observed with the place name Kue in Anatolia (1 Kgs 11:28).³³ A similar origin may exist for the Perizzites.³⁴ The association of Hivites and Perizzites with Hurrians is important for dating. Hurrian peoples and names flourished in the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC). Their presence diminished in the following two centuries and disappeared at the beginning of the first millennium

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32. This identification rests upon the interchange of 'Horite' and 'Hivite' in Gen. 36:2, 20 and the LXX rendering of 'Hivite' in Gen. 36:2 and Josh. 9:7. See E. A. Speiser, 'Hurrians', *IDB*, II, p. 665; H. A. Hofner, 'Hittites and Hurrians', *POTT*, p. 225. R. de Vaux, 'Les Hurrites de l'histoire et les Horites de la Bible', *RB*, 74, 1967, pp. 497–503, denied this relationship. However, the presence of Hurrian name bearers in nearby Jerusalem in the fourteenth century BC supports the equation. The attempt of O. Margalith, 'The Hivites', *ZAW*, 100, 1988, pp. 60–70, to identify them with the Ahhiyawa of Western Anatolia requires even greater linguistic shifts and finds little evidence in the hill country to support it.
33. W. F. Albright, 'Cilicia and Babylonia under the Chaldean Kings', *BASOR*, 120, 1950, pp. 22–24.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 25. M. Görg, 'Hiwwitter im 13. Jahrhundert v. Chr.', *UF*, 8, 1976, pp. 53–55, identifies it with the land of *pi-ri-in-du* in Cilicia. Others attempt a sociological definition, as people who dwell in unwallled villages and in the highland countryside. See R. F. Schnell, 'Perizzite', *IDB*, III, p. 735. While this association may have existed in Canaan, the name is attested in a personal name from fourteenth-century BC Mitanni, the Hurrian kingdom from northern Syria. Thus the name and presumably at least some of the people associated with it have a northern origin, however much the name becomes associated with 'foreigners' in general.

BC. Girgashites may be attested in second-millennium BC Ugaritic and Egyptian sources.³⁵ These all may have migrated south from the Hittite empire and perhaps earlier, from the Hurrian kingdom of Mitanni.³⁶ Many peoples in addition to Israelites experienced migration during the latter half of the second millennium BC.

4. The act of God in bringing down the walls of Jericho (Josh. 6:20) has a parallel in a Hittite text:

Shaushga of Shamuha, my lady, revealed also then her divine justice: in the very moment I reached him, the wooden fortifications fell down to the length of one *gipessar*.³⁷

5. The list of items that Achan stole fits best in the latter half of the second millennium BC. For the *beautiful robe from Babylonia*, see the commentary at Joshua 7:21 (p. 167). Two additional items from the list also support this conclusion. The term ‘Shinar’ designates Babylon in a variety of biblical passages. However, its cuneiform correspondent, Šanhar, is used of Babylon in cuneiform texts only in the sixteenth to thirteenth centuries BC.³⁸ The description of *a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels* finds a parallel in the fourteenth-century BC Amarna list of gifts from the king of Mitanni, ‘an ingot of gold of 1,000 shekels in weight’.³⁹ Both use the same unusual word for

35. M. Görg, art. cit.

36. The preservation of the characteristic Hurrian *-z̄zi* suffix in ‘Perizzite’ may support this identification. For further discussion, see B. Mazar, ‘The Early Israelite Settlement in the Hill Country’, *BASOR*, 241, 1981, pp. 75–85, reprinted in Mazar, pp. 35–48; R. S. Hess, ‘Cultural Aspects of Onomastic Distribution in the Amarna Texts’, *UF*, 21, 1989, pp. 209–216.

37. So M. Liverani, *Prestige and Interest. International Relations in the Near East ca. 1600–1100 BC*, History of the Ancient Near East/Studies 1 (Padova: Sargon, 1990), p. 155. The Hittite text is *Keilschrifturkunde aus Boghazköy*, vol. VI, II 29–33.

38. R. Zadok, ‘The Origin of the Name Shinar’, *ZA*, 74, 1984, p. 242.

39. EA 29, lines 34 and 39. See H. P. Adler, *Das Akkadische des Königs Tušratta von Mitanni*, AOAT, 21 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1976),

‘ingot’, literally ‘tongue of’.⁴⁰ Both also follow the identical word order, ingot – gold – number – shekels – weight. These two items, in particular, make this parallel unique.⁴¹ They suggest that this list betrays signs of an origin in the second millennium BC.

6. The Gibeonites of Joshua 9 occupied the Benjaminite plateau that extends from Jerusalem in the south to Bethel in the north. The acquisition of this area formed a key element in the strategy of the occupation of the land. Without it, Israel would be divided between the hill-country settlement of the north and the Judean hills to the south. Like other regions in the hill country, this area was not settled in the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC). Eight Iron I (1200–1000 BC) villages have been identified, of which seven are in the eastern part of the region. These were settled early in Iron I. The only Gibeonite site that has been excavated is Gibeon itself. A partial excavation revealed a Late Bronze Age necropolis and Iron I habitation.⁴²

7. The names of the defeated kings in Joshua 10 and 11 provide clues as to the origins of these narratives.⁴³

a. That of the king of Jerusalem, *Adoni-Zedek*, means ‘(my) lord is Zedek’, where Zedek (or Zadqu) is the name of a deity or a description of the deity as righteous (Heb. *šdq*). It may also be

pp. 234–235; A. R. Millard, ‘Back to the Iron Bed: Og’s or Procrustes?’, Congress Volume Paris 1992, Supplement to *VT*, 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 197–200.

40. Hebrew *lešōn*, Akkadian *li-ša-an-nu ša*.

41. *CAD*, vol. 9 L, p. 215, lists seven examples of the usage of *lišānu* as ‘ingot’. Four of the seven examples are from the second millennium BC (Late Bronze Age).

42. I. Finkelstein, *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement* (Israel Exploration Society: Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 56–65. The absence of evidence for habitation in the Late Bronze Age may call into question whether or not this site was inhabited. However, the partial excavation of the site and the problems with interpreting the stratigraphy suggest that the final verdict has not been rendered.

43. R. S. Hess, ‘Non-Israelite Personal Names in the Narratives of the Book of Joshua’, *CBQ*, 58, 1996, pp. 205–214.

found in the biblical name of an earlier king, possibly of Jerusalem, in Genesis 14, Melchizedek, '(my) king is Zedek/ righteousness'. The structure of the name as well as the elements that compose it are found in personal names of the fourteenth-century Amarna letters in the names of town leaders from elsewhere in Palestine and Syria.⁴⁴

b. Hoham and Piram, the leaders of Hebron and Jarmuth, possess names whose origins lie with the Hurrian culture to the north in northern Syria, a culture that influenced various regions of Palestine, especially the inland valleys and the hill country, in the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC).⁴⁵ Japhia and Debir, leaders of Lachish and of Eglon, have names that are similar to a fourteenth-century BC ruler of Gezer and to a name in contemporary Egyptian sources.⁴⁶

c. Anak (Josh. 11:22; 14:6–15; 15:13–19) occurs as a place name in the Egyptian Execration texts from the first half of the second millennium BC.⁴⁷ From the region of Palestine three rulers are mentioned who are each called a ruler of Iy-'anaq.⁴⁸

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44. See the names of *a-du-na*, leader of Irqata, and *rabu-ši-id-qi*, a citizen of Byblos who is involved in its administration.
45. For similarities of Hoham with *hūba* in some Nuzi names and for comparisons of Piram with Nuzi names such as *bi-ru* and *be-ru-na*, see R. S. Hess, 'Non-Israelite Personal Names in the Narratives of the Book of Joshua'. For evidence of Hurrian influence at this time, see R. S. Hess, 'Cultural Aspects of Onomastic Distribution in the Amarna Texts', *UF*, 21, 1989, pp. 209–216.
46. R. S. Hess, 'Non-Israelite Personal Names in the Narratives of the Book of Joshua', *CBQ*, 58, 1996, pp. 205–214. The name of the ruler of Gezer in the Amarna texts is *ia-pa-ḥi*.
47. See E. Lipiński, 'Anaq-Kiryat 'Arba' – Hébron et ses sanctuaires tribaux', *VT*, 24, 1974, pp. 41–48. See also M. Dothan, 'Ethnicity and Archaeology: Some Observations on the Sea Peoples at Ashdod', in *BAT*, pp. 53–55. Dothan identifies Anakites with the pre-Philistine stratum at Ashdod and suggests a Mycenaean origin. This is not likely in view of their West Semitic and Hurrian personal names (see Josh. 15:14), nor is it correct if the Anakites are present in the early second millennium BC.
48. *ANET*, p. 328; E. Lipiński, 'Anaq-Kiryat 'Arba' – Hébron et ses

8. In Joshua 15:14, the names of the three Anakites appear, *Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai*. Sheshai and Talmai are Hurrian names, originating in the Hurrian culture to the north of Palestine which was influential in 1550–1200 BC.⁴⁹ Ahiman is a West Semitic ‘Canaanite’ name. The land of the Anakites is the southern hill country around Hebron. This region included a population of mixed origin, as attested both in the biblical record and in contemporary extrabiblical evidence from this region, a testimony to the antiquity of this text.⁵⁰

9. Joshua 24:2–27 contains a report of a covenant that, in its form and content, most closely resembles the Hittite vassal-treaty structure unique to the second millennium BC. See Theology: (c) The covenant between God and Israel (pp. 54–55) and the commentary on Joshua 24 (pp. 329–330).

This commentary will not attempt to ‘prove’ the historicity of any part of Joshua. However, it will accept the work as preserving authentic and ancient sources that attest to events in the late second millennium BC. In addition to the points made here, notes throughout the commentary will attempt to locate the text within this ancient context and so to understand its message.

Composition

(a) *Traditional higher-critical methods*

The book of Joshua makes no specific claim regarding either its authorship or its composition. Scholars have sought to describe the composition of Joshua from two perspectives of higher criticism:

sanctuaires tribaux’. O. Margalit, ‘The Origin of the Sons of Anak’, *Beth Mikra*, 25, 1990, pp. 359–364, Hebrew, identified the Minoan word for ‘king’, *anak*, with the Anakites.

49. See R. S. Hess, ‘Non-Israelite Personal Names in the Narratives of the Book of Joshua’.
50. *Ibid.* See also the Hurrian and West Semitic names on the second-millennium BC cuneiform tablet discovered there in M. Anbar and N. Na’aman, ‘An Account Tablet of Sheep from Ancient Hebron’, *Tel Aviv*, 13–14, 1986–1987, pp. 3–12.