

Chapter 13

Joshua^{*}

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EDITIONS

Standard Scholarly Editions

Moshe Goshen-Gottstein, ed., *The Aleppo Codex: Provided with Massoretic Notes and Pointed by Aaron ben Asher* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1976).

BHL: Aron Dotan, ed., *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia, Prepared According to the Vocalization, Accents, and Masora of Aaron ben Moses ben Asher in the Leningrad Codex, With Adaptations to Halakhic Requirements* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001).

BHS: Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, Ediderunt K. Elliger et W. Rudolph, Textum Masoreticum curavit H. P. Rüger, Masoram elaboravit G. E. Weil* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969–77). It replaces (the third version of) *Biblia Hebraica* (BHK³, Rudolf Kittel and Paul Kahle, eds., *Biblia Hebraica* [3rd ed., Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1937]).

BHQ: Seppo Sipilä, Cornelis G. den Hertog, and Pierre Casetti, ed., *Biblia Hebraica Quinta: Joshua* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, in preparation).

Other Editions

Astrid B. Beck, David Noel Freedman, and James A. Sanders, eds., *The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Leiden: Brill, 1998).

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- Mordechai Breuer, ed., *Keter Yerushalayim (The Jerusalem Crown)* (Jerusalem: S. Karger, 2002).
- A. Philip Brown II and Bryan W. Smith, eds., *A Reader's Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008).
- Menahem Cohen, ed., *Miqra 'ot Gedolot HaKeter: Joshua–Judges: A Revised and Augmented Scientific Edition of 'Miqra 'ot Gedolot' Based on the Aleppo Codex and Early Medieval Manuscripts* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1992 [Hebrew]).
- Christian David Ginsburg, ed., *Bomberg/Ginsburg Hebrew Old Testament* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1894).
- Jewish Publication Society, *JPS Hebrew–English Tanakh* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999).
- D. S. Lowinger, ed., *Codex Cairo of the Bible from the Karaite Synagogue at Abbasiya, The Earliest Extant Hebrew Manuscript Written in 895 by Moshe ben Asher: A Limited Facsimile Edition of 160 Copies* (Jerusalem: Makor, 1971).
- David Marcus, *The Masorah of the Former Prophets of the Leningrad Codex, Vol. 1: Joshua* (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2017). Each and every masoretic note is transcribed and analyzed, with cross-references throughout. Note, however, per the title, that the focus of the work is $\mathfrak{M}^L$, without reference to the masoretic notes in $\mathfrak{M}^A$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$, $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$, or other manuscripts.¹
- Norman H. Snaith, ed., *Hebrew Old Testament* (London: British & Foreign Bible Society, 1958).
- F. Pérez Castro, ed., *El Códice de Profetas de El Cairo, Tomo I: Josué–Jueces* (Madrid: Instituto Arias Montano, 1979).
- Donald R. Vance, George Athas, and Yael Avrahami, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: A Reader's Edition* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2014).

Editions of Ancient Hebrew Manuscripts

- Eugene Ulrich, Frank Moore Cross, et al., *Qumran Cave 4.IX: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings* (DJD XIV; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995; reprinted 1999): **4Q47 (4QJosh^a),² 4Q48 (4QJosh^b).³**

¹Another valuable resource is Christopher Dost, *The Sub-Loco Notes in the Former Prophets of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2016), which systematically presents and analyzes each “Mp sub loco” comment recorded in *BHS* for the Former Prophets (there are 58 such entries for Joshua), plus an entry on the Masorah finalis (Mf). By definition, this requires a focus specifically on $\mathfrak{M}^L$, but very helpfully the author includes comparison with $\mathfrak{M}^A$ and $\mathfrak{M}^C$ throughout.

²For an additional detailed treatment, see Émile Puech, “Les copies du livre de Josué dans les manuscrits de la Mer Morte: 4Q47, 4Q48, 4Q123, et XJosué,” *RB* 122 (2015): 481–506, esp. 482–95. Note that Puech’s article also treats 4Q123 (pp. 499–505), though most scholars understand this very fragmentary text (written in paleo-Hebrew) as part of the larger Rewritten Joshua composition attested at Qumran. For discussion see Emanuel Tov, “The Rewritten Book of Joshua as Found at Qumran and Masada,” in *Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, eds. Michael E. Stone and Esther G. Chazon (STDJ 28; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 233–56, reprinted in Emanuel Tov, *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible and Qumran: Collected Essays* (TSAJ 121; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 72–91; and the definitive study by Ariel Feldman, *The Rewritten Joshua Scrolls from Qumran* (BZAW 438; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014).

³For an earlier treatment, see Emanuel Tov, “4QJosh^b,” in *Intertestamental Essays in Honour of Józef Tadeusz Milik, Part I*, ed. Zdzisław J. Kapera (Qumranica Mogilanensia 6; Krakow: Enigma, 1992), 205–12. For an additional detailed treatment, see Puech, “Les copies,” 495–99.

James Charlesworth, et al., *Miscellaneous Texts from the Judaean Desert* (DJD XXXVIII; Oxford: Clarendon, 2000): **XJoshua**.⁴

MANUSCRIPTS

Proto- $\mathfrak{M}$ Manuscripts

Unprovenanced Scroll

XJoshua (=Schøyen MS 2713)⁵ Josh 1:9–12; 2:4–5 (all fragmentary)

Non-Proto- $\mathfrak{M}$ Manuscripts

Qumran Scrolls

4Q47 (4QJosh^a) Josh 8:34–35; 5:X; 5:2–7; 6:5–10; 7:12–17; 8:3–11, 14, 18 (?); 10:2–5, 8–11

4Q48 (4QJosh^b) Josh 2:11–12; 3:15–4:3; 17:1–5, 11–15

Manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah

A full study of the book of Joshua as attested among the Cairo Genizah manuscripts remains a desideratum. Images are available through the Cairo Genizah module at the Friedberg Genizah Project: <https://fjms.genizah.org/>. A pilot study of the Samuel manuscripts revealed occasional variant readings, that is, different than $\mathfrak{M}^A$ and/or $\mathfrak{M}^L$.⁶ Presumably such would be the case for Joshua as well.⁷

Medieval Codices

The book of Joshua is the first book of the Bible for which we have four early and first-rate masoretic codices:⁸

⁴See also Torlief Elgvin, “MS 2713. Mur/HevJosh (Josh 1.9–12; 2.3–5),” in *Gleanings from the Caves: Dead Sea Scrolls and Artefacts from the Schøyen Collection*, eds. Torlief Elgvin, Kipp Davis, and Michael Langlois (London: T&T Clark, 2016), 185–92.

⁵The fragments of XJoshua are most likely found at either Naḥal Ḥever or Wadi Murabba’at (as opposed to Qumran).

⁶Gary A. Rendsburg, “The Book of Samuel in the Cairo Geniza,” *Textus* 27 (2018): 111–21.

⁷For one particular issue, viz., the consonantal text at Josh 17:15 and Josh 21:10, see below, especially nn. 34–38.

⁸Perhaps I overstate the claim, since in theory it may be possible to produce a list of four manuscripts for the Torah from the same early time period (for example, Codex Sassoon 507, $\mathfrak{M}^{ss}$). But in so far as starting with Joshua one is able to use $\mathfrak{M}^A$ and $\mathfrak{M}^C$ alongside $\mathfrak{M}^L$ (the three most famous early manuscripts), the picture is vastly improved. In order to expand the picture somewhat, I also have elected to use $\mathfrak{M}^{s1}$ herein.

- **Aleppo Codex (M^A, A):** c. 920. M^A was produced as a complete Tanakh, and was seen intact by several scholars during the first half of the twentieth century, but since c. 1950 about one-third of the codex, including almost the entire Torah, has gone missing. Joshua, accordingly, is the first complete book available for inspection in extant M^A. The main text of the codex was produced by the scribe Shelomo ben Buya'a in Tiberias c. 920. The masoretic apparatus (vowels, accent marks, marginal notes, etc.) was added by Aaron ben Moshe ben Asher, the last and most prominent member of the Ben Asher family. When the manuscript resided in Cairo during the twelfth century, it was given the imprimatur of Maimonides as containing the most reliable Bible text. Today the codex resides in the Shrine of the Book pavilion of the Israel Museum, on permanent loan by the Ben-Zvi Institute (its official owner and custodian).
- **Cairo Codex (M^C, C):** 895 > eleventh century. The story of M^C is somewhat complicated. According to the colophon, it was written in the year 895, by the scribe and Masorete Moshe ben Asher (father of the aforementioned Aaron). The codex contains the text of the Prophets only, from Joshua through Malachi.⁹ In 1995, a fragment of the codex was subjected to a carbon-14 test, which revealed an eleventh-century date, that is, more than a century after the year 895. Apparently, the eleventh-century scribe, whoever he may have been, copied the colophon from his *Vorlage*, presumably due to the prestige of the name Moshe ben Asher therein. Regardless, M^C is a very important testimony to the Masoretic Text of Joshua. Moreover, notwithstanding the colophon's attribution to Moshe ben Asher, "surprisingly, the Cairo Codex agrees in 67% of the cases with Ben Naftali and is one of the closest manuscripts to his system."¹⁰ Its present whereabouts are unknown.¹¹
- **St. Petersburg (Leningrad)¹² Codex (M^L, L, Ms. Evr I B19a):** 1009 CE. M^L is well known, of course, as it is treated in the previous chapters in this

⁹For an early description of M^C to the Prophets, see Richard Gottheil, "Some Hebrew Manuscripts in Cairo," *JQR* 17 O.S. 17 (1905): 609–55, esp. 639–41 (as entry no. 34). For a recent treatment, see Vincent D. Beiler, "Does the Cairo Codex Represent a Scribal School?," in *Interconnected Traditions: Semitic Languages, Literatures, and Cultures – A Festschrift for Geoffrey Khan*, ed. Aaron D. Hornkohl et al. (Cambridge Semitic Languages and Cultures; Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2025), 111–45.

¹⁰Yosef Ofer, "Cairo Codex," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, eds. Constance M. Furey, et al. (vol. 4; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 770.

¹¹For the story of the Cairo Codex, see Nadine Epstein, "The Mystery of the Cairo Codex: on the Trail of an Ancient Manuscript," *Moment* 41/1 (2016): 22–24, 27–29, 31, 33–37, 69. See also Chapter 3 in the present volume.

¹²A note on the history and nomenclature of this manuscript: M^L was obtained somewhere in the Near East by the great collector Abraham Firkovich (1786–1874), and then entered the National Library of Russia (formerly the Imperial Public Library) in St. Petersburg in 1863. When M^L first was published in 1937, the name of the city had been changed to Leningrad, and hence the manuscript became known as

book. Since it is the oldest complete extant Tanakh, it serves as the basis for the *Biblia Hebraica* series from the third edition onward.

- **Codex Sassoon 1053 (M^{S1}):** tenth century. M^{S1} is not always used in Masoretic Studies, but as it represents an early and important testimony to the Masorah, and since it is now readily available to scholars, I have elected to include it herein. For many years, the manuscript was privately held by the great collector David Solomon Sassoon (1880–1942), hence its designation as S1. Until recently, the manuscript remained in private hands, within the collection of Jacqui Safra (Geneva) (b. 1940).¹³ In 2023, the manuscript was sold at auction via Sotheby's, bought by Alfred H. Moses (b. 1929), and then immediately donated to the Museum of the Jewish People (Tel-Aviv), where it now resides on prominent display.¹⁴

Unlike the previous chapter in this volume, relating to the Torah, this chapter is able to benefit from the presence of M^A and M^C. That said, while at times this chapter will present information forthcoming from all four of these early major codices, in the main, the focus of our attention will be on M^A and M^L, as they remain the two most important manuscripts for our purposes.¹⁵ Note also the pagination conventions, with M^A and M^L numerated by *folio*, while M^C and M^{S1} are numerated by page.

Naturally, there are many additional important medieval manuscripts which contain the book of Joshua, including, for example, the following from c. 1100:

- **Fitzwilliam Museum MS 364:** c. 1100, Former Prophets.¹⁶
- **Vatican Library Urbinati Ebr. 2:** c. 1100, complete Tanakh.¹⁷

the Leningrad Codex. Since 1991, the name of the city has reverted to St. Petersburg, and thus I prefer to refer to the manuscript as the St. Petersburg Codex—though I am happy to retain the siglum M^L, since such has been in universal use for almost a century.

¹³See Benjamin Richler, *Guide to Hebrew Manuscript Collections* (2nd ed.; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2014), 301.

¹⁴For further information, see <https://www.anumuseum.org.il/codex-sassoon/>. I wish to add that when I began to work on this chapter in 2019, Codex Sassoon 1053 still was housed within the private collection of Mr. Safra. I here express my gratitude to both Mr. Safra and to my colleague Yosef Ofer (Bar-Ilan University), who provided me then with several full-colour high-resolution images at my request. Today, the full manuscript now may be viewed at Ktiv: [https://www.nli.org.il/en/discover/manuscripts/hebrew-manuscripts/viewerpage?vid=MANUSCRIPTS#d=\[PNX_MANUSCRIPTS990001349580205171-1\]\]](https://www.nli.org.il/en/discover/manuscripts/hebrew-manuscripts/viewerpage?vid=MANUSCRIPTS#d=[PNX_MANUSCRIPTS990001349580205171-1]]).

¹⁵To some extent, this is due to practical concerns, since excellent photographs and facsimile editions have been readily available for M^A and M^L for some years. We still lack a high-quality digital record for M^C, while such record for M^{S1} has become available only recently (see n. 14).

¹⁶Information and bibliography available here: https://www.gbbj.org/manuscripts/manuscripts_5.html. Note that the manuscript is missing the very beginning of Joshua, as it commences at Josh 3:10.

¹⁷Benjamin Richler and Malachi Beit-Arié, *Hebrew Manuscripts in the Vatican Library* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2008), 600.

- **Badische Hof- und Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe, Cod. Reuchlin 3** (= **Codex Reuchlinianus**): Dated to 1106 (Prophets),¹⁸ which includes Targum Jonathan, and thus is of particular interest to scholars of the traditional Aramaic translation of the Prophets.

CHARACTERISTICS

Paragraphing and Versification

Sedarim

ℳ^A and ℳ^L divide the text into *sedarim* in precisely the same places, at the following verses: Josh 1:1; 3:7; 4:24; 6:27; 8:1, 33; 10:8, 42; 13:1; 14:15; 17:4; 18:28; 19:51; 21:41; 22:34. ℳ^C follows suit, though with the following important comment: The manuscript does not allow one to determine whether or not *seder* marks occur at Josh 1:1 and 3:7. The damage at the very beginning of the manuscript (p. 12, upper right) does not preserve the margin at Josh 1:1, while the charring or blackening of the manuscript in the margin at Josh 3:7 (p. 15, upper right) prevents any view of what may be written there.¹⁹ The only *seder* marks present in ℳ^{SI} occur at Josh 4:24; 10:42; and 18:28. In the other instances, either no *seder* mark is present (Josh 6:27; 8:1, 33; 10:8; 14:15; 17:4) or the margin is not visible (Josh 1:1; 3:7; 13:1).²⁰ Some of the *seder* marks appear even when there is no *petuḥa* or *setuma* paragraph break (see below). See, for example, the following:

- at 4:24, just one verse ahead of the *petuḥa* break separating 4:24 and 5:1;
- at 14:15, just one verse ahead of the *petuḥa* break separating 14:15 and 15:1;
- at 18:28, just one verse ahead of the *petuḥa* break separating 18:28 and 19:1;
- at 22:34, just one verse ahead of the *petuḥa* break separating 22:34 and 23:1.

¹⁸Alexander Sperber, *Codex Reuchlinianus: No. 3 of the Badische Landesbibliothek in Karlsruhe (formerly Durlach no. 55)* (Copenhagen: E. Munksgaard, 1956). On the vocalization used in this manuscript, see the important study by Shelomo Morag, "The Vocalization of Codex Reuchlinianus: Is the 'Pre-Masoretic' Bible Pre-Masoretic?" *JSS* 4 (1959): 216–37.

¹⁹See the comments by Pérez Castro, *Codico*, 13, n. a (re: 1:1), 22, n. b (re: 3:7).

²⁰At Josh 1:1 and 3:7, repair material along the binding edge (presumably introduced by David Sassoon's conservators) obscures whatever may have been written in the right margins of pp. 191 and 193, respectively. At Josh 13:1, the right side of p. 204 was trimmed at some point during the manuscript's long lifespan, so one cannot determine the presence or absence of a possible *seder* mark here (see image 13.4 below).

Petuḥot and Setumot

The following chart presents the locations of the *petuḥot* (paragraph breaks) and *setumot* (sub-paragraph breaks) in the four early codices studied herein (M^A, M^C, M^L, M^{S1}). The verse numbers listed follow (as opposed to precede) the delimitation markers.²¹ As the chart indicates, the various manuscripts include numerous paragraph breaks in two chapters especially: ch. 15 (the territory of Judah) and ch. 21 (the Levitical cities).

	M ^A	M ^C	M ^L	M ^{S1}
1:1	<i>incipit</i>	<i>incipit</i>	<i>incipit</i>	<i>incipit</i>
1:10	P	P	P	S
1:12	P	P	S	P
2:1	P	P	P	P
3:1	S	P	S	P
3:5	P	S	S	S
3:7	S	S	S	S
3:9	P	P	P	—
4:1b	P	P	P	S
4:4	S	S	S	S
4:14	S	S	S	S
4:15	P	P	P	P
5:1	P	S	S	P
5:2	P	P	S	S
5:9	P	P	P	P
5:13	S	P	S	S
6:2	S	S	S	P
6:12	P	P	P	P
6:26	P	P	P	P
6:27	—	—	—	S
7:1	S	—	—	—
7:2	S	—	—	P
7:10	—	S	S	—
8:1	P	P	P	P
8:18	P	P	P	S
8:30	P	P	P	P
9:1	—	P	P	P
9:3	P	P	P	P
10:1	P	P	P	P
10:8	P	S	P	P
10:12	S	S	S	S
10:15	S	P	P	S
10:28	S	P	P	P
10:29	S	—	—	S
10:31	S	S	S	P
10:33	P	P	P	S
10:36	P	P	P	S
10:38	S	P	S	S
11:1	P	P	P	P
11:6	P	P	P	P
11:10	S	S	S	S
11:21	S	S	S	S
12:1	S	S	P	S
12:7	S	—	S	P
12:9	P	P	P	P
12:9–24	<i>chart</i>	<i>chart</i>	<i>chart</i>	<i>chart</i>
13:1	P	P	P	P
13:15	P	S	S	P
13:24	P	S	P	P
13:29	S	—	—	P
13:33	P	S	S	—
14:1	S	—	—	—
14:6	P	P	P	S
15:1	P	P	P	P
15:20	P	P	P	P
15:33	S	S	S	S
15:37	S	—	—	S
15:42	S	S	S	S
15:45	S	—	—	S
15:47	S	—	—	—
15:48	S	—	S	S
15:50	S	—	—	—
15:52	S	—	—	S
15:55	S	S	S	S
15:58	S	—	—	S
15:60	P	—	—	—
15:61	S	S	S	S
16:1	P	P	P	S

²¹In adopting this system, I follow the lead of François Langlamet, “Les divisions massorétiques du livre de Samuel,” *RB* 91 (1984): 481–519.

17:1	P	P	P	S	21:20	S	S	S	S
17:14	S	S	S	P	21:23	S	S	S	S
18:1	P	P	P	S	21:25	—	S	S	S
18:11	P	P	P	P	21:27	S	S	S	S
18:21	P	—	—	—	21:28	S	S	S	—
18:25	—	—	—	S	21:30	S	S	S	S
19:1	P	P	P	P	21:32	S	S	S	S
19:10	P	P	P	P	21:34	S	S	S	S
19:17	P	P	P	P	21:36	S	S	S	S
19:24	P	P	P	P	21:38	—	—	—	S
19:32	P	P	P	P	21:41	S	S	S	S
19:40	P	P	P	P	22:1	P	P	P	P
19:49	S	P	P	P	22:7	P	S	S	P
20:1	P	P	P	P	22:9	P	P	P	P
21:1	P	P	P	P	22:13	P	P	P	P
21:3	P	—	—	S	22:21	S	P	P	P
21:5	S	S	S	S	22:30	P	P	P	P
21:6	S	S	S	S	23:1	P	P	P	P
21:7	S	S	S	S	24:1	P	P	P	P
21:8	S	—	—	S	24:16	P	P	P	S
21:9	P	P	P	S	24:19	—	S	S	—
21:13	S	S	S	S	24:27	P	P	S	S
21:17	S	P	P	P	24:29	P	P	P	P

Table 13.1: *Petuhot and Setumot in* $\mathfrak{M}^A$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$, $\mathfrak{M}^L$, and $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$ *Halfway Mark*

All four manuscripts used in the present study indicate the halfway mark in the book on the word *וּמִחֶשְׁבֹן* (“and from Heshbon,” Josh 13:26). $\mathfrak{M}^C$ (p. 22, col. 1) and $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$ (p. 205, col. 2) write the full phrase: *חֲצִי הַסֵּפֶר* (“half the book”), with the former including a decorative symbol as well. $\mathfrak{M}^A$ (f. 14r., col. 2) and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ (f. 129r., col. 3) use the slightly abbreviated phrase *חֲצִי הַסֵּפֶר* (“half the book”), with the latter including a decorative symbol as well.

Masorah Finalis

The masoretic notes at the end of $\mathfrak{M}^A$ (f. 21r.), $\mathfrak{M}^C$ (p. 48), and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ (f. 135v.) concur that there are 656 verses in Joshua (for $\mathfrak{M}^A$).²² $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$ does not include a verse count. A tally of the verses as they appear in the chapters of printed editions of $\mathfrak{M}^A$ (for example, Breuer) and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ (for example, *BHL*) accords with the total of 656. Note, however, the issue of the two additional verses that appear in some later manuscripts and editions, for which see below.

²²See Dost, *Sub-Loco*, 56.

Features of External Distinction

ℳ and the Dead Sea Scrolls

While there are elements of 4Q47 (4QJosh^a) and 4Q48 (4QJosh^b) which align with ℳ, significant differences remain, and thus they are classified above as non-proto ℳ manuscripts (details anon). Thus, the only truly proto-ℳ Joshua manuscript among the Judean Desert documents is XJoshua. While fragmentary in the extreme (only bits of 1:9–12; 2:4–5 remain), there are no divergences from later ℳ.

Regarding 4Q47 and 4Q48, scholars differ on their classification, that is, whether they anticipate the later ℳ or whether they contain sufficient pluses, minuses, and differences to be labeled as different recensions. I present the opinions of scholars in both camps, though, in the main, I accede to the latter approach. Eugene Ulrich observes as follows in relation to 4Q47: “The predominant pattern is that the scroll frequently goes its way, disagreeing with both ℳ and ℑ in significant readings.”²³ Florentino García Martínez concurs: “This manuscript, 4QJosh^a, represents yet a third edition or recension of the book, different from both the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint,”²⁴ and Ariel Feldman opines similarly: “While in general 4QJosh^a follows the MT, some of its readings either agree with the LXX or are unique to this scroll.”²⁵ A different view is presented by Michaël N. van der Meer: “With the possible exception of Josh. 8:10–17 (Column V consisting of fragments 9 ii, 13–16), the extant text presents no large-scale quantitative differences with MT.”²⁶

Moving to 4Q48, Tov writes: “The text of 4QJosh^b agrees usually with MT against LXX.”²⁷ García Martínez observes: “The manuscript published by Tov [sc. 4QJosh^b] agrees in general with the text represented by the Masoretic Text (with a small number of readings which agree with the Septuagint, although in one interesting case, in Josh 3:15, the text has been corrected interlinearly, and the correction agrees with the Septuagint against MT)”;²⁸ so also van der Meer: “The text of this manuscript corresponds closely to MT-Josh, also in passages where MT differs from LXX.”²⁹ Notwithstanding these judgments, differences between 4Q48 and ℳ remain, which to my mind merit the former’s classification as a non-proto-ℳ

²³Eugene Ulrich et al., *Qumran Cave 4.IX: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings* (DJD XIV; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995; reprinted 1999), 145.

²⁴Florentino García Martínez, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Book of Joshua,” in *Qumran and the Bible: Studying the Jewish and Christian Scriptures in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, eds. Nóra Dávid and Armin Lange (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 97–109 (101).

²⁵Feldman, *Rewritten Joshua Scrolls*, 15.

²⁶Michaël N. van der Meer, *Formation and Reformulation: The Redaction of the Book of Joshua in the Light of the Oldest Textual Witnesses* (VTSup 102; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 95.

²⁷Ulrich et al., *Qumran Cave 4.IX*, 154. Though see also Émile Puech, “Les copies du livre de Josué dans les manuscrits de la Mer Morte: 4Q47, 4Q48, 4Q123, et XJoshué,” *RB* 122 (2015): 481–506, esp. 495–99.

²⁸García Martínez, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 101.

²⁹Van der Meer, *Formation*, 98.

manuscript. Feldman writes as follows: “While it is close to the MT, this scroll also agrees in several places with the LXX and contains a few unique readings.”³⁰

ℳ and the Versions

The Peshitta (Ⲯ), Targum Jonathan (ⲡ), and Vulgate (Ⲭ) all adhere closely to ℳ, throughout the book of Joshua.³¹ The Old Greek (Ⲯ¹),³² however, is approximately 4 to 5 percent shorter than ℳ, thereby reflecting numerous minuses, some of them quite significant. At the same time, Ⲯ¹ contains some important pluses, especially towards the end of the book, for example, after Josh 16:10; 19:47; 21:42; 24:30; 24:33. The last of these pluses, at the very end of the book, includes material found in ℳ Judg 2.³³

Features of Internal Distinction

Very occasionally one finds differences in the consonantal text between and among the medieval codices. Two such instances arise in the book of Joshua, at 17:15 and at 21:10.

In the former, that is, Josh 17:15, ℳ^A, ℳ^L, and ℳ^{SI} read וַיִּכְרְתֶהּ (“and you shall cut-down”) while ℳ^C reads וַיִּכְרְתֶהּ,³⁴ presumably a simple error: the ך and ך have

³⁰Feldman, *Rewritten Joshua Scrolls*, 16.

³¹For Ⲯ, see George A. Kiraz et al., *The Syriac Peshitta Bible with English Translation: Joshua* (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2015). For a detailed study on the first five chapters, see Johann E. Erbes, *The Peshitta and the Versions: A Study of the Peshitta Variants in Joshua 1–5 in Relation to Their Equivalents in the Ancient Versions* (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1999). For ⲡ, see Emiliano Martínez Borobio, *Targum Jonatan de los Profetas Primeros en tradición babilónica, Vol. 1: Josué–Jueces* (Madrid: Instituto de Filología, Departamento de Filología Bíblica y Oriente Antiguo, 1989). For Ⲭ, see Robert Weber, *Biblia sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam versionem, Vol. 1: Genesis–Psalmi* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1984); and Swift Edgar, *The Vulgate Bible: Douay-Rheims Translation, Vol. IIA: The Historical Books* (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

³²For a concise introduction, see Leonard J. Greenspoon, “Jesus,” *NETS*, 174–76. For an expanded study, see Emanuel Tov, “Literary Development of the Book of Joshua as Reflected in the MT, the LXX, and 4QJosh,” in *The Book of Joshua*, ed. Ed Noort (BETL 250; Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 65–85 (revised version: Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint: Collected Writings* [VTSup 167; Leiden: Brill, 2015], 3:132–64). For a detailed study of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the *kaige* recension, see Leonard J. Greenspoon, *Textual Studies in the Book of Joshua* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 28; Chico: Scholars, 1983). All researchers into Septuaginta (Ⲯ, LXX) Joshua stand on the shoulders of the magisterial and authoritative study by Max A. Margolis, *The Book of Joshua in Greek* (4 vols.; Paris: P. Geuthner, 1931–38); Max A. Margolis, *The Book of Joshua in Greek, Vol. 5*, ed. Emanuel Tov (Philadelphia: Annenberg Research Institute, 1992). For those unfamiliar with the story of the Margolis *magnum opus*: the fifth volume (or better: fascicle) was feared forever lost, until Emanuel Tov found the photostatic negative (produced in 1930, while Margolis was yet alive) in the archives of the Annenberg Research Institute (now the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies of the University of Pennsylvania) in 1981.

³³See Alexander Rofé, “The End of the Book of Joshua according to the Septuagint,” *Henoch* 4 (1982): 17–36.

³⁴Said reading also occurs in at least one other text, to wit, the Genizah fragment Bodleian MS heb. d.79/8, f. 1r: (though without the *meteg*).

exchanged places, but the vocalization remains the same. Note that $\mathfrak{M}^C$ presents the expected form (as in all four major codices) three verses later at Josh 17:18 וַיִּכְרְאוּהוּ (“and you shall cut-down it”).³⁵ In the latter passage, that is, Josh 21:10, the reading is essentially the same across all manuscripts, save for the placement of the *mater lectionis* yod.³⁶ $\mathfrak{M}^A$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$, and $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$ read רִאשֹׁנָה (“first”),³⁷ while $\mathfrak{M}^L$ reads רִיאשֹׁנָה (“first”).³⁸

Significant Observations from the Masorah

Ketiv | Qere

As with all biblical books, Joshua includes its array of interesting *ketiv* | *qere* variants. The number of *ketiv* | *qere* variants differs from manuscript to manuscript. According to one count, $\mathfrak{M}^A$ contains 25, $\mathfrak{M}^C$ contains 39, and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ contains 32,³⁹ while $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$ recently has been determined to contain 29 instances.⁴⁰ A representative sampling of items that appear in all four major codices ($\mathfrak{M}^A$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$, $\mathfrak{M}^L$, $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$) are presented here:

- **Josh 2:13:** אָחֹרֹתַי (*ketiv*, *k*) | אָחֹרֹתַי (*qere*, *q*): Hebrew has two forms of the word “sisters,” even as neither occurs in the absolute form. Compare, for example, Hos 2:3 אָחֹרֹתֶיכֶם (“your sisters,” without /y/), Job 1:4 אָחֹרֹתֶיהֶם (“their sisters,” with /y/). In Josh 2:13, the equivalent form of the former appears as the *ketiv*, while the equivalent form of the latter appears as the *qere*.⁴¹
- **Josh 3:16:** בָּאֵרִם (*k*) | מֵאֵרִם (*q*): In various strata of ancient Hebrew, as well as in Ugaritic and Phoenician, the preposition בֿ served for both the locative (that is, “in”) and the ablative (that is, “from”). Only at a later time

³⁵Though once again Bodleian MS heb. d.79/8, f. 1r. switches the ו and א, with the reading with וַיִּכְרְאוּהוּ at Josh 17:18. Said reading also occurs in another Genizah fragment, namely, CUL: T-S A6.2, f. 1r.

³⁶For treatment of the Mp notes in $\mathfrak{M}^A$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$, and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ to this passage, see Dost, *Sub-Locho*, 49.

³⁷See also L-G Bib.IV.16, f. 1v., and St Petersburg Evr. II B 686, both from the Cairo Genizah.

³⁸See also Bodleian MS Kennicott 5, f. 32r., though with a second *mater lectionis*, hence רִיאשֹׁנָה. Note that both spelling conventions are found in Qumran Hebrew: for the former see 4Q400 (4QShirShabb) 2:10 רִיאשֹׁנָה and 4Q522 (4QProph of Josh) 9ii:7 רִיאשֹׁנָה; for the latter, see 11Q12 (11QJub) 3:2 רִיאשֹׁנָה.

³⁹See Elvira Martín-Contreras, “Prophets: Medieval Text of Masoretic Text,” in *Textual History of the Bible, The Hebrew Bible, Vol. 1B: Pentateuch, Former, and Latter Prophets*, eds. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 449. For a detailed study on *ketiv* | *qere* variants in $\mathfrak{M}^C$, see M^a. J. de Ázcarraga Servet, “El ketib/qerê en el libro de Josué del Códice de Profetas de El Cairo,” in *Proceedings of the Eleventh Congress of the International Organization for Masoretic Studies*, ed. Aron Dotan (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1994), 7–14 [non vide].

⁴⁰I am grateful to Yosef Ofer (Bar-Ilan University) for sharing with me the results of his detailed study of Codex Sassoon 1053.

⁴¹See David Marcus, *The Masorah of the Former Prophets of the Leningrad Codex, Vol. 1: Joshua* (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2017), 24.

did מִן (“from”) take hold in such dialects.⁴² This will explain the usage at Josh 3:16, with the *ketiv* בָּאָדָם (“from Adam”), which later was linguistically updated via the *qere* to מִן־אָדָם (“from Adam”). For the modern-day reflex of the toponym, note the Jordanian village of Damiya (c. 45 km northwest of Amman) and the Damiya Bridge, which crosses the Jordan River, about halfway between Bet She’an to the north and the Dead Sea to the south (see also below).⁴³

- **Josh 5:1:** עָבְרָנוּ (*k*) | עָבְרָם (*q*): At some point in the scribal transmission, the final -ם was misread as -נו (somewhat akin to a ligature). Hence, the form עָבְרָנוּ (“our crossing”) arose, though the oral reading tradition retained the correct form עָבְרָם (“their crossing,” see the Septuagint, 6).⁴⁴
- **Josh 7:21:** וַאֲרָאָה (*k*) | וַאֲרָאָה (*q*): The *qere* represents the Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) form for “and I saw” (Gen 31:10; 41:22; Deut 9:16, etc., for a total of 17 times, including in late books). The *ketiv* represents the Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH) form (Ezekiel 9×, Zechariah 2×, Qohelet 2×, Daniel 4×, etc., for a total of 20×, including two earlier attestations: Judg 12:3; Isa 6:1). Presumably, a scribe updated the form to וַאֲרָאָה , thus the *ketiv*, while the oral reading tradition preserved the original form וַאֲרָאָה (“and I saw”).
- **Josh 15:4; 18:12, 14, 19:** וְהָיָה (*k*) | וְהָיָה (*q*): Eleven times in Joshua 13–19, the long section detailing the tribal allotments and boundaries, the text records that such-and-such “shall be its boundaries” (15:7; 16:3, 8; 18:12, 14; 19:14, 29) or such-and-such “shall be the boundaries of the border” (15:4, 11; 18:19; 19:22). The standard verb is וְהָיָה (“and they shall be”). On four occasions, however, as listed above in the heading to this subsection, the *ketiv* reads וְהָיָה , with the *qere* providing the expected וְהָיָה (“and they shall be”), thus, for example, Josh 18:12 $\text{וְהָיָה תְּנָאֲלָיו}$ [וְהָיָה].⁴⁵ The form וְהָיָה is not to be parsed as the 3 m. sg. *wēqatal* form (= “and it shall be”), which would be a case of both number and gender incongruence, in light of the subject תְּנָאֲלָיו | תְּנָאֲלָיו —but rather as the archaic form of the 3 f. pl. *wēqatal* form. Note the 3 f. pl. suffix-conjugation ending -ā in Eblaite, Akkadian, Biblical Aramaic, and Ge’ez (and most likely

⁴²For details, see Gary A. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (SBLMS 43; Atlanta: Scholars, 1990), 21–23.

⁴³See Marcus, *Masorah*, 41.

⁴⁴On similar confusions within the course of the transmission of the biblical text, in both directions, see Raphael Weiss, “On Ligatures in the Hebrew Bible (ם = נו),” *JBL* 82 (1963): 188–94 (190). For more on the masoretic notation, see Marcus, *Masorah*, 56. For the use of marginal *nun* in נֹחַ at Josh 5:1, see below.

⁴⁵See Marcus, *Masorah*, 223, 275, 277, 279.

Ugaritic as well).⁴⁶ Hebrew must have retained this archaism in certain dialects or registers, as witnessed by the four instances in Joshua, even as the reading tradition harmonized these cases with the more common וְהָיוּ (“and they shall be”).⁴⁷

- **Josh 22:7: מעבר (k) | בעבר (q):** This example is the opposite of what is described above. In this case, the oral reading tradition preserved the (presumably) more archaic form, whereas the scribal tradition apparently updated the text.⁴⁸
- **Josh 24:15: בעבר (k) | מעבר (q):** This example is the inverse of what is described above, though it parallels the example analyzed earlier. Once again, the written text retained the (presumably) more archaic form, whereas the oral reading tradition apparently updated the text.⁴⁹

Masoretic Notes

This section presents selected Masorah parva (Mp) notes relevant especially to passages in the book of Joshua. Naturally, such examples could be multiplied virtually without end, though I limit the presentation to three items:⁵⁰

- **The Seven Nations of the Land of Canaan:** The list of the seven nations of the land of Canaan appears twice in Joshua, though the ordering is different. To alert the scribe/reader to the differences, the Masorah includes mnemonics comprised of seven letters.⁵¹ Hence, at Josh 3:10 one reads עהוּפנמס, while at Josh 24:11 one reads מַפְּתִנּוּס.⁵² מ^L Mp includes

⁴⁶See Edward Lipiński, *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar* (OLA 80; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 360–61, 364. For Biblical Aramaic, see Elisha Qimron, *'Aramit Miqr'a* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1993), 38.

⁴⁷I might even suggest that the Benjaminite dialect was one such dialect with the 3 f. pl. suffix-conjugation ending *-ā*. Note that three of the Joshua passages are within the Benjamin section (Josh 18:11–29), while five additional examples occur in Jeremiah, the prophet from Anathoth of Benjamin. For the complete list of passages, see Gary A. Rendsburg, “Dual Personal Pronouns and Dual Verbs in Hebrew,” *JQR* 73 (1982): 50–53 (51 n. 54).

⁴⁸See Marcus, *Masorah*, 332.

⁴⁹See Marcus, *Masorah*, 377.

⁵⁰As indicated above, the hundreds of notes, especially as presented in מ^L, are analyzed thoroughly and systematically in the important study by Marcus, *Masorah*.

⁵¹For further details, see Dost, *Sub-Loq*, 18; and Marcus, *Masorah*, 37.

⁵²Note the following abbreviations: ע = הַבְּנֵי (apparently because ע is the only letter in the word which does not bear a grammatical function [as a prefix, article, preposition, etc.]); ת = הָהֵם (with ת used to distinguish this word from the next one); ו = הָהֵם (with ו used to distinguish this word from the previous one); פ = הַפְּרִי (with פ as the first letter of the ethnonym); נ = הַנְּרִינִי (with נ as the first letter of the ethnonym); מ = אֲמֵרִי (apparently because מ is too common a letter—the same holds for מ, which, moreover, also can bear a grammatical function [as preposition, as prefix to the participle in derived stems, etc.], but for whatever reason the Masoretes settled on the use of מ to indicate הַמְּאֲרִי, instead of the following ר; י = יְבוּסִי (apparently because י is the only letter in the word which does not bear a grammatical function [as a prefix, conjunction, preposition, etc.])).

these notes at 3:10 and 24:11, respectively, but also adds a similar note at 9:1 תמכפוס, where six nations are listed.⁵³

- **The verb גָּדַל (“he raised up,” Josh 4:14):** At Josh 4:14, the Masoretes observe that the verbal form גָּדַל (“he raised up”) appears only twice in the entire Bible, here and in Esth 3:1.⁵⁴ M^A Mp provides the catchwords המלך אחשורוש (“King Ahasuerus”), the subject of the verb in Esth 3:1;⁵⁵ while M^L Mp provides the catchwords את המן (“Haman”) the object of Ahasuerus’s action in said verse. Such is the way of the Masorah, with each manuscript utilizing its own system.
- **The phrase בן ארבעים שנה (“forty years old,” Josh 14:7):** At Josh 14:7, the Masoretes observe that only twice in the Bible does the phrase בן ארבעים שנה (“forty years old”) occur at the head of the verse. Both M^A and M^L include the Mp comment ב ראש פסו.⁵⁶ The only other instance is 2 Sam 2:10 (re: Ish-bosheth), though in both M^A and M^L the Masorah does not comment on the matter.

Sebirin

The term *sebirin* refers to suggested variant readings transmitted by the Masorah, but which ultimately are to be rejected. The different codices include differing numbers of *sebirin*: M^A contains 1 case (1:7); M^L contains 2 cases (1:7, 8:17); and M^C contains 2 cases (8:17, 13:8).⁵⁷ I present here one example, the case of Josh 1:7, commented upon in M^A and M^L (though not M^C):

רָקַן חֹזֶק וְאַמִּיץ מְאֹד לְשִׁמּוֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל־הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי אֶל־תִּסּוּר מִמֶּנּוּ יָמִין
וּשְׂמֹאל לְמַעַן תִּשְׁלִי כְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תִּלְדָּ:

Only be-strong and very courageous, to keep (and) to do according to the entire Teaching which Moses my servant has commanded you; do not turn-aside **from it** either to the right or to the left, so that you may prosper wherever you go.

⁵³For a summary of the evidence from other books of the Bible, see Solomon Frensdorff, *Das Buch Ochlāh W’ochlah (Massora)* (Hannover: Hahn’sche Hofbuchhandlung, 1864; reprint: New York: Ktav, 1972), 149–50, §274.

⁵⁴For further details, see Marcus, *Masorah*, 51.

⁵⁵See also M^{S1} Mp with אַחַש הַמֶּלֶךְ and M^C Mp with simply הַמֶּלֶךְ.

⁵⁶For further details, see Marcus, *Masorah*, 215.

⁵⁷See the detailed study of Emilia Fernández Tejero, “No es así, aunque así os parezca: Los *sebirin* del libro de Josué,” *MEAH, sección Hebreo* 58 (2009): 27–40. As far as I am able to determine M^{S1} contains no *sebirin* comments, though one cannot be certain, since the margin at Josh 1:7 is covered by the repair material along the binding edge.

Since the antecedent of **מִמֶּנּוּ** (“from it”), indicated in bold above, is the feminine noun **תּוֹרָה** (“Teaching”), one would expect the grammatically “correct” form **מִמֶּנָּה** (“from it,” f.). The *sebir* comment warns against altering the text in such fashion. As both $\mathfrak{M}^A$ and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ note, there are six such cases in the Hebrew Bible (Lev 6:8; 27:9; Josh 1:7; Judg 11:34; 1 Kgs 22:43; 2 Kgs 4:39).

Typically the alternative reading is indicated in the Mp note, though not always. For example, in the present instance, at Josh 1:7, $\mathfrak{M}^A$ does not provide the proposed alternative reading, though such is indicated in $\mathfrak{M}^L$.⁵⁸ Neither manuscript provides the list of the other five occasions here at Josh 1:7, though $\mathfrak{M}^L$ does so in a Masorah magna (Mm) note at 1 Kgs 22:43.⁵⁹

Yafeh Mark

Unlike $\mathfrak{M}^A$ and $\mathfrak{M}^L$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$ frequently uses the special *yafeh* mark to indicate that a reading is correct, especially since a similar phraseology may occur either nearby or more commonly elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Instances in Joshua are found at Josh 7:4; 8:17, 22; and 10:39.⁶⁰ For example, at Josh 10:39 (see Image 13.1) not only is the expression **אֶת־כָּל־נַפְשׁ** unique in the entire Hebrew Bible, it follows upon six occurrences of **וְאֶת־כָּל־הַנַּפְשׁ** in Josh 10 (vv. 28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 37) and thus requires special attention.

Marginal Nun

Again, unlike $\mathfrak{M}^A$ and $\mathfrak{M}^L$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$ makes liberal use of the marginal *nun* mark.⁶¹ To be more specific, this feature never appears in $\mathfrak{M}^A$; there are c. 75 instances in $\mathfrak{M}^L$, which covers the entire Tanakh; and there are 500+ cases in $\mathfrak{M}^C$, which covers only the Prophets. Moreover, the marginal *nun* appears as a *nun sofit*, written bold and large, especially when compared to other Mp notes, hence: ך.

According to the analysis of Elvira Martín-Contreras, “the marginal *nun* is related to the consonantal text without any reference to the reading tradition; its function is to warn that something happens in the consonantal text but not to explain it”—which is to say, the mark is used to alert the scribe or reader to an issue

⁵⁸See Marcus, *Masorah*, 9.

⁵⁹See also conveniently in the ‘*En ha-Masora*’ section of Cohen, *Miqra’ot Gedolot HaKeter*, 2.

⁶⁰Elvira Martín-Contreras, “Confirming What is Written: The Masoretic Term *Yafeh*,” *VT* 68 (2018): 606–19. A perusal of $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$, at least in the Joshua portion, suggests that the *yafeh* mark is not a feature of this manuscript either.

⁶¹A perusal of $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$, at least in the Joshua portion, suggests that the marginal *nun* is not a feature of this manuscript either.

in the spelling of a particular word.⁶² Not surprisingly, accordingly, 450 of the 500+ occurrences in $\mathfrak{M}^c$ occur alongside *ketiv* | *qere* denotations.



Image 13.1: Yafeh Indication (Abbreviated as יפ, With Three Dots Above the Two Letters) at Josh 10:39, in $\mathfrak{M}^c$, p. 17, Left Column

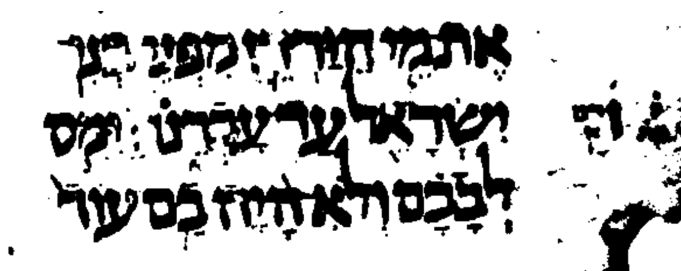


Image 13.2: Josh 5:1, as presented in $\mathfrak{M}^c$, p. 7, with marginal nun alongside the *ketiv* | *qere* denotation, in the bottom right corner of the page (with only the last two letters of the relevant word עברם [that is, רם] indicated in the margin)

⁶²Elvira Martín-Contreras, “The Marginal Nun in the Masora of the Cairo Codex of the Prophets: Use and Function,” *VT* 64 (2014): 81–90 (81); see also Innocent Himbaza, “Le *nūn* marginal et la petite Massore,” *Textus* 20 (2000): 173–91; and Vincent D. Beiler, “The Marginal Nun/Zayin: Meaning, Purpose, Localisation,” in *Studies in the Masoretic Tradition of the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Daniel J. Crowther, Aaron D. Hornkohl, and Geoffrey Khan (Cambridge Semitic Languages and Cultures; Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2022), 75–113. Note that Beiler believes that the “marginal nun” is actually not a *nun sofit*, but rather either the letter *zayin* or a special sign of unknown specific meaning.

For example, at Josh 5:1, marginal *nun* appears beside the *ketiv* | *qere* issue noted there (see Image 13.2).⁶³ For another instance, see at Josh 6:9, with marginal *nun* adjacent to the *ketiv* | *qere* denotation indicated simply by נ over ק, concerning the *ketiv* תִּקְעוּ | *qere* תִּקְעִי.

Pisqa' bē-'Emša' Pasuq

The book of Joshua includes one instance of *pisqa' bē-'emša' pasuq* (that is, a break in the middle of a verse), at 4:1. $\mathfrak{M}^A$, $\mathfrak{M}^C$, and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ all include a *petuḥa* in the middle of the verse, while $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$ marks the break with a *setuma* (see Table 13.1 above).⁶⁴

Peculiarities

The Layout of Joshua 12

Joshua 12 includes a list of 31 kings (not by name, though) and their cities in the land of Canaan who were defeated by Joshua and the Israelites.⁶⁵ Joshua 12:7–8 introduces the list, and then vv. 9–24 list the individual cities, with each toponym followed by the word אֶחָד (“one”). Masoretic manuscripts present this material in list form, with 16 lines comprised of two columns. Each of the first 15 lines includes two city-names and the word אֶחָד (“one”). Thus, for example, v. 12 reads: מֶלֶךְ עֵגְלוֹן אֶחָד מֶלֶךְ גִּזְרִי אֶחָד (“king of Eglon, one; king of Gezer, one”)—with white space between the two component parts. The final verse (v. 24) reads: מֶלֶךְ תִּרְצָה אֶחָד כָּל-מְלָכִים שְׁלֹשִׁים וְאַחָד (“king of Tirzah, one; all [the] kings, thirty-one”)—again, with white space between the two component parts. Through this device, we gain a list of 31 kings, spread over 15½ verses, with the half-line or half-verse in v. 24b providing the total. This layout thereby allows for 16 complete lines, each with two halves, for a neat and aesthetic appearance.

The four manuscripts studied here use different strategies for presenting the list in Joshua 12. In $\mathfrak{M}^A$ and $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$, the list extends over the right and center columns, with the verses above and below following suit—leaving only the left column as a standard column. In $\mathfrak{M}^L$, the reverse occurs, with the list extending over the center and left columns, with the verses above and below following suit—leaving only the right column as a standard column. The most unique layout is found in

⁶³For the *ketiv* | *qere* at Josh 5:1, see above.

⁶⁴The standard treatments of *pisqa' bē-'emša' pasuq* by M. Z. Segal, “Le-ḥeqer ‘pisqa’ be-’emša’ pasuq,” *Tarbiz* 29 (1960): 203–206 (206), and Shemaryahu Talmon, “Pisqah be’Emša’ Pasuq and 11QPs^a,” *Textus* 5 (1966): 11–21 (15), state that an example occurs in Josh 8:24, but none of the major manuscripts reflect such. Presumably this statement originates as an inadvertent error by Segal, and then Talmon simply repeated the citation through his reliance on Segal.

⁶⁵For linguistic insights into the list of the 31 kings, including an explanation of the final phrase כָּל-מְלָכִים שְׁלֹשִׁים וְאַחָד (“all [the] kings, thirty-one”), without the expected definite article, see below.

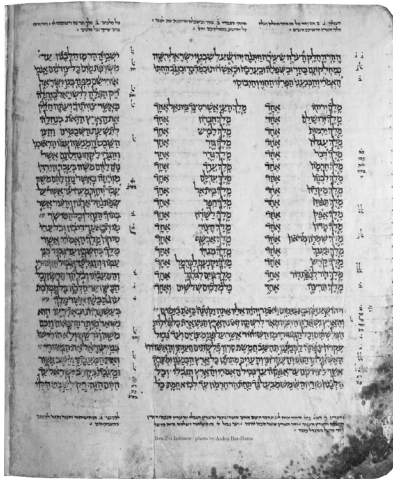


Image 13.3: *The List of the 31 Kings in Josh 12 as Presented by $\mathfrak{M}^A$, f. 13b*

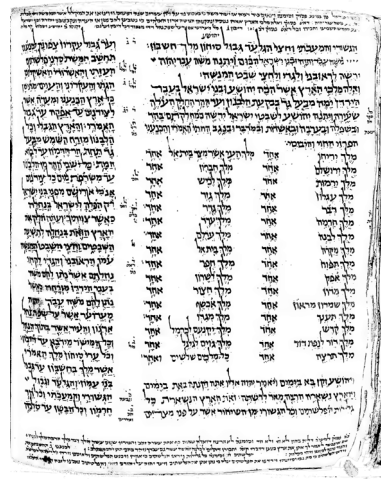


Image 13.4: *The List of the 31 Kings in Josh 12 as Presented by $\mathfrak{M}^{S1}$, p. 204*



Image 13.5: *The List of the 31 Kings in Josh 12 as Presented by $\mathfrak{M}^L$, f. 128v.*



Image 13.6: *The List of the 31 Kings in Josh 12 as Presented by $\mathfrak{M}^C$, p. 20.*

$\mathfrak{M}^C$, where the list comprises all three columns, with the verses above and below doing likewise.

In all four manuscripts, the scribes have left white space after the expression “king of X,” so that each instance of אֶחָד (“one”) aligns one below the other. Even

the last item has been accommodated to this system, with white space intervening between the phrase *כָּל-מְלָכִים שְׁלֹשִׁים* (“all [the] kings, thirty”) and the final word *וְאֶחָד* (“and one”). In addition, note that *M^A* and *M^C* have full blank lines both before and after the chart, while *M^L* and *M^{S1}* include a full blank line only after the list of kings (for further inspection, see Images 13.3–6 above).

A Qumran-Style Spelling at M Joshua 10:24

Joshua 10:24 reads *הָהָלְכִים* (“those who went”) with a very strange *’aleph* added to the verb *הָלַךְ*. All the major codices read thus. This spelling evokes the so-called baroque orthography of the Dead Sea Scrolls, even if this specific usage of word-final *ה* to represent the /u:/-vowel is not commonly attested.⁶⁶ This usage is noted in the Masorah, with *M^L* Mp mentioning 12 instances of an additional *’aleph* at the end of a word, and with *M^L* Mm providing the list.⁶⁷ *M^A* Mp notes simply that the form is spelled *plene* (and that it does not exist elsewhere), with no further comment.

The form *הָהָלְכִים* within the phrase *הָהָלְכִים אִתּוֹ* (“those who went with him”) in Josh 10:24 is doubly interesting, due to the presence of the definite article *הַ* serving as the relative marker preceding a suffix-conjugation verb, a feature found more commonly in LBH (Ezra and Chronicles especially).⁶⁸ The collocation of these two features (one orthographic, one grammatical) suggests that the phrase is a late addition to the text of the book of Joshua (even though it is represented in *Q* and other Versions).

Language

Linguistic Profile

Joshua includes two main narrative portions: (1) chs. 2–11, the account of the conquest; and (2) chs. 22–24, a kind of appendix to the main book, which includes the ratification of the covenant at Shechem (Josh 24). In his analysis of the narrative prose material, utilizing metrics such as Noun-Verb ratios and (within the verb class) Finite-Nominal ratios, Frank Polak places the former chunk into his

⁶⁶See Armin Lange, “The Question of the So-Called Qumran Orthography, the Severus Scroll, and the Masoretic Text,” *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 3 (2014): 424–75 (esp. 439, 447, 461). For the use of this spelling system in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Eric Reymond, *Qumran Hebrew: An Overview of Orthography, Phonology, and Morphology* (Atlanta: SBL, 2014), 56–57; and Elisha Qimron, *A Grammar of the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2018), 86. A good example is 1QpHab 2:6 *יִאֱמִינוּ* (“they [do not] believe”). The only other example of this specific feature in *M* is Isa 28:12 *אֲבִיזִי* (“they are [not] willing”).

⁶⁷For further details, see Marcus, *Masorah*, 154–55.

⁶⁸Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1991), 2: 537 §145d. For a detailed analysis of this syntagma, see Robert D. Holmstedt, *The Relative Clause in Biblical Hebrew* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 69–77.

“Transitional Subclass: Intricate Classical Narrative,” and the latter chunk into his “Late Pre-exilic/Exilic Period.”⁶⁹ Which is to say, chs. 2–11 are written during the monarchic period (though not as early as other material), while chs. 22–24 are written later, either towards the end of the monarchy or during the exile—though, as Polak notes, the linguistic profile of this latter section is not uniform.⁷⁰ This treatment excludes ch. 1, which borrows heavily from Deuteronomy, and chs. 12–21, which are dominated by lists of cities and related material.

Poetic Snippet in Joshua 10:12b–13a

Most scholars agree that Joshua’s wish or command that the sun stand still at Gibeon (10:12b–13a) constitutes a poetic snippet, with characteristic parallelism. The text then continues to inform the reader הִלֵּא־הָיָא בְּתוֹכָהּ עַל־סֵפֶר הַיָּשָׁר (“behold, it is written in the book of Yashar”). The book of Yashar is mentioned again in 2 Sam 1:18, in the introduction to David’s poetic lament over Saul and Jonathan, who lost their lives on the battlefield at Mt. Gilboa. From these two references, we can assume that the book of Yashar was a collection of ancient Hebrew poetic traditions, most likely with a focus on military actions (both victories, as at Gibeon, and defeats, as at Gilboa). As these passages further indicate, the book of Yashar is older than our canonical Joshua or our canonical Samuel.⁷¹

Some Special Linguistic Items

Notwithstanding the millennia of transmission of the biblical text, atypical grammatical forms remain. They are not to be emended, but rather are to be explained within the context of literary composition. Four examples are included here. An additional item presented below (the fourth bullet) is of a different kind, but worthy of our attention nonetheless.

- **Joshua 2:4 וַתִּצְפְּנוּ (“And she hid him”):** An unusual form occurs in Josh 2:4: וַתִּצְפְּנוּ (“and she hid him”). First, there are two Israelite spies in Rahab’s house, and in fact later in the narrative, the text states, as expected, וַהֲיָא הָעֵלְתָם הַנָּחִיָּה וַתִּטְמְנֵנָם בְּפִשְׁתֵּי הָעֵץ (“and she had taken them up to the roof, and she had hidden them among the flax stalks,” 2:6). Secondly, the wrong object–pronoun appears on the word; the expected form is וַתִּצְפְּנֵהוּ (“and she hid him,” Exod 2:2). Most scholars, accordingly, emend

⁶⁹Frank H. Polak, “The Oral and the Written: Syntax, Stylistics and the Development of Biblical Prose Narrative,” *JANES* 26 (1998): 59–105, with the convenient chart on p. 70.

⁷⁰Polak, “Oral and Written,” 95–96.

⁷¹For a recent thorough study, with an original suggestion regarding the book of Yashar, see Edward L. Greenstein, “What Was the Book of Yashar?” *Maarav* 21 (2014): 25–35.

וַהֲצִיפֵנוּ in Josh 2:4 to וַהֲצִיפֵנָם (“and she hid them”), with a nod to 𐤀, 𐤁, and 𐤂 (see, for example, *BHS*, *ad loc.*). But the ancient versions were doing nothing differently than modern English versions (for example, RSV: “and hidden them”), which is to say, they simply were making sense of a challenging text by smoothing out the difficulty. As the present writer has argued, however, Josh 2:4 וַהֲצִיפֵנוּ (“and she hid him”) is not to be emended. Rather, the form stands as testimony to the manner in which the ancient Israelite wordsmiths would introduce confused language to reflect the confusion and excitement of the moment—and to the manner in which later Jewish scribes faithfully transmitted the text, without alteration.⁷²

(1) First, we must marvel at the action of Rahab, who is able to accomplish the ultimate in multitasking: in a single instant, she is able to hide the Israelite spies *and* speak to the king’s messengers in her entranceway. Thus I would explain the use of the 3 m.s. pron. suff. as a means to indicate that Rahab—who in reality had no time to hide either man—astonishingly managed to hide at least one of the men, with the other spy presumably tagging along or finding his own quick hiding spot. This is a very hurried moment for Rahab, there is hardly time to think, and no time to act; and she does the best she can at this crucial juncture in order to hide even one man. The text should stand as it is, with the 3 m. s. pron. suff. in place, as an indication of the animation and excitement present in her house at this critical moment. (2) Secondly, the atypical form וַהֲצִיפֵנוּ, with the 𐤁- pronominal suffix is invoked by the author to add yet another element of confused language to the story. The moment of Rahab’s hiding the men is so rushed that not even the correct grammatical form can be used; instead, the author introduces this atypical form to enhance the storytelling. (3) Thirdly, the sense of “and she hid him” carries the reader back to the only other case of this action in the Bible, to wit, the action taken by Moses’s mother to hide him in the papyrus basket (Exod 2:2, as referenced above). As many scholars have noticed, numerous scenes in the early chapters of Joshua evoke scenes from the life of Moses or from the Exodus/Numbers narrative generally.⁷³ As so often happens in biblical scholarship, commentators are too quick to take the facile route of textual emendation. Upon closer inspection, as this passage illustrates beautifully, 𐤀 is to stand, as testimony to the brilliant literary creativity

⁷²Gary A. Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2019), 140–43.

⁷³Consider the following items: spies narrative; crossing of the Jordan (parallel to the crossing of the Sea of Reeds); circumcision story; mention of manna; mention of Passover; “remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy” (5:15), with its parallel in Exod 3:5; etc. For a sustained treatment, see Elie Assis, *From Moses to Joshua and from the Miraculous to the Ordinary: A Literary Analysis of the Conquest Narrative in the Book of Joshua* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2005).

of the ancient Israelite literati: *lectio difficilior praeferenda est* (note that all four manuscripts studied herein indicate that וְהַחֲכָמִים in Josh 2:4 is the sole attestation of the form in the Bible, via the usual ל mark).⁷⁴

- **Joshua 9:12–13: Atypical Syntax of the Demonstrative Pronoun (3 times):** When the men of Gibeon, who have come from a faraway land, show their food and their wares to Joshua, they use atypical syntax vis-à-vis the demonstrative pronoun (3×): וְהוּא לַחֲמֵנוּ (“this our bread,” v. 12); וְאַלֶּה שְׁלֻבוֹתֵינוּ (“these our skins of wine,” v. 13); וְנַעֲלֵינוּ (“these our garments and our shoes,” v. 13). In SBH grammar, the demonstrative pronoun follows the substantive, whereas in these three clauses the demonstrative pronoun precedes the substantive. Said syntax occurs regularly in Aramaic and occasionally in Mishnaic Hebrew, thereby pointing to the northern provenance of this usage. For Aramaic, see, for example, Ezra 5:4 בְּנִינָא דְגָה (“this building”), Dan 4:15 דְּנִהּ חֲלֵמָא (“this dream”), etc. For Mishnaic Hebrew, see, for example, Ketubbot 4:6 הָא בְּרִשָּׁא (“this interpretation”), Nazir 3:2 הָא עֵדוּת (“this testimony”), etc.⁷⁵ Note that the men of Gibeon are referred to in this passage as Hivites (Josh 9:7), who in turn are associated with Mount Lebanon (Judg 3:3), that is, to the north of Israel, including as far as Lebo-hamath, that is, in the Aramaic-speaking heartland.⁷⁶
- **Joshua 12:24: כָּל-מְלָכִים שְׁלֹשִׁים וְאַחַד (“all kings, thirty and one”):** As seen above, the masoretic tradition presents the list of 31 kings defeated by Joshua in chart format. The list commences with מֶלֶךְ יֵרִיחוֹ אֶחָד (“king of Jericho, one,” 12:9a) and concludes with מֶלֶךְ תִּרְצָה אֶחָד (“king of Tirzah, one,” 12:24a). Then follows the tally: כָּל-מְלָכִים שְׁלֹשִׁים וְאַחַד: (lit. “all kings, thirty and one,” 12:24b). In prose writing, one would expect the definite article in the expression, and indeed such occurs 5 times: כָּל-הַמְּלָכִים (“all the kings,” Josh 9:1; 10:42; 11:5, 18; 2 Sam 10:19).⁷⁷ The lack of the definite article in Josh 12:24 results from the accounting style table, listing each of the 31 kings, and then providing a total line, כָּל-מְלָכִים שְׁלֹשִׁים וְאַחַד: (lit. “all kings, thirty and one”). Similar phrases embedded into the prose narratives may be found in Gen 46:26; Josh 15:32; 21:26; 2 Sam 23:39, and strikingly, this same format is used in administrative texts written in Minoan Linear A, with a list of items, and then a final line which commences

⁷⁴See, for example, *M*⁵¹, p. 191, with the key word conveniently located as the last word on the page.

⁷⁵Miguel Pérez Fernández, *An Introductory Grammar of Rabbinic Hebrew* (trans. John Elwolde; Leiden: Brill 1999), 23.

⁷⁶For further details, see Gary A. Rendsburg, “Šimuš Bilti Ragil šel Kinnuy ha-Remez ba-Miqra’: ‘Edut Nosefet le-‘Ivrit Šefonit bi-Tqumat ha-Miqra’,” *Shnaton* 12 (2000): 83–88.

⁷⁷Four of these have the *maqṣef*; Josh 11:5 reads כָּל הַמְּלָכִים without *maqṣef*.

with *ku-ro* (“all, total,” = Semitic *kull-*).⁷⁸ Note that the biblical examples all come from the earlier portions of the Bible, suggesting an accounting tradition that bridges the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age. The Masorah provides the following comments. Both $\mathfrak{M}^A$ Mp and $\mathfrak{M}^L$ Mp indicate that there are two instances of כל מלכים in the Bible,⁷⁹ with $\mathfrak{M}^A$ Mm noting Ps 72:11 as the other passage. $\mathfrak{M}^A$ Mm further observes that one case of כל מלכים occurs, namely, at Isa 62:2. Note that these other passages are in poetry, where the definite article occurs less frequently.

- **Joshua 15:9; 18:15 מַיִן נַפְתוּחַיִם** (“The spring of Merneptah”): Most readers of the Bible are unaware of the fact that the name of pharaoh Merneptah (r. c. 1224–1214 BCE)⁸⁰ appears embedded within a toponym in the book of Joshua: מַיִן נַפְתוּחַיִם (Josh 15:9; 18:15), located on the boundary between the territorial allotments of Judah and Benjamin. Now, because the Hebrew word מַיִן means “waters of,” readers of the Bible have interpreted this toponym as “the spring of the waters of Neptōah,” with only the last element as a pure proper noun (see already ὁ πηγῆς νεφθωῶς ὕδατος Ναφθωῶ). The term, however, is to be understood as “the spring of Merneptah,” especially in light of the fact that final /r/ was lost in Late Egyptian.⁸¹ The Pharaoh’s name may have been written with the hieroglyphs *mr-n-ptḥ* (meaning “beloved of Ptah”), but the actual pronunciation of the first element would have been closer to what is preserved in Josh 15:9; 18:15, to wit, *mēneptōah*. So, while the Hebrew was reinterpreted over the ages, the masoretic reading preserves the name of this important pharaoh with relative accuracy. In his famous victory stele, Merneptah proclaims that he campaigned in Canaan, with specific mention of Ashkelon, Gezer, and Yeno‘am.⁸² From the reference to “the spring of Merneptah” in the book of Joshua, one should assume that this pharaoh’s armies also reached the central highlands, perhaps Jerusalem itself.

⁷⁸Cyrus H. Gordon, *Evidence for the Minoan Language* (Ventnor: Ventnor Publishers, 1966), 27; and Robert R. Stieglitz, “Minoan and Biblical Totals,” *Studi micenei ed egeo-anatolici* 14 (1971): 217–18. Note that Minoan uses *r*-signs to express both /r/ and /l/.

⁷⁹See Marcus, *Masorah*, 193.

⁸⁰Dates according to the detailed analysis by Thomas Schneider, “Contributions to the Chronology of the New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period,” *Egypt and the Levant* 20 (2010): 373–409.

⁸¹See Antonio Loprieno, *Ancient Egyptian: A Linguistic Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 38.

⁸²The same stele mentions Israel, of course, most likely with reference to Israelite elements which did not participate in the Exodus and the Sojourn in Egypt. See our treatment in Manfred Bietak and Gary A. Rendsburg, “Egypt and the Exodus,” in *Ancient Israel*, ed. John Merrill and Hershel Shanks (4th ed.; Washington: Biblical Archaeological Society, 2021), 34–37. On the toponym appearing in Josh 15:9; 18:15, see Gary A. Rendsburg, “The Emergence of Israel in the Land of Canaan,” in the same volume, p. 87.

Finally, note that the name of the spring lives on as Lifta,⁸³ five kilometers northwest of Jerusalem.

- **Joshua 21:40 תְּהִי־יָנָה הָעָרִים הָאֵלֶּה** (“These cities shall be”):⁸⁴ Only here in the Bible does a verse commence with the form תְּהִי־יָנָה (“they shall be,” out of 20 occurrences). Moreover, the sense of the phrase violates the norms of Hebrew grammar: a prefix-conjugation verb standing before its subject bears jussive or volitive meaning; to express the indicative future, SBH either uses the *wəqatal* form or places the prefix-conjugation verb after the noun or a particle.⁸⁵ In this case, accordingly, one would expect the ubiquitous form יָנָה (16x at the head of the sentence, 29 times following *’atnah*, in the span of Genesis–Kings). In light of this information, several scholars have proposed that Josh 21:40 passage has suffered from scribal error.⁸⁶ The text is fine as it stands, however: *lectio difficilior praeferenda est*. For the author of Joshua 21 has two purposes in the employment of the alternative syntax in v. 40. The first is to mark closure:⁸⁷ note that the phrase תְּהִי־יָנָה הָעָרִים הָאֵלֶּה (“these cities shall be”) comes at the very end of an exceedingly long and detailed discussion of the various Levitical cities (in which the word עִיר, “city” occurs 40 times). The second is to create the intertextual link: note that the key verb תְּהִי־יָנָה echoes the four-fold use of the self-same verb and form in the related passage Num 35:11–15.

State of Preservation of the Text

Scribal Insertion

Joshua uses two forms to indicate “the half-tribe of Manasseh,” one with the definite article, thus, הַחֲצִי שֶׁבֶט מְנַשֶּׁשֶׁה (9×: 1:12; 4:12; 12:6; 13:7; 18:7; 22:9, 10, 11, 21), and one without, thus, חֲצִי שֶׁבֶט מְנַשֶּׁשֶׁה (3×: 13:29; 22:13, 15). The two forms intersect and interchange especially in ch. 22: the former occurs in vv. 7, 9, 10, 11, 21, while the latter occurs in vv. 13, 15. The careful scribe will keep all this straight, though when a slip does occur, it is understandable. For one instance thereof, note

⁸³Reflecting apocopation of the original name, and with interchange of the sonorants /n/ and /l/.

⁸⁴Verse 40 according to *BHL*; v. 42 according to *BHS*, etc.—depending on whether or not one numbers the two “missing verses” after Josh 21:35 (see below).

⁸⁵Alviero Niccacci, “A Neglected Point of Hebrew Syntax: Yiqtol and Position in the Sentence,” *Liber Annus* 37 (1987): 7–19; Jan Joosten, *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew* (Jerusalem: Simor, 2012), 315–16, 333–34.

⁸⁶See, for example, Seth Sanders, “Ancient Hebrew,” in *A Companion to Ancient Near Eastern Languages*, ed. Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee (Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World; Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2020), 293.

⁸⁷On this literary device, see Gary A. Rendsburg, “Marking Closure,” *VT* 66 (2016): 280–303; Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written*, 269–98.

the usage at Josh 22:7 in מ^c: מִנְשֵׁה (with the superscript *he* inserted as a correction), and with a marginal note to flag the insertion.

DEVELOPMENT

General Comments

Most scholars include the book of Joshua within the theorized Deuteronomistic History (DtrH), which (1) spans Joshua through Kings, (2) reveals the influence of the book of Deuteronomy, and (3) is to be dated to the late monarchic or exilic period. To be sure, there are instances of Deuteronomistic language in Joshua, though generally they are limited to certain pericopes, especially in chs. 1 and 23, to wit:

- Josh 1:1 (+13×) מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהוָה (“Moses the servant of YHWH”; see Deut 34:5)
- Josh 1:3 כָּל-מָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְרֹךְ כַּף-רַגְלֶךָ בּוֹ לָכֶם נָתַתִּי (“every place on which the sole of your foot treads, to you I give it”; see Deut 11:24)
- Josh 1:4 מִהַמִּדְבָּר וְהַלְבָּנוֹן הַזֶּה וְעַד-הַנָּהָר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה וְעַד-הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל ... יְהִיָּה לָכֶם: “from the wilderness and this Lebanon, and until the great river, the river Euphrates ... and until the great sea ... your border shall be”; see Deut 11:24)
- Josh 1:6, 7, 9, 18 חֲזַק וְאַמִּץ (“be strong and courageous”; see Deut 31:7, 23)
- Josh 23:1 מִכָּל-אֹיְבֵיהֶם מִסָּבִיב (“from all their enemies about”; see Deut 12:10)
- Josh 23:6 לִבִּי לֹא יִסְוֶה מִיָּמִין וּמִשְׁמָאל (“not deviating from it to the right or to the left”; see Deut 17:20)
- Josh 23:9 גְּדֹלִים וְעֲצוּמִים (“great and mighty nations”; see Deut 4:38; 9:1; 11:23)

In general, though, I find the DtrH theory overstated, not only for Joshua but also for the following books. If anything, the narrative portions of Joshua 2–12 (especially the first half approximately) evoke the earlier Exodus/Numbers narratives, with references to the splitting of the waters, the prominence of the ark, manna, Passover, etc. (see above, n. 73)—of which the most striking example is the shared phraseology between Josh 5:15 and Exod 3:5:

- Josh 5:15 שֶׁלֹּא-תַעֲלֶה מֵעַל רַגְלֶךָ כִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה עֹמֵד עָלָיו קֹדֶשׁ הוּא (“remove your shoes from upon your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy”)
- Exod 3:5 שֶׁלֹּא-תַעֲלֶה מֵעַל רַגְלֶךָ כִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה עֹמֵד עָלָיו אֲדַמְתִּי-קֹדֶשׁ הוּא: (“remove your shoes from upon your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground”)

This observation has led other scholars to extend the JEP division of the Torah narratives into Joshua as well (especially JE, less so P), though once again I must demur, (1) because I prefer to treat narrative pericopes throughout the Bible holistically,⁸⁸ and (2) because such attempts to extend the putative sources into Joshua have been found wanting.⁸⁹

Next there is the question of the long and detailed lists of the tribal allotments and cities (chs. 13–19). Do the lists constitute an ideal, or do they reflect a reality? And if the latter, which time period is reflected? None of these questions can be answered definitively, though more and more scholars today would see a reality behind these lists, perhaps dating to the early monarchy.

To my mind, only one passage in the book of Joshua provides a clue to the time of composition and/or redaction, namely, Josh 6:26, with its clear echo in 1 Kgs 16:34:

- Josh 6:26 וַיִּשָּׁבַע יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּעֵת הַהִיא לְאַחַר אֲרוֹר הָאִישׁ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר יָקוּם וּבְנָה אֶת־הָעִיר: הָעִיר הַזֹּאת אֶת־יְרִיחוֹ בְּבִכְרוֹ וַיִּסְדֹּקָהּ וּבְעַצְמוֹ וַיַּצִּיב הָלְתִיָּהּ: (“And Joshua adjured at this time, saying: ‘Cursed be the man before YHWH, who arises and builds this city, Jericho, [at the expense of] his first-born he shall found it, and [at the expense of] his youngest he shall affix its gates’”).
- 1 Kgs 16:34 בְּיָמָיו בָּנָה חִיאל בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִי אֶת־יְרִיחוֹ בְּאַבְרָם בְּכֹרֹו יִסְדָּהּ וּבְשֵׁגֻב וּבְנָהּ: (“And in his [sc. Ahab’s] days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; [at the expense] of Abiram his first-born he founded it, and [at the expense of] Segub his youngest, he affixed its gates, according to the word of YHWH, which he spoke through the hand of Joshua bin Nun”).

Clearly, Josh 6:16 looks ahead to the actions of Hiel during the reign of Ahab (r. 871–852 BCE), which thereby provides a *terminus post quem* for the creation of the book of Joshua. Moreover, this dating, say ninth or eighth centuries BCE, aligns with the literary-stylistic analysis proffered by Polak (see above), at least for the main section of the book.

In sum, as with so many biblical books, reaching a fixed date for the book of Joshua is difficult. Using the evidence of language—which remains the most objective criterion and methodology for such endeavours—suggests a time during the monarchy, with the main portion (chs. 1–21) dating to the middle monarchic period (ninth–eighth century) and the appendices (chs. 22–24) dating to the late monarchic period.

⁸⁸Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written*, 468–90.

⁸⁹See, for example, Elie Assis, “A Literary Approach to Complex Narratives: An Examination of Joshua 3–4,” in *The Book of Joshua*, ed. Ed Noort (BETL 250; Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 401–13.

For more minor issues relevant to the development of the book of Joshua, see above, at “*ℳ and the Versions*,” with attention to the various pluses and minuses in *℣* in comparison to *ℳ*. These differences may testify to two different recensions of the book of Joshua in antiquity, until proto-*ℳ* emerged as the norm within the Jewish tradition.

The Additional Verses Following 21:35

Introduction

Joshua 21 is devoted to the Levitical cities, which were distributed more-or-less evenly throughout the twelve tribes. All twelve tribes are listed in the summary statement in vv. 4–8, but then something peculiar arises in the ensuing material. In the detailed tribe-by-tribe presentation in vv. 9–40, only eleven of the tribes and their cities are enumerated—with the tribe of Reuben absent. Based on v. 7, where Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun are mentioned together in the summary statement, we would expect to find Reuben included somewhere in the section comprised of vv. 34–38. Zebulun (vv. 34–35) and Gad (vv. 36–37) are there, with a general statement following (v. 38)—but, to repeat, Reuben is absent. This reflects the state of the four manuscripts analyzed herein, along with many other early codices—which is to say, the Reuben verses are lacking in *ℳ*^A, *ℳ*^C, *ℳ*^L, and *ℳ*^{SI}.⁹⁰ Other early manuscripts lack them as well, for example, Codex Reuchlinianus, no. 3 (Karlsruhe), dated to 1106. With the passage of time, however, Jewish scribes must have realized the non-appearance of Reuben in Joshua 21, and thus they began to include two additional verses (which we will call vv. 35a–35b), usually with a marginal note, at times without vocalisation. From where did they obtain the two verses? Either from manuscripts no longer available to us, or from the parallel material in 1 Chr 6:63–64, with the necessary adjustments (see anon). In the Chronicles passage, the Reuben material does appear, exactly where one would expect it, between Zebulun (v. 62) and Gad (vv. 65–66), as follows:

וּמֵעֵבֶר לַיַּרְדֵּן וְיָרְחוֹ לַמְּזוֹרָח תִּירְדֹּן מִמִּנְחָה רְאוּבֵן אֶת־בְּצֵר בְּמִדְבָּר וְאֶת־מִגְרָשִׁיהָ וְאֶת־יָהֶצֶה
וְאֶת־מִגְרָשִׁיהָ:
וְאֶת־קֶדְמוֹת וְאֶת־מִגְרָשִׁיהָ וְאֶת־מִיִּפְעֵת וְאֶת־מִגְרָשִׁיהָ:⁶⁴

⁶³ And across the Jordan of Jericho, to the east of the Jordan, from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the wilderness and its surrounding-lands, and Jahaz and its surrounding-lands; ⁶⁴ and Kedemoth and its surrounding-lands, and Mephaath and its surrounding-lands.

⁹⁰The two Reuben verses are present in *℣* and *℥*; they generally are not present in *ℳ* manuscripts; while *℣* Jonathan manuscripts reflect both options (some with, some without).

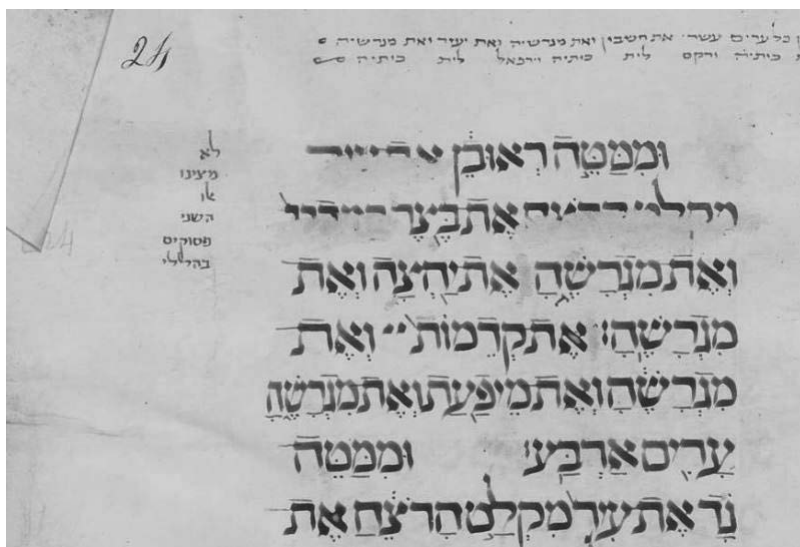


Image 13.7: *Paris BnF hebr. 82, f. 24v., written in Burgos, Spain, in 1207*

The Incorporation of the Reuben Verses into Biblical Manuscripts

The incorporation of the Reuben verses into biblical manuscripts has been ably treated by Ronald Hendel,⁹¹ though one corrective is necessary here. Whereas Hendel identified MS Madrid, M1 (formerly Complutense, no. 1), dated to 1280, as the earliest manuscript to include Josh 21:35a–35b, to the best of my knowledge the earliest such manuscript is one written seven-plus decades earlier, to wit, Paris BnF hebr. 82, written in Burgos, Spain, in 1207,⁹² as follows (see Image 13.7).⁹³

וּמִמָּנָה רְאוּבֵן אֶת־עֵיר מִקְלַשׁ הָרָצָח אֶת־בָּצָר בְּמִדְבָּר וְאֶת־מִגְרָשָׁהּ וְאֶת־יְהוֹצָהּ וְאֶת מִגְרָשָׁהּ:
וְאֶת־קְדְמוֹת וְאֶת־מִגְרָשָׁהּ וְאֶת־מִיפְעֵת וְאֶת־מִגְרָשָׁהּ עָרִים אַרְבַּע:

⁹¹Ronald Hendel, *Steps Toward a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible* (Text-Critical Studies 10; Atlanta: SBL, 2016), 7–13.

⁹²The manuscript may be viewed here: https://www.nli.org.il/en/discover/manuscripts/hebrew-manuscripts/itempage?vid=MANUSCRIPTS&scope=PNX_MANUSCRIPTS&docId=PNX_MANUSCRIPTS990001288150205171&SearchTxt=paris%20bnf%2082.

⁹³Naturally, of the hundreds of Bible manuscripts extant, one would not be surprised to identify an earlier one with the two verses, Josh 21:35a–35b, present.

Five words have been erased (indicated here by the strikethrough), though enough remains to identify the missing words. In addition, two instances of *waw* have been effaced (near the end of v. 35a and at the very start of v. 35b). Since the word **בַּמִּדְבָּר** (“in the wilderness”) appears in 1 Chr 6:63, one will posit that 1 Chronicles 6 serves as the source for the inclusion of the Reuben verses here in Joshua 21. And then since the phrase **אֶת־עִיר בְּקִלְט הָרָצָה** (thus the usual string of *tē’amim*) occurs 5 times elsewhere in Joshua 21 (vv. 13, 21, 27, 32, 38), the scribe used those occurrences as the basis for its inclusion here in v. 35a.

Note that the scribe adjusted the spelling of **בְּנִגְשִׁיהָ** (*plene*, “its surrounding-lands”), as occurs throughout 1 Chronicles 6 (41×), to **בְּנִגְשָׁהּ** (*defectiva*, “its surrounding-lands”), as occurs throughout Joshua 21 (49×).⁹⁴ In addition, he added the phrase **עָרִים אַרְבַּע** (“four cities”) at the end, to conform with the other tribal lists in Joshua 21.

Most importantly, however, is the marginal note: **לֹא מָצִינוּ אֵלּוּ הַשְּׁנַי פְּסוּקִים בְּהִלְלִי** (“we have not found these two verses in [Codex] Hilleli”), with reference to the model codex used by Spanish scribes, then available to them in Toledo (per the testimony of David Qimḥi, et al.).⁹⁵ This bit of early thirteenth-century textual criticism no doubt led a second hand to erase at least part of v. 35a and to lead the same or yet a third hand to add the marginal note.⁹⁶

⁹⁴Though note the use of **בְּנִגְשִׁיהָ** (*plene*) in the summary statement in Josh 21:42, as another way to mark closure (even if by orthographic variation only), for the *plene* form follows 49× the *defectiva* form.

⁹⁵See the early article by Bernhard Pick, “Lost Hebrew Manuscripts,” *Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis* 2 (1882): 122–27 (esp. 125).

⁹⁶I plan to return to the subject of the incorporation of the missing Reuben verses into medieval Hebrew manuscripts in a more detailed fashion elsewhere.