THE PECULIAR JUDGMENT ON GOD'S PEOPLE

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

by

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VOLUME 2

University of Durban-Westville

DECLARATION

I, Everette Wayne Ingram, Jr.

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Hereby declare that the thesis entitled:

THE PECULIAR JUDGMENT ON GOD'S PEOPLE
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Is the result of my own investigation and research and it has not been submitted
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December 1, 2003

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Abstract

The motif of judgment pervades the Hebrew bible and it is generally accepted that one of the functions of deity is judgment. Within the Book of Judges, this motif logically surfaces through the various pericopes describing premonarchic Israel. The prologue to the book includes paradigmatic formulae for the pattern of this judgment and the institution of a deliverer. Commonly, it has been accepted that a cyclical pattern exists in the book in which the Israelites begin in a proper relationship with YHWH. This disintegrates into their apostasy resulting in YHWH empowering an oppressive force to subdue them as an element of His judgment. At some point in the subjection, Israel cries out to YHWH and He raises up a deliverer. The deliverer acts as the divine representative to remove the oppressor and he restores peace and stability as long as he lives. The pattern returns again after the death of the deliverer.

The study begins with an examination of the identity of the Israelite deity and the object and subject of His judgment. The next chapter explores the themes of judgment from a diachronic perspective to determine how the critical methodologies of canonical, textual, source, form, redaction, social-scientific, and historiographical criticism either support or refute the idea that YHWH operates based on the anthropocentric paradigm of judgment from the Judges prologue. The following chapter continues that examination from a synchronic perspective employing a close reading of the text through rhetorical and narrative criticism.

The fifth chapter examines the idea of the anthropocentric cycle of judgment and its constituent elements. The study concludes that while the elements of this cycle are present throughout the book; nevertheless, they are not present consistently throughout the entirety of each circumstance of judgment. As the hypothesis of this paradigm is rejected, the study examines whether the cyclical elements should be considered from a theocentric perspective. This hypothesis is also rejected. The study considers whether

there is a complementary approach that embodies the two other paradigmatic structures. Ultimately, that hypothesis is rejected also.

The study concludes that both diachronic and synchronic methodologies are helpful in making this evaluation; however, only those that focus on a close reading of the text are the most beneficial for validating the hypothesis. Since the hypothesis that YHWH is bound by the anthropocentric cycle must be rejected another conclusion is required. Through the Judges narrative, it becomes apparent that although peculiar and distinct methods of divine judgment on behalf of and against Israel have a general form; YHWH is by no means bound to function according to a prescribed ritual. Even though judgment is often initiated because of Israelite apostasy, it is not Israelite repentance that brings judgment through deliverance; but, rather it is the mercy, compassion, and love of YHWH that controls and initiates His peculiar judgment. The judgment on YHWH's people is indeed peculiar because it occurs within the context of divine justice.

Abbreviated Title: Judgment on God's People in Judges

Key Terms: Judges, judgment, apostasy, oppression, repentance, and deliverance.

DEDICATION

With profound respect to Mac and Kay Snyder

FOREWARD

Because of the sheer size of this research, it has been necessary to divide the thesis into two volumes for ease of printing and handling. Accordingly, there are references throughout the thesis which by necessity are a part of Volume 1. The pagination of the thesis reflects its continuation. Volume 1 is composed of the preface, and chapters 1-3. Volume 2 includes chapters 4-6, Appendices, and the Bibliography.

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CHAPTER 4
REVIEW OF SYNCHRONIC CRITICAL
SCHOLARSHIP IN JUDGES

Like other disciplines, biblical criticism has not remained static. The diachronic historical critical approach has directed scholars in the discipline. In response, the last half-century has seen an upsurge in modern hermeneutical activity that is more interested in the extant literary text than its formation or historical *Sitz im Leben*. These new synchronic methodologies emerging examine the biblical narrative from one of three focal points: the text with its authorial intent, the reader of the text, or from a position of no meaning. The language of the text becomes the paramount issue for synchrony. This does not suggest that contextual analysis in the diachronic emphases is not useful for hermeneutical endeavor. It is simply not a point to be considered for an expansive textual analysis; however, in the emergence of synchronic analyses

> Texts have been engaged at several levels: literary and grammatical, structural and hermeneutical. There is no reason why biblical scholars should not examine the language dimension of the biblical text with all its complex structures, including the literary structures produced by the imagination, with the same intensity and thoroughness that scholars have devoted to the study of the links texts have with their settings, their historical dimensions.[1]

Contemporary Textual Criticism

As the critical methodologies evolve, the text itself does not change; however, the meaning that is given to the text does change because of perspectival approaches. With the questions surrounding diachrony being excised, the discipline now had biblical texts that could be examined from a strictly literary viewpoint. There are inherent problems that emerge from an examination that is motivated by understanding authorial intent apart from a historical context. As these issues surface, they are addressed through the approaches of rhetorical and narrative criticism.

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[1] R.C. Culley, "Exploring New Directions," *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*, (Eds.) D.A. Knight and G.M. Tucker (*SBL 1:* Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985), 190.

Rhetorical Criticism

Technically, rhetorical criticism is not a new discipline at all; rather, it is a resurrected and modified approach from its original Hellenistic form. The Greek rhetorical form was popularized by Aristotle in the late fourth century BCE, when

> [He] catalogued types of rhetoric (judicial, epideictic, deliberative), modes of persuasion (logos, ethos, pathos), and steps in the compositional process (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery).[2]

The classical form with its major features is presented in Table 14.[3]

TABLE 14

CATEGORIES OF CLASSICAL RHETORIC

THREE ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION
    Speaker or Author
    Speech or Text
    Audience or Reader

THREE TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

	Judicial (forensic)	Deliberative (hortatory)	Demonstrative (*epideictic*)
Focus:	Justice	Expediency	Adulation/Denunciation
Setting:	Law Court	Public Assembly	Public Ceremony
Purpose:	To Persuade	To Persuade	To Please or Inspire
Time:	Past	Future	Present
Emphasis:	Speech	Audience	Speaker

THREE GOALS OF COMMUNICATION
    Intellectual goal of teaching
    Emotional goal of touching the feelings
    Aesthetic goal of pleasing so as to hold attention

FIVE PARTS OF RHETORIC

Invention (*inventio*):	Discovery of material suitable to the occasion
Structure (*dispositio*):	Arrangement of material in an organized whole
Style (*elocutio*):	Choice of appropriate words; use of figures and tropes
Memory (*memoria*):	Formulation of mnemonic systems for oral delivery
Delivery (*pronunciatio/actio*):	Features of oral presentation

The rhetorical approach continued until the time of the Enlightenment, when it began to disappear as a discipline because "the rise of scientific inquiry and the consequent drive to view knowledge as founded upon observable fact rather than upon logic or persuasion."[4] Nonetheless, secular academicians reinstituted this literary style

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[2] P.K. Tull, "Rhetorical Criticism and Intertextuality," *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application*, (Eds.) S.L. McKenzie and S.R. Haynes (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 156.

[3] Chart of Sarah Ryan, presented in P. Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (*GBS, OTS:* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), 9.

[4] Tull, 157.

which came to be called "New Criticism." The first to give biblical notice and to embark upon a parallel religious application was James Muilenburg during an address given to the Society of Biblical Literature in 1968.[5] His specific attention focused upon stylistics and a close reading of texts asserting that "the passage must be read and heard precisely as it is spoken."[6] However, as the biblical discipline progressed, its earlier Aristotelian form became important to understand the role of persuasion. Aristotle defined rhetoric as "the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion."[7] Therefore, this examination includes the compositional elements found in Judges and then through these how they are used through persuasion to discover authorial intent.

Art of Composition

There is relative scholarly agreement that Judges may be divided into three distinct segments: a double introduction, the main body of hero stories, and a double epilogue. As earlier addressed the question of nomenclature exists as to whether there is an introduction or prologue and an appendix, conclusion, or epilogue. The redactional approach of Amit highlights two *leitmotifs* of signs and leadership that work their way from their Deuteronomistic and Deuteronomic introductions throughout the narrative. Since Judges has a double prologue, if the introductions are viewed separately, the rhetorical concern of the editor thematically produces two parallel conflicts. In both instances, land occupation and cultic loyalty figure as key elements; however, they are presented in a superior and inferior subordination and then conversely reversed. Prologue-A (1:1 – 2:5) emphasizes the dependence of land occupation upon cultic loyalty; whereas Prologue-B (2:6 – 3:6) emphasizes the dependence of cultic loyalty upon land occupation.[8] If Prologue-A is viewed as the introduction, then its emphasis guides the reader through the remainder of the narrative. The same is true for Prologue-B. Yet, when viewed as a complementary double introduction, the circular emphasis moves continually throughout the narrative bifurcating with its alternating points. As a result, it underscores the circularity of the cycle and its movement through its elements.

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[5] J. Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL 88* (1969), 1-18. The article is the text of his presidential address given at the annual meeting of SBL on December 18, 1968 in Berkeley, California.

[6] Ibid.," 5.

[7] Ἔστω δὴ ῥητορικὴ δύναμις περὶ ἕκαστον τοῦ θεωρῆσαι τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον πιθανόν. The original quote is from Aristotle, Ῥητορικὴ, 1.2.1355b.26-27. Cf. Aristotle, *The "Art" of Rhetoric*, (Trans.) J.H. Freese (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947), 15.

[8] O'Connell, 59-80.

For Muilenburg, the initial task of a rhetorical critic "is to define the limits or scope of the literary unity, [that is] to recognize precisely where and how it begins and where and how it ends."[9] As a literary unity is presented with the text, the whole of the book of Judges will be examined as a movement through the introductions, the main corpus, and the epilogues viewing the elements within the individual pericopes as related to each other rather than lifting a pericope out of its context within the book. This task can be fulfilled by identifying what Trible calls an "external design."[10]

EXTERNAL DESIGN OF JUDGES

The editor has incorporated the material *(inventio)* in such a manner that there are three distinct segments. The idea of an introduction, the main stories, and a conclusion may be missed by the reader if the book is seen as anthology of independent stories that have similar themes and motifs. This is further complicated by the idea that there is a double introduction and a double appendix that do not appear to be connected. Thus, the three distinct segments, especially from a diachronic perspective, do not appear to be connected. Yet, it is at this point, where the rhetorical analyst notes the parallels of two beginning segments and two ending segments. Structurally, a potential symmetry exists between the beginning and ending balancing the central corpus of stories. The question is whether this symmetry is validated by content as well as form.

Linear thought places the hypothesis that the form of the first introduction with its related themes should correspond with the first appendix. Likewise, the same should hold true for the second introduction and second appendix. However, this logic fails when viewed through the structure of Boling.[11] Because he focuses on a single introduction (his preview: 1:1-36) and only the second appendix (his postview 19:1 – 21:25) being the final Deuteronomistic framework for the book, the double linear parallelism fails and creates the potential of a chiasmus. His structure (fig. 76) is one of direct parallelism mixed with elements of chiasmus.[12]

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[9] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 8-9.

[10] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 109-120.

[11] See Figure 2, "Redactional Structure of Judges," on chapter three, page 147.

[12] Y.T. Radday has taken Boling's structure and reformulated it with alphabetic sigla. See his "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative," *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis,* (Ed.) J.W. Welch (Hildesheim, Germany: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), 68.

FIGURE 76

STRUCTURE OF JUDGES

A   Preview: Disintegration of national unity (1:1-36)
       B   An angelic judgment speech (2:1-5)
             C   The epic prologue (2:6 – 3:6)
                 D   Phase I: The Ideal: The Office of the Judge (3:7 – 6:6)
       B'   A prophetic judgment speech (6:7-10)
                D'   Phase I: The Ideal (continued) (6:11 – 10:5)
       B"   The Divine judgment speech (10:6-16)
                D"   Phase II: What is past is Prologue (10:17 – 15:20)
                E   Supplements: Lessons of the Past (16:1 – 18:31)
A'   Postview: The national unity restored (19:1 – 21:25)

The structural *(dispositio)* analysis of Boling has merit because it points to a mirroring of themes and begins to show a progression; nonetheless the chiastic symmetry suggests that the Aristotelian formula does not produce a lucid persuasion. Building on this scholarship, D.W. Gooding discovered a complete chiasmus of the macro-structure (fig. 78).[13] Before this is viewed in detail, it is helpful to see the symmetrical pattern in its constituent parts highlighting the sigla (fig. 77).[14]

FIGURE 77

STRUCTURE OF JUDGES

A B   C D E F E' D' C'   B' A'
Introduction | Epilogue
                        Gideon
                     a b b' a'

Chiastic patterns function well as a structural device for understanding poetry and smaller narrative units. This does not deny its use in longer passages; however, for the passage to be genuinely chiastic "the whole stretch of text must be involved, not simply certain select parts."[15] Another important element is the center of the chiasm, because it is the key to understanding the authorial intent since "biblical authors and/or editors placed the main idea, the thesis, or turning point of each literary unit, at its center."[16] If Gooding's analysis is truly chiastic in form, the parallelism surrounding the center of the chiasm will support the claim that the fundamental purpose of Judges is in the Gideon narrative.

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[13] Gooding, 77-78. The chart is my adaptation of his structural analysis.

[14] Webb, The Book of Judges, 35.

[15] W.G.E. Watson, "Chiastic Patterns in Biblical Hebrew Poetry," *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegegis*, (Ed.) J.W. Welch (Hildesheim, Germany: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), 137. Watson argues for the primary use of chiasmus within poetry; however, acknowledges its presence in prose; but suggests that longer passages do not usually adhere to the strict guidelines.

[16] Radday, 51.

FIGURE 78

STRUCTURE OF JUDGES

A   INTRODUCTION: Part I (1:1 – 2:5)

    a   "The Israelites asked of the Lord, saying, 'Who shall go up for us first against the Canaanites, to fight against them?' And the Lord said, 'Judah shall go up.'" (1:1-2)

    b   The story of how Othniel got his wife (1:11-15)

    c   The Benjaminites fail to drive out the Jebusites from Jebus (1:21)

    d   Bochim: God's covenant: Israel's unlawful covenants with the Canaanites: Israel weeping before the Angel of the Lord (2:1-5)

B   INTRODUCTION: Part II (2:6 – 3:6)

    a   The degeneration of the generations after the death of Joshua (2:6-19)

    b   God leaves certain nations to prove Israel whether they would obey the commandments which he commanded by Moses (2:20 -3:4)

C   OTHNIEL (3:7-11)

    Set in contrast to the Israelites who took Gentiles' daughters to be their wives (3:6); Wife had been his incentive for capturing Kiriath-Sepher, and pressed him to ask for a field (1:11-15)

    D   EHUD (plus Shamgar) (3:12-31)

    Announces "a message from the Lord" to the king (3:19-20);
    With the Ephraimites takes the fords of Jordan and kills the enemy

        E   DEBORAH, BARAK, JAEL (4:1 – 5:31)

        A woman pierces the enemy commander's skull with a tent-peg and so ends the war.

            F   GIDEON (6:1 – 8:32)

                a   His stand against idolatry (6:1-32)

                b   His fight against the enemy (6:33 – 7:25)

                b'   His fight against his own nationals (8:1-21)

                a'   His lapse into idolatry (8:22-32)

        E'   ABIMELECH (plus Tola, Jair) (8:33 – 10:5)

        A woman smashes the enemy commander's skull with a millstone and so ends the war

    D'   JEPHTHAH (plus Ibzan, Elon, Abdon) (10:6 – 12:15)

    Sends messengers to the king (10:12-14)
    Takes the fords of Jordan and kills the Ephraimites

C'   SAMSON (13:1 – 16:31)

    Takes Gentile wives; his wives press him to tell them his secrets and so prove his undoing

B'   EPILOGUE I (17:1 -18:31)

    a'   A mother dedicates silver to the Lord for her son to make an idol

    a"   That sons makes one of his own sons a priest in his idolatrous shrine

    b'   Moses' grandson and his sons become priests at Dan's shrine

A'   EPILOGUE II (19:1 – 21:25)

    c'   A Levite carefully avoiding the Jebusites in Jebus (19:1-30)

    a'   "The Israelites asked of God, "Who shall go up for us first to battle against the Benjaminites? And the Lord said, Judah." (20:18)

    d'   Bethel: The ark of the covenant of God: Israel weep and fast before the Lord (20:26-29)

    b'   The story of how the remainder of Benjamin got their wives (21:1-25)

CHIASMUS CENTER.   Since the Gideon pericope stands at the center of the chiasmus, the focus of the author should be apparent.   Accepting Gooding's thesis of this chiasmus center, but rejecting his center a-b-b'-a' is the a-b-c-b'-a' approach of Tanner (fig. 79), with its sections being demarcated differently with its own internal concentric pattern.[17] The chiasmus center of the Gideon narrative also functions in microcosm the same way as the chiasmus center of the book functions in macrocosm.

FIGURE 79

STRUCTURE OF GIDEON NARRATIVE

a   Introduction to Gideon (6:1-10)

     b   Call to Deliver (6:11-32)

        c   Gideon's Personal Struggle to Believe God's Promise (6:33 – 7:18)

           α   The Spirit-endowed Gideon *mobilized* four tribes against the Midianites, though *lacking confidence* in God's promise (6:33-35)

              β   Gideon sought a *sign* from God with the fleece *to confirm the promise* that the Lord would give Midian into his hand (6:36-40)

                 γ   With the *fearful* Israelites having departed, God directed Gideon to *go down* to the water for the further reduction of his force (7:1-8)

                 γ'   With *fear* still in Gideon himself, God directed Gideon to *go down* to the enemy camp to overhear the enemy (7:9-11)

              β'   God provided a *sign* to Gideon with the dream of the Midianite *to confirm the promise* that the Lord would give Midian into his hand (7:12-14)

           α'   The worshiping Gideon *mobilized* his force of 300 for a surprise attack against the Midianites, *fully confident* in God's promise (7:15-18)

     b'   Effecting of Deliverance (7:19 – 8:21)

a'   Conclusion to Gideon (8:22-32)

Tanner makes the focus of the narrative the personal struggle in which Gideon endeavors to believe the promise of YHWH. This struggle is presented concentrically through six episodes. The threat of the trilateral Midianite alliance camped in the valley of Jezreel is contrasted against the Spirit of YHWH coming upon Gideon. Whereas this might be observed as a positive charismatic experience with his initial zeal of blowing the *shofar*, the event underscores his fear and unbelief. This unexpected divine intrusion,

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[17] J.P. Tanner, "The Gideon Narrative as the Focal Point of Judges," *BibSac 149* (1992), 151-152, and 157. Generally most analyses of chiasmus is directed at smaller portions of scripture and as a result only primary and secondary levels are necessary for the analysis. Consequently, the primary level is classified with an uncial Latin alphabetic character and the secondary level with a miniscule character. However, when a third level is necessary, there is confusion amongst scholars in the manner of classifying the level, which becomes more pronounced with narrative comparisons. Therefore to remove ambiguities of second and third levels within the chiasmus caused by parentheses, the writer has adopted a third level that employs miniscule Greek alphabetic characters, as the first two Greek uncials would continue the confusion because of Latin similarity. As a result, Tanner's structure in Figure 78, although the same in form content has been modified with sigla that reflects a second and third level chiasmus.

although it provides the vehicle for testing his unbelief "seems to graphically describe YHWH's arresting of men ill-disposed toward resolving Israel's problems and his equipping of them for the saving task."[18]

In the second episode Gideon presents *Elohim* with a conditional statement requiring proof of His deliverance through a sign which ultimately must be demonstrated twice. The narrator does not provide us with any divine discourse or element that would suggest any displeasure in this action. Nor does he provide any direct information as to why Gideon would require these signs. Gideon is not seeking discernment into divine will as that "had been carefully articulated to him by the Angel of the Lord (6:14-16); the problem was his own ability to take God at His word."[19] It must be remembered that this internal six-episode segment is part of the greater Gideon story which has already exposed a characterization of fear.

Once the third episode begins the element of fear is highlighted at the center of the chiasmus. This places fear in contraposition with the *Übergabeformel leitmotif*.[20] That the enemy would be handed over is not the question; but rather whether Gideon's fear would render him paralyzed and unable to be used as a divine instrument of deliverance. Irony accentuates the problem of fear. Whereas only Gideon's discourse with *Elohim* is reported in episode two, only the divine discourse with Gideon is reported in episode three. Although the divine command addresses potential pride (a characteristic leading toward apostasy) it becomes a mask for the real issue of fear that was manifesting. Boling translates this as a hendiadys making the divine statement *(mî-yārē' wᵉḥarēḏ)* "Whoever is downright afraid."[21] Clearly there were 22,000 men who were afraid and returned home.[22] Yet, ironically Gideon in his fearful state is not in a position to return home. The narrator further masks the toponymic *hapax legomenon: ('ên Hᵃrōḏ)* the spring of Harod.[23] If translated instead of transliterated, the fearful army of Gideon would

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[18] D.l. Block, "The Period of the Judges: Religious Disintegration under Tribal Rule," *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K. Harrison,* (Ed.) A. Gileadi (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 52. Block characterizes this event in the life of Gideon as one that should be interpreted in light of other scriptures where the Holy Spirit rushes upon its object. As a result the spiritual disposition of the individual controls the human response to divinity, which in the case of Gideon is fear.

[19] Tanner, 158.

[20] In addition to its presence in the episodes of γ and γ', this formula is present in β, β', and α'. Cf. Jg. 6:36; 7:2, 7, 9, 14, and 15.

[21] מִי־יָרֵא וְחָרֵד. Boling, *AB*, 144; and *BDB*, 353. Cf. Jg. 7:3.

[22] This is consistent with the Deuteronomic battle orders. Cf. Dt. 20:8.

[23] עֵין חָרֹד.

have been at a place of "fearful trembling" which suggests a play on words with the divine command given to those afraid.[24]

The irony is carried further in episode four. Earlier Gideon though fearful was not able to depart with those afraid. Now with a further reduction of his army, the leader is the only one that remains afraid. In a near rhetorical question, the action of Gideon forces the reader to acknowledge that Gideon is truly afraid to go to battle. However, in the fifth episode, the irony is not that he and his servant spy on the Midianites; but, that it requires the words of a Midianite interpreting a dream to assuage his fear rather than the pronouncement of deliverance from YHWH.[25] Only in the final episode of the chiasmus center has Gideon's fear been divided and conquered so that he is in a position to lead his fearless army into battle.

Thus, with the central thrust of the Gideon narrative not focusing on the cyclical pattern involving idolatry that leads to oppression requiring a deliverance, the question is whether the temporary narrative suspension of the cyclical pattern to focus on the personal struggle to believe YHWH's promise affects the rest of the Gideon narrative as well as the other narratives of the book's chiasmus?

Through Gideon, the author has presented a character whereby the tribal issues, the foreign oppression, and the cyclical pattern must become subordinate to the humanity and frailty of an individual who concurrently is a deliverer. The chiasmus center provides an alternative paradigm in microcosm in which other deliverer characters are viewed as well as an introspective examination by the reader.[26] The external circumstances that Israel faced through the Midianite-Amalekite-Qedemite trilateral axis of evil may be equally characterized by other life threatening material and physical problems which the reader may personally encounter. Further, as the narrator causes our focus to shift to the root issues of lack of faith and fear that motivates Gideon's actions, the same introspective shift by the Holy Spirit moves the story from historical non-fiction to a personal divine confrontation of the same issues Gideon had to face. Exum has noted that

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[24] G.R. Driver, "Hebrew Homonyms," *Hebräische Wortforschung: Festschrift zum 80 Geburstag von Walter Baumgartner*, (Hebrew Word Search: Dedicated to Walter Baumgartner on his 80th birthday), (Ed.) W. Baumgartner (*VT Supp. 16*: Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1967), 54-56. Although Driver acknowledges the pun, it does not require that the toponym be an etiology.

[25] Tanner, 159.

[26] The primary hero paradigm is that of Othniel, which is addressed elsewhere.

No character in the book receives more divine assurance than Gideon and no one displays more doubt. Gideon is, significantly, the only judge to whom God speaks directly, though this privilege does not allay his faintheartedness.[27]

Fear characterizes Gideon up to the climax of the chiasmus, as the Hebrew word (yr') is present in a, b, and c-γ'.[28] The fear is first intimated when Gideon is hiding from the Midianites in the winepress.[29] It is made obvious in the divine response to Gideon rebuking his fear after acknowledging the angel of YHWH.[30] Nonetheless, he expressed fear of his father's household and the men of Ophrah.[31] As earlier discussed, *Elohim* used the two miracles with the fleece to expose Gideon's fear to the reader.[32] The same scenario is present at the spring of Harod and then with the espionage trip into the Midianite encampment.[33] Once the fear abated in Gideon and the deliverance commenced, the narrator does not report this characteristic again in Gideon; however, it does appear in at least two of his sons. The irony is that it is present in his eldest and youngest sons. Jether, the first born of Gideon was afraid to slay Zebah and Zalmunna.[34] Then later, Jotham, the last born child of Gideon was afraid of his half-brother Abimelech.[35]

If fear is the central focus as Tanner makes it in his internal chiasmus doublet, then there should be some indication of this trait in other characters outside this narrative. The same Hebrew word is used ironically as an entrapment by Jael as she welcomes Sisera into her tent.[36] Elsewhere the word is not used; however, a similar Hebrew word (mipp³nê) is used to describe Jotham's fear when he ran away from Abimelech.[37] The parallel is present in that Sisera was running away from Barak in fear, which is section E of the chiasm and Jotham is section E'. Likewise, the response of Barak to Deborah may implicitly refer to fear as the basis of his reasoning not to go to battle against Sisera

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[27] Exum, "The Centre Cannot Hold," 416.

[28] יראי. Jg. 6:10, 23; and 7:10.

[29] Jg. 6:11.

[30] Jg. 6:23.

[31] Jg. 6:27.

[32] Jg. 6:36-40.

[33] Jg. 7:1-3, and 10-15.

[34] Jg. 8:20.

[35] Jg. 9:5, and 21.

[36] Jg. 4:18.

[37] מִפְּנֵי. Literally, the word means "from the face," usually rendered as "before." However, in this instance it is used to imply fear because he was before the divine messenger. *BDB*, 815-819. Jg. 9:21.

without Deborah; however, the narrator is silent as to Barak's rationale.[38] Unfortunately, the motivation of fear is not even implicit in any other hero narrative outside the sections of E, F, and E'. Yet, it does surface in the life of Manoah in his fear following the vanishing of the angel of YHWH.[39]

Because the fear factor is not reported by the narrator elsewhere does not deny that it may have had an effect in the other pericopes. Tanner notes that the important element is "the change that transpired in Gideon's heart" which would have been the individual and personal deliverance that later was manifested corporately for Israel.[40]

> The fear in Gideon's heart held him back from being able to trust the promise God had given about his delivering Israel from the Midianites. To overcome this deficiency in Gideon's life, God uniquely worked to expose the problem of fear in his life and to bring him to a point of worship and faith.[41]

Too close an examination of Gideon's character in order to try to find the same flaw in other deliverers obscures the result of what fear accomplished in Gideon's life: his refusal to believe the divine promise. This did not stop divine judgment. In fact, it promoted judgment toward the Israelites and the Midianite confederation. Fear was judged in the 22,000 cowardly soldiers and ultimately in their commander, although there was no punitive action recorded against them; they still emotionally had to acknowledge fear motivated them rather than the word (or promise) of YHWH. For the Midianites, their judgment was administered through a worshiping and believing Gideon who had been divinely judged and commissioned. Then the question remains whether other factors of which fear could be included affect other characters in the book of Judges leading to their refusal to believe YHWH.

Believing YHWH or a proper expression of faith would only be present in the cyclical format in the stages of repentance-deliverance-peace. Therefore, the negation of that belief would be present foremost in the time of apostasy that led to oppression. Belief in the divine word would include the *Torah* and those divine representatives who included prophets, priests, judges, and angels. The second introduction (Prologue-B) provides background information that validates a rejection and forsaking of YHWH, in the response of Israel serving idols, worshiping *Baal*, and transgressing the covenant.[42]

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[38] Jg. 4:8.

[39] Jg. 13:22.

[40] Tanner, 160.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Jg. 2:2, 12, 13, 17, 19, 22; and 3:4.

The generalized formula of Israel doing evil in the sight of YHWH makes the improper faith implication.[43] Rather than this idea being chiastically motivated, the downward spiral of increased apostasy shows that this idea of refusing to believe YHWH has its narrative genesis with Gideon.

As the divine representative, Gideon experiences others not believing his divinely inspired actions and words. The key difference is that when the men of Succoth and Penuel failed to believe Gideon, his judgment rendered against them was considerably harsher than what he received from YHWH during his unbelief.[44] In the life of his son Jotham, the men of Shechem when they heard the fable failed to accept and believe this as a divine word of judgment.[45] It is somewhat oblique, but in the case of Jephthah having been clothed by the Spirit of YHWH, there is a degree of his failure to believe in a divine deliverance, thus resulting in the sacrificial vow.[46] The final example of Samson shows disrespect for YHWH's word through the annunciation message by the angel regarding his *Nazirite* status with subsequent violations until his strength is removed, as well as the divine presence.[47] In each of these situations the narrator fails to provide the reader with enough information to determine what motivated them to refuse to believe YHWH, through His spokesmen.

Returning back to Gooding, his chiasmus center is not as forceful as Tanner's.[48] Nonetheless, his organizing principle is much more consistent with the form content of Judges. His innermost doublet is based on fighting against an enemy.[49] There is no center point. He first fights against an external non-Israelite enemy. Then, he fights against an internal Israelite enemy from a different tribe. Each section of fighting is surrounded by idolatry. Because Gooding makes the Gideon narrative his center of his book chiasmus, then the external points should mirror the internal ones.

The first half of the structure consists of a relative positive portrayal of the characters whereas the second half has a negative connotation. The symmetry of this structure connotes both the elements of idolatry and fighting/war; however, there is a

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[43] Jg. 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; and 10:6.

[44] Jg. 8:5-9, and 15-17.

[45] Jg. 9:7-20, and 56-57.

[46] Jg. 11:29-31.

[47] Jg. 13:5; and 16:17-20.

[48] See Figure 78 and specifically section F of the chiasm on page 348.

[49] Jg. 6:33 – 7:25 and 8:1-21 are his elements F-b and F-b'.

pattern of increased degeneration with each successive narrative. In fairness to Gooding, his work identifies the overall chiasmus thematic symmetry and the internal symmetrical elements in the Gideon narrative; however, he does not formalize the center with a narrative theme. He does briefly acknowledge religious decline and political decline and makes this the guiding principle for symmetrical integrity.[50]

Religious decline is a recognizable *leitmotif*.[51] Gooding illustrates this through Gideon's idolatry. As a center point of the book, the hero uses the spoils of victory to create an idolatrous ephod that becomes an unacceptable object of worship. This stands in stark contrast to his earlier activity in removing his father's idolatrous grove and altar. The other pericopes of the book do not expose the judge and hero as the one who affects the nation in this way and leads them through his action into apostasy, whereas Gideon personifies first an appropriate and then an inappropriate worship response, rather than the converse which is present in the cyclical formula.

With Gideon personifying the religious decline, the chiasmus model should produce a symmetrical decline toward this center point. Prologue-A provides the episode at Bochim that connects the political and religious introductions.[52] The divine messenger speaks as if he is a theophany. The past is recounted and the *Torah* violations indict Israel for disobeying YHWH. The downward religious spiral reported in Prologue-B generalizes the commandments broken that included idolatry, which was attributed to the Canaanization of Israel. From that point, the formula that Israel did evil in the sight of YHWH introduces the ensuing cycles. Within section C, Israel forgot YHWH and served the *Baals* and the groves.[53] No specific covenant violation is highlighted in section D; however, the presence of graven images implies some level of idolatry.[54] Section E does not have a negative religious element.

From the climax of Gideon's idolatrous ephod, it is not surprising that as Gideon adopted improper religious traits from his father Joash the same could be said for Gideon's son Abimelech. The narrator does not identify Gideon's motive for making the ephod but it is not intimated that it was for idolatry. Nevertheless, the narrator does

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[50] Gooding, 74-75.

[51] See also the "Function of Religion" in chapter three, pages 256-261.

[52] Jg. 2:1-5.

[53] Jg. 3:7.

[54] Jg. 3:19, and 26. KJV poorly identifies this as quarries rather than graven images.

foreshadow future idolatry by identifying that the ephod became a snare to his house.[55] This is illustrated in section E' by Abimelech's mercenary use of money from the idolatrous shrine of *Baal-Berith* to hire a terrorist army.[56] The narrator does not physically place Abimelech within the shrine nor does it show him to worship there; however, its central role within the community of Shechem suggests his patronage for the community to use sacred money *(sic)* to fund his political ends. Within section D' the story of Jephthah's vow fulfilled by the human sacrifice of his daughter exacerbates the religious decline, when her death is Jephthah's human response of worship.[57] Samson continues the trend in section C' when he violated his *Nazirite* status. The narrator's comment on Samson's failure to acknowledge the divine departure of the Holy Spirit from him, serves as an anti-climactic conclusion for the reader.[58]

With the departure of the Holy Spirit from the last judge in the cycle, the reader would anticipate the narrator would tie up any loose ends in the epilogues. The narratives that follow reinforce that Israelite society has been Canaanized and the narrator recounts the "spiritual devolution" of Israel.[59] Epilogue B' is replete with improper religious activity. Without concentrating on all of the *Torah* violations, Micah's mother commissioned him with "cursed" silver to make a graven image and molten image.[60] Micah erected a shrine for these idols. Then he consecrated one of his sons, an Ephraimite, as his priest.[61] Later he employs a Levite as his priest.[62] However, the narrator does not reveal his Mosaic lineage until the end of the story.[63] Although Jonathan the priest can claim upward lineage to Levi through Kohath, the legitimate priestly clan with distinctive ritualistic function; nevertheless the divine priesthood came through his great grandfather's brother Aaron. Thus, Jonathan was functioning within the scope of his priestly calling; however, it was through a perversion of that calling as an individual, family, and tribal priest at unauthorized idolatrous shrines. Apart from *Torah* violations

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[55] Jg. 8:27.

[56] Jg. 9:4.

[57] Jg. 11:39.

[58] Jg. 16:20.

[59] Block, "The Period of the Judges," 48.

[60] Jg. 17:3-4. For a complete listing of these violations, see Chapter three, "Reason for YHWH's Test," pages 302-309.

[61] Jg. 17:5.

[62] Jg. 17:10-12.

[63] Jg. 18:30.

of harlotry, refusal of hospitality, rape, murder, lying, and kidnapping which all have religious ramifications, Epilogue A' does not specifically address religious decline except in a repeated broad stroke conclusion that "everyone did what was right in his own eyes."[64]

In addition to religious decline, the *leitmotif* of political decline has a significant role in the text. Gooding recognizes the judges' activity in this negative light primarily through tribal conflict. Gideon epitomizes this action in the central chiasmus section F-b' when he fights against his own nationals. This internal political anarchy does not occur until the center of the chiasmus. The tribal conquest accounts in Prologue-A reflect a tribe's effectiveness in removing the Canaanite enemy from its territory. Although various levels of failure were present, especially in the northern tribes; there is no evidence of inter-tribal rivalry. The purpose statement within Prologue-B alerts the reader that Israel did not know war and that certain nations were left in the land to prove Israel's covenant fidelity and to teach them war.[65] Although the narrator uses this to foreshadow international conflict, there is no indication that this knowledge of warfare would be turned inwardly into domestic conflict. International political conflict begins when the Mesopotamians oppressed Israel for eight years until the deliverance was affected through Othniel (section C).[66] The political decline is accentuated in section D, by the Moabites at two points. The first is the oppression is increased to eighteen years.[67] Secondly, it is a near-nation that has occupied Israel during that time.[68] The political problem was resolved through the deliverance and battle led by Ehud.[69] As the story moves into section E, despite a prolonged period of rest, the narrator continues his two pronged political attack. Like the previous oppressors, the new oppressor called Canaan has increased the time of oppression to twenty years. This occupation is underscored by the narrator with the phrase *(lāḥaṣ)* "he mightily oppressed."[70] Further, the oppressive enemy did not originate outside the geographical boundary of premonarchic Israel; but within its boundary. This resonates back to the double-introduction and failure to remove

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[64] Jg. 21:25.

[65] Jg. 3:1-4.

[66] Jg. 3:8-10.

[67] Jg. 3:14.

[68] Jg. 3:13, and 19.

[69] Jg. 3:27-30.

[70] אֶ לָחַץ. Jg. 4:3.

the Canaanites from the land. In sections C and D there are no tribes mentioned; however, there is an implication of Benjamin and Ephraim in the latter section. Yet, with section E, most of the tribes have a representation. However, the narrator is able with these elements to foreshadow the problem that will emerge with Gideon. In section E, some of the tribes faithfully go to battle against the enemy. Nevertheless, there are other tribes that do not exhibit the same loyalty and refrain from military action. There was no retributive action or negative commentary directed toward those tribes. However, that the inhabitants and city of Meroz were *('ōrû 'ārôr)* "bitterly cursed" by the angel of YHWH suggests that if tribes can be non-responsive and cities can refrain from fighting there may be further political disintegration of the tribal confederacy.[71]

When section F is presented, the enemy has increased from an individual ethnic group to a trilateral confederacy from the eastern border.[72] In a change of methodology, the narrator reports that the period of oppression was seven years, which arrests the pattern of increased time with each successive oppressor.[73] However, that the number seven was used suggests a literary clue that this oppression has a significant "holy" ramification used by divinity to test judge and people alike. The political hierarchy subsumed in the military order is used by the narrator to show that fear in the ranks compromised the leadership's effectiveness. The fear exhibited by the soldiers places a question mark upon their trust in human leadership being directed by YHWH.[74] This disintegration in the military prior to the battle further foreshadows the tribal disintegration within the political premonarchic confederacy. This begins to manifest once the enemy army has been dealt a fatal blow by the Naphtali-Asher-Manasseh confederacy and the two outstanding Midianite leaders only remain. At this point (section F-b'), the narrator suspends the story of the pursuit of these kings to initiate the political disintegration. Gooding does not formalize his chiasmus at any point to the third level. Nevertheless, the writer has observed the framework does present an alternating chiasmus at the third level (fig. 80).[75] The internal conflict in both cases is a questioning of leadership regarding the battle efforts of Gideon against the Midianite confederation. At first, the Ephraimites challenge Gideon (section F-b'-α) and he is able to diffuse a potential

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[71] אֹרוּ אָרוֹר ‏ℋ. Jg. 5:23.

[72] Jg. 6:3.

[73] Jg. 6:1.

[74] Jg. 7:3.

[75] The third level is developed based on the second level F-b' of Gooding from Figure 77.

FIGURE 80

STRUCTURE OF GIDEON CENTRAL CHIASMUS

b'   His fight against his own nationals (8:1-21)

     α   Conflict with men of Ephraim (8:1-3)

          β   Conflict with men of Succoth (8:4-7)

               γ   Conflict with men of Penuel (8:8-9)

                    δ   Conflict with *Midianite Kings* (8:10-12)

          β'   Discipline men of Succoth (8:13-16)

               γ'   Discipline men of Penuel (8:17)

                    δ'   Discipline *Midianite Kings* (8:18-21)

conflict.[76] Nonetheless, the narrator has introduced the theme of internal Israelite strife. Similar to the incident with Meroz (section D), the conflict emerges against a lower tribal level with the men of Succoth (section F-b'-β) and men of Penuel (section F-b'-γ).[77] In both cases, the men of these cities question Gideon's leadership regarding the pursuit of the Midianite kings. However, whereas the only narrative action against Meroz was an incident of the divine messenger cursing it, Gideon disciplined the men of both cities (sections F-b'-β' and γ').[78] Up until this point there have been no Israelite deaths caused by Israelites; but the language of the discipline Gideon inflicted upon the men of Succoth and Penuel foreshadows this action.

Since Gideon has introduced fighting against his own nationals, it is not surprising that his son Abimelech would continue this trend and cause further political disintegration. The incidents with Abimelech (section E') introduce the themes of civil war and improper political leadership into the narrative. Notwithstanding, the internal conflict Gideon had with his nationals over the disposition of kings becomes a point of conflict that others have with Abimelech because of his kingship. Under normal succession rules, the first born assumes the throne either upon abdication or death of the monarch. In order to supercede that practice, Abimelech usurped the position of crown prince by removing challengers to his throne through fratricide.[79] Thus, a political practice (despite that Gideon was not a king) was violated in principle. The initial seventy murders that inaugurated his reign were imposed on his own family. The narrator reports the political instability between Abimelech and the men of Shechem existed because of

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[76] Jg. 8:1-3.

[77] Jg. 8:4-9.

[78] Jg. 8:13-17.

[79] Jg. 9:1-5.

an evil spirit sent by *Elohim*.[80] As a result, Abimelech began a war of genocide against the men of Shechem, the tower of Shechem, and Thebez.[81] His first two campaigns were successful *(sic)* with him killing over one thousand people; however, his final campaign signaled the end of his reign when he was mortally wounded by a woman throwing a piece of millstone down from a tower onto Abimelech's head.[82] For an unnamed Israelite woman to assassinate the half-Israelite monarch underscores the political decline.

As the reader acknowledges the less than honorable character of Jephthah (section D') and understands the familial strife, it is not surprising that this strife would be raised to the tribal level. His appointment as a military leader was not divinely initiated which parallels the position of Abimelech. A similar parallel is present with Gideon. In both cases the deliverer had defeated the oppressive enemy and subsequently engaged in a conflict with the Ephraimites. In this instance, Jephthah did not make a tribal reconciliation; but engaged the Gileadites in a civil war against the Ephraimites resulting in the genocide of 42,000 men.[83]

Just as the political elements were minor in section C, it is paralleled in section C' regarding Samson. In this story, the Philistine threat is never fully removed only temporarily restrained. Yet, internally, the men of Judah willingly delivered Samson (a Danite) over to the Philistines.[84] Gooding has observed that the formula "and the land had rest X years," is not used in the narratives following Gideon despite the victories against the enemy.[85] As a forceful conclusion to an argument, Epilogue-A' the dismemberment of the *pîlegeš* characterizes the disintegration and separateness of the tribal confederacy that engages in an internecine war against the tribe of Benjamin and then later against Jabesh-Gilead.[86]

Although the rules of chiasmus and literary analysis should be the guiding principle for this analysis, the question remains whether the Gooding and/or Tanner analyses provides a central purpose for the book of Judges that is theologically viable. The *leitmotifs* presented by Gooding in his chiasmus center second level are consistently

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[80] Jg. 9:23.

[81] Jg. 9:34-52.

[82] Jg. 9:53.

[83] Jg. 12:6.

[84] Jg. 15:10-13.

[85] Gooding, 75. Cf. Jg. 3:11, 30; 5:11; and 8:28.

[86] Jg. 19:29; 20:15-48; and 21:10-11.

more present throughout the book than those of Tanner at his third level. But, if the second level of Tanner's chiasmus center is examined against Gooding, then they stand on equal footing. Gooding highlights the negative elements of idolatry and war, which may ultimately be summed up as elements of decline. Tanner highlights the positive elements of divine calling, deliverance, and personal struggle to believe. However, neither of them properly addresses the divine role as the element of centrality.

The book structure presented by Gooding is not helpful at all in regard to the divine focal point; even though elements of divinity are present in his approach. Tanner's structure on the other hand does provide clues to divine action; yet it does not highlight YHWH. Nonetheless, Tanner does present an acceptable platform from which to examine the purpose of the book through the chiasmus center, especially when his second level is the focus.

As earlier stated, Tanner makes the internal focus the personal struggle the judge has to believe in the divine promise, although it could be broadened to his belief in divinity. YHWH begins to expose this circumstantial fear as a relational fear of YHWH, which the narrator has hidden from the audience. An angel of YHWH is used to announce the divine calling to Gideon (section F-b). However, despite the divine pronouncement of YHWH's presence and His view of Gideon as *(gibbôr heḥāyil)* "[a] mighty man of valor" Gideon offered protestation.[87] He questioned the divine presence in the immediate past and present and appropriately acknowledged Israel had been forsaken by YHWH and delivered over to the Midianites. Yet, Gideon was shortsighted in placing the blame upon divinity, who simply executed the judgment that Israel deserved for her apostasy. Not unlike Moses, Gideon protested this call several times. A significant issue emerges in the Gideon narrative regarding the divine presence and the Israelite perception of His absence. There was no Mount Sinai type experience to prove divine presence. However, the narrator slowly reveals divinity to the audience. The entire predicament of this divinely ordered oppression is announced by the narrator in the anthropomorphic term of sight because of the evil that YHWH witnessed (section F-a).[88] The next phase of divine action is reported anthropomorphically through the sense of YHWH hearing the cries of Israel.[89] As a result, He sends an unnamed prophet to speak to Israel.[90] Without pausing,

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[87] גִּבּוֹר הֶחָיִל. Jg. 6:12-13.

[88] Jg. 6:1.

[89] Jg. 6:8.

the narrator introduces a theophany, which suggests the Hebrew preformative conjunction should be taken as a *waw*-adversative that expresses divine compassion for the state Israel is in (section F-b).[91] The opening theophanic discourse *(YHWH 'imm²kā)* "YHWH is with you" reveals divinity and divine presence to everyone except for Gideon.[92] Gideon's response acknowledges horizontal relational respect to the messenger of YHWH, but betrays Gideon before YHWH as unable to properly discern the theophanic messenger. Further, he does not know why Israel is in the state it is, that there are no miracles, and they have been delivered into the hands of the enemy. YHWH does not rebuke him for his ignorance or lack of discernment. Instead, He listens to Gideon and then commissions him. However, amidst the protestations Gideon fails to hear the divine "I" speaking through the theophanic messenger. Now the commission statement moves from divine sending *(hᵃlō' šᵊlaḥtîkā)* "have not I sent you" to divine enablement and presence *(kî 'ehyeh 'immākā)* "Surely, I will be with you."[93] As the episode progresses, the narrator is ambiguous as to whether Gideon recognizes that YHWH is speaking through the messenger or that this is YHWH.[94] This change of response by Gideon may be attributable to the Jewish perception of the term *(kᵊ'îš 'eḥād)* "as one man;" which if viewed in light of Dt. 6:4 clearly places the monotheistic divinity at the scene of the foreshadowed holy war.[95] Gideon moved from the logical discourse by asking YHWH to prove Himself so that Gideon would recognize His grace rather than assurance of military victory. The narrator interjects irony of Gideon's doubt and unbelief regarding divine presence by requesting Him not to depart, when in fact it is Gideon who leaves the theophanic presence. Once Gideon returns, the episode continues as he presents the sacrifice to the theophany, the messenger performs the sign with the offering and subsequently disappears. Gideon validates the sign by acknowledging it was the angel of YHWH and changes his prayer to address the deity as *Adonai YHWH*. Gideon is

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[90] Jg. 6:8-10.

[91] 𝔐 *(wayyābō')* וַיָּבֹא. Jg. 6:11.

[92] 𝔐 יהוה עִמְּךָ. Jg. 6:12.

[93] 𝔐 כִּי אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ, and הֲלֹא שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ. Jg. 6:14, and 16.

[94] B. Standaert, "Adonai Shalom (Judges 6-9): The Persuasive Means of a Narrative and the Strategies of Inculturation of Yahwism in a New Context," *Rhetoric, Scripture and Theology: Essays from the 1994 Pretoria Conference*, (Eds.) S.E. Porter and T.H. Olbricht (*JSNT Supp. 131*: Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 197. Standaert suggests that this recognition does not occur until Jg. 6:22.

[95] 𝔐 כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד. Jg. 6:16.

immediately gripped with fear and in response YHWH foreshadows the end of the cycle to Gideon by speaking *(šālôm lᵉkā)* "Peace unto you" in much the same way that the narrator, by announcing the oppression was only for seven years, allows the reader to conclude "there is always an end to bad stories—from the point of view of God."[96] This divine discourse acknowledges that YHWH was aware of Gideon's fear, because at this point he expected to die and revealed his need for peace. Even with the recognizable manifest divine presence gone, this problem of questioning the presence of YHWH was no longer a concern for Gideon, as his response resembled patriarchal memory, when he built an altar calling it "YHWH Shalom."[97] Thus, the questioning of divine presence by Gideon and the acceptance of that presence forms an *inclusio* that is amplified in the altar name.

> *YHWH* is his Name from the beginning, and means: promise of his saving proximity (YHWH, cf. *ehyeh* "I will be with you," Exod. 3.14 and Judg. 6.16); *Shalom* is the expression for the end result: the fullness of salvation. Beginning and end, memory and hope are put together in one expressive formula. The chosen expression is rich and deep, and may be read in a multiplicity of meanings overflowing the strict borders of the actual narration. The last detail mentioned: "It stands to this day," invites the reader to receive this name with its suggestive openness (*Adonai Shalom*) even into his own present situation.[98]

The grace of YHWH is exemplified in that He does not disqualify Gideon because of his fearfulness; but rather, He works with him in spite of that fear in a way to emphasize the divine presence. The narrator reports that Gideon was afraid to raze the altar of *Baal* during the day light hours. Thus, YHWH spoke to him the same night Gideon had erected the Yahwistic altar and minimized the fear issue with an immediate task resolution.[99] Earlier Gideon had requested a sign of divine grace and through this incident the narrator is giving the reader another sign. Specifically, the Midianite oppression had been for seven years.[100] As what may be seen as coincidence, the events that remove the oppression begin with the removal of Gideon's father's seven year old bull through sacrifice to YHWH.[101] The bull, which was born near the time of the divinely ordered oppression, was also the propitiatory element to atone for Israel's apostasy.

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[96] **H** שָׁלוֹם לְךָ. Jg. 6:1, and 23. Standaert, 196.

[97] Jg. 6:24. This follows similar action by Abraham and Moses, although the altars had different names. Cf. Gen. 22:14; and Ex. 15:26.

[98] Standaert, 198.

[99] Jg. 6:25-27.

[100] Jg. 6:1.

[101] Jg. 6:25.

As the narrative in the center of the chiasmus begins (section F-c) the presence of deity is manifest in the person of the Spirit of YHWH coming upon Gideon.[102] At this point, Gideon does not question divine presence but the veracity of divine speech. It is not surprising that the narrator only records the human part of this discourse involving the two signs with the fleece; nonetheless Gideon observes the divine response. The subsequent episodes report the reduction in the size of his army by only reporting the divine side of the discourse. Divine grace is expressed in this action by YHWH removing a potential obstacle of pride that could plunge Israel back into a state of apostasy.[103] Clear divine direction is given to Gideon regarding the further reduction of his army. This is followed by a divine restatement of successful conquest. The next episode reveals YHWH as inostensibly involved by giving battle directives as a Commander-in-Chief to His general. However, divine perception confronted the human commander with his fear by unfolding the immediate future event prophetically to undergird him in his weakness.[104] What was becoming obvious to Gideon was already a *fait accompli* for the Midianite dreamer who understood *Elohim* had delivered Midian into the hand of Gideon. The narrator intensifies this by using the imperfect tense and restating Midian with the appositive "and all the host."[105] Gideon's retelling of this event to his band of three hundred men changes the deity nomenclature to YHWH. The three divisions of one hundred men engaged the threefold enemy confederacy with express divine help by His turning the enemy swords against their own compatriots. In the ensuing episodes involving the chase and capture of the Midianite princes and kings, the narrator excises the deity from the remainder of the Gideon narrative until Israel becomes apostate again, after Gideon's death.[106]

Despite Israelite perception, YHWH was not absent from the scene. He was observing and acting based upon Israelite response to the covenant. There are many examples of His cyclical involvement with Israel which may be categorized as His anger for their apostasy, His delivering them into the hands of an enemy, His hearing their cries,

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[102] Jg. 6:34.

[103] Jg. 7:2.

[104] Jg. 7:10.

[105] Jg. 7:14.

[106] Jg. 8:34.

and His raising up a deliverer.[107] The author does not focus on the divine element within the first half of the book structure. Nevertheless, within Prologue-A, Webb has discerned the chiasmus structure based upon the *leitword ('lh)* "go up" as reflected below.[108]

FIGURE 81

STRUCTURE OF INTRODUCTION CHIASMUS

A   INTRODUCTION: Part I (1:1 – 2:5)
    a   The <u>assembled Israelites</u> ask Yahweh, 'Who will *go up* ...?" (1:1-2)
        b   Judah *goes up.* (1:3-21)
        b'   Joseph *goes up.* (1:22-36)
    a'   The messenger of Yahweh *goes up* to indict the <u>assembled Israelites</u>. (2:1-5)

Thus, YHWH is present in the introduction from the point of intercessory inquiry (section A-a) and response and then by proxy through His divine messenger (section A-a'). The narrator has presented deity as accessible, responsive, and materially present in the prologue. Although it does not perfectly adhere to the chiasmus, the narrator creates an *inclusio* from sections B to C', that is the prologue to the last deliverer. The narrator introduces that "when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge."[109] Within the chiasmus center the narrator accentuates to Gideon this divine presence and participation when the divine messenger proclaims "The LORD is with you."[110] Then, with the last judge in the series, a significant conclusion completes the *inclusio* with "he did not know that the LORD was departed from him," after Samson betrayed his *Nazirite* status.[111]

The presence of YHWH may be seen through the prophetic fulfillment of Jotham's fable against Abimelech and the men of Shechem (section E').[112] It is obvious in the divine rebuke that precedes the Jephthah narrative (section D').[113] Although divine presence is not as pronounced with Jephthah as it was with Gideon, the political speech to

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[107] For a detailed discussion of this, see chapter five, "The Theocentric Cycle in Judges," pages 746-761.

[108] **ִ** עלה. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 102-103. Webb's chiasmus has been modified to fit within the overall Gooding structure and his sigla of A₁, B₁, B₂, and A₂ have been altered to be consistent with the overall form of this thesis. Neither change affects his presentation. Webb notes that the *leitword* functions compositionally rather than thematically.

[109] Jg. 2:1.

[110] Jg. 6:12.

[111] Gooding, 75. Jg. 16:20.

[112] Jg. 9:7-20, and 56-57.

[113] Jg. 10:11-14.

the king of Ammon gives Him historical and present memory. The concluding verse to that speech announces an official divine character role through the name *(YHWH haššōpēṭ)* "YHWH the Judge."[114] What may be observed is that from Gideon forward once the deliverance has occurred deity ceases to be present in the narrative until He delivers Israel again into the hands of the enemy because of apostasy. However, that does not necessitate that divine judgment is not being exercised.

> [T]he role of the judges in arresting spiritual backsliding in Israel should not be overestimated. It is of great significance that not one of them is charged by YHWH to launch a crusade against idolatry in the nation, or to call the people back to YHWH.[115]

The epilogues do not highlight YHWH, although His presence is there. More than the Danite intercession for travel and conquest mercies and the pan-tribal intercession for success against Benjamin, two other episodes figure more prominently. The first is the arrogant perception of Micah that YHWH is obligated to bless him because he has a Levite as a priest. The narrator responds to the human "omniscience" *(sic)* with the formulaic statement "there was no king in Israel" that characterizes the epilogues.[116] Even though only the first half of the formula was used, the memory of its second part has not escaped the reader. The second episode is the realization of divine foreknowledge that YHWH was sending Israel into two battles where they would be defeated by Benjamin. In fairness to YHWH, Israel never asked if they would win only whether they should go up against Benjamin.[117] Divine presence was not the issue. Rather, divine judgment was the issue.

Unfortunately, the theological realm that should govern the chiasmus does not. The presence of YHWH is obvious in the book; however, it is not the organizing principle for the narrator or for his characters.

> The Book of Judges is not so much a written commemoration of Israel's heroes in the Early Iron Age as a witness to YHWH's gracious determination to preserve his people, by answering their pleas and providing deliverance.[118]

It is doubtful that the editor had an external chiasmus in mind when the stories were compiled to form the book; nevertheless, chiasmus does exist regularly in the internal sections. But, to force the book of Judges to adhere to the rules of chiasmus when it was not the authorial intention is needless. A better alternative is to accept that there are

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[114] יהוה הַשֹּׁפֵט. Jg. 11:27.

[115] Block, "The Period of the Judges," 51.

[116] Jg. 18:1.

[117] Jg. 20:18, and 23.

[118] Ibid., 52.

parallels functioning throughout the book, and through these doublets examine whether they support the rhetorical purpose of the interior chiasmus in principle.

CHIASTIC PARALLELS. When Gooding developed his structure, he was applying the idea of a chiastic *inclusio*, which is typically an element in smaller passages. Instead, the examples he and later, Webb and O'Connell presented are actually distant parallelism arranged chiastically. Because it is not the immediate objective to examine every chiasmus, this examination will focus upon the distant parallelism in these doublets (fig. 82).[119]

FIGURE 82

DISTANT PARALLELISM IN THE PROLOGUE-EPILOGUE

A	Who will go up first? (1:1-2)
A'	Who will go up first? (20:18)
A	Adoni-Bezek dismembered (1:6)
A'	*Pîlegeš* dismembered (19:29)
A	Jerusalem struck with the edge of the sword (1:8)
A'	Jabesh-Gilead struck with the edge of the sword (21:10)
A	Story of how Othniel got his wife (1:11-15)
A'	Story of how remainder of Benjamin got their wives (21:1-24)
A	Benjamin fails to drive out Jebusites (1:21)
A'	Levite avoids the Jebusites (19:1-30)
A	Amorites did not allow sons of Dan into the valley (1:34)
B'	Sons of Dan struck Laish and live in the valley (18:27-28)
A	Sons of Israel weep at Bochim (2:1-5)
A'	Sons of Israel weep at Bethel (20:26-29)
B	Another generation (sons) forsook the way of the fathers (2:10, 17, 19)
B'	Son steals from his mother and makes an idol (17:1-5)
B	Nations left to prove whether Israel would keep the commandments of Moses (2:12 – 3:4)
B'	Grandson of Moses ministered over the graven image (18:30)
B	Sons of Israel served the *Baals* (2:13)
B'	Sons of Dan set up the graven image (18:30-31)

Of the ten examples, they generally parallel with the corresponding theme within the same character sigla and its prime, with the exception of the sixth pair. Further, the second element of the pair does not follow in its placement either in reverse alternation or

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[119] For a detailed analysis of chiasmus possibilities see Webb's *The Book of Judges* and O'Connell's *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges*. Cf. Figure 78. Gooding's analysis serves as the basis for developing this figure; however the writer has observed other instances of distant parallelism.

in direct parallelism. Because of the parallelism it would appear there is a thematic *inclusio*; however, the scriptural placement of the second element betrays that possibility. Viewed in a list, the narrative artistry is apparent. The individual elements do not guide the story nor do they externally support a particular thesis. Nevertheless, the narrator is able to use this distant parallelism to form a loose external framework which guides the reader in the two-fold introductions that are interwoven. As a result, the distant parallelism does not begin and end with the prologues and epilogues but it continues into the heart of the narratives (fig. 83).

FIGURE 83

DISTANT PARALLELISM IN THE HERO NARRATIVES

A	Othniel's wife the secret of his success (1:12-15)
C'	Samson's foreign women the secret of his downfall (14:1 – 15:8; 16:1-21)
C	Spirit of YHWH came upon Othniel (3:10)
C'	Spirit of YHWH came upon Samson (14:6; 15:14)
D	Ehud takes message to a foreign king (3:19-20)
D'	Jephthah takes message to a foreign king (11:12-28)
D	Eglon lies behind locked door dead (3:23-25)
D'	Jephthah's daughter comes out of open door (to die) (11:34)
D	Ehud blows a trumpet (3:27)
D'	Jephthah's daughter met him with tambourines (11:34)
D	Ehud slays Moabites at the Jordan (3:28-29)
D'	Jephthah slays Ephraimites at the Jordan (12:4-6)
E	Jael slays Sisera (4:21-22; 5:26-27)
E'	A certain woman slays Abimelech (9:53)
E	After Sisera's death, the war ends (4:24)
E'	After Abimelech's death, the war ends (9:55)
E	Sisera is a Canaanite king (5:19)
E'	Abimelech is a Shechemite/Israelite king (9:6)

The authorial purpose of Judges was not for it to be used as a rhetorical analysis. Had it been his purpose, then neither the chiasmus nor its distant parallelism would falter at points. Based on Gooding's internal chiasmus, the author's use of distant parallelism supports his thesis extremely well in the prologues and epilogues; however, ironically, the central section is not as strong.[120] When this is viewed against the thesis of Tanner (fig.

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[120] In Figure 82 only the fourth pairing regarding men obtaining wives is unrelated to the theme. However, in Figure 83, only one-third of the pairs are related to Gooding's central chiasmus.

78), the distant parallelism is distant and not parallel to his focal point. Neither is it supportive when viewed against the theocentric design. Although Gooding forces the definition of chiasmus beyond acceptable standards, his observation is the distant parallelism that functions within the symmetrical structure confirms authorial purpose.

> [T]he thing that confirms that the symmetry is intentional, and not just an accidental epiphenomenon, is that the symmetry itself appears to carry a message. At least a definite pattern emerges from the symmetry: in each pair within the symmetry the second member presents a deterioration from, or a worse example of, the position presented by the first member.[121]

A review of the examples of distant parallelism in figures 82 and 83 reveals that Gooding's thesis may not be completely validated; however, in principle his observation is generally present in the symmetrical pairs. This is best illustrated by choosing one comparison from each section.[122] In Prologue-A, Othniel obtains his wife honorably from his father-in-law after a successful campaign against the Canaanites in Debir. This is contrasted in Epilogue A' with the manner in which the men of Benjamin obtain their wives by Israelites killing all of their own citizenry except for the virgins of Jabesh-Gilead. The remainder of the wives the men of Benjamin obtained was stolen away from the fathers during the annual festival in Shiloh. Whereas the previous contrast moves from good to bad, in Prologue B it moves from bad to worse and general to specific. Israel as a nation was tested as to whether it would keep the commandments of Moses. However, in Epilogue B' the grandson of Moses is leading the people in the violation of those commandments. With Othniel (section C) the Holy Spirit comes upon him. However, with Samson (section C') the Holy Spirit comes upon him on two occasions and also departs. Ehud (section D) slays 10,000 Moabites at the fords of the Jordan River. He is contrasted with Jephthah (section D') who slays 42,000 Ephraimites (fellow Israelites) at the fords of the Jordan River. This parallel is followed by Jael slaying Sisera, a foreign king, by a blow to his head (section E) and is contrasted with an unnamed woman from Thebez slaying Abimelech, an Israelite king, by a blow to his head (section E'). This of course is highlighted in section F, when Gideon's fighting against the enemy later becomes a fight against Israelites.

THEMATIC PARALLELS. If a large scale chiasmus cannot technically be established, then this examination brings us full circle to the starting point of the two parallel prologues. Gooding's deterioration observation of parallels works better when seen from

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[121] Gooding, 74.

[122] Other examples could be offered from figures 82 and 83; however, only a representative choice is made, which does not necessitate that it is the prime example.

the perspective of the introduction guiding the narrative. The question is which prologue and which *leitmotif* of land occupation and cultic loyalty is central and which one is subordinate.

Prologue-A with its conquest narratives highlights land occupation. If this is the chief issue in authorial intent, then Prologue-B is subordinated to Prologue-A, and land occupation (a theme carried over from Joshua) becomes the prerequisite for cultic loyalty. The narrator has woven both of these *leitmotifs* into Prologue A as a chiasmus (fig. 80) using the same *leitword*.[123] Following the rules of chiasmus, authorial purpose is found within its center. As a result, the tribes going up in conquest of the land (sections A-b and A-b') determine the extent of cultic loyalty (sections A-a and A-a'). Although the general success of Judah-Simeon is contrasted against the general failure of the Joseph league in land occupation, the *inclusio* of the assembled Israelites portrays them "standing before YHWH in cultic submission: first, voluntarily (1:1-2), then, remorsefully (2:1-5)."[124] Thus, the narrator is able to portray in the ensuing pericopes a cycle of tempered periodic cultic loyalty and disloyalty as foreshadowed in Prologue-A because of failure to conquer the land. If this hypothesis is valid, since there is no future land occupation within the narratives; but, rather extended periods of foreign occupation of the land, then cultic loyalty could not and would not occur. Although the element of land occupation was an external factor upon Israelite cultic loyalty, it would be fallacious to make Prologue-A the guiding principle.

The converse position predicates that Prologue-B is the foremost introduction. This results in the hypothesis that cultic loyalty effects whether Israel would occupy the land. This is equally fallacious, because there is no evidence that the generation under the leadership of Joshua ever completely conquered and occupied the land, although covenant loyalty was present in a greater measure. Chronologically, the introductory material can be categorized into three periods: 1) Following Joshua's dismissal of the tribes but before his death; 2) the generation who outlived Joshua; and 3) the generation who arose who did not know YHWH or what He had done for Israel. This would place Prologue-A within the second and third periods.

> It is crucial to the rhetoric of Judges that this three-period schematization be discerned, because the characterization given each of these periods in the exordium (1:1 – 3:6)

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[123] See Figure 81, "Structure of Introduction Chiasmus," page 365.

[124] O'Connell, 61. It is interesting to note that the 𝕳 text of Jg. 1:1 uses "sons of Israel" *(bᵉnê Yiśrā'ēl)* בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל and 2:4 uses "all the sons of Israel" *(kol-bᵉnê Yiśrā'ēl)* כָּל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל to show the disintegration of cultic loyalty predicated by an incomplete and unsuccessful land conquest.

portrays a successive degradation from faithfulness to take possession of the land while forsaking idolatry (Period 1), to coresidence with the natives and toleration of idolatry (Period 2), then to outright idolatry and inability to possess the land (Period 3).[125]

When this three period scheme is considered, then Prologue-B establishes the paradigm in which all of the hero narratives and the double epilogue are constrained to Period 3. By default, the syllogism of the hypothesis condemns Israel to covenant disloyalty because of its chronological placement in Period 3 and thus unable to break the cycle and occupy the land. The text refutes this hypothesis because it provides instances of covenant fidelity through Deborah and Gideon during times of occupation.[126] Further, when the hero had delivered Israel, the enemy was dispossessed from the land, with the land enjoying rest throughout the life of the judge.[127] Even though the land enjoyed rest following the deliverances through Othniel, Ehud, Deborah/Barak, and Gideon there were no conquests to regain land or to eradicate non-Israelite nations from other tribal territories within the premonarchic confederation.

Thus, the purpose of placing one prologue in subjection to another in a cause and effect relationship is not theologically or rhetorically sound. Rather, there is a complementary relationship in which circularity exists between both prologues. The double introduction exists rhetorically as the parallels are interwoven throughout the remainder of the narratives. The cyclical pattern introduced in Prologue-B and interspersed throughout the rest of the book affects both *leitmotifs*.

> Whereas the individual stories in the body of Judges may have been originally designed to depict how heroes from various tribes, with the help of YHWH, overcame personal limitations to deliver Israel from enemy oppressors, they now serve a scheme that shows how each new cycle functions as a 'test' of Israel's loyalty to YHWH.[128]

To view either prologue as paramount defeats the purpose of the combined impact they force upon the reader for the remainder of Judges. Both introductions are interdependent upon each other to create a tension that reminds the reader that both land occupation and cultic covenantal adherence are Israelite responsibilities which are dependent upon the other. Yet, if only viewed as mutually exclusive, the *leitmotifs* become segmented themes rather than the sum of the parts which make the whole. This is demonstrated in Figure 84 whereby the double prologue and double epilogue form a thematic chiastic *inclusio* that ultimately points to the type of relationship Israel has with YHWH.

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[125] O'Connell, 73.

[126] Jg. 4:5; and 6:18-27.

[127] Jg. 3:10-11, 29-30; 4:24; 5:31b; and 8:28.

[128] Ibid., 77.

FIGURE 84[129]

PROLOGUE-EPILOGUE THEMATIC *INCLUSIO*

A   Foreign wars of subjugation with the *ḥerem* being applied (1:1 – 2:5)

    B   Difficulties with religious idols (2:6 – 3:6)

    B'   Difficulties with religious idols (17:1 – 18:31)

A'   Civil wars with the *ḥerem* being applied (20:1 – 21:25)

There is one other concern regarding the double prologue. As important as the *leitmotifs* are to the external design they only characterize the Israelite response to the unseen deity. Instead, human action assumes the foreground rather than the orchestration of divine action judging humanity. At the onset, pursuant to divine inquiry, the *Übergabeformel* designated successful land conquest for Judah.[130] The subsequent anecdotes of Prologue-A testify to tribal infidelity in the land conquest and in cultic disloyalty, whereby the theophanic messenger pronounces judgment that removes divine help in eradicating the enemy and places the enemy as an instrument of divine judgment.[131] The narrator uses broad strokes in Prologue-B to describe divine judgment highlighting covenantal disobedience and introduces divine purpose for the instruments of judgment in order to test Israel in its fidelity.[132] Although the main body of Judges and the epilogues record the cycles of infidelity and fidelity; yet it is the anticipation for the reader of divine action and the continuation of the *leitmotif* of YHWH's glorification that becomes the zenith focus.[133]

INTERNAL DESIGN OF JUDGES

Whereas *leitmotifs* govern the external design of the book, it is the *leitwords* of formulaic statements that govern the internal design. Earlier, eight of these statements were discussed (Table 1) as they pertained to the style of the central body of stories.[134] O'Connell has identified "twenty distinguishable elements [that] may be segregated into twelve essential elements (eight of which are binary)" that the author has used to establish

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[129] Younger, "Judges 1 in Its Near Eastern Literary Context," 224. Of course, this only is a thematic *inclusio* and does not completely adhere to the rules of chiasmus as Younger's example excludes chapter 19.

[130] Jg. 1:2.

[131] Jg. 2:3.

[132] Jg. 2:21 – 3:4.

[133] O'Connell, 83.

[134] See Table 1 "Formulaic Statements in Judges" in chapter 3, page 99.

his rhetorical framework.[135] A modification of O'Connell's scheme, that views the elements in the entirety of Judges is presented in Table 15.[136]

TABLE 15

RHETORICAL FORMULAIC STATEMENTS

Sigla	Formula Statement	References
A1a	Israelites did evil before YHWH	(2:2), 2:11, (2:20); 3:7, 3:12; 4:1; 6:1, (6:10); 10:6; 13:1
A1b	Every man did what was right in his own eyes	(2:2); (9:16), (9:19); (10:15); (14:3), (14:7); (16:21), (16:28); 17:6; (19:24); 21:25
A2a	Served the *Baals*...followed other gods and worshipped them	2:11, 2:12, 2:13, 2:17, 2:19; 3:6; 8:33; 10:6, (10:10), (10:13), (10:16)
A2b	They forsook YHWH	2:12, 2:13; 3:7; 8:34; 10:6, (10:10), (10:13), (10:16)
B1	YHWH's anger burned against Israel	(2:12), 2:14, 2:20; 3:8; 10:7; (14:19)
B2a	YHWH gave them into the hand of ...	2:14; (3:12); 6:1; 13:1; (16:23), (16:24); (20:28)
B2b	YHWH sold them into the hand of ...	2:14; 3:8; 4:2; 10:7
B3a	Israelites served ... N years	(2:14-15); 3:8, 3:14; 6:1, (6:2); 13:1
B3b	Oppressed the Israelites ... N years	4:3; (9:22); 10:8
B3b[i]	oppressed *(lhs)* לחץ	(1:34); (2:18); (6:9); (10:12)
B3b[ii]	distressed *(srr)* צרר	2:15; 10:9; 10:14; (10:16); 11:7
C	Israelites cried to YHWH	(1:1); 3:9, 3:15; 4:3; 6:6, 6:7; 10:10, (10:12), (10:14); (12:1), (12:2); (15:18); (16:28); (20:18)
D1	YHWH raise up ... to save them	2:16, 2:18; 3:9, 3:15; (6:15), (6:36), (6:37); 10:1, 10:3, (10:11), (10:12), (10:14); (12:2), (12:3); (13:5)
D2a	YHWH's Spirit ... upon ...	(2:18); 3:10; 6:34; (9:23); 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 14:19; 15:14, (15:19); (16:19), (16:20)
D2b	Sounded the ram's horn	3:27; 6:34
E1	[Enemy] humbled ... before/by hand of [Israel]	3:30; 4:23; 8:28; 11:33
E2a	Gave ... into the hand of [Israel]	(1:2), (1:4); (2:23); 3:10, 3:28; (4:14); 11:21, 11:30, 11:32; 12:3; (16:23); (16:24); 20:28
E2b	Sold ... into the hand of [Israel]	(4:9)
F1	Judged ... Israel (N years)	(2:18); 3:10; 4:4, (4:5); 10:2, 10:3; 12:7, 12:8, 12:9, 12:11, 12:13, 12:14; 15:20; 16:31
F2	Land had peace N years	3:11, 3:30; 5:31; 8:28
G1	And ... died	(1:1); (2:8), 2:19; 3:11; 4:1; 8:32, 8:33; (9:54), (9:55); 10:2, 10:5; 12:7, 12:10, 12:12, 12:15; 16:30
G2	Was buried ... at	(2:9); 8:32; 10:2, 10:5; 12:7, 12:10; 12:12, 12:15; 16:31.

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[135] Ibid., 26. Although the primary emphasis of his thesis at this point is the author's use of recurrent elements to support a Deuteronomic purpose, it does not negate the existence of the elements for rhetorical examination.

[136] Ibid., 22-25. The references within parentheses reflect phrases where either the formula is slightly modified or it is implied.

O'Connell discounts the idea that the formulaic statement must recur often to fulfill rhetorical purposes. As a result, his *siglae* when viewed alphabetically designate seven different motifs. The 'A' motifs describe covenant aberrations, whereas the 'B' motifs "describe the disasters that resulted from YHWH's anger and retribution against Israel."[137] The penitential response of Israel to their situation characterizes the 'C' motif. This is followed by the 'D' motif of YHWH's response to Israel through deliverance. The 'E' motif could almost be seen in a binary and complementary relation to the previous motif, when the deliverance of Israel has its affect on the enemy and the oppressor-oppressed situation is reversed. One of the more pervasive motif elements is the 'F' motif involving the final cyclical element of peace during the reign of the judge. The final motif, 'G' serves as a turning point with the death and burial of the judge that one cycle has ended and a new cycle is to begin.

Because of the presence of these seven key motifs which recur throughout the narratives, the redactor has created an internal framework suggesting a repetitive circular movement from motifs 'A' through 'G'. While it may be recognized that all of the fourteen distinct sections do not contain an element from each motif; however this structure does incorporate itself in these sections on a regular basis. The obvious exceptions are some of the minor judges and the first epilogue. Nonetheless, all seven of these motifs may be found in the Othniel, Ehud, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson narratives, as reflected in Table 16.[138]

TABLE 16
DISTRIBUTION OF FORMULAIC STATEMENTS

	Pr A	Pr B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Ep A	Ep B
A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓
B		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓		✓
C	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				✓		✓
D		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
E	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				✓		✓
F		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
G	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

[137] Ibid., 33.

[138] This table is created based on the information derived from Table 15, on page 373. The columns represent the fourteen sections (the two prologues, twelve hero narratives, and two epilogues). The rows represent the seven primary motifs.

By utilizing this framework, the narrator reveals human action and divine response. O'Connell suggests that this rhetorical structure allows the reader to assess the Israelite actions and motives "by the standards of YHWH's covenant."[139] But what he doesn't say is equally true. The reader may use the same framework to assess YHWH's fidelity to the covenant and to expect an action of judgment, either for or against Israel.

Each of the formulaic statements relate to the covenant, although sometimes implicitly; they either describe the situation that precedes the divine judgment or the actual judgment. Rather than to take the traditional four or five part cycle, O'Connell has discerned that the statements may be described in phases of alienation or restoration as Israel relates to YHWH. This polar arrangement as shown in Table 17 reveals how the redactor has used the statements to present a problem, transition the reader to see how Israel requests a solution to that problem, initiates the solution, and then transitions the reader to the point where the solution dissolves into another problem.[140] This continues up until the epilogues whereby the cyclical structure disintegrates as does Israel alienating itself against itself and YHWH. This leaves the reader with a new problem that the author has left Israel in a phase of alienation and subtly poses a rhetorical question of whether and when would the restoration phase begin because the solution is not apparent either in the concluding hero narrative or in either of the epilogues.

The redactor has carefully used these formulaic statements to assert the glorification of YHWH. Deity is indemnified in each statement, through each central motif, and ultimately in the two phases. The improper covenantal activity of Israel in motif 'A' required the motif 'B' response. Grace is personified in motif 'D' as a response to Israelite inquiry in motif 'C'. Divine action through a judge in motifs 'E' and 'F' restore Israel to its covenantal relationship until the death knell of motif 'G' signals a change.

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[139] Ibid., 20. See the section "Reason for YHWH's Test" in chapter three, pages 302-309 for this assessment.

[140] Ibid., 55. The table of O'Connell is slightly modified in order to bring better clarity. However, only the intermediary motif elements are excluded from a "box" because of their antithetical sequence.

TABLE 17

AGGREGATE STRUCTURE OF JUDGES' CYCLE-MOTIF

ALIENATION PHASE: *RESTORATION PHASE:*

Problem Conceived:	
A1a	Israelites did evil before YHWH
A1b	Israelites did what was right in their own eyes
A2a	Served the *Baals;* followed other gods and worshipped them
A2b	Forsook YHWH

Solution Initiated:	
D1	YHWH raised up [judge] to save

B1	YHWH's anger burned against Israel
B2a	YHWH gave [Israel] into the hand of
B2b	YHWH sold [Israel] into the hand of
B3a	Israelites served ...
B3b	Israelites oppressed by ... N years

D2a/b	YHWH's Spirit upon [judge]
E1	[Enemy] humbled before Israel
E2a	Gave ... into the hand of [Israel]
E2b	Sold ... into the hand of [Israel]
F1	Judged Israel
F2	Land had peace N years

Problem Acknowledged/ Solution Requested:	
C	Israelites cried to YHWH

Dissolution:	
G1	[Judge] died
G2	[Judge] was buried at ...

Art of Persuasion

As previously mentioned, the Aristotelian design of classical rhetoric must fulfill a distinct communicative purpose of persuasion.[141] The Muilenburg model is rather effective in the rhetorical realm of composition, and satisfies his two requirements of defining the literary unit and discerning the structure. However, the model falls short by not addressing the persuasive element. Although the book of Judges does not specifically satisfy the Aristotelian focus, the redactor's forensic approach incorporates Aristotle's elements and goals of communication. Yet, to incorporate his five parts of rhetoric as the proof of persuasion would denigrate the Judges text because it would fail rhetorically because of its literary value for reading rather than for oral interpretation and hearing.[142] In order to scrutinize the redactor's effectiveness in persuasion, a close reading of the text *(elocutio)*, a reexamination of the *dispositio,* and a look at *inventio* is required.

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[141] See Table 14, "Categories of Classical Rhetoric," page 344.

[142] More specifically, the elements of *memoria* and *pronunciatio.* Having said that, even though this would have been a lengthy oration, the chiastic arrangement would serve the purpose of *memoria.*

ELOCUTIO OF JUDGES

The internal scrutiny of the book through a close reading fulfills the classical rhetorical form of *elocutio* and as such, the choice of literary devices employed. There is no paucity in this selection. Although every possible rhetorical device is not used, the liberality in which they have been incorporated makes Judges good fodder for this type of rhetorical analysis.

PARTICLES. In the Hebrew language certain morphemes function as signals of language within the sentence often introducing a clause. This serves a rhetorical purpose as a device that presents and reveals the persuasive elements. Muilenburg suggests there are eighteen important particles, of which we will focus on the five most prominent ones: *(kî), (hinnēh* or *hēn), (lākēn), (lāmmāh),* and *(wᵊʿatāh).*[143] Each of these particles is present in Judges. Keeping in mind that classical rhetoric involved oratory, these particles function with their vocal gestures as "ejaculations or cries or exclamations, calling the hearer to attention, bidding him heed, giving him notice or warning, or stirring him to action."[144] This would facilitate in the *pronunciatio* of classical rhetoric.

PARTICLE: כִּי. The foremost particle is *(kî)* which functions deictically and emphatically.[145] Of the five particles discussed, it is used more frequently than the others. Its wide range of usage as a multipurpose particle is demonstrated in its frequency of being used over 4000 times and in nearly every book in the Hebrew bible.[146] The narrator has used it 113 times, with its presence found in all but one chapter of Judges.[147] Within the Hebraic grammar, the syntactic position of the particle in relationship to the main clause provides the key for the reader to understand the functional role of *(kî).*[148] Muilenburg has identified fifty-one different Hebrew bible usages.[149]

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[143] H כִּי, הִנֵּה, הֵן, לָכֵן, לָמָּה, and וְעַתָּה. See, J. Muilenburg, "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle כי in the Old Testament," *HUCA 32* (1961), 135-160. The other particles include: *(ʾk)* אַךְ; *(ʾh)* אָח; *(ʾz)* אָז; *(ʾwy)* אוֹי; *(ʾhh)* אֲהָהּ; *(ʾl-kn)* עַל־כֵּן; *(kn)* כֵּן; *(kh)* כֹּה; *(hnm)* הִנָם; *(hlʾ)* הֲלֹא; *(hwy)* הוֹי; and *(ʾkn)* אָכֵן.

[144] Ibid., 135.

[145] *Idem*, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 14.

[146] A. Aejmelaus, "Function and Interpretation of כי in Biblical Hebrew," *JBL 105* (1986), 193.

[147] Jg. 1:15, 19, 28, 32, 34; 2:17, 18; 3:12, 22, 28; 4:3, 9, 12, 14, 17, 19; 5:23; 6:5, 7, 16, 22, 30, 31, 32, 37; 7:9, 15; 8:1, 5, 6, 15, 20, 21, 22, 24, 30; 9:2, 3, 5, 18, 28, 38, 47, 55; 10:10; 11:2, 12, 13, 16, 18; 12:3, 4, 5; 13:5, 7, 16, 16, 17, 21, 22; 14:3, 4, 9, 10, 17; 15:2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 13; 16:16, 17, 18, 20, 24, 25; 17:13; 18:1, 9, 10, 14, 26, 28; 20:3, 6, 28, 34, 36, 39, 41; 21:5, 15, 16, 18, and 22. There are several instances where the particle is present either two or three times within the same verse.

[148] Aejmelaeus, 196.

[149] Muilenburg, "Usages of Particle כי in the Old Testament," 137-159.

The question at hand is the applicability of this particle within rhetorical design. The Muilenburg emphasis on how the particle is used partially satisfies this requirement but rather yields itself more toward Narrative Criticism. In contradistinction to that position, Aejmelaeus suggests that the functional role it serves as conjunctive particle connecting subordinate and/or coordinate clauses demonstrates the contextual meaning.[150] Although there is validity in that approach, it is through a harmonization of these approaches whereby the way the particle is used is subsumed through its function. As a connective, the particle functions in five different ways: emphatically, causally, temporally, conditionally, and consecutively.[151]

The emphatic function is used 46 times in Judges. For both the reader and the hearer of the text the particle is a visual and aural signal that emphasis is being made. This is a point where Muilenburg's system is helpful.[152] This function may be fulfilled morphologically in two ways. The first way is when the particle is conjoined with another particle. Emphatic result is expressed when *(kî)* is followed by *('al-kēn)*. The narrator used this to emphasize Gideon's response when he recognized the theophanic messenger.[153] But, when the theophanic messenger comes to Manoah's wife, he uses the particle *(kî)* with *(hinnēh)*, in order to give dramatic and climactic force to the annunciation oracle.[154] A frequent usage in the narrative is the combination of the particle *(kî)* with *(lō')*. Whenever *(kî)* comes first in the series, it functions like the word "never." It is used once to reflect the emphatic negative response of the men of Judah toward Samson.[155] But when the particles are transposed it accentuates the negative emphasizing the adversative clause. This is important in the initial chapter because the narrator reinforces his thesis by using these particles describing the non-expulsion of the Canaanites from the land.[156] In a similar vein, when *(kî lō')* is preceded by *('epes)* it

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[150] Aejmelaeus, 195.

[151] In order to facilitate a close-reading of the text two conventions are used. The first follows the pattern established in the discipline of giving a very literal rendering of the text instead of a dynamic equivalent. As such, in order to convey through the translation what is represented by a single Hebrew word, when a multi-word translation is needed those words in the phrase are hyphenated showing them as a singular word. Secondly, as a point of emphasis and because of a wide variety of meaning, the particle remains in its Hebrew form.

[152] Muilenburg, "Usages of Particle כי in the Old Testament," 137-149.

[153] Jg. 6:22.

[154] Ibid., 137. Jg. 13:5.

[155] Jg. 15:13.

[156] Ibid., 140. Jg. 1:19, and 32. Other usages of these two particles together in this manner include: Jg. 1:34; 3:22; 5:23; 12:3; 13:16; 18:1; and 21:22 (2x).

expresses climactic negative emphasis, as in the reply of Deborah to Barak regarding the glory he would not be given in the battle against Sisera.[157] The final emphatic double particle is the usage of *(kî)* with *('im)*.[158] This is used once in the discourse of Samson to the Philistines where the particles function with an emphatic climactic contrast almost with the force of a conditional statement.[159]

The second morphological emphatic function is when the particle is not joined with another particle. These are generally straightforward syntactical observations. It is used to introduce discourse or a direct quotation. The emphatic value is present when Deborah proclaims "*(kî)* this [is] the-day which has-given YHWH Sisera into-your-hand."[160] Likewise, the divine pronouncement to Gideon emphasizes "*(kî)* I-will-be with-you."[161] In antithetical usage demonstrating God's judgment of Samson (and representatively Israel), the Philistines proclaim "*(kî)* they-said has-given our-god into-our-hand our-enemy."[162] Likewise, the particle functions as an introductory signal to emphasize a statement that follows. The narrator uses this to concentrate on the apostasy of Israel. In the Prologue, he states "*(kî)* whored after gods other."[163] Then later describes Israel "And-*(kî)* we-have-forsaken our-*Elohim*."[164] The particle is used at the end of a clause for emphasis. It is interesting that it is only used this way in the Abimelech narrative, which might be an intended syntactical rhetorical usage to contrast this story against the others.[165] In some instances, the particle introduces a clause that follows after an urgent question.[166] And at other times, the usage is after an urgent imperative. There are four examples of this, but in the Gideon narrative, the narrator uses it for rhetorical emphasis "*(kî)* has-given YHWH into-your-hand the-army-of Midian."[167] In one instance, the

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[157] אֶפֶס כִּי לֹא H. Jg.4:9. The nuance of this added particle with its primary meaning "zero" accentuates the numerical extent and amount of glory he would receive.

[158] כִּי אִם H, translated "nevertheless." Ibid., 142.

[159] Jg. 15:7.

[160] Jg. 4:14.

[161] Jg. 6:16.

[162] Jg. 16:24.

[163] Jg. 2:17.

[164] Jg. 10:10.

[165] Jg. 9:2, 28, and 38.

[166] Jg. 14:3; and 21:5.

[167] Jg. 7:15. The other usages are Jg. 7:9; 8:21; and 18:9.

particle introduces an oracle of assurance.[168] However, the most frequent emphatic usage of the particle is when it follows a verb of perception and "introduces the object clause."[169]

The second crucial function of the particle is to communicate a causal relationship within the circumstantial *(kî)* clause, especially when it precedes the main clause. Although it may follow after a verb of perception, the circumstance of the clause is explained through either a causal, motivational, or evidential rendering. There are seventeen instances where the clause functions in a general casuistic manner.[170] Through this, the narrator is able to express the cause associated with a particular example or action, such as Jotham's remarks to the men of Shechem reiterating their action "*(kî)* your-brother he [is]."[171] Frequently, the particle conveys the motivation behind the action. There are nineteen examples where it functions motivationally.[172] Achsah frames her request based on the motivation "*(kî)* the-land of-the-Negev you-have-given-me."[173] Yet, in the other fifteen examples, the narrator causes the particle to function evidentially.[174] In other words, the particle introduces "a loose and indirect explanation" that provides the reason behind the statement.[175] This is employed by the divine messenger in his speech to Manoah's wife about her son, "*(kî)* a-Nazirite-to *Elohim* shall-be the-boy from-the-womb."[176]

The third function that this particle fulfills is temporal. In each of the times it is used time is expressed.[177] Israelite action is represented temporally as in the Prologue statement "And-*(kî)* raised-up YHWH for-them judges."[178]

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[168] Jg. 20:28.

[169] Ibid., 144; and Aejmelaeus, 199. Jg. 6:22; 12:3; 13:16, 21; 14:4, 9; 15:2, 11; 16:18, 20; 17:13; 18:14, 26; 20:3, 34, 36, and 41.

[170] Aejmelaeus, 202-203. Jg. 3:12; 4:12; 6:30 (2x), 31, 32; 8:20, 24; 9:18, 55; 11:13; 13:22; 14:17; 15:6; 18:28; 20:36; 21:15, and 16.

[171] Jg. 9:18.

[172] Jg. 1:15; 2:18; 3:28; 4:3, 19; 6:5; 8:5, 20, 22, 24; 9:3; 11:2; 12:4; 14:3, 4; 16:18; 18:10; 20:6, and 41.

[173] Jg. 1:15.

[174] Jg. 1:19; 4:9, 17; 8:30; 9:5, 47; 11:16, 18; 13:5, 7; 14:10; 16:17; 17:13; 20:39; and 21:18.

[175] Ibid., 203.

[176] Jg. 13:5.

[177] Jg. 1:28; 2:18; 6:7; 8:1; 12:11; 15:3; 16:16, 25; and 21:22.

[178] Jg. 2:18.

The fourth function of the particle is conditional. Conditional clauses operate deictically pointing the direction of action as a plausible optative condition which in each of the cases the condition was met. Gideon's discourse with YHWH about the fleece-test illustrates the condition based on the apodosis "then-I-shall know *(kî)*-You-will-deliver by-my-hand Israel as You-have-said."[179]

Finally, the particle may fulfill a consecutive function. This is when the clause is equivalent to the interrogative pronoun. As in the case of Jephthah it states the reason for the question he asked "*(kî)*-you-have-come to-me to-fight in-my-land."[180]

PARTICLE: הנה. Hebrew grammar utilizes the particle *(hinnēh)* in such a way that it functions to arrest the reader to acknowledge some significant information which the author is about to disclose. This particle is used 41 times within the Judges narrative and is primarily translated "behold."[181] One of the normative uses of this particle is for it to draw our attention.[182] The first usage in Judges demonstrates this: "Judah shall-go-up; *(hinnēh)* I-have-given the-land into-his-hand."[183] This opens the narrative conquest with the expression of divine will and remains the *modus operandi* for which premonarchic Israel must square its reality throughout the pericopes. Similarly, this same type of attention is drawn when Gideon uses his fleece, Samson deceives Delilah regarding his strength, and in the discernment of non-involvement by the men of Jabesh-Gilead in the war against Benjamin.[184]

Another important usage is when the particle reflects a change in the perception of the character's point of view.[185] This change is made from Ehud to Eglon's courtiers when the narrator allows Ehud to escape the scene of the crime.[186] Despite all that had

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[179] Jg. 6:37. Other instances of this function are: Jg. 8:6, 15; and 13:17.

[180] A. Schoors, "The Particle כי," Remembering All the Way: A Collection of Old Testament Studies Published on the Occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland, (Eds.) B. Albrektson, et.al. (OS 21: Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1981), 262-264. Jg. 11:12.

[181] Jg. 1:2; 3:24, 25; 4:22; 6:15, 28, 37; 7:13, 17; 8:15; 9:31, 36, 37, 43; 11:34; 13:3, 7, 10; 14:5, 8, 16; 16:2, 10, 13; 17:2; 18:12; 19:12, 16, 24, 27; 20:7, 40; 21:8, 9, and 19. There are a couple of occurrences when the particle is used two or three times within the same verse.

[182] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 14.

[183] Jg. 1:2.

[184] Jg. 6:37; 16:10, 13; 21:8, and 9. The particle also functions the same way in these verses: Jg. 18:12; 19:12; 20:7; and 21:19.

[185] J.P. Fokkelman, Narrative Art in Genesis: Specimens of Stylistic and Structural Analysis (Assen, the Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1975), 50-51.

[186] Jg. 3:24.

been said to Gideon by the divine messenger, his point of view about his inferiority is reflected by the particle.[187] As the issue of point of view is important, the other examples and this discussion will follow later.[188]

When the essence of the particle indicates surprise to the character (not necessarily to the reader) then it functions to provide suddenly new information that the character begins to perceive.[189] This surprise creates a conflict which the narrator must resolve based upon this change of new information. The men of Succoth were surprised when Gideon returned to them with Zebah and Zalmunna despite that this event had been foreshadowed through the earlier rhetorical question.[190] Likewise as the narrator had foreshadowed the consequence of Jephthah's vow, the narrator recounts Jephthah's surprise to his daughter's actions even though he knew what these actions meant to him and to her.[191] The surprise that Manoah's wife experienced with the theophanic annunciation message was not of their childlessness; but that this barren state had "not gone unnoticed with God" and they would have a son.[192] The particle is again used when Manoah's wife selectively reported these events to her husband with the key surprise being her conception: "And-he-said to-me, '(hinnēh)-you [are]-pregnant and-bearing a-son.'"[193] Because this particle is used three different times in this announcement, it almost carries with it the "dream-like" concept, although there is no evidence that at any time Manoah's wife had been dreaming and the birth of this child will prove that it was no dream.[194] Later, the narrator uses the particle to announce the surprise appearance of a lion in Samson's path, then his reacquaintance with the lion and now its occupants: the bees and the honey, the return of the silver Micah had stolen from his mother, the presentation of the pîlegeš to the men of Gibeah, and finally her physical state the next morning.[195]

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[187] Jg. 6:15.

[188] Other examples include: Jg. 9:31, 37; 14:16; 16:2; and 19:16. See the sections on "Point of View," pages 500, 508, 513, 520, 537, 557, 588, 618, 644, 666, and 695.

[189] F.I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew* (The Hague, the Netherlands: Mouton, 1974), 94.

[190] Jg. 8:15.

[191] Jg. 11:34.

[192] Jg. 13:3. Block, *NAC*, 401.

[193] Jg. 13:7. I have chosen to translate this verb here and in Jg. 13:5 as a perfect with a future import.

[194] Jg. 13:3, 5, and 7. Andersen, 95.

[195] Jg. 14:5, 8; 17:2; 19:24, and 27.

Also like the previous particle *(kî)*, *(hinnēh)* may have a temporal value that notes a "mark of suddenness" for the character.[196] This occurs when the men of Ophrah discover their altar to *Baal* torn down, when Gideon is ready to initiate an attack, and when Gaal saw the people coming down the mountain prepared to attack.[197]

The particle likewise operates to either introduce or to culminate a strophe.[198] Sometimes this occurs simultaneously along with the shift in the point of view as in the case of Barak appearing at Jael's tent and Manoah's wife reporting to her husband about the messenger.[199]

Similarly, the particle may present itself in "crucial or climactic contexts."[200] The narrator highlights the climactic understatement of why Eglon did not open the locked door to his chamber.[201] Further, the use describes metaphorically the Benjaminite experience at the turning point of the conflict: "and-turned Benjamin behind-him, and-*(hinnēh)* had-gone-up the-whole city toward-the-heavens."[202]

Typically, the particle as a part of a clause occurs singularly as a point of emphasis. Yet, this convention has an exception in "dream reports" whereby there is a series of the particle in rapid succession.[203] This is exemplified in Gideon overhearing the Midianite relate his dream about the barley loaf.[204]

PARTICLE: לכן. This particle *(lākēn)*, translated "that being so" exists as the preformative preposition *Lamedh* is joined to the adverb *(kēn)* "so."[205] It is present three times in Judges. In the first two occurrences it functions as a "conversation director" and in the other one as an "attention getter."[206] However, these rhetorical functions are best

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[196] A. Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 92.

[197] Jg. 6:28; 7:17; and 9:36.

[198] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 14.

[199] Jg. 4:22; and 13:10.

[200] Ibid., 15.

[201] Jg. 3:25.

[202] Jg. 20:40.

[203] Andersen, 95.

[204] Jg. 7:13. The particle is used three times in this verse.

[205] כן ﬡ. Literally, translated "for so."

[206] W.E. March, "Lākēn: Its Functions and Meanings," *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*, (Eds.) J.J. Jackson and M. Kessler (Pittsburgh, PA: The Pickwick Press, 1974), 284.

understood realizing that the particle is frequently present in the judgment speech.[207] Gideon uses the particle idiomatically in his address to the men of Succoth as does the elders of Gilead toward Jephthah reconciling him for their past behavior. [208] As aptly demonstrated in the Jephthah narrative, the particle serves a rhetorical function of introducing a response.

> Lākēn is used to acknowledge that a discussion is under way and that other points have already been made while urging the audience to listen to the next word with the expectancy that something significant, a turning point, is about to be recorded.[209]

The other time it is used prophetically to introduce "after statement of the grounds [the] divine declaration" when YHWH said: "Yet-you, you-have-forsaken Me, and-served gods other; (lākēn) not I-did-again to-deliver you."[210] This sentence structure with the negative particle following the consequential particle creates a divine permanent prohibition regarding YHWH's deliverance of Israel.[211]

PARTICLE: למה. As an interrogative, the particle (lāmmāh) translated "why" occurs five times in the text.[212] Some of these questions are rhetorical implying the answer, some are answered in the narratives, and others are left unanswered. Perhaps the question asked by Gideon best expresses the predicament of Israel throughout all of the narratives: "O my-lord if-there-is YHWH with-us then-(lāmmāh) has-found-us all this?"[213] The obvious answer is because YHWH is with Israel and desires to have a covenant relationship with Israel.

PARTICLE: ועתה. The last particle to consider is (wᵉʿatāh) which is primarily translated as "now therefore" with the preformative Waw acting temporally rather than as a simple conjunction. The sixteen times this particle occurs in Judges, it functions to establish the clause as the result or consequence of the prior action.[214] The narrator uses

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[207] C. Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, (Trans.) H.C White (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1967), 64-70. He categorizes the prophetic judgment speech by the German nomenclature *Drohwort* and *Scheltwort*, which are "threatening-speech" and "reproaching-speech," respectively.

[208] Jg. 8:7; 10:13; and 11:8.

[209] March, 275.

[210] *BDB*, 486. Jg. 10:13. The dynamic translation is: "Yet, you have forsaken Me; that being so, I will never deliver you again."

[211] Weingreen, A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew, 77.

[212] Jg. 5:16, 17; 6:13; 15:10; and 21:3.

[213] Jg. 6:13. The more dynamic translation would be: "O my lord, if YHWH is with us, then why has all this happened to us?"

[214] Jg. 9:16; 11:13, 23, 25; 13:4, 7; 15:18; 17:3; 18:14; and 20:13. However, in seven instances the particle does not have the preformative conjunction, as in Jg. 8:6, 15; 9:38; 11:8; 13:12; 17:13; and 20:9.

it to stress the immediacy of the moment in the narrative, such as the case of Samson crying out in thirst.[215]

All of the aforementioned particles have a distinct role connecting the clauses together. The rhetorical role supercedes the syntactical role of conjunctivity. When the clause functions with motive, the design of persuasion takes on a pastoral purpose. Thus through grammar, the narrator uses these types of motive clauses

> [T]o provide an impetus and inspiration for obedience. They are meant to restore men to what they were intended by God to be when they were created. They expose to them the resources that are at their disposal, to warn them against the disregard and flouting of the grace of the *Torah* which is given them as a light upon their way, indeed their very life.[216]

VOCATIVES. Another rhetorical element, which is found in discourse are vocatives. A particle together with a proper noun or its representative description signals information that is specifically addressed to the individual or group addressed. This vocative may be categorized based on whether the address is toward deity or toward humanity.

ADDRESSED TO DEITY. The Judges text includes eight examples of a divinely addressed vocative, which include the Tetragrammaton, *Adonai, Elohim,* and the compound structures of *YHWH-Elohim* and *Adonai-YHWH.* The narrator places the vocatives not only at the beginning of the sentence, but also at the middle introducing a clause, and at the end of the sentence. Deborah and Gideon used a vocative to make a declarative statement.[217] Gideon and the collective voice of Israel used a vocative to question YHWH.[218] Similarly, Manoah and Samson used this rhetorical device to make a petition.[219]

ADDRESSED TO PERSONS. In addition, there are eight other vocatives whereby humanity is addressed. In each case, they are all declarative statements. Seven of these are simple human-human addresses: Ehud to the king of Moab; Deborah to the kings of Canaan, to the rulers of Canaan, to Barak, the son of *(ʾᵃbînōʿam)* Abinoam, and to her own soul; Jotham to the men of Shechem; and the men of Ephraim to the Gileadites.[220]

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[215] Jg. 15:18.

[216] Muilenburg, "Usages of Particle כי in the Old Testament," 155.

[217] Jg. 5:31; and 6:22.

[218] Jg. 6:13, 15; and 21:3.

[219] Jg. 13:8; and 16:28 (2x).

[220] אֲבִינֹעַם H. Jg. 3:19; 5:3 (2x), 12, 21; 9:7; and 12:4.

There is however a divine-human vocative by the theophanic messenger to Gideon whereby he is addressed as a valiant warrior.[221]

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS. The narrator has introduced 88 different questions throughout the text. Of these questions, 55 are rhetorical in nature, thus implying the answer that it asserts or denies.

ACCUSATION. The first rhetorical question used is a straightforward accusation in which YHWH draws Israel's attention to its disobedience through making a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and not tearing down their altars.[222] Later, Dan is singled out and accused for his non-involvement in the battle against Sisera.[223] Next, the divine accusation confronts Israel with the historical memory of past deliverances from the Egyptians, Amorites, Ammonites, and Philistines.[224] Although not in an interrogative form, the implication of the rhetorical question continues to remind Israel of past deliverance from the Sidonians, Amalekites, and Maonites.[225] In the first epilogue, when the reconnaissance party returns with their report to their tribal brothers about the northern land, it is somewhat reminiscent of the earlier spy narrative during the time of Moses.[226] The rhetorical question has the same accusatory nature as the speech of Joshua and Caleb; yet the implication is that since there is no minority report, then the conquest will occur. The reader is reminded of the prologue and the divine promise of conquest to Judah. Because of the *remez* of the results following the twelve spies, and more specifically, the evil report of ten of those spies, the wickedness that occurs in the second epilogue is brought into focus. The narrator uses a rhetorical question posed toward the tribe of Benjamin regarding the abuse toward the *pîlegeš*.[227] It is obvious to the characters in the narrative as well as to the reader the answer to this question. However, the accusation formed serves a double duty for the reader to wonder if in the larger

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[221] Jg. 6:12.

[222] Jg. 2:2.

[223] Jg. 5:17. This verse is textually problematic because the particle is omitted in some of the manuscripts, including the Vulgate. Cf. Burney, 142. Geographically, Gilead may be seen in the East, Dan in his ships at Lake Huleh in the center, and Asher at the Mediterranean seashore in the West. Garstang takes this position with the reason for Dan's noninvolvement because of Hazor's control of the region. See his, *Joshua, Judges*, 305. This is plausible; yet, although the text does not explain the reason for Dan's actions, even if the interrogative particle should be deleted, the accusation remains.

[224] Jg. 10:11.

[225] Jg. 10:12.

[226] Num. 13:30; and Jg. 18:9.

[227] Jg. 20:12.

context anyone from any tribe will recognize the greater wickedness that has taken place—that being covenant infidelity and spiritual harlotry.

DERISION. Within the Song of Deborah, the tribe of Reuben is sarcastically rebuked for their sedentary pastoral activity during a time of regional conflict. The question embodies a double *entendre* as the piping or whistling to the flocks producing a hissing noise becomes a hissing toward Reuben in the song for the heedlessness of the tribe in a time of war.[228] In a different perception, Reuben is seen lethargically "charmed into inaction by the music of the shepherd's pipe."[229]

This same kind of derision is present in the sarcasm Joash expresses toward his fellow citizens in the double rhetorical question: "Will you contend for *Baal*? Or will you save him?" He intimates not only the impotence of *Baal* but of the *Baal* worshipers after Gideon has destroyed their altar.[230] The narrator uses the Abimelech pericope in much the same manner; however, the beauty of the rhetorical device is the way in which the rhetorical questions place Abimelech as both the subject and object of the derision. In his scheme to usurp the throne, Abimelech questions the men of Shechem to persuade them that one leader (that being a Shechemite) is better than seventy leaders (who are not Shechemites).[231] This conspiracy is disrespectful of all that his father Gideon had accomplished. Nonetheless, when Jotham escapes the attempted murder by his half-brother and tells his fable, he anthropomorphizes the olive tree, fig tree, and vine. The rhetorical question they each ask elicits the implied negation and in essence ridicules Abimelech and the men of Shechem.[232] Later in the narrative, this event begins to affect Abimelech, when the questions Gaal pose demonstrates the scorn and disdain the Shechemites had toward their king.[233] When the question is repeated it shows contempt by Zebul toward Gaal about Abimelech.[234]

Indeed, the narrator uses the rhetorical question to climax the conflict surrounding the internal episode of the wedding of Samson and his Philistine bride.[235] What Samson

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[228] Lindars, *Judges 1-5*, 260-261. Jg. 5:16; and Jer. 18:16. See the section "Doublets" in Appendix 2, page 720, footnote 12 for the possible alternate translation.

[229] Burney, 142.

[230] Jg. 6:31.

[231] Jg. 9:2.

[232] Jg. 9:9, 11, and 13.

[233] Jg. 9:28. There are three questions in this verse, each accomplishing the same result.

[234] Jg. 9:38.

[235] Jg. 14:18. In actuality, there are two rhetorical questions in this verse.

thought was a sure bet when he challenged the Philistines with his riddle was turned into a rhetorical question filled with ridicule at his experience. The implication is that nothing is sweeter than honey or stronger than a lion; however, the reader can look past this mocking and see Messianic importance through the "Lion of Judah," who is the incarnate *Torah* that we can "taste and see that YHWH is good."[236] Moreover, despite the earlier internal context with which the riddle was formed regarding the incident when Samson killed the lion and later found the honey in its carcass, the Philistine use of their riddle forces the reader to see the immediate and external context as it relates to this episode and the rest of the short story.

> On contextual grounds this answer must be linked to a wedding, in which case line 1 [What is sweeter than honey?] may be supposed to refer to love, which is incomparable in its sweetness; and the second line [And what is stronger than a lion?], to Samson, who is incomparable in his strength. Ironically, love proves to be the stronger, melting Samson like honey in a woman's hand.[237]

Thus, the Philistine riddle foreshadows with derision the impending fate of Samson because of his uncontrolled love for women. The narrative artistry allows Samson to have the last word by answering their questions. But, it is a rebuke of their actions with his bride who he calls *('eglāh)* "a heifer."[238] This rebuke is important for the reader, because of the parallelism to "Eglon" which will bode as unfavorable to the Philistines as it did to the Moabites.[239]

COMPLAINT. The narrator presents Gideon as uninformed about his circumstances regarding the Midianite oppression; whereas the reader has the knowledge of the preamble to chapter six. Gideon asks what appear to be two quickly following questions to the divine messenger for the basis of learning the reason for his predicament.[240] His questions of complaint are not answered. Instead they form the basis for a third rhetorical question in a Socratic response as if to say the earlier questions were moot because it was not time for a history lesson but the time for deliverance in which Gideon would be used.[241] Gideon's first question, "My lord, if YHWH is with us, then why has all this happened to us?" serves to underscore that his own incomprehension about the situation

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[236] Ps. 34:8; and Rev. 5:5.

[237] Block, *NAC*, 435.

[238] עֶגְלָה. Note the feminine nominative lexical form is used rather than as it occurs in the text with its prefix and suffix *(bᵊ'eglāṭî)* בְּעֶגְלָתִי. Jg. 14:18. *BDB*, 722.

[239] Jg. 3:12.

[240] Jg. 6:13.

[241] Jg. 6:14.

makes him a case-in-point representative of Israel as a whole. This unawareness of the big picture also characterizes Gideon's complainants, the Ephraimites who were excluded from the Midianite foray.[242] For the reader, who knows the reason for their exclusion, as well as Gideon, who does not disclose it to them the rhetorical question serves to vilify those more interested in their self-glorification rather than the glory of YHWH. Perhaps an even stronger complaint would be why Gideon did not inform them of the reason and whether his ensuing actions foreshadow his own self-glorification, as if he has already forgotten not only the reason for the reduction of his army, but of his initial question to the angel of YHWH "Why has all this happened to us?".[243] Characteristic in form, Gideon's response to the Ephraimites comes in a series of three rapid fire questions, in which each rhetorical question implied to the Ephraimites what they wanted to hear and diffused their complaint which fueled their anger.[244] After one potentially disruptive situation, Gideon finds himself through a simple petition for food initiating another one that is provoked by a rhetorical question about the capture of Zebah and Zalmunna.[245] The question the men of Succoth asked Gideon, of which they knew the negative answer becomes their complaint for his request of hospitality. Unfortunately for them, the matter is resolved by the repetition of this question when he returns to them with the positive answer that results in their physical abuse and essentially Gideon's complaint toward them.[246]

In the Jephthah narrative, the elders of Gilead make several declarative statements that leave no question to the reader what their intentions are. Nonetheless, Jephthah responds with three rhetorical questions as a complaint that embodies elements of accusation and contempt for their past treatment of him, although this sarcasm enables him to overcome the past and come to fulfill the desires of his elders.[247] True to form, he uses sarcasm again in his reply to the Ammonite king regarding his three hundred year delay.[248] Later, the men of Ephraim bring their accusatory complaint of being left out of

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[242] Jg. 8:1.

[243] Jg. 6:13; and 7:2.

[244] Jg. 8:2, and 3.

[245] Jg. 8:6.

[246] Jg. 8:15.

[247] Jg. 11:7, and 9. There are two questions in verse 11:7.

[248] The use of the *Waw*-copulative with the interrogative particle accentuates the sarcasm in the idiom. Burney, 317. Jg. 11:26.

the battle against Ammon of which Jephthah answers declaratively and then rhetorically with a question implying the answer and signaling the intertribal conflict against Ephraim.[249]

The author also uses the rhetorical question in the Samson narrative. What is distinctive about this is how the early chapters either make Samson the recipient or the reason for that question. His parents question him about his desire to marry a Philistine, implying that Samson acts as if there are no Israelite women.[250] But, it is through the use of the rhetorical question that the narrator exposes the external divine motivation that is working through Samson. At the half way point of the week long wedding celebration, the Philistine wedding guests begin to complain to their fellow citizen, Samson's bride, because of the pressure of Samson's riddle and the economic affect losing the wager would have on them. They proffer two quick rhetorical questions to her "Have you come here to impoverish us?".[251] Although the answers to both of their complaints are in the negative; however, for the reader they serve as a double *entendre* with each question deserving both a positive and negative answer. This being so because the reader remembers the divine purpose behind the earlier rhetorical question asked by Samson's parents; hence the conflict introduced at first now begins to have its first resolution. In what the narrator makes as a simple exchange of discourse between the men of Judah and Samson, although it by design would be more volatile becomes the precursor to the Judahites two-fold rhetorical questions: "Don't you know that the Philistines are rulers over us?" and "What then is this you have done to us?".[252] It was obvious to both the men of Judah and to Samson that the Philistines were ruling over them and of what he had done in the arson episode. These two complaints serve the narrative to transition to another killing frenzy against the Philistines, this time at Ramath-Lehi. Subsequent to that event, Samson complains about his thirst and rhetorically questions YHWH about dying at that location.[253] Rather than answer that question negatively, *Elohim* performs a miracle, thus providing the answer to both Samson and the reader. Nonetheless, this question he posed about his death foreshadows the next chapter in which he will die. Still, the incident must unfold that leads to that death. It is in the midst of his encounter

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[249] Jg. 12:1-3.

[250] Jg. 14:3.

[251] Jg. 14:15. There are two rhetorical questions in this verse.

[252] Jg. 15:11. There are two rhetorical questions in this verse.

[253] Jg. 15:18.

with Delilah that she changes her straightforward accusation of his deceitfulness and lying regarding the source of his strength in order to make her complaint in the form of a rhetorical question.[254] The narrator uses this device in the words of the temptress to bring the scene to its climax and in essence the beginning of Samson's death.

When the narrator continues with the northern conquest of Dan, he allows the spies to use a rhetorical question about the cultic items in Micah's house.[255] Because this information about these religious elements had not been introduced in their initial report, it is obvious to the reader that the Danites had no knowledge of the cultic material. But the declarative statement made by the spies indicates to the reader that not only have they made up their minds to confiscate the elements, but they were using the rhetorical question to persuade their confederates as well. The seizure of these items directs the reader to a conflict with the priest. When he confronted them, there is no question that all parties know what had happened and what the Danites were doing.[256] The rhetorical question accentuates this fact; but in a strange twist, their reply to the priest, instead of stating the obvious answer is replaced with another rhetorical question regarding being priest to a tribe rather than to a family, thus playing on his pride while diminishing his integrity.[257] Simple logic suggests a greater prestige by him being the priest in a larger setting. Although the reader may not have expected the defecting of the priest, the issue of the victim of this crime remains unsettled. In pursuit of his material welfare, Micah is accompanied by the men of his household in order to restore his loss. Despite having a legitimate claim of property theft and breach of contract with the priest, the Danites confront Micah with a rhetorical question regarding the deployment of his forces.[258] Everyone knows why Micah has come. But, he answers them in a series of rhetorical questions.[259] It is interesting that his second question "What is the matter with you?" is a restatement of part of their question. The complaints both parties raise are not resolved through persuasive dialogue but through common sense—the awareness of Micah being outnumbered with brute force. Although this potential bloodshed is averted, the results are magnanimously realized in the internecine conflict in epilogue two.

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[254] Jg. 16:15.

[255] Jg. 18:14.

[256] Jg. 18:18

[257] Jg. 18:19.

[258] Jg. 18:23.

[259] Jg. 18:24. There are two rhetorical questions in this verse.

When the time of reckoning comes, almost as a complaint in ignorance, the Israelites pose a rhetorical question: "Why is one tribe lacking in Israel?".[260] The reader knows the answer and secretly hopes that this is a rhetorical question whereby Israel knows the answer. However, the narrator purposely makes this ambiguous. This creates a dilemma for the reader to wonder if Israel is obtuse to spiritual matters and whether Judges has an ending or it just spills over into the next prophetic book.

DISPUTATION. At times, the discourse may become more heated and cross the line from a friendly discussion with complaints and differing view points to an argument disputing the facts. Once Jephthah had come to the aid of his people, he was embroiled in a political disputation. The rhetorical questions in these endeavors show the folly of the Ammonite king's reasoning and belittle him in comparison to his historical predecessor regarding these challenges.[261] The narrator is able to use this disputation in order to illustrate the land occupation motif, while at the same time glorify YHWH at the expense of the Transjordanian god *Chemosh.*[262]

REBUKE. When the narrator allows the imperceptive Manoah to ask the theophanic envoy his name, the strange form in which the question is made alerts the reader that a different response will come.[263] Appropriately, the divine response was to answer his question with a rhetorical question. Block identifies this as a rebuke for his obtuseness and his inability to comprehend a name that is "beyond understanding."[264] This castigation of Manoah is perhaps an authorial device to reprimand Israel, who at this point in the series of narratives is not unlike Manoah in his inexperience with divine agents, YHWH, or His covenant and thus unable to understand the ways and judgment of YHWH.

MULTIPLE QUESTIONS. It is worth noting that of the rhetorical questions discussed above, there is an additional rhetorical use. Whereas the questions have been dealt with on the basis of their implied answer and the way they are used in the narrative that will

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[260] Jg. 21:3.

[261] Jg. 11:12, 23, 25, and 26. There are two rhetorical questions in verse 11:25.

[262] Jg. 11:24. There are two rhetorical questions in this verse.

[263] ‏מִי שְּׁמֶךָ‎ *(mî šemekā).* The literal translation is "Who is your name?" One suggestion for this has been consonantal confusion of *(h)* ‏ה‎ with *(y)* ‏י‎ in the initial interrogative particle. Burney, 348. However, the idea of a hybrid conflation between *(mî 'atāh)* ‏מִי אַתָּה‎ "Who are you?" and *(mah- šemekā)* ‏מַה־שְּׁמֶךָ‎ "What is your name?" is plausible. Block, *NAC,* 413. This hybrid form may characterize a stutter in Manoah's speech with an ellipsis between the first and second word. Boling, *AB,* 222.

[264] Block, *NAC,* 413.

not be repeated; however, whenever the questions appear in succession the rhetorical force is amplified. This rhetorical use is present in both Hebrew and Ugaritic narratives.[265] Of these questions discussed there are fourteen verses that employ the double rhetorical question.[266] The emphasis is increased when there is a triple rhetorical question, as in three of the verses.[267] In one verse, the questions can be construed in such a way that it contains four rhetorical questions.[268] There also remains another verse that could be a double rhetorical question depending upon the way the participle is translated.[269] Rather than follow the normal rendering with the participle functioning substantivally, Boling treats this as the first word in a *He*-interrogative clause.[270]

WIEDERAUFNAHME. Another of the rhetorical devices which was used in Judges is *wiederaufnahme.* This method of resumptive repetition allowed the redactor to incorporate new information "and then resume[d] the original narrative [by] repeating the last phrase before the break with more or less accuracy."[271] However, more recent understanding of this technique suggests that the repetition would not necessarily have to be the whole sentence, but even as little as a phrase or a word.[272] The rhetorical value is immense because of "its application to the structuring and analysis of a narrative which relates the synchronous occurrence of two or more events in different locales."[273] *Contra* this approach, the insertion could be seen as the work of a redactor providing superfluous information, whereby the *wiederaufnahme* is an *inclusio* that marks the lesser value of the passage.[274]

In a departure from textual criticism that would suggest the repetition as a form of dittography, the *wiederaufnahme* designates authorial intent. The introduction of the

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[265] M. Held, "Rhetorical Questions in Ugaritic and Biblical Hebrew," *Eretz-Israel 9* (1969), 72-74. He cites both the use of the double and the triple rhetorical question.

[266] Jg. 5:28, 30; 6:31; 8:2; 9:2, 38; 11:7, 25; 14:18; 15:11; 18:24; 19:17; and 20:28.

[267] Jg. 6:13; 11:25; and 18:3.

[268] Jg. 9:28.

[269] Jg. 2:22.

[270] Boling, *AB,* 74.

[271] H.M. Wiener, *The Composition of Judges II 11 to 1 Kings II 46* (Leipzig, Germany: J.C. Hinrichs, 1929), 2.

[272] Talmon, 17.

[273] Ibid., 14.

[274] For this position on the secondary value of the technique of resumptive repetition, Cf. C. Kuhl, "Die 'Wiederaufnahme' – ein literarkritisches Prinzip?" (The 'Resumptive Repetition' – A Literary Critical Principle?), *ZAW 64* (1952), 1-11.

second account of Joshua's death is an example of this resumptive repetition reflecting the passage in Josh. 24:28-31.[275] Although his death is recorded in the initial verse of Judges, this transition supports the idea that Judges should be viewed in the larger context of a two volume Joshua-Judges scroll. This would serve a purpose of uniting the books with this *wiederaufnahme* forming an *inclusio* that also would cause Prologue-A to function as an appendix to Joshua.[276]

In the prose account of Deborah, the information about Heber, a character who is introduced without apparent reference to the scene between Deborah and Barak is not an illogical insertion into the narrative. Rather, it forms the beginning of an *inclusio* that provides a compressed narrative of the defeat of the enemy army. When the *wiederaufnahme* is presented, the battle is over, and the story resumes introducing the heroine, Heber's wife who assassinates Sisera.[277] The resumptive repetition focuses the reader back to the main issue of Sisera being sold into the hands of a woman; while at the same time inserting necessary battle narrative in order to tie up the loose end *(sic)* of Sisera's army. Yet, at the same time, the author has cleverly placed another *inclusio* this time regarding Barak. He had been pursuing his enemy; however, the narrative breaks from his point of view and shifts to Jael. But, when the *wiederaufnahme* occurs thus resuming Barak's pursuit, the narrator has revealed to Barak what the audience already knew – Barak's pursuit was in vain.[278]

In the Gideon story, once his army had been reduced, he was still experiencing fear. Although it was not necessary to the story and shouldn't have been necessary for Gideon, an *inclusio* is formed using the *Übergabeformel* motif.[279] The divine words spoken by YHWH and then declared by Gideon bracket the Midianite dream episode. This resumptive repetition places Gideon and his army at the onset of the battle against the Midianite camp and its kings. But because the kings escaped from the battle the narrator takes us to Succoth where its leaders ask the rhetorical question regarding the capture of Zebah and Zalmunna. Again forming an *inclusio* the narrator immediately changes the scene from the perspective of the men in Succoth to that of Gideon in pursuit of his bounty. Only after the two Midianite kings have been captured does the narrator

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[275] Brettler, "Jud 1,1 – 2,10: From Appendix to Prologue," 434. Jg. 2:6-9.

[276] Ibid., 435.

[277] Jg. 4:11, and 17.

[278] Jg. 4:16, and 22.

[279] Jg. 7:9, and 15.

return Gideon to the scene of Succoth, where the same rhetorical question is used as *wiederaufnahme*.[280] The narrative continues to resolve the conflict between Gideon and the leaders of Succoth, but as a rhetorical device the important pursuit and capture of the two kings is inserted for dramatic effect.

The speech by Jotham after his fable is another example of *wiederaufnahme*. Everything is framed by the phrase *('im-be'ᵉmet ûbᵉtāmîm)* "dealt in truth and integrity" which highlights the sarcastic indictment of their actions.[281] After the three year point in the reign of Abimelech treachery and deceit emerges through various antagonists. The men of Shechem set up ambush against him. The author begins another *inclusio* with the two word phrase *(wayyuggad laᵃbîmelek)* "and-it-was-told to-Abimelech."[282] But, instead of continuing the scene, the character Gaal is introduced into the narrative and the author illustrates another example of treachery and deceit. The *inclusio* ends with the *wiederaufnahme* of the same two word phrase and the story resumes where it left off with Abimelech fighting against Shechem.[283]

Battle scene narratives allow the resumptive repetition technique to flourish whereby the author may "inform the reader of activities going on 'simultaneously' in the opposing camps, or in different parts of one and the same camp."[284] Although the phrasing is not exact, the third day of the battle of Israel against Benjamin is an example of this rhetorical device. In presumption that the battle was a repetition of the earlier two victories, Benjamin uttered *(niggāpîm hēm lᵉpānênû kᵉbāri'šōnāh)* "are-smitten they before-us as-at-the beginning" beginning the *inclusio*.[285] The *inclusio* ends with the *wiederaufnahme ('ak niggōp niggāp hû' lᵉpānênû kammilḥāmāh hāri'šōnāh)* "surely be-smitten utterly-smitten he before-us as-from-the-battle the-beginning" that Benjamin said in delusion of the reality.[286] The paronomasia in this concluding phrase serves to emphasize the decisive blow that Benjamin thinks that he is going to live; but because this is an *inclusio* Benjamin is the only one not to know that the narrator has inserted the Israelite plans of ambush when the repetition resumes the action with the Benjaminite

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[280] Jg. 8:6, and 15.

[281] **H** אִם־בֶּאֱמֶת וּבְתָמִים. Jg. 9:16, and 19. Wiener, 2.

[282] **H** וַיֻּגַּד לַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ. Jg. 9:25.

[283] Jg. 9:42.

[284] Talmon, 21.

[285] **H** נִגָּפִים הֵם לְפָנֵינוּ כְּבָרִאשֹׁנָה. Jg. 20:32.

[286] **H** אַךְ נִגּוֹף נִגָּף הוּא לְפָנֵינוּ כַּמִּלְחָמָה הָרִאשֹׁנָה. Jg. 20:39.

false impression.[287] Even so, this event is part of a larger *inclusio* that takes the reader from the end of the second day of battle to the fourth day, in which a reckoning is made regarding the war. In both instances the congregation is assembled at Bethel and the three word phrase *(wayyaᵃlû ʿōlôṯ ûšᵉlāmîm)* "and-offered burnt-offerings and-peace-offerings" signals the starting and ending points of the *inclusio*.[288] Whereas the narrative descriptions of the first two days of battle are brief, this third day is expanded and the *wiederaufnahme* serves to show Israel before YHWH in worship. Unfortunately when the narrative resumes, the repetition reinforces yet another situation of slaughter and bloodshed.

CLIMACTIC PARALLELISM. There are numerous examples of parallelism throughout the text of Judges. In and of them, the recurrence of synonymous parallelism, whereby the equivalent *stichos* further describes the first line or antithetical parallelism, whereby the second *stichos* contrasts the first one give depth to the narrative. Since they are a regular feature of Hebrew poetry, it is worth noting when there is an exception to this form. The cola have climactic value when there is a partial parallelism with the first and second *stichoi;* but they add "something further which completes the sense of the *distich*, thus forming, as it were, a climax."[289] The arrangement of *BHS* identifies eight different poetic passages. The Song of Deborah and Jotham's fable are distinctively poetic, whereas the poetry in the Samson narrative are simple cola interjected into the prose.

SONG OF DEBORAH. The grammatical structure in the Song of Deborah uses the infrequent but powerful rhetorical device of climactic parallelism. In comparison with the poetry of Jotham's Fable or the cola in the Samson narrative, the Song of Deborah is most illustrative with its climactic form. As reflected in Figure 85, the verses that have this parallel structure are excised from the composite song.[290] This is best exemplified by dividing the bicola and tricola into their constituent parts. The parallel cola are placed under each other with the non-parallel cola standing separately. Figure 85 demonstrates "that the non-parallel portion of *stichos b* is intended to round off and complete the whole distich."[291] This type of parallelism makes climactic declarations. YHWH is emphasized

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[287] The word *(niggōp̄)* is parsed as *Niphal* infinitive absolute whereas *(niggāp̄)* is parsed as *Niphal* participle masculine singular.

[288] H וַיַּעֲלוּ עֹלוֹת וּשְׁלָמִים. Jg. 20:26; and 21:4.

[289] Burney, 169.

[290] The figure is an adaptation based on the chart of Burney. Burney, 170. See also, Appendix 4, "Translation of Emended Verses in Judges," pages 733-735.

[291] Burney, 170.

FIGURE 85

CLIMACTIC PARALLELISM OF THE SONG OF DEBORAH

5   The mountains shook | before YHWH,
Before YHWH, | the *Elohim* of Israel.

6   From the days of Shamgar ben-'Anath,
From the days of old, | caravans ceased.

7b   Until you did arise, | Deborah,
Did arise | a mother in Israel.

9   Come, | you commanders of Israel
You that volunteered among the people, | bless YHWH.

11   There they recount | the righteous acts of YHWH
The righteous acts of His arm | in Israel.

12a   Awake, awake | Deborah;
Awake, awake | sing a song!

12b   Rise up, Barak, | and lead captive
O son of Abinoam, | your captors!

18   Zebulun is the folk | who despised their lives to the death,
And Naphtali also | on the heights of the field.

19a   On came the kings, | they fought
The kings then fought | of Canaan.

20   From heaven fought the stars
From their paths they fought | with Sisera.

23   For they came not | to the help of YHWH
To the help of YHWH | against the mighty ones.

28   Out through the window | looked and lamented
Out through the lattice | the mother of Sisera.

30b   A spoil of dyed garments | for Sisera,
A spoil of dyed garments | | embroidery
Dyed garments | for the neck of the queen | two embroideries.

as the *Elohim* of Israel.[292] The ancient days are characterized as a time when caravans ceased.[293] With the rhetorical device of anaphora, Deborah is cast into the role of national motherhood.[294] The commanders of Israel come for the purpose of blessing YHWH and while they focus on recounting His righteous acts it is emphasized that those acts were in Israel.[295] The reason for Deborah's awaking is for her to sing a song. In that song, Barak

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[292] Jg. 5:5.

[293] Jg. 5:6.

[294] Jg. 5:7.

[295] Jg. 5:9, and 11.

leads captive their captors.[296] The parallel tribal allegiance between Zebulun and Naphtali is remembered that it was on the heights of the field where they scorned life to its death.[297] When the kings came, it is highlighted they were from Canaan just to focus in on Sisera who was fought against by the stars of heaven.[298] The inhabitants of Meroz are cursed because they are shown in stark contrast to the mighty ones who came to the aid of YHWH.[299] As the song comes to its conclusion, Sisera's mother is framed in her window in poetic isolation.[300] A tricola is used to emphasize the embroidery of dyed garments for Sisera and his mother; although the reader knows that instead of her anticipated spoil, she will receive back his blood stained embroidered garments.[301] The final bicola of the Song as antithetical parallelism does serve as climactic to emphasize the description of those who are not the enemies of YHWH, but those who love Him.[302]

JOTHAM'S FABLE. Within the context of the Abimelech narrative, Jotham's Fable provides the only other large poetic passage in Judges.[303] Repetition conditions the poem in such a way that the author causes the iterative practices of Israel to extend beyond its liturgical activity into the poetic realm.[304] It is structured with a preamble followed by four stanzas. Each stanza represents the agricultural focus. Although some take the fable as poetry, others see it as a hybrid poetic prose.[305] As a result, the strophes do not elucidate the strict parallelism one would expect. However, it does structurally adapt to a large scale gender chiasmus within an *inclusio* of the phrase *(limšōaḥ aʾlêhem meleḵ)* "to-anoint over-themselves a-king" and *(mōšʾḥîm ʾōtî lʾmeleḵ aʾlêḵem)* "anointing me for-king over-yourselves."[306] Interestingly enough, to accentuate the gender chiasmus, Welch has chosen to translate these stanzas with gender agreement so that the masculine

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[296] Jg. 5:12.

[297] Jg. 5:18.

[298] Jg. 5:19, and 20.

[299] Jg. 5:23.

[300] Jg. 5:28.

[301] Jg. 5:30.

[302] Jg. 5:30.

[303] Jg. 9:8-15.

[304] J. Muilenburg, "A Study in Hebrew Rhetoric: Repetition and Style," *Congress Volume (VT Supp. 1*: Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1953), 100-104.

[305] In support of a poetic structure see *BHS* and Burney, 272-275. *Contra* this approach see Boling, 166, and 172-174.

[306] מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם לִמְשֹׁחַ and עֲלֵיכֶם לְמֶלֶךְ אֹתִי מֹשְׁחִים. Jg. 9:8, and 15.

stanzas A and A' reflect asking for a king and the feminine stanzas B and B' reflect asking for a queen.[307] This forces the translation to support the gender chiasmus rather than accept the contextual meaning of who should be the king. Each one of the first three plants is a symbol of Judah; whereas the bramble is not. As such, the fable is not dealing with a gender issue but rather with what sort of king Abimelech would be in view of the cruel slaughter of the sons of Jerubbaal. His reign would be neither with the oil of the olive used in food, light, and worship; nor would it be with the sweetness of the fig, nor the cheer of the produce of the vine; but showing the irony of the cruel thorns of the bramble. This is neither an option for them to shelter under nor a good option for royalty.

SAMSON NARRATIVE. Six of the poetic passages are in the Samson narrative.[308] The riddle forms the basis for the first two passages. Neither of them are climactic parallels; however, both of these bicola have a feature of assonance in their rhythmic parallelism.[309] The sarcastic response of Samson in the bicolon is likewise alliterative with each three word colon beginning with the same letter and rhyming with the pronominal suffix of the first person singular at the end of each cola.[310] But, when Samson commemorates his victory at Ramath-Lehi, with the lyric poetry of this bicola he invokes climactic parallelism.[311]

Bilḥî	*haḥᵃmôr*	*ḥāmôr*	*ḥimmartîm*
Bilḥî	*haḥᵃmôr*	*hikkêṯî*	*'elep 'îš*

The emended translation for this is:

With the red ass's jawbone,   I have reddened them really red;
With the red ass's jawbone,   I have killed a thousand men.

The climax is found in the last phrase, "I have killed a thousand men." Burney has coined a phrase capitalizing on the paronomasia of the first cola with his translation, "With the jawbone of an ass I have thoroughly assed them."[312] The NIV captures the

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[307] Welch, 137-138. The stanzas A and A' focus on the masculine gender of the olive tree and bramble. The stanzas B and B' focus on the feminine gender of the fig tree and the vine.

[308] Jg. 14:14, 18; 15:16; 16:23, and 24. There are two different cola in verse 14:18.

[309] Jg. 14:14, and 18. The morpheme *(m)* מ is used in four of the six words in verse fourteen and in five of the six words in verse eighteen. Block, *NAC*, 433.

[310] Jg. 14:18. The morpheme *(l)* ל begins each cola and *(î)* י ends it. Burney, 366.

[311] 𝔐 אִישׁ אֶלֶף הִכֵּיתִי הַחֲמוֹר בִּלְחִי חֲמֹראתִים חֲמֹר הַחֲמוֹר בִּלְחִי. This differs from 𝔐 and is based on an emended translation. See Appendix 1, "Listing of Textual Errors in Judges by Alteration," specifically the section 'Error in Vocalization,' page 713; and Appendix 4, "Translation of Emended Verses in Judges," page 742.

[312] Burney, 373.

same idea in its translation, "With a donkey's jawbone I have made donkeys of them." But, by avoiding the emphasis on "red" the other translations miss the climax of the thousand deaths and the blood that was shed, rather to focus on the donkey motif. The remaining two poetic songs are composed by the Philistines to commemorate Samson's demise. The second one is an amplification of the first by making a colon into a bicolon. But neither of them functions with climactic parallelism although the import of the song is climactic. Burney makes the song of the Philistines a tetracolon in order to focus on the phonetic rhyme of the first person plural ending.[313]

HAPAX LEGOMENA. Primarily, the exegete should be interested in *leitwords* because of their obvious importance to the text. However, the introduction of a *hapax legomenon* into the text by the author gives it a special peculiarity since it is the only time the word is used in the entirety of the bible. There are thirty eight different *hapax legomena* in Judges. It is possible that the number could be raised slightly by including singular occurrences of the word based on a different lexical form; but since number and gender agreement do not affect the meaning of the word, they are excluded and the root is considered. Of these *hapax legomena*, twenty-one instances refer to geographical toponyms. One of these is Meroz, a town which along with its inhabitants were cursed by the messenger of YHWH for their non-participation in the battle against Sisera.[314] It could be that this singular occurrence of this toponym is because the curse was carried out, although there is no extant record of that action of judgment. None of the proper names in Judges appear exclusively.[315] The remaining seventeen *hapax legomena* are primarily nouns with four verbal usages and one adjective. At times these new words give an added nuance to the narrative. However, with the possible exception of Shamgar's ox-goad which was used to kill the offending enemy these words are not significant enough to address within the motif of divine judgment.[316] They are introduced when they affect the narrative.

NUMBERS. The text is replete with numbers. They are used in every chapter of the book. Forty-eight different cardinal numbers are used 168 times in 160 verses ranging from one to four hundred thousand. Of these forty-eight numbers, twenty one of them are

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[313] Ibid., 388. The plural pronominal suffix *(ēnû)* נו accentuates the rhyme.

[314] Jg. 5:23.

[315] It is recognized that some of the proper names which are repeated in other biblical books are appellations for different individuals than the Judges referent.

[316] Jg. 3:31.

only used once in the text. Six different ordinal numbers are used eighteen times in seventeen verses. The author uses the numerical references as a reckoning of time, people, animals, and property. The numbers are descriptive elements; but beyond that one should not look for some *Kabbalistic* hidden interpretation in them. As is expected, certain numbers such as seven, twelve, and forty are present. It is possible that some of the larger numbers might be reduced if the term for 1000 is taken as a tribal unit.[317] Nonetheless, these large numbers do have hyperbolic value as a rhetorical device.[318] Such is the case with the slaughter of 10,000 men at Bezek, 10,000 Moabites, 42,000 Ephraimites, and the incredulous number of 120,000 Midianites.[319] At other times the hyperbole is seen in the strength of the army because of its size. Barak mobilized 10,000 men.[320] The congregation of Israel deployed 12,000 men against Jabesh-Gilead.[321] Gideon's initial army was even larger at 32,000.[322] Of course the size of the army is part of the crux of the plot to remove the element of human strength and incorporate divine strength through a smaller number of three hundred men.[323] But these armies paled in comparison to the size of Israel's 400,000 men in the internecine conflict with Benjamin.[324]

As with certain familiar number motifs, the numbers seven, twelve, and forty are significant. The number seven is appropriate because of the seven cycles within the book.[325] The completeness and totality that the number seven represents is seen through the cycles Israel endures.[326] Yet, there is another parallel in the *Torah* of which the author would have been cognizant. The disasters that Israel experienced through divine

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[317] Mendenhall, "The Census Lists of Numbers 1 and 26," 52.

[318] Fouts, 386.

[319] Jg. 1:4; 3:29; 8:10; and 12:6.

[320] Jg. 4:6, 10, and 14.

[321] Jg. 21:10.

[322] Jg. 7:3. The actual number 32,000 does not exist in the text; but is derived by the addition of the two numbers that are in this verse.

[323] Jg. 7:2, and 7.

[324] Jg. 20:2, and 17.

[325] See Table 2 "Sequence of Seven Cycles," in chapter three, page 155.

[326] This understanding is generally accepted based on its *usus loquendi*. J.J. Davis, *Biblical Numerology: A Basic Study of the Use of Numbers in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1968), 119.

judgment was a fulfillment of divine utterance as articulated in Leviticus 26, especially as the punishment was to be for seven times.[327]

The symbolism of others numbers is at best speculative. As such, the number twelve is representative of governmental perfection or rule, as well as the elective purposes of YHWH.[328] Both of these elements are present as there were twelve judges. Likewise, the number forty represents a period of judgment, probation, testing, or trial.[329] This number is used several times to designate this judgment period, although the element of rest is highlighted in the motif.

TIME. Coupled with the use of numbers, the element of time is necessary for movement in the plot. Excluding temporal particles, there are nine substantives for expressing time in Judges. The author uses the word *(yôm)* "day" most frequently, which is present 62 times.[330] This is followed by the word *(šānāh)* "year" with its twenty-four uses.[331] Throughout the narratives, these words are used to express both definite and indefinite time periods. The day may be seen as a composite twenty-four hour period, where at times the author accentuates the *(bōqēr)* morning, *('ereḇ)* evening, or *(laylāh)* night.[332] The morning may represent the beginning of the day or it may have the force of the following day. Identifying the part of the day is more than a marker of time because it is often crucial to the narrative as in the case of Gideon when he razed the pagan altar or the Levite at the patriarchal home of his *pîlegeš*.[333] Elsewhere, the day as a whole has an emphatic force by drawing the reader's attention to the immediacy of the action through the use of the definite article or a demonstrative pronoun.[334] There is also the idiomatic

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[327] Block, *NAC*, 145. Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, and 28.

[328] J.E. Hartill, *Principles of Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1947), 119.

[329] Hartill, 121; and M.S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974), 385.

[330] 𝕳 יוֹם. Jg. 1:21, 26; 2:7 (2x), 18; 3:30; 4:14, 23; 5:1, 6 (2x); 6:24, 27, 32; 8:28; 9:18, 19, 45; 10:4, 15; 11:27, 40; 12:3; 13:7, 10; 14:12, 14, 15, 17, 18; 15:19, 20; 17:6, 10; 18:1 (3x); 12, 30; 19:1, 4, 5, 8, 9 (2x), 11, 19, 30 (2x); 20:21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 35, 46; 21:3, 6, and 25.

[331] 𝕳 שָׁנָה. Jg. 2:8; 3:8, 11, 14, 30; 4:3; 5:31; 6:1, 25; 8:28; 9:22; 10:2, 3, 8 (2x); 11:26, 40; 12:7, 9, 11, 14; 13:1; 15:20; and 16:31.

[332] 𝕳 בֹּקֶר, עֶרֶב, and לַיְלָה. Jg. 6:25, 27, 28, 31, 40; 7:9; 9:32, 33, 34; 16:2 (3x); 19:5, 6, 8, 9 (2x); 10, 13, 19, 25 (2x), 27; 20:5, and 19.

[333] Jg. 6:27; 19:5, and 8.

[334] Jg. 3:30; 4:14, 23; 5:1; 6:32; 9:19, 45; 10:15; 12:3; 18:1, 30; 19:9 (2x), 11, 26; 20:21, 26, 35, and 46.

use of the phrase *('ad hayyôm hazzeh)* "until this day."[335] Of the eighty four times that it occurs in the Hebrew bible, seven of these occurrences are in Judges.[336] The rhetorical purpose is "to express the *terminus ad quem* of a temporal sequence."[337] Not withstanding, the opposite is expressed with the phrase *(l³mîyôm ᵃlôt b³nê-Yiśrā'ēl mē'eres Miṣrayim)* "the day when Israel came up from the land of Egypt."[338] Thus, historical specificity may be brought into narrative to serve the author's purpose.

Day and night also have a symbolic meaning. The Gideon story illustrates this. During the night time scenes, Gideon is beleaguered with episodes of doubt and fear, whereas the day time scenes his doubt is alternated with episodes of belief. Klein has observed "the narrative identifies *belief* and *courage* primarily with *day*; and *doubt* (which follows reason) and *fear* with *night*."[339]

In other cases, the narrator shows time movement from one day to another. Since most of the action in Judges has an immediacy of the same day, when the narrator slows the action to focus in on a scene the time element has a rhetorical value. There are a few such instances in which time in the narrative extends past a forty-eight hour period. The first is with Samson and his seven day wedding feast. The reader is privy to information about the first, third, fourth, and seventh day.[340] After this wedding there is an unspecified amount of time until the time of the wheat harvest when the reader learns more about Samson.[341] Time elapses in Delilah's deception of Samson, but the author chooses not to focus on this. In the epilogue, the time is slowed down to see a period of nearly one week during which time the Levite attempts to make his journey home.[342] This obviously transitions into the later battle narrative where the three days are identified in a building crescendo.[343] It is interesting that the slowing down of the narrative through the use of time does not occur until the last judge and into the epilogue. It is able to reinforce and illustrate the time when there is no king in Israel.

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[335] 𝕳 עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.

[336] Jg. 1:21, 26; 6:24; 10:4; 15:19; 18:12; and 19:30.

[337] Childs, "A Study of the Formula, 'Until This Day,'" 280.

[338] 𝕳 לְמִיּוֹם עֲלוֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. Jg. 19:30.

[339] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 59.

[340] Jg. 14:12, 14, 15, 17, and 18.

[341] Jg. 15:1.

[342] Jg. 19:4, 8, 25, and 27.

[343] Jg. 20:22, 24, 25, and 30.

Apart from these examples, the only other short term periods are the four days each year for commemorating Jephthah's daughter, and reflecting upon the two month wailing period she observed.[344] The next larger period was for four months. There is an interesting parallel between the two times this is mentioned as it forms an *inclusio*. The Levite's *pîlegeš* leaves him for a period of four months at the beginning of the narrative.[345] By the time the whole saga is coming to a close, the surviving men of Benjamin return from the Pomegranate Rock where they had been hiding for four months following the last day of battle.[346]

The other mention of time was formulaic regarding the number of years that either Israel was oppressed, a deliverer judged Israel, or the time the land had rest. These periods varied from as little as three years upwards to eighty years.[347] Twice this usage differed. One is the death announcement of Joshua, in order to focus on him being 110 years old.[348] The other is the three hundred year period referred to in Jephthah's speech.[349]

The narrator was also able to use this rhetorical element to identify an era, while not being specific with the actual time lapse. The formula "days of X" captures this concept.[350] This is a subtle device that at first characterizes the period based on the judge and deliverance; however, its use describing the premonarchic period relegates the period to being not completely Israelite. This may be seen first with Shamgar as a potential non-Israelite, followed by Jael, who is assimilated as a Kenite, and Gideon, who though fully Israelite, in his polygamy is married to a Shechemite.[351] The final usage of this describes it as a time of the Philistines.[352] Because the narrator uses time and he does it with ambiguity and imprecision this serves as an undermining of the text and the time for the reader.

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[344] Jg. 11:37, 38, and 39.

[345] Jg. 19:2.

[346] Jg. 20:47.

[347] Jg. 3:8, 11, 14, 30; 4:3; 5:31; 6:1, 25; 9:22; 10:2, 3, 8; 12:7, 9, 14; 13:1; 15:20; and 16:31.

[348] Jg. 2:8.

[349] Jg. 11:26.

[350] Jg. 2:7 (2x), 18; 5:6 (2x); 8:28; and 15:20.

[351] Jg. 5:6 (2x); and 8:28.

[352] Jg. 15:20.

NAMES. Potentially, through the crafting of the stories, the names of the characters may have a rhetorical value when heard by the audience in their tongue. Some of the names are presented by themselves and at other times the patronymic formula was affixed to the name. As there was a distinctive audience, the reader/hearer would have recognized that the character names were either:

> 1) authentic West Semitic P[ersonal] N[ames] that often have at least semantic if not etymological parallels in cognate languages; and 2) fictional and symbolic names that usually are without parallel and were created by the biblical writers to express their bearer's character and role in the narrative.[353]

Of these two types of name origins, it does not exclude the meaning from the authentic name nor does it remove the meaning from the author's choice of personal name for the story, thus giving it concealed pun value. Rather than make this distinction between fictional and non-fictional names the dichotomous classification is based on whether or not the names are theophoric.[354]

THEOPHORIC NAMES. There are possibly fourteen theophoric names in Judges. These particular names originally functioned as "short sentences about God."[355] This could be construed as a theological predisposition of the parents naming the child and a commentary on their religious practice whether through monotheism, monolatry, or idolatry. The primary usage is when a form of YHWH is affixed to the substantive.[356] This is characteristic of the pre-exilic period.[357] The statements made are all positive and complementary of deity. There are five of these Yahwistic theophoric names used within Judges:

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[353] S.C. Layton, "Ya'el in Judges 4: An Onomastic Rejoinder," *ZAW 109* (1997), 93.

[354] J.A. Motyer, "Name," *IBD 2*: 1051-1052. Motyer suggests there are seven categories of names: status, occasion, event, circumstance, transformation/alteration, predictive/admonitory, and precative/theophoric. At times some of his categories overlap and at other times the personal name fulfills several categories. His list is not exhaustive because it does not take into account names built on agricultural or zoological substantives.

[355] Mussies, 262.

[356] Less frequently is the form of *('l)* אל "God." However, there are other times where the theophoric element may reflect an anthropomorphic concept implying divinity. These include: *('b)* אב "[divine] Father," *('ḥ)* אח "[divine] Brother," *('m)* עם "[divine] Kinsman," *(mlk)* מלך "[divine] King," *('dn)* אדן "[divine] Lord," *(šdy)* שדי "Almighty," and *(b'l)* בעל "[divine] Master/Husband." The theophoric element may be abbreviated in its prefixed or suffixed form. J.D. Fowler, *Theophoric Personal Names in Ancient Hebrew: A Comparative Study* (*JSOT Supp. 49*: Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 29-71.

[357] Zevit, "A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names," 3.

Joshua[358]	*Yāh* is salvation.
Judah[359]	*Yāh* is praise.
Jotham[360]	*Yāh* is perfect.
Micah[361]	Who is like *Yāh*?
Jonathan[362]	*Yāh* has given.

The author did not discriminate in the use of the names even though the meaning of the personal names of Micah and Jonathan do not match their characterization. This is communicated in the Micah pericope in the way that the full name is only given in the opening verses and it becomes hypocoristic by apocope.

> [I]n the meaning of Micah's name, "Yahweh-the-Incomparable," which appears only here in its full spelling, obviously [it is] to attract attention to itself. It appears that the redactor was almost saying, "Think of it. Images! And with a name like that."[363]

However, that the divine name was present theophorically the divine nature and character is communicated to the reader even when the integrity of the character fails to emulate his namesake.

There are two theophoric uses with the generic *Elohim*. One involves the hypocoristic form that is prefixed to create Eleazar, meaning " *ᵉl* is my helper." As the patronymic form attached to Phinehas it amplifies the priestly function in concert with deity.[364] The other use is with Othniel, where the apocopated form is suffixed to the substantive giving the meaning " *'ēl* is my force" or "the force of *'ēl*."[365]

An alternate deity is represented theophorically in the renaming event of Gideon to Jerubbaal, meaning "Let *Baal* contend."[366] Based on the circumstances of the narrative Gideon's father renames his son using the theophoric *Baal* appended to a verb that describes the inability of the Canaanite deity to contend for itself. But has Joash done injustice to his son and likewise the narrator for the continued usage of the new name of the deliverer? This introduces theological conflict in the narrative for the reader as the exclusivity of Yahwism appears to be sacrificed for the sake of monolatry. If this is only a nickname then the appellation serves the scene well. However, because it is used in the

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[358] Jg. 1:1; 2:6, 7 (2x), 8, 21, and 23.

[359] Jg. 1:2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19; 10:9; 15:9, 10, 11; 17:7; 18:12; and 20:18.

[360] Jg. 9:5, 7, 21, and 57.

[361] Jg. 17:1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12 (2x), 13; 18:2, 3, 4, 13, 15, 18, 22 (2x), 23, 26, 27, and 31.

[362] Jg. 18:30.

[363] Boling, *AB*, 258. Jg. 17:1, and 4.

[364] Jg. 20:28.

[365] Jg. 1:13; 3:9, and 11.

[366] Jg. 6:32; 7:1; 8:29, 35; 9:1, 2, 5 (2x), 16, 19, 24, 28, and 57.

subsequent episodes it curses Jerubbaal as a foreshadowing of future idolatry. Yet, for the immediate event, the explanation given for the renaming is able "to make a virtue out of the problem inherent in any theophoric name compounded from a suspect *theos*."[367]

The name Adoni-bezek is suspicious of intentional scribal perversion. It is possible that it was changed "in order to cast ridicule upon the name of a heathen deity."[368] As such, it would be translated as "Lord of Bezek" if the second word is taken geographically. Otherwise it would be translated "Lord of lightning." The emendation suggested is *(ᵃḏōnî Ṣedeq)* Adoni-zedek, which is consistent with the Joshua passage.[369] Most likely this is a theophoric title of the Canaanite god *(Suduk)* rather than a personal name.[370] The scribal alteration would also be because of the offensive nature of the Hebrew translation "Lord of Righteousness" and its connection with both YHWH and Jerusalem in the context of the narrative action, which would be theologically inappropriate for the Israelite deity.

The patronymic "son-of-Anath" for Shamgar suggests that this may be a theophoric name for the Canaanite goddess *Anat*. In Ugaritic mythological texts, she is a warrior goddess. As such, it would implicate Shamgar as someone in her service with the patronymic designation functioning as "a military title or epithet."[371] If this is the case, then the irony is that YHWH is using one in the service of a false god to do His bidding. Yet, despite the A.N.E. parallel, the *dislegomena "Anath"* may simply be Shamgar's father's name, with the meaning "bring an answer" or "afflict."[372] Certainly this son of *Anath* brought affliction to the Philistines. However, there is still another possibility that the name is a hypocoristic form of the god *(Anu)* with the apocopated termination changed to match the grammatical rules of declension.[373]

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[367] Auld, "Gideon," 264.

[368] Burney, 5.

[369] אֲדֹנִי צֶדֶק. Josh. 10:1.

[370] This based on the Συδυκ quoted by Philo Byblius that the Phoenicians revered this god. Lindars, *Judges 1-5*, 15-16.

[371] Craigie, "A Reconsideration of Shamgar ben Anath," 239-240.

[372] This name was used during the first Babylonian dynasty period. H. Ranke, *Early Babylonian Personal Names From the Published Tablets of the so-called Hammurabi Dynasty (B.C. 2000)*, (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1905), 66.

[373] Burney, 76; and Mussies, 250.

There remain five additional names that may be theophoric. Samson, with its diminutive ending means "little sun."[374] This may be a solar reference to the worship of the Babylonian sun god *(Šamaš)* "Shamash."[375] This is partially deduced from the literary allusions.

> The seven locks of Samson's hair represented the sun's rays, and his blinding recalled the sun as a one-eyed God. Samson's death pointed to the similar fate of the sun, which pulls down the western pillars, upon which the heavenly vault stands, and brings darkness to all. Likewise, Samson's hiding in a rocky crag symbolized the sun's retreat behind dark clouds; just as Samson burst forth from hiding and destroyed his foes, so the suns' devastating power emerged from a violent storm.[376]

Because Samson comes from the tribe of Dan this association may be carried further. The Assyrians referred to the Babylonian god as *(Dân)* with this name originally being a reference "to a divine *Judge* who was regarded as the patron of the clan."[377] This does not necessitate that the tribe of Dan were worshippers of this Assyrian god; however, the connection does exist for this likelihood considering the apostasy of the tribe. Moreover, two other tribes have theophoric possibilities. "The tribal name of Asher was originally connected with the deity of good fortune (a masc. form of *Ashera*?), just as the name of Gad is derived from a similar deity."[378]

The last possibility is with the name Abimelech. Literally, this is translated "My father is the king." If taken literally, the statement may be viewed in a diametric polarity. In a positive sense, the kingly reference would be to interpret this as a monotheistic pronouncement that "My father is The [divine] King." But considering the life of Gideon this would appear suspect considering Abimelech's birth is because of his father's union with a Shechemite *pîlegeš.* If the standard and implied literal translation is taken, then this becomes a statement of arrogance that implies that Abimelech's father is the king, which is a position that Gideon himself vehemently resisted. Was Gideon fulfilling a reign at the time of Abimelech's birth? This type of reasoning leads one to believe that Abimelech was fulfilling the continuation of a monarchal dynasty, despite the manner of succession. Yet, the third possibility is a theophoric explanation. There are three deity possibilities. *Molech, Milcom,* and *Malik* were all gods of the Transjordan.[379] The grammatical form

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[374] Block, *NAC,* 416.

[375] Burney, 392.

[376] Crenshaw, *Samson,* 16.

[377] Burney, 392.

[378] Ibid., 197. The tribal name Gad does not appear in Judges.

[379] Block, *NAC,* 304-305; and Boling, *AB,* 162-163.

of the first and last deities is identical with the name of Abimelech, although with a different vocalization. The other deity would also be a possibility if the hypocoristic form was taken through apocope. It is peculiar that the other biblical characters with this same name were Philistines and this "heightens the suspicion that Gideon has given his son a syncretistic foreign name." The ambiguity of the name works rhetorically as part of the narrator's persuasion showing that by vocalization changes Israel could be either in idolatry or in true worship.

NON-THEOPHORIC NAMES. The remainder of the personal names in Judges are non-theophoric. As a rule, the names are not remarkable. But, because of the circumstance of the naming event, there is theophoric inference to the deity. Patriarchal references embody this principle. Even though YHWH is not in the name, the reader recalls that "YHWH hears" with Simeon, "YHWH judges" with Dan, "YHWH has given me my hire" with Issachar, and "YHWH adds" with Joseph.[380]

Some of the names are agricultural in nature. Ephraim, (Purāh) Purah, and Elon are examples of this.[381] Other names are zoological in character. These include Caleb, Eglon, Deborah, Jael, Oreb, Zeeb, Gaal, Hamor, Tola, Zippor, and Phinehas.[382] The animals that are represented often are the author's "subtle contribution to the characterization of the enemy."[383] Further, their names advance the plot. Caleb is the attack dog that marks his territory. Eglon is the fatted calf who will be sacrificed. Deborah is the queen bee leading her charges into a stinging attack. Jael is the nimble ibex mounting the treacherous terrain. Oreb is the raven who as a bird of prey becomes the prey. Zeeb is the wolf who as the predator likewise is preyed upon. Gaal the dung beetle is loathed and detested by Abimelech. Hamor is a jackass and his descendants are seen in this satirical sense for submitting to Abimelech. Tola is a worm that gnaws away at his enemies. Also, (Sippôr) Zippor, the patronym for (Bālāq) Balak, is a sparrow who is insignificant and ultimately takes flight departing from his mission unsuccessful.[384]

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[380] H. Haber, "The Power of Hebrew Names," *JBQ* 27 (1999), 131-132. Cf. Gen. 29:33; 30:3-6, 18, 22-24; Jg. 1:3 (2x), 17, 22, 23, 35; 5:15; 10:1; 13:25; 18:2, 16, 22, 23, 25, 26, 29 (2x), 30 (2x); and 20:1.

[381] H פֻּרָה. Jg. 1:29; 2:9; 3:27; 4:5; 5:14; 7:10, 11, 24 (2x); 8:1, 2; 10:1, 9; 12:1; 4 (4x), 5 (3x), 6, 11, 12, 15; 17:1, 8; 18:2, 13; 19:1, 16, and 18.

[382] Jg. 3:12, 14, 15, 17 (2x); 4:4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22; 5:1, 6, 7, 12, 15, 24; 7:25 (6x); 8:3 (2x); 9:26, 28 (2x), 30, 31, 35, 36, 37, 39, 41; 10:1; 11:25; and 20:28.

[383] Garsiel, "Homiletic Name-Derivations as a Literary Device in the Gideon Narrative," 308.

[384] H צִפּוֹר, and בָּלָק.

Phinehas is the mouth of a serpent who inquires of YHWH in order to strike Benjamin with the venomous fatal blow.

It is clear that the narrator was not able to work every meaning behind the name into the story.[385] However, paronomasia was at work in many other names. As in the story of Deborah and Barak it is plausible that their names "originated as aspects of God's theophanic terror."[386] Because the literary beauty of the word play is best seen in its context this will be addressed as the pun appears in the narrative account in the upcoming section on Narrative Criticism.

> The marked correspondences between names and plot materials must strengthen our sense that the development of the incidents is not accidental, and that part at least of the course of events was known in advance and could be hinted at in the names of people and places. Hence a literary scholar would view the technique as an organizing device, the allusions planted by the author forming part of the structure of the plot; but if we look at it in terms of the historiosophical conceptions of a biblical author and his readers, we must also note the implied theological background which insists that order and providence exist in the world, that indications are given of events' taking place and developing according to a hidden plan, and that hints of this plan are concealed in the names of people and places: that is, a Hand directs events from above.[387]

There is one other matter outstanding to this discussion. A few of the names were of foreign origin. The name Cushan-Rishathaim is a loose transliteration from Akkadian.[388] As earlier addressed, whether this is an epithetical title or an actual name, the Hebrew rendering "doubly wicked of Cushan" connotes narrative commentary on his character.[389] Likewise, Shamgar may represent a Hurrian name. This is based on the appearance of the name *(Šimigari)* in several Nuzi texts.[390] Otherwise, there is an uncanny resemblance to the Hittite name *(Šangar)*.[391] Josephus makes this same observation with his nominative appellation *(Sanagaros)*.[392] However, when the foreign word is transliterated into our text, then the rendering "stranger there" betrays his foreign heritage. The last foreign name was Sisera. This is a Hittite name which has been

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[385] It does not appear that *(Šēšay)* שֵׁשַׁי Sheshai; *(ᵃḥiman)* אֲחִימַן Ahiman, *(Talmāy)* תַּלְמַי Talmai; Kenaz; Moses; *(Hillēl)* הִלֵּל Hillel; *(Gēršōm)* גֵּרְשֹׁם Gershom; and Aaron function in the realm of the pun as far as Judges is concerned.

[386] R.S. Kawashima, "From Song to Story: The Genesis of Narrative in Judges 4 and 5," *Prooftexts 21* (2001), 161.

[387] Garsiel, "Homiletic Name-Derivations as a Literary Device in the Gideon Narrative," 317.

[388] Ball, 192.

[389] Malamat, "Cushan Rishathaim and the Decline of the Near East around 1200 B.C.," 232. Also, see the section "Nations outside the Promised Land" in chapter three, pages 368-373.

[390] B. Maisler, "Shamgar ben 'Anat," *PEFQS 66* (1934), 193.

[391] Burney, 76. One of the kings of Carchemish had this name during the ninth century B.C.E.

[392] Σαναγαρος. Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 5:4, 3.

modified through transliteration from its form *(Siser)*. It also bears resemblance to the Babylonian word *(si-is-sê-ru)* "youth."[393] However, the proper name does not have a translatable value in our text, nor should one make an inference from the Babylonian cognate.

Thus, an onomastic examination reveals that the names serve the rhetorical purpose of persuasion as the name often embodies either the characterization or the plot in which the character is present. Although the personal names do not at first glance appear to be related to the theme of divine judgment, except perhaps Joshua and Dan, they do serve to facilitate the narrative and show divine action through people with theophoric and non-theophoric names. The importance and significance of Hebrew names is illustrated in rabbinic thought.

> The sages said that the children of Israel were liberated from slavery in Egypt in the times of Moses for four reasons, and the first of those is "because they did not change their [Hebrew] names."[394]

What is also remarkable is how the narrator used the absence of names with many different characters; yet their role is equally viable despite their marginalization through anonymity. Yet, this is another rhetorical use that is explored later.

LOCATIONS. Just as the author was able to employ names to fulfill rhetorical purpose, it would be anticipated that the same would occur for geographical locations. Generally, the author would not be able to create locations as names would have already existed. However, it does not presuppose that the meanings behind those locations would not have paronomasic value for the plot and rhetorical purpose. The number of different toponyms is more extensive than the onomasticon. The etiological notes of the Spring of Harod, Ramath-Lehi, and En-hakkore all function in this capacity.[395] These examples and other toponyms that constitute word-plays, they are discussed in Narrative Criticism.

PUNS. Perhaps one of the rhetorical devices that is often lost in translation or is missed by those unable to read the Hebrew texts are the words plays. The puns may be classified as either paronomasia or syllepsis.[396] The paronomasic puns require a close

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[393] F. Delitzsch, *Prolegomena: Prolegomena eines Neuen Hebräisch-Aramäischen Wörterbuchs zum Alten Testament* (Prolegomena: Prolegomena for the New Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament) [Ger.], (Leipzig, Germany: J.C. Hinrichs, 1886), 199.

[394] *Yalkut Shimoni* quoted in Haber, 132.

[395] Jg. 7:1; 15:17, and 19.

[396] Classical Rhetoric classifies puns into the following categories: equivoques, paronomasia, etymological, onomastic (involving the appropriateness, inappropriateness, meaning, or distortion of names), hybrid, tautological, omens, and euphemisms. E.S. McCartney, "Puns and Plays on Proper Names," *The Classical Journal 14* (1919), 343-358.

reading of the Hebrew text in order to observe the pun playing on similar sounding words. The issue is not the repetition of substantives and verbs with the same root and consequently a similar sound; but, rather "in the union of similarity of sound with dissimilarity of sense."[397] The sylleptic puns often can be observed through the translation since it functions on the basis of understanding a word differently based on the way it controls two or more words. The rhetorical value of the pun is woven into the fabric of the story; but to examine it outside of its context is to unravel the literary garment. Therefore, since it is more valuable to see the pun in the narrative, a number of the puns are discussed as they relate to the plot and characterization in Narrative Criticism.

OTHER RHETORICAL DEVICES. There is no paucity of rhetorical devices in Judges. Aside from the ones earlier mentioned, there are simile, metaphor, euphemism, homonyms, synonyms, assonance, enigmatic speech, irony, satire, and even ambiguity. The nature of these devices, much like the pun, requires that they be observed in their narrative context. Of those that are examined in the Narrative Criticism section the overall persuasive element can be seen.

DISPOSITIO OF JUDGES

The structure may be examined at two different levels. The question is whether the *dispositio* of the macrocosmic and microcosmic levels are complementary to the persuasive argument.

MACROCOSMIC LEVEL. At the macrocosmic level, both covenant cultic fidelity and land occupation are vital themes. And as has already been addressed, the narrator gives ample illustrations of times of Israelite fidelity and infidelity to YHWH. The land occupation theme is somewhat subsumed by the other theme, although as an *inclusio* it is intermittently illustrated based on the results of failing to occupy the land. It is true that both themes have validity. However, that validity is increased because the themes are mutually interwoven from the *exordium* through the epilogues. The macrocosmic chiasmus supports this bifurcated focus; however, because its focus tends to be subjective to the central positive character of each pericope, it misses the essence of authorial intention, unless that intention is for the rhetorical *memoria.*

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[397] I.M. Casanowicz, "Paronomasia in the Old Testament," *JBL 12* (1893), 105. This would also exclude an infinitive with a verb, as well as a singular noun together with a plural noun forming a superlative.

Is judgment an intentional rhetorical theme? Or does the dialectical ideology of Judean supremacy and kingship subvert judgment? The divine element is the motivation and object of covenant fidelity. Land occupation is a divine command as a protective and preventative measure for monotheistic faith. Both themes and the subordinate themes in the individual pericopes exhibit the failure of the premonarchic leadership system. Was the problem with the leader chosen or was it with the people being lead? There were obvious character flaws in the human leaders; but was that a divine judgment by raising up a leader who was representative of the people? Despite all of this, the biblical characters of Othniel and Deborah are not sullied in their respective accounts. In fact, Othniel is seen as paradigmatic. Or could it be that for the characters, the narrator, and the reader or a combination thereof that an attempted *coup d'etát* of YHWH's leadership is being challenged? Is the problem the judge system or the mutinous usurping of human autocracy that does not allow theocracy to work through its divine representatives? When YHWH spoke it was thunderous. When YHWH was silent it was deafening. Yet, He still was in control and judged the situation directly and/or indirectly regardless of Israel's oblivion to His presence. The ultimate biblical purpose is soteriological. YHWH is seen as triumphant and resolutely in control, judging every situation. However, is the reader (and possibly not even him) the only one to continually acknowledge the glorification of YHWH in each successive narrative and the divine salvific design?

MICROCOSMIC LEVEL. At the microcosmic level, the formulaic statements work as an internal structure used by the narrator to move through the individual hero narratives. If the authorial intention is found in the *leitmotifs* of the two prologues, then the internal structure should give evidence of this. The cultic fidelity/infidelity theme exhibits nearly every formula, although not in each pericope.[398] However, the land occupation *leitmotif* does not exhibit any of these statements. By this standard, Prologue-B is able to subsume Prologue-A. Consequently, when the focus is placed upon YHWH, then the myopic viewpoint may be excised from these formulaic statements. In them, sixteen statements reflect divine action either directly or indirectly through His agency.[399] The remaining six formulaic statements are characteristic of Israelite action that prompted a divine

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[398] The only formulae absent are in category G. See Table 15, "Rhetorical Formulaic Statements," page 373.

[399] Specifically, siglae: B1, B2a, B2b, B3a, B3b^i, B3b^{ii}, D1, D2a, D2b, E1, E2a, E2b, F1, F2, and G1.

response.[400] As reflected earlier in Table 17, Israel creates its own problem alienating itself from YHWH. This in turn requires a divine response to highlight that alienation until such time as Israel recognizes the problem it has created. Then, the divine response is restorative until the situation dissolves and the problem resurrects itself at the death of the judge. O'Connell has observed in these motif elements an interlocking of elements G1 (death of the judge) and A1a (Israel doing evil in the sight of YHWH). Consequently, it serves a "rhetorical effect of showing a close, almost causal connection between the death of the deliverer/judge and Israel's return to apostasy."[401] This divine-human intercourse juxtaposes Israel's conception of evil through spiritual harlotry that bears a child alienated from its Maker. But, the inestimable value of grace expiates the sin and restores the relationship. Thus, the *dispositio* of Judges validates the persuasive argument of divine glorification and His peculiar judgment.

INVENTIO OF JUDGES

The classical design by necessity had to define the limits of the text. In doing so, the author may have incorporated the texts based on content length to facilitate his purpose. The text itself was crafted not for literary endeavor but with a specific purpose and audience in mind. That audience would affect his choices of stories and the way he would develop the rhetoric used.

LIMITS OF THE TEXT. Ultimately, the author had to decide which stories would be incorporated into the book and which ones would be lost to historical memory. This would delineate the starting and ending point of the book, which was an important element in the Muilenburg rubric. While his comments are more related to the redactional arrangement of the book, Boling has made an observation about the final Deuteronomistic edition.

> In its finished form the Book of Judges begins with Israel scattered and ineffective by the close of ch. 1. It ends with a very delicate, persistent ideal—Israel, reunited at last in the wake of a tragic civil war.[402]

Through what he calls a tragicomic framework, this epitomizes the classical *inventio*. Further, each successive narrative shows some movement toward unification, especially as it is seen in the Song of Deborah. However, the fragmentation continues until the

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[400] Specifically, siglae: A1a, A1b, A2a, A2b, C, and G2.

[401] O'Connell, 55.

[402] Boling, *AB*, 37-38.

epilogue. By beginning with tribal separateness and ending with a confederacy this signals to the reader conflict resolution and closes the book.

Although from a different vantage point, Klein has noticed a focus that takes discontinuity toward continuity. Her observations do not clearly establish a starting point; but they do show an ending point. Her thesis is the individuals represented as protagonists and the antithesis is the collective nature of Israel, whereby Israel is transformed from the individualistic sons of Israel to "one man" that responds collectively.[403] Thus, fragmentation is brought to wholeness at the conclusion.

CONTENT LENGTH. Another element which the editor employs as a persuasive proof is the length of the narrative. Keeping the structure in mind, the earlier narratives of Othniel, Ehud, and the Deborah/Barak/Jael trilogy have a smaller content length and simpler plot structure, although with each successive story the length and complexity increases. Yet, when compared to the later narratives of Gideon, Abimelech, Jephthah, and Samson "the narratives become substantially longer and more complex."[404] The editor is consistent with this methodology by framing the judges' stories with an introduction which in its first part is made of small episodes with simple plots. The second introduction increases in its episode length and complexity. However, neither of these introductions compare with the content length and complexity present in the two epilogues.

INTENDED AUDIENCE. One of the unanswered questions about Judges is who the intended audience was. This answer is partially bound up in understanding the *Sitz im Leben* for which the author wrote and the text was later redacted. This question is generally neglected for other pertinent issues. The text does not give us this information definitively, although the answer would be Israel. The question is whether it is during the monarchy, the divided monarchy, exilic, or post-exilic times. Because these are not questions for a synchronic examination, they will be dismissed. But other observations may be made about the audience.

> [This] was not a story intended for a small community of intellectuals, lovers and consumers of literature. Its writing within a historiographical setting was done in order to transmit the ancestral tradition, and was intended to serve and to educate the people. One may therefore conjecture that different levels of target audiences were taken into account in the editing and fashioning of this literature.[405]

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[403] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 175. Jg. 20:1.

[404] Tanner, 156.

[405] Amit, The Book of Judges, 12.

The historiosophical purpose of Judges indeed reflects authorial intent. Yet, how does the editor fulfill that purpose in order to reach the audience? He never comes outright and declares his purpose. However, through exposition, narration, discourse, and description the argument is made. It is important to operate on different levels in order to be most effective. The editor approaches the audience through rational logic. There must be an authority figure from which the reader can derive direction from the narrative. Divine transcendence through the clothing of a judge with the Spirit of YHWH serves the purpose well. When a divine call comes upon one of the deliverers, there is the identification with the call experience of Abraham or Moses, thus giving historical continuity. The same occurs when a prophet appears on the scene or a theophanic messenger. This recurrence of divinity interspersed through the narratives, through acts of judgment and deliverance for Israel unifies the book and the audience is reminded of the transcendent and profound concern YHWH has for Israel.[406]

Further, he uses biblical allusion to reach the audience and connect them with their ancestors. At times, it is much more than allusion, as in chapter one where at times the text is verbatim with Joshua 15.[407] The same is true in chapter two of the death narrative of Joshua from Joshua 24.[408] The congregational gathering at Bochim is reminiscent of Joshua's farewell speech.[409] The Song of Deborah and the Jephthah narrative restore historical memory of both the giving of the *Torah* at Mount Sinai and of the wilderness wanderings with its incidences of Sihon, *('ôg)* Og, and *(Bālāq)* Balak.[410] But the Song does double duty by recalling the Song of Moses and the Song of Miriam after the Red Sea crossing.[411] The semantic construction of the Midianite relating his dream recalls the dreams Joseph had as a teenager.[412] As Gideon's name is changed there is the historical remembrance of Jacob's name being changed to Israel and that same type of face to face experience.[413] When Gideon and his army sounded the rams' horns the

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[406] Webb, The Book of Judges, 31.

[407] Josh. 15:13-19, 63; 16:10; and 17:12.

[408] Josh. 24:29-31; and Jg. 2:8-9.

[409] Josh. 24:16-24; and Jg. 2:1-5.

[410] **H** עוֹג, and בָּלָק. Ex. 19:16; Num. 21:1 – 24:25; Dt. 1:1 – 3:17; Jg. 5:4-5; and 11:15-22.

[411] Ex. 15:1-18, and 21.

[412] Gen. 37:5, and 9; and Jg. 7:13.

[413] Gen. 32:27-29; Jg. 6:22, and 32.

reader is taken back to Joshua's conquest of Jericho.[414] But the reader is also taken back to remember Aaron taking the golden earrings from the Israelites to make the golden calf when the narrative shows Gideon asking for gold earrings to make his ephod.[415] How could anyone not think of the *Akeidah*, as *Elohim* describes Isaac as Abraham's only child when the story of Jephthah is told about his only child?[416] Then in that same story when Jephthah's daughter comes out to meet him, the author more forcefully alludes to Miriam and her dancing with tambourines.[417] As the Danites send out five of their number to spy out the land the obvious allusion is to when Moses sent out the twelve spies to spy out the land.[418] But, secondarily and historically closer there is the time when Joshua sent out two men to spy out Jericho and they stayed with *(Rāḥāḇ)* Rahab.[419] Likewise, as a part of their espionage trip, the five Danite spies stayed with Micah.[420] And finally, when the men of *Belial* in Gibeah come to the house of the sojourning Ephraimite and his guests, one quickly remembers the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.[421] And if the historical remembrances were not enough for the reader to identify themselves with their past, then the parallels within Judges would serve to reinforce them.[422] One of the clearest parallels is the sacrifice and offering before the divine messenger by Gideon and later by Manoah and his wife.[423] While it is true that the allusions to the *Hexateuch* did not match the Judges events point for point, the author was able to communicate persuasion through historical argument and imply the full meaning of the alluded story to its new context.

There is perhaps one additional allusion that would only be noticed by someone involved in methodical *Torah* study. Within Judaism there is a prescribed rabbinical ordering of the *Torah* into portions, so that a complete cycle would be read and studied annually.[424] As such, each portion has been given a name, which is taken from the

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[414] Josh. 6:1-21; and Jg. 7:20.

[415] Ex. 32:2-4; and Jg. 8:24-27.

[416] Gen. 22:2, 12, 16; and Jg. 11:34.

[417] Ex. 15:20-21; and Jg. 11:34.

[418] Num. 13:17-20; and Jg. 18:2.

[419] רָחָב H. Josh. 2:1.

[420] Jg. 18:2.

[421] Gen. 19:4-11; and Jg. 19:22-26.

[422] See the earlier section "Thematic Parallels," pages 369-376.

[423] Jg. 6:17-24; and 13:15-23.

[424] In actuality, there are two systems. The division based on a one year reading and another based on three years. However, most congregations follow the annual system.

opening phrase of that scriptural passage. The portion is not referred to by a numeric designation because there are no verse numbers inserted in *Torah* scrolls. Likewise, the normal method of recalling a book of the bible is by its name taken from the initial *Torah* portion in that book. For whatever reason, this tradition did not apply to Judges. Most likely this is because it would be a duplication of a previous *Torah* portion of the same name. In the opening verse of Judges, the second and third words are *('ah^{a}rê môt)* "after the-death" referring to Joshua.[425] This is the identical idiom referring to the death of Aaron's two sons and is the title of a *Torah* portion.[426] As a principle of midrashic interpretation, the title of the portion when used elsewhere is a *remez* of the entire portion. This is significant because this Leviticus passage specifically addresses covenant statutes and judgments. The penultimate verse serves as a declaration of that covenant and the sanctification of Israel to YHWH, because He is holy, and He has set Israel apart for Himself.[427] So, for the *Torah* student, the fullness of the covenantal stipulations would be recalled in the opening verse of Judges, and as such, the reader would know that this *Torah* portion will ultimately be addressed throughout the narratives of Judges.

There was still another way that the audience was reached through the text. The editor used pathos to touch their emotional side in order to speak to their heart. When Israel would weep as at *Bochim* or their groaning became unbearable for themselves and for the reader, YHWH would manifest His *(hesed)* tender mercy.[428] When the author used such strong idiomatic language that YHWH would sell Israel into the hand of their enemy, the reader would know it was justified; but, it would not alleviate the empathy the reader experienced vicariously through the text.[429] However, whenever He would raise up a deliverer, the reader could sigh and once again breathe easily hoping that the outcome would generate a response of applause.[430] The narrator gives the reader a birds-eye view of YHWH's interaction with man; however, the reader is never so far away that his own heart, soul, and mind are not touched and impacted. Ultimately, the reader having dealt emotionally with these characters now through the agency of the Holy Spirit deal with not only the authorial purpose of the book but face other issues both intrinsic

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[425] Jg. 1:1.

[426] Lev. 16:1 – 20:27.

[427] Lev. 20:26.

[428] חֶסֶד. Jg. 2:4-5, and 18.

[429] Jg. 2:14; 3:8; 4:2; and 10:7.

[430] Jg. 2:16, 18; 3:9, 15; 10:1, and 3.

and extrinsic to the text, as YHWH transcends through the narrative into the life of the reader. Thus, the persuasion has reached a level that perhaps the author had never imagined possible.

RHETORICAL CRITICISM AND BEYOND

The 1968 address by Muilenburg has prompted those in biblical scholarship to explore the symbiotic relationship between critical methods. Borrowing from the title of his address with the obvious allusion to his work, it brings us to a point of reflection. Rhetorical criticism is not an exclusive paradigm for academic endeavor. Rather, it serves as a fulcrum for Form Criticism and Narrative Criticism, its precedent and antecedent, respectively. A removal of either element destroys the balance and objectivity.

The Aristotelian rhetorical divisions have immense validity in and of themselves. However, it is in the merismic totality that the reader accepts or rejects the persuasive rhetoric. Likewise, while being distinct *dispositio* and *elocutio* must be synthesized and accepted as mutually interdependent. Yet, to stop at this point would arrest the whole endeavor and fall short of proper analysis. The literary devices such as puns, similes, metaphors, irony, and satire do not stand alone. Nor is it profitable to examine one pun against another or methodically list them to validate a persuasive argument. This action removes them from their natural environment and serves the same purpose as taking a fish out of water. By design, they must be explored in their literary context. *Dispositio* on the other hand, through *inclusio*, parallelism, and chiasmus provides an ostensible framework for the reader. However, it only shows the outward structure the same way one would view a deciduous tree in winter. The real beauty is when its nakedness is clothed with fruit and foliage. Thus, the fruitfulness of this pursuit suggests a multi-season complementarity that Narrative Criticism will provide as an outgrowth of Rhetorical Criticism. Only then can the persuasive argument be evaluated.

Narrative Criticism

The discipline of Narrative Criticism is unique in comparison with other critical methodologies in that its genesis "developed within the field of biblical studies without an exact counterpart in the secular world."[431] Claims have been made that this was first

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[431] M.A. Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 19.

applied to reading the Gospels through a secular literary English literature paradigm by David Rhoads and Donald Michie in 1977.[432] Later, through the insights gained in this endeavor the two colleagues produced the narrative critical work on Mark.[433] However, in 1971 Robert Alter applied this concept to Genesis 38 and 39 during a symposium at Stanford University.[434] Almost a decade later he published his seminal work *The Art of Biblical Narrative* that characterized a typical Berkeley style protest of historical critical methodology that caught the attention of his audience.

The hermeneutical application suggests that meaning is determined from the text and that a close reading is required.

> [This] identifies formal and conventional structures of the narrative, determines plot, develops characterization, distinguishes point of view, exposes language play, and relates all to some overarching, encapsulating theme.[435]

Before this may be applied to Judges, there is the issue of the author and the reader. The narrative approach distinguishes between the real author and implied author. Likewise the distinction is made between the real reader and the implied reader. The implied author "is reconstructed by the reader from the narrative" which enables the reader to view the implied author's perspective rather than being bound to the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the historical author that imposes external information into the reading.[436] "The implied reader is that imaginary person in whom the intention of the text is to be thought of as always reaching its fulfillment."[437] These concepts become important because whereas the real author and real reader lie outside the realm of the text, the implied author, narrative, and implied reader constitute the fabric of the text, as reflected in Figure 86.[438] This objective approach focusing on the text keeps Narrative Criticism outside the realm of the pragmatic reader-response critical approaches.[439] However, as helpful as this model may be, there are two elements that need clarification. The first is regarding the positioning of

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[432] Powell, 6.

[433] D. Rhoads and D. Michie, *Mark As Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982).

[434] Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, xi.

[435] D.M. Gunn, "Narrative Criticism," *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application*, (Eds.) S.L. McKenzie and S.R. Haynes, rev. and exp. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 201.

[436] Powell, 5.

[437] J.D. Kingsbury, *Matthew As Story*, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986), 38.

[438] Powell, 19.

[439] Ibid., 20.

the arrow between the text and the real reader. As reflected in Figure 87, it is when the real reader becomes the implied reader of the text and thus the ideal reader.[440]

FIGURE 86

COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR NARRATIVE CRITICISM

Real Author ⟶ Text ⟶ Real Reader

Implied Author ⟶ Narrative ⟶ Implied Reader
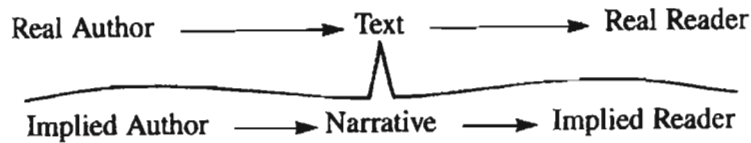
FIGURE 87

FACTORS OF NARRATIVE SIGN

Real World

Text

Real Author ⟶ Implied Author — Narrator ⟶ Narrative Expression ⟶ Narratee — Implied Reader ⟵ Real Reader
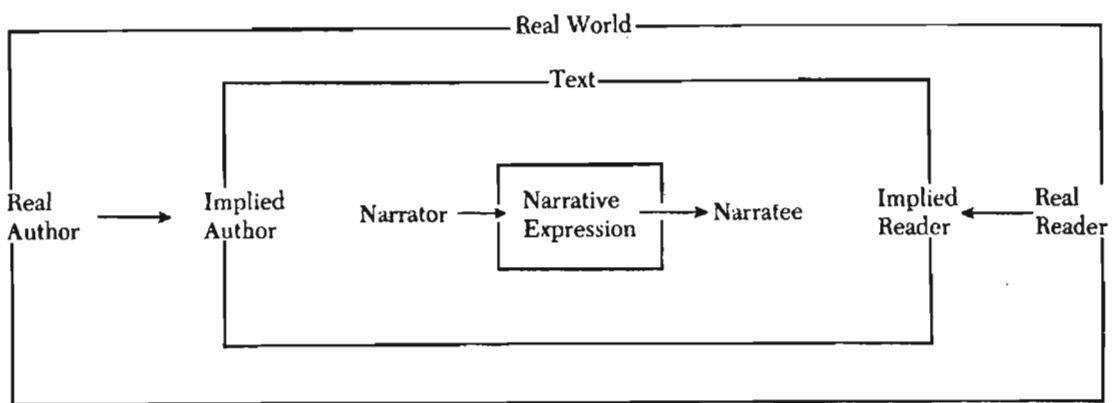
The other issue is that the narrative itself is composed of three elements: the narrator, the narrative expression, and the narratee. There is ample opportunity for confusion of the terms. So as to reduce this confusion, distinction is made between the real and implied authors as well as the real and implied readers. Nonetheless, the real confusion rests in the nomenclature of the text. Throughout this analysis, the word "story" is used to signify the content of what the narrator is conveying to the narratee, also known as signs that are "signified."[441] The word "narrative" is used to signify the discourse the implied author is communicating to the implied reader, also known as the "signifier" of signs.[442] The word "text" is used to signify the narrative sign of the signified and signifier that the real author is communicating to the real reader. As this methodology is applied to Judges, the reading must bear in mind the following question: "Is there anything *in the text* that indicates the reader is expected to respond in this way?"[443]

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[440] T.J. Keegan, Interpreting the Bible: A Popular Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 94.

[441] Ibid., 92-93.

[442] Ibid.

[443] Powell, 21.

At the onset, the diachronic hermeneutical filter imposes upon the real reader of Judges the idea of an anthology of stories collected together and framed with a prologue and epilogue by redactors. Accordingly, the starting point for the real reader has been established to work against a coherent reading and thus make a narrative critical approach only valid to the individual stories rather than the whole book. While it is true that these stories may be viewed separately as distinct literary pieces they may also be viewed theatrically as acts in a multi-act play. Consequently, the individual scenes and episodes necessitate the real reader's full attention to the overall plot until the curtain call.

Therefore, the narratological approach adopted is to examine the stories and their constituent elements followed by observations about the narrative and concluding with a discussion of the text.

The Stories of Judges

The various methodologies by nature tend toward fragmentation by alienating the focal points for closer observation. By default this is also necessary in a narrative analysis. The question is which approach best serves the story because there is a degree of overlapping in these approaches. For Alter, words, actions, dialogue, and narration is the organizing principle.[444] As such, his categories combine content and rhetoric giving an overall positive approach, yet it alternates forward and backward between the plot and characters. Powell organizes a binary paradigm that concentrates on the story and the discourse.[445] His systemization is thorough and logical. However, his order of settings following after events and characters could be moved to a better hierarchical position. Although less extensive, Longman prefaces the binary approach of narrative and style with a category of genre. One element that he brings out that others have not considered is the function of the literature.[446] Another possibility is the system of Berlin.[447] Unfortunately, her approach only includes character and characterization, point of view, and narrative structure. Her understanding of point of view is most instructive. Finally, Gunn is very general in his approach acknowledging the need of the following six items:

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[444] Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, 179-185.

[445] Powell, 23-84, and 103-105. At first glance it appears that this is a three category system of events, characters, and settings. However, those are subcategories of story. Since the bulk of the emphasis is placed on story, the reader might miss his initial category of discourse.

[446] T. Longman, III, Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation (FCI 3: Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1987), 75-100.

[447] Berlin, 23-82.

1) formal and conventional structures of the narrative, 2) determine plot, 3) develop characterization, 4) distinguish point of view, 5) expose language play, and 6) relate to an overarching theme.[448] Nonetheless, his paradigm is employed with adaptation from Alter, Powell, Longman, and Berlin.

PROLOGUE A

As a story is read, one of the important features is the lines of demarcation for its beginning and end. The first prologue functions as a narrative bridge for the book of Joshua and "a microcosm in many ways of the larger slice of Israelite tradition that surrounds it."[449] The overall text has its obvious beginning with the first verse; however, the question of the last verse of the story is disputed. One approach is to make chapter one a succinct unit.[450] Alternatively, when the story ends with the Bochim episode, the conquests are subsumed into the larger issue of covenant fidelity-infidelity.[451] The third position is to see a composite introduction rather than two individual prologues.[452] Each position has arguable validity. Since the author is not writing the text about conquest; but about how Israel deals with the situation because there was not a proper conquest, the story must operate under the guise of the second position rather than alienate chapter one from its theological significance which is realized throughout the narrative.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. The discourse structure of a story may have six distinguishable elements for the reader. They are not always present in each story. Borrowing from both Berlin and Labov, I have employed the elements of abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, result or resolution, and coda to understand the narrative.[453]

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[448] Gunn, "Narrative Criticism," 201.

[449] S. Niditch, "Reading Story in Judges 1," *The Labour of Reading: Desire, Alienation, and Biblical Interpretation,* (Eds.) F.C. Black, R. Boer, and E. Runions, (*Semeia 36*: Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 206.

[450] This would entail a composition of 1:1-36. Advocating this position includes: (Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges,* 30); and (van Seters, *In Search of History,* 338).

[451] This would entail a composition of 1:1 – 2:5. Advocating this position includes: (Amit, *The Book of Judges,* 141); (Auld, *Joshua, Judges, and Ruth,* 140); (Boling, *AB,* 50, 66); (Keil & Delitzsch, *The Book of Judges,* 183); and (O'Connell, 58).

[452] For this position: (Block, *NAC,* 76-78); and (Webb, *The Book of Judges,* 102). A variation of this position makes the first chapter a complete unit, the Bochim scene as a transition, and the remainder the second prologue 2:6 – 3:6. Cf. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist,* 146.

[453] Berlin, 102; and W. Labov, *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), 361. Labov focuses on the skeletal nature of a series of temporally ordered narrative clauses which comprise minimal narrative.

ABSTRACT. Within the initial verse the narrator while focusing on an initial action capitalizes on an Israelite inquiry about who shall first go up against the Canaanites to fight against them. The use of the word "first" suggests that there will be a subsequent battle conflict. Yet the kernel theme is the Israelite battle against the Canaanites, although it is not until the narrator reports the divine response that the reason for the conflict is explained as territorial conquest.

ORIENTATION. Just as the first verse indicates the type of material the reader will expect in the ensuing episodes, the narrator places this event "after the death of Joshua."[454] He withholds how long after Joshua's death this inquiry took place as well as the location of the inquiry. It is intimated that it was a congregational gathering possibly mirroring the final episode of the story at Bochim. Although the location of the initial gathering is not specifically related, it is intimated that it was at Gilgal based on the movement from Gilgal to Bochim in the fourth episode. Further, the narrator assumes his narratee knows that the action is taking place in the land of Canaan, as this is the place where the battles occur. If there is any question tribal territory is mentioned along with 42 different geopolitical locations, all within Canaan except Egypt.[455] Of these sites mentioned, most all of them are limited to the Prologue and are not used elsewhere in the text.

COMPLICATING ACTION. The action clearly begins with the divine inquiry and bifurcates geographically between a north-south orientation. The second episode begins with Judah accompanied by Simeon having a foray against the Canaanites and Perizzites at Bezek. The narrative description is expanded to view Adoni-bezek who flees to Jerusalem. This provides a natural transition to a battle in Jerusalem followed by additional battles in the hill country and the Negev. As with the earlier scene, the narrative slows to focus in on Caleb, Othniel, and Achsah as they relate to the capture of another city. Although the narrative slowed so that Judah could capture Adoni-bezek and then later so that Othniel could capture his bride and Debir, the narrator complicates the story by introducing the Kenites, another ethnic people that inhabit the land. As the remaining cities are taken by Judah and some in alliance with Simeon, the narrator

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[454] Jg. 1:1.

[455] These include: Bezek, Jerusalem, Hebron, Kiriath-arba, Debir, Kiriath-sepher, the Negev, the city of palms, Arad, Zephath, Hormah, Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron, the hill country, Bethel, Luz, Beth-shean, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, Megiddo, Gezer, Kitron, Nahalol, Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, Rehob, Beth-shemesh, Beth-anath, Mount Heres, Aijalon, Shaalbim, the ascent of Akrabbim, Sela, Gilgal, Bochim, and Egypt. Jg. 1:3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36; 2:1, and 5.

interjects that "they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had iron chariots."[456] The reader is left wondering why this could happen since YHWH was with Judah. The second episode concludes with a narrative comment on the unsuccessful efforts of Benjamin.

The third episode moves northward and focuses on the house of Joseph. The narrator quickly tells the reader that YHWH was with Joseph also. The action slows to focus in on an unnamed man from Luz who betrays his people. Expecting another situation of annihilation, the narrator contradicts the Judahite scenes by allowing the betrayer to escape with permission. The narrative picks up speed again by rapidly moving through geographic scenes of Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan acknowledging that the Canaanites persisted in living in the land.

The fourth episode full of theological content synthesizes the previous episodes and provides divine judgment.

EVALUATION. The narrator evaluates his story at different points. He allows Adoni-bezek with his monologue through explicative evaluation to conclude "as I have done, so *Elohim* has repaid me."[457] The narrator leaves Adoni-bezek to die in Jerusalem, while leaving the reader to ponder if this statement is a truism that Israel will also receive repayment for its deeds, especially in the context of conquest.

The next evaluative remark is a comparator evaluation which also happened in the second episode. This previously addressed was the inability of Judah to drive out the inhabitants of the valley because of their iron chariots. The narrator shows the strength of the Canaanites but does not directly implicate Judah for its incomplete conquest. The same type of evaluation is made of Benjamin for failing to drive out the Jebusites. However, the narrator breaks the temporal frame by acknowledging the Jebusite presence in Jerusalem at the time of his narration.

Once the second and quick moving scenes of the third episode are mentioned, the evaluations are each made with comparators to show the unrealized possibility of the tribes. For Manasseh, the Canaanites persisted in living in the land but only later were put to forced labor because they were not driven out. Ephraim is evaluated in the same light because the Canaanites lived among them. The same was said of Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan. However, of all these northern tribes mentioned neither Ephraim nor

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[456] Jg. 1:19.

[457] Jg. 1:7.

Asher were able to conscript the Canaanites to forced labor, whereas their tribal brothers were able.

Perhaps the greatest evaluation of the fourth episode, and ultimately the story, the narrative, and the text is the divine pronouncement of non-compliance and disobedience. The messenger of YHWH recounts the covenantal infractions and indicts assembled Israel at Bochim.

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. Because the Bochim episode is intrinsically related to the chapter one conquest story, the result of not driving out the Canaanites brings Israel to face its Maker and respond to YHWH. The story appears to be resolved through the Israelite action of lifting up their voices, weeping, and sacrificing to YHWH. However, the narrator stops short of resolving the issue by leaving the divine allegations unanswered and not addressing whether there would be future conquest to dispossess the Canaanites that remain. This prepares the reader to acknowledge that the conflict introduced will be carried further in the narrative.

CODA. The story ending is marked by the etiological notice of Bochim.[458]

PLOT. In Prologue-A, the setting generally does not affect the mood of the story. Only in the vignette of Achsah requesting arable land in the Negev and of the Canaanite use of iron chariots in the valley does the narrator bring the setting to the fore. They become examples of whether the land conquest was successful. Yet, to the overall book plot, the information would appear extraneous.

KERNELS AND SATELLITES. As O'Connell has noticed, each of the four episodes "opens with a demarcating use of [*('lh)*] עלה."[459] The two cultic assemblies frame the story chiastically and serve as the primary kernel events.[460] The southern episode features Judah, while also integrating Simeon and Benjamin. Amidst the narration of these conquests, the narrator introduces two vignettes. Both the Adoni-bezek and Achsah insertions act as satellites. When the northern episode is presented, the house of Joseph is featured along with six tribes. The narrator includes a satellite vignette of the betrayer of Luz.

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[458] Jg. 2:5.

[459] O'Connell, 62. Jg. 1:1, 3, 22; and 2:1.

[460] Events may be described as being an essential "kernel" of the story or a "satellite" because its inclusion or deletion does not affect the basic plot. S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film,* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 53-56. Chatman borrows from Roland Barthes the French terms *noyau* and *catalyse.*

ORDER, DURATION, AND FREQUENCY. Because of the way the story is told, these three categories of event classification are dealt with as one unit. The narrator basically uses story time throughout the first prologue.[461] In the first cultic assembly episode, the narrator reports the event as a brief scene choosing only to focus upon the divine inquiry and response. Although there is no way to determine the time between the divine response and the next scene of Judah's statement to Simeon, the quick scene change transitions into the summary reports that follow of conquest action. Only in the satellite events does the narration slow from summary to scene. As the reader reaches the second kernel event the discourse time becomes a scene. With the possible exception of the Adoni-bezek satellite as a repetitive multiple-singular narration, the remainder of the prologue is characterized by singular narration. The only place where the story time changes to discourse time is the death announcement of Adoni-bezek.[462]

CAUSATION. Causality in a plot may be differentiated by possibility, probability, and contingency.[463] Although not as straight forward as the hero stories, the first prologue events are linked by probability. The first cultic assembly precipitates the action of Judah in land conquest. Not unlike the Joshua narrative, the subsequent forays of other tribes do not appear to occur simultaneously but chronologically; yet, with each tribal action related to the initial cultic event. By the same token, the second cultic assembly wavers between probability and contingency. The narrator does not discuss land conquest, but it is implied by the presence of Canaanite idolatry, which would suggest that this event is contingent upon the narrative about failure to occupy the land.

CONFLICT. The battle narrative summaries intimate conflict between the tribes and the Canaanites. In the first satellite event the reader albeit briefly acknowledges a potential conflict of whether Adoni-bezek would be captured. This is significant because although the minimal conflict is resolved with his capture and subsequent death, it covertly introduces a conflict between Judah and YHWH for failing to properly conclude the situation through *ḥerem*. Does the dismemberment of this Canaanite leader's four primary digits suggest that failure to properly occupy the land and remove the Canaanite influence will likewise hamstring Israel in its covenantal relationship with YHWH? But,

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[461] The distinction is made regarding story time versus discourse time. Further, the discourse time can be compared to story time as: summary, scene, stretch, ellipsis, or pause. G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, (Trans.) J.E. Lewin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 33-85.

[462] Jg. 1:7.

[463] Powell, 40.

the conflict is not so much with the minor characters as it is subtly with the text's major characters Israel (seen in many different ways and stories) and YHWH. What may be seen as intertribal cooperation between Judah and Simeon is not a fulfillment of the divine dictate that "Judah shall go up." YHWH did not mention Simeon accompanying Judah or the converse. Simply because the narrator did not choose to evaluate this action, despite the obvious fulfillment of YHWH's promise with the Canaanite defeat at Bezek, does not abrogate Judah of its responsibility to fulfill the letter of the divine command. Later, YHWH makes that clear to Gideon so that Israel does not become proud and think they defeated the Midianites; Gideon's army must be reduced. Perhaps that is potentially related to the Judah-Simeon league.

The conflict is perpetuated throughout the summary events when tribe after tribe fails to dispossess the Canaanites. This is the overt conflict. But, interwoven into the story, the narrator covertly describes the Canaanites living with the Israelites and often becoming forced labor. The narrator does not stop there. What might appear as an innocuous comment allows the Kenites, a Midianite tribe (who for good or for evil in the later stories is a factor that Israel must contend) to live with Judah.

As the error of Judah with allowing Adoni-bezek to live was grave, the error of the house of Joseph was more severe. The generous treatment of the turncoat Luzite who helped the Israelites in annihilating his own people violates the divine command of utter annihilation. The added phrase "we will treat you kindly" looks to be a humanitarian gesture. Yet, it takes the divine commandment beyond what was acceptable. Thus, they allowed the Hittite man and his family not only to escape, but to reestablish himself and his society further north. The narrator makes an etiological intrusion into the story but does not cast aspersions on this action. The reader is left to wonder whether these Hittites will become "a thorn in Israel's side" in the future narrative. But, while the Hittite and his family escaped, would the house of Joseph escape the judgment of YHWH or would it be forced into exile?

While not specifically addressing all of these questions, the narrator alerts the reader of the presence of the angel of YHWH. It is the first mention of him in the text, although his presence was known to the characters when they were at Gilgal. Now, the divine messenger rebukes assembled Israel and confronts it with a perennial conflict of Canaanites and Canaanite gods that becomes part of the setting of the remaining stories.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. Within the scope of the first prologue, the narrator has introduced twelve individuals, nineteen composite groups, and three divine

characters.[464] Most literary analysts follow the scheme of Abrams and Forster that classifies the characters as either round, flat, or stock on the basis of the their traits.[465] Because of some of the confusion surrounding this terminology, Berlin's reclassification of full-fledged, type, and agent is employed.[466] I would like to suggest that the author of Judges, although while using these three types of characters has also created "macro-characters" and "micro-characters." Throughout the text itself the macro-characters are YHWH and Israel. Nonetheless, they do appear as micro-characters in the various stories. Occasionally, the micro- and macro- features are identical. Since this examination is looking at the individual stories first, only oblique references will be made to the two main macro-characters, whereas they are dealt with as text characters at the end of this study. Further, space does not allow for comment on each agent of the story.

SONS OF ISRAEL. After the temporal mention of Joshua, the first character is introduced as the collective sons of Israel. Since the various names and identification of Israel has been addressed in chapter two, this will not be repeated.[467] If Judges is excised from the Hebrew bible, then the macro-character Israel might not be recognized in the initial verse. As a micro-character the narrative describes Israel as a type character. The reader observes that Israel is inquiring of YHWH, thus purporting a relationship and potentially covenant fidelity. Further, the character is perceptive that the Canaanites must be engaged in warfare and there is a divine order for battle. Likewise, the reader notices through the discourse that Israel heard the favorable oracle and acted upon it through attempted conquestive warfare. As a collective entity, they form an *inclusio* for the first and last episodes. At Bochim, through theophanic discourse the reader learns that Israel had been in Egypt, delivered from there and brought into the Promised Land. Also, emphasis is made on the fact that they had a covenant with YHWH that they disobeyed.

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[464] The individuals include: Joshua, Adoni-bezek, Sheshai, Ahiman, Talmai, Caleb, Achsah, Othniel, Kenaz, the Kenite, Moses, and the man from Luz. The composite groups include: sons of Israel, Canaanites, Judah, Simeon, Perizzites, 10,000 men at Bezek, inhabitants of Debir, sons of Benjamin, Jebusites, the house of Joseph, the spies, the Luzite's family, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, the Amorites, the sons of Dan, and your fathers. The three divine characters include: YHWH, who is also called *Elohim*; the angel of YHWH; and the Canaanite gods.

[465] The first two categories are elucidated by Forster. The third category is Abram's addition to the classification system. E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd., 1927, reprinted 1960), 65-75; and M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 4th ed. (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1957), 69-72.

[466] Berlin, 23. As such, full-fledged equates with round characters, type equates with flat characters, and agent equates with stock characters.

[467] See the section "Divine Judgment: The Object" in chapter two, pages 57-67.

Yet, Israel is responsive even in their time of rebuke, which is marked by weeping and cultic sacrifice.

The ideal reader would also know that the internal stories of conquest are illustrative of Israel, who now is not seen collectively, but through tribal segmentation, with the narrator using the patriarchal collective names. As such, Israel on a macro-level is represented in the collective characters of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin, Joseph, Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan, as well as the individual characters of Caleb and Othniel.

JUDAH. For those reading this narrative ideologically, the large volume of narrative attributed to Judah might support a Judahite monarchic or anti-Ephraimitic monarchic polemic. But, that simply is not information the narrator provides even though Judah appears to be more favorably characterized than his tribal brothers. As a character, Judah is a type. The character knows that he has a tribal allotment and is aware of the oracle that assures that the land has been given to him. The only direct speech is a statement of invitation given to Simeon to join with his battle. The narrator does not provide Simeon's reply but demonstrates the acceptance of an alliance by the ensuing attacks at Bezek and Zephath. Judah is seen as obediently conquering the land smiting individual Canaanites and whole cities, sometimes burning them to the ground. Within the tribe three individuals are mentioned; yet, that is significant because the narrator does not single anyone out in any other tribal collective. Those include Caleb, Achsah, and Othniel. Once again, the ideal reader would recognize Caleb from the *Hexateuch*. A feminist rendering of this would see a rash individual with no apparent concern for his daughter rather than for the conquest of the land. However, the androcentric reading acknowledges that not only as an individual is he fulfilling the command for land conquest and the de-Canaanization of the land, also he is able to motivate a future hero to obey YHWH in this conquest. The reader also notes that he keeps his promises and is gracious and benevolent to his daughter and son-in-law. Apart from a few verses Achsah as an agent disappears from the narrative, although her husband Othniel later appears as a hero.

YHWH. As a micro-character in this prologue, YHWH also fulfills the character role as full-fledged. The narrator reveals that YHWH not only may be inquired of by Israel, but that He also responds and responds favorably, in a manner in which His divine will may be discerned. His transcendence is mediated at times, as in Bochim by his messenger that delivers divine discourse. Historical memory is recalled of His divine deliverance of Israel from Egypt, through the wilderness, and into Canaan. He is seen to

respond to Israel's action which in the prologue is to covenantal disobedience provoking His wrath. What is remarkable about the dialogue is that it is a repetition of an earlier dialogue with Israel that the narrator did not include. For the characters this is not new information; but, for the reader it is.

CANAANITES. This group of people, who are the inhabitants of Canaan that Israel is to dispossess, is actually a main character despite the way the narrator uses it as an agent of the story. As Hamlin has noticed, this character dominates the initial chapter of Judges and appears more frequently here "than in any other chapter of the Hebrew Scriptures."[468] Other than them having iron chariots and powerful enough to withstand the Israelite attacks by the northern tribes, the narrator allows this character to be enigmatic. Nonetheless, the character functions in the prologue as

> [A] kind of code word referring to those forces, structures, and individuals who were seen
> to be in opposition to the good order of Yahweh. The real adversary was not a whole
> people, but a way of organizing society.[469]

CHARACTERIZATION. For the most part the narrator tells us about the characters rather than showing them. And as a rule, throughout the conquest narrative the reader is aloof to the characters. This is mostly because they serve only a perfunctory role of advancing the plot toward Bochim. Yet, at times the reader is drawn into the story. When the self-incriminating speech of Adoni-bezek is revealed there is antipathy for him and a sense of poetic justice for his circumstances. In the vignette of Othniel and Achsah, the narrator creates positive sympathy for Othniel in his battle to defeat the foe and to obtain his bride while at the same time through ambivalence creates empathy for Achsah regarding the circumstance she finds herself in because of her father's vow. Likewise, when the congregation is assembled at Bochim, the reader is sympathetic toward Israel for its situation but empathic with YHWH through his messenger that the first judgment of the book is just.

POINT OF VIEW. Obviously, there is one other important macro-character and that is the narrator created by the implied author. Nowhere in the text does his voice merge with another character. As a character, he is examined later in the study. Nonetheless, his voice is heard from the onset of the story. The prologue is presented in a divine perceptual voice. The narrator is objective, reliable, and generally inconspicuous throughout the narrative. His voice is heard introducing narrative and discourse.

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[468] Hamlin, 14. The term appears 14 times in chapter one.

[469] Ibid.

Occasionally he intrudes to provide extraneous information such as the former names of Hebron, Debir, and Bethel.[470] Likewise, he breaks into the time frame to tell the narratee that the Jebusites still live in Jerusalem and that the relocated Luz still has the same name.[471] For whatever reason, the narrator does not give any of the tribes a voice except for Judah, even when a response is expected from Simeon. And surprisingly, Othniel has no voice and only his bride is given a voice not prior to her betrothal, but after her marriage and Othniel's failure to request land of her father. Only in the brief monologic statements of Israel, YHWH, Judah, Adoni-bezek, Caleb, Achsah, the Luzite man, and the angel of YHWH does the point of view momentarily shift away from the narrator, although he is still controlling the action. But what is really occurring is the point of view of chapter one is distinctively Israelite and with the Bochim story the contrastive Yahwistic point of view is introduced. Despite the narrator not giving extra voice to the characters, the selective reporting of the narrator does not make the reader feel as if he is being robbed of essential information.

LANGUAGE PLAY. Although the stories are primarily expositional narrative, the narrator has used symbolic themes and irony to accentuate his plot.

SYMBOLISM. The prologue offers several symbols. The first is rather oblique because it is the temporal background for the story. The death of Joshua is significant because it ends a historical era. However, within the story, the symbol of death likewise speaks of an ending which is followed by a new beginning.[472] The death-and-life motif is employed throughout the main stories as points of demarcation.

The first chapter is not devoid of theological language despite modern interpreters dividing the prologue along chapter divisions. Although subliminal the cultic nature of sacrifice is embedded in the Adoni-bezek vignette. The Canaanites as a character are bound up with their religious practices which become a snare to Israel. The judgment of YHWH was already at work behind the scenes to eradicate the Canaanite priesthood. Canaanite kings also functioned as priests.[473] Not unlike the *Torah* certain anointing rituals were followed regarding blood being placed on thumbs, large toes, and the ear lobe.[474] Whether the Canaanite priesthood followed the exact ritual focusing on the right

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[470] Jg. 1:10, 11, and 23.

[471] Jg. 1:21, and 26.

[472] Niditch, "Reading Story in Judges 1," 198.

[473] Gray, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, 236.

[474] Lev. 8:23.

thumb, toe, and ear lobe is unknown, but it becomes a moot point when both big toes and both thumbs are amputated by Adoni-bezek. In his claim for religious superiority he removed all other priest-kings from serviceability because they could not be made "holy" (*sic*) for their god.[475] Whereas he had been the agent of YHWH for removing the Canaanite priesthood, he now becomes the object of YHWH removing him from priestly idolatry. The irony is that even though the legitimate Canaanite priesthood has been removed it still had enough of a grip on Israel to lead it to the sacrificial altar.

The third symbol is found in the Othniel-Achsah vignette. Klein has noted that it contributes to "the symbol of Israel as a bride, a recurrent figure in the ensuing narratives."[476] However, as a recurring biblical motif of betrothal it does not follow the normative type-scene of securing a bride at a well. But, if the vignette is seen allegorically at the same time, Caleb becomes an anthropomorphic representation of YHWH prepared to give a bride to a messianic figure (Othniel) who not only subdues and vanquishes the enemy but secures the land (Israel) and to whom the father gives a double portion inheritance of springs, potentially a foreshadowing of living water. This all the more poignant because the giving of the upper and lower springs constitutes a merism whereby they have full legal right to all of the available water in the area.[477]

In the dramatized story of the capture of Luz the implied author is drawing upon an allusion of which the ideal reader should be aware. The connection between the two spies that met Rahab in Jericho and the spies meeting the unnamed Luzite connotes the previous conquest theme, despite numerous differences in the accounts. Even though Rahab and her family, as well as the Luzite and his family were spared, the latter gave no affirmation to YHWH nor was he incorporated into Israel. The irony of this dramatization is a key to the plot. The man from Luz betrayed his countrymen to death and then reestablished his Hittite city and pagan lifestyle. Thus, Luz was technically never conquered and the house of Joseph betrayed YHWH and His mandate when they sanctioned the establishment of a new Canaanite settlement.[478] What is remarkable is an anonymous traitor in the opening chapter has infected Israel with the Canaanite ways so early in the narrative, and Israel is oblivious to that infection.

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[475] Hamlin, 27.

[476] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 12.

[477] Block, *NAC*, 95.

[478] Ibid., 104.

Another theme actually links each of the four dramatized stories. It is significant because it is a manifestation of the macro-character YHWH that works throughout the text. It is mercy in the midst of judgment. Adoni-bezek cruelly maimed his adversaries with a severe punishment; however, Judah measured back according to their understanding of *Lex talionis* a merciful judgment, when by all rights he should have been killed.[479] Although in a completely different vein, Caleb had fulfilled his promises to both Othniel and Achsah, yet, he mercifully gave an extra blessing to them above his original judgment.[480] The third dramatized event illustrates the house of Joseph giving mercy to the traitor from Luz by allowing him and his family to live when they should have been killed.[481] Finally, at Bochim, the angel of YHWH dispensed mercy to Israel by only bringing an accusation that omitted a sentence, when justice required it to be given.[482] Theologically, it would appear that the mercy given in each of these events controverts the divine character and plan; yet underlying this is the divine trait of mercy that tempers each judgment.

RHETORICAL DEVICES. Although Judah is portrayed in the foreground in going with Simeon to secure its territorial allotment, the narrator magnifies Simeon's accomplishment by introducing the first pun. Through syllepsis the renaming of the city of Zephath to Hormah not only highlights its utter destruction but dedicates the razed city to YHWH.[483] Likewise, Bochim is a pun built on paronomasia with its etiological name based upon the weeping of Israel at that site.[484] But, before that weeping occurs, the divine condemnation which the narrator borrows from Joshua elicits a metaphor of animal entrapment that vividly pictures Israel awaiting the hand of the Canaanite fowler empowered by YHWH.[485] The irony that punctuates this story is that an actual "unreal" deity who had been embraced by Israel will be the warden of their "real" imprisonment.[486]

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[479] Jg. 1:7. R.E. Gane, *God's Faulty Heroes*, (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1996), 22-23.

[480] Jg. 1:12, and 15.

[481] Jg. 1:24-25.

[482] Jg. 2:1-3.

[483] Jg. 1:17.

[484] Casanowicz, 127.

[485] Burney, 39. Cf. Josh. 23:13.

[486] Block, *NAC*, 116.

Because the narrator makes the Canaanite influence so pervasive, he gives a clue to this through satire with Adoni-bezek. As earlier stated, the name itself is suspect as a possible scribal alteration. But, if taken as it is, there are two distinct possibilities operating in the story. The first is the proposal of Soggin based on the Aramaic cognate of the word Bezek meaning "pebble." If this is so, then in a land cluttered with rocks, this "Lord-Pebble" is a nickname of derision.[487] But, sticking with the Hebrew, if the word includes a prefixed preposition the substantive *(zēq)* "chain" presents a double *entendre*: "'my lord *with* a chain,' that is the one who bound the seventy kings, or 'my lord *in* a chain,' the one bound in chains by Judah."[488]

The use of repetition seals the fate of Israel and points toward Bochim. The narrator with sevenfold precision uses the phrase "did not drive out [of power]."[489] The totality of this phrase and its usage is a profound indictment. Moreover, for the reader it could be a litany of lament invoking sympathy.[490]

INTERPRETATION. The story begins with Israel needing to go to war with the Canaanites and receiving *carte blanche* divine approval for their efforts. Yet, there is only limited success in the conquest and toward the end of the story the Israelites because of failure to evict the Canaanites are depicted by the narrator as having an "increasing degree of coresidence with [the] banned foreigners."[491] The divine point of view must conclude the prologue, although it does not stop the deterioration of Israel caused by the Canaanite influence. The rhetorical question asked by the divine messenger "What is this you have done?" is left unanswered. The reader is left to wonder if Israel knows what they have done, despite their tears. But even more disconcerting for the reader is the ambiguity surrounding the weeping. Hamlin suggests they could be weeping because of frustration for what they had lost, anxiety over impending trouble, and in repentant appeal for divine grace.[492] However, the narrator does not choose to give us a view of Israel's inner motivation.

The three interior dramatized vignettes are potentially controlling factors for the remainder of the text. Adoni-bezek is much more than the last remaining desacralized

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[487] Soggin, Judges, 15

[488] ‏חֲ זֵק‎. *BDB*, 278; and Hamlin, 26.

[489] Jg. 1:27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 33.

[490] Hamlin, 43.

[491] O'Connell, 68.

[492] Hamlin, 56.

Canaanite priest-king. Though maimed, he was allowed to live until his natural death and no doubt exercise some degree of influence from Jerusalem. The traitor from Luz likewise was free to relocate and reestablish his Canaanite (*albeit* Hittite) enclave. Yet, for the ideal reader, the Canaanization of Bethel is bothersome. The city that was set apart because of the divine significance between *Elohim* and Jacob had become in Joshua's era a city-state opposed to Israel.[493] Even though Joshua destroyed the king of Bethel, now Hittites had established their realm in a holy site.[494] So from king to commoner, as well as resistive Canaanite communities that exert their influence, the reader is perplexed if the once holy will be immortalized as profane. But whereas the Othniel-Achsah vignette is portrayed positively when viewed in its surroundings, the narrator prepares us for harmonious relations to disintegrate (though not with this couple) and the blessings on the land to be raped, pillaged, and stolen.

The narrator uses the first prologue historically and didactically to show that partial obedience to YHWH's commands are equivalent to disobedience.

PROLOGUE B

As with the initial prologue, the question of points of demarcation emerges. Rather than follow the standard chapter division, the second prologue will begin with the historical rejoinder to Joshua and conclude with the introduction of the list of test nations.[495]

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. Unlike the first prologue with vignettes of dramatized narrative, the second prologue is completely narrated and contains a single but albeit important discourse.

ABSTRACT. The narrator shows a historical contrast between the generation of Joshua and the generation that followed "who did not know YHWH, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel."[496]

ORIENTATION. Geography is not nearly as compelling in this prologue as is the temporal organization between the two generations of Israelites. The first episode surrounds the final years of Joshua's life, a remembrance of Joshua 23-24, the notation of tribal inheritance. Then there is a record of Joshua's death and burial in Timnath-Heres

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[493] Gen. 28:11-19; and 35:6-15.

[494] Josh. 12:16.

[495] Prologue-B is from Jg. 2:6 – 3:6.

[496] Jg. 2:10.

and the death of his generation. The setting for the second scene remains the same only that the characters are part of a new generation.

COMPLICATING ACTION. The first episode is a straightforward concise narration about the Joshua generation who had possessed the land of their inheritance and served YHWH. This stands in juxtaposition to their descendants. This sedentary and peaceful existence is complicated by the death of Joshua, although not immediately. The narrator is establishing a precedent in the narrative that change will occur in the people after the death of its leader. But to the credit of his generation, their theological convictions are able to guide them throughout their lives. However, as a transition to the second episode several decades later the new generation neither knew YHWH or His works. This becomes the narrator's introduction to the antithetical character of Israel living out of covenant with YHWH that demands a divine response. A cyclical pattern emerges summarizing apostasy, oppression, repentance, deliverance, and peace. Nonetheless, the death of the delivering judge serves as a complication for Israel because the cycle would begin again. The episode concludes with Israel unable to possess their inheritance because YHWH has allowed Canaanite nations to remain.

EVALUATION. The narrator uses embedded evaluation for both episodes. The fact that the people returned home to their inheritance and possessed the land once Joshua had dismissed them is a positive assessment of that generation. For in the earlier prologue, the command was to possess the land. Because the Joshua generation had served YHWH all the days of Joshua and of the elders their passing from the scene and reality is communicated through the idiom "were gathered to their fathers." But as the post-Joshua generation is introduced, they are contrasted as doing evil in the sight of YHWH, serving the *Baals*, and forsaking YHWH, who is named as the God of their fathers who brought about their deliverance. The wickedness of this generation (of which future generations are implied) is witnessed in their repeated idolatry. YHWH in burning anger toward Israel delivers a lengthy judgment to them in the form of a test.

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. Essentially there is no resolution to the cycle initiated. Apostasy moves the general plot toward a time of oppression. This is followed by a repentant plea for help, at which time a judge is raised up for deliverance purposes. All is well until the judge dies and the cycle repeats itself. However, the result of this cycle is that YHWH would in His judgment test Israel through the oppressive nations He left in Canaan. The narrator prepares the reader for illustrations of future cycles but at the same

time for Israel to learn war and whether they would obey the Yahwistic commandments as the Joshua generation did.

CODA. The closing sentence of the second prologue mirrors the situation in chapter one with the sons of Israel living among the Canaanites (and five other nations) and advancing their enculturation one step further by intermarrying and serving their gods.[497]

PLOT. There are no real distinctive kernels in this story. Two different eras of generations are contrasted in the same setting based on their theological integrity and their relationship with the Canaanites.

ORDER, DURATION, AND FREQUENCY. As a distinct narrative, story time is observed in the second prologue. Yet, when connected with the first prologue, the narrator uses discourse time to portray the analeptic anachrony in order to contrast the Joshua generation, obviously dead at the story time of the post-Joshua generation. Narrative summary is used almost exclusively in the story except the scene where YHWH gives His discourse, and when the narrator pauses to comment on the inexperienced sons of Israel regarding warfare. Although the story begins with the narrator using singular narration, he briefly changes to iterative narration to draw emphasis on the cyclical pattern of judgment that will pervade the ensuing stories.

CAUSATION. The contrasting of the two generations shows there is a contingent linkage. However, the causal relationship is not bound up in the life of the leader whether it is Joshua or a judge. The narrator includes the allusion to land conquest in the first episode with the Joshua generation; however, this is not addressed in the second episode, because the narrator has returned to story time that continues after Bochim. The narrator does not tell when or how Israel began to serve the *Baals* or the affect that the Canaanites had on them to allure them into idolatry. This is all implied as a part of the Bochim judgment. Whether it was the idolatry or the forsaking of YHWH, or the combination thereof, the narrator is silent as to the divine motive. Yet, these external factors are causative to move the plot forward with the cyclical action-reaction motif. The prologue could end earlier than it does, if it were not for this cycle once instituted causing itself to be amplified by the divine test.

CONFLICT. The only element of conflict that might be found in the first episode is the death of Joshua and the elders. But this does not introduce conflict for that generation; it is only a temporal marker that contrasts the post-Joshua generation. The

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[497] Jg. 3:5-6.

conflict emerges between YHWH and Israel because the new generation did not know YHWH or His works. The idolatry and apostasy are only manifestations of their lack of knowledge.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. The narrator mentions one individual by patronym, eighteen collective characters, and three divine characters.[498] Although Joshua is mentioned four times, he and nearly every other character function as agents of the narrative. Only three characters are described in any depth.

JOSHUA GENERATION. The narrator tells about this type character of the early Israel using the evaluative point of view. The reader experiences idealistic empathy with the character because it is marked by covenantal obedience, Yahwistic worship, and has taken possession of its land inheritance. The purpose of this character is to provide a plumb-line to contrast the succeeding generation.

POST-JOSHUA GENERATION. Likewise, the narrative tells about this full-fledged micro-character (that is imbued in the larger Israel macro-character), rather than showing it. Descriptive terms such as "did evil," "served the *Baals*," "forsook YHWH," "bowed themselves down" to idols, and "provoked YHWH to anger" characterized the propensity toward sin. They were "distressed" by their enemies; but that did not stop them from "playing the harlot" or disobeying the commandments. The succeeding generations would even "act more corruptly than their fathers." This stubborn generation transgressed the covenant and "did not listen to the judges" or "listen to YHWH." Their lives were Canaanized and this is summed up in the intermarriage with the inhabitants of the land. They were not without feeling; however the groaning was short lived in order to return to an apostate lifestyle. This character which is subsumed into the subsequent stories has been characterized to create antipathy because of its actions; yet, because of the inner working of the Holy Spirit, the author steps in and the reader regrettably acknowledges a degree of realistic empathy.

YHWH. The micro-character of YHWH is a full-fledged character. Primarily He is portrayed by the narrator as a character that others interact with or try to avoid. But this avoidance generates anger that is described idiomatically as burning against Israel. The

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[498] The singular character is Joshua son of Nun. The collective characters are: the people, known as the sons of Israel during Joshua's generation; elders, the fathers (those who had died); a new generation (also called the sons of Israel); judges; plunderers, and enemies (who could have been included in: Canaanites, Philistines, Sidonians, Hivites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, and Jebusites), as well as their daughters who became wives; and the sons (Israelites given for intermarriage). The divine characters are: YHWH, also called *Elohim*; *Baal*, and *Ashtaroth*. Jg. 2:6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23; 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

narrator does give us a view of the inner life by seeing that YHWH can be provoked to anger and conversely moved to pity by the groaning of Israel. The narrator tells about YHWH giving Israel into the hand of plunderers and selling them into the hand of their enemies. The only discourse in this story is attributed to YHWH when He expresses judgment and volition regarding the inhabitants of the land. The action of testing Israel by those He will judge and Israel will be judged by surprises the reader, but because the reasons for the test are given, the reader empathizes with the main protagonist.

TEST NATIONS. For the reader, the test nations can easily be lumped into a single category of Canaanites, although there were ethnic differences and manifestations that occur later in the narrative. But, for the narrator, the magnanimity of this agent character is portrayed in two different rosters of enemy nations.[499]

POINT OF VIEW. The second prologue is almost entirely presented from the reliable point of view of the narrator. Only to reinforce his story does he allow YHWH to break frame with His discourse. But already, the narrator has drawn the reader's attention by the ebb and flow of YHWH's emotions "to the depth of His personal attachment to Israel and to the reluctance with which He finally takes the decision" reported in the discourse.[500] Generally, the narrator does not intrude into the story. He does covertly comment on the post-Joshua generation by noting "they could not stand before their enemies," "that they were severely distressed" and "they did not do as [their fathers]."[501] Also, in regard to YHWH's test, the narrator is more overt in his comment by pausing the story in order to explain why Joshua was unable to dispossess all of the Canaanites.[502] Keeping the reader's attention, the narrator interjects extra information for the reader about the character needing to be taught war and then repeats the purpose of this war by restating what YHWH had said earlier.[503] Because this story is established on a contrastive principle between the two generations, it is important for the narrator to show YHWH as spanning the temporal frame of the generations. He does this by correlative appositive describing YHWH as the *Elohim* of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. This identification places Him in relationship with many different

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[499] Jg. 3:3, and 5. Of the four enemies in the first list and six enemies in the second list, only the Canaanites and the Hivites appear in both lists. O'Connell, 79.

[500] Webb, The Book of Judges, 121.

[501] Jg. 2:14, 15, and 17.

[502] Jg. 2:23.

[503] Jg. 3:1-2, and 4.

generations and for the ideal reader forces him to evaluate and contrast the post-Joshua generation with other generations as well.

LANGUAGE PLAY. The narrator employs a frequently used idiom from the Hebrew scriptures by using the metaphor "played the harlot" to accentuate the perversity and estrangement of the monogamous relationship YHWH demanded of Israel.[504] The portrayal is one of prostitution with the *Baals* rather than adultery.[505] And because of this action he uses the hendiadys "oppressed and afflicted them" metaphorically to imply the squeezing pressure that YHWH initiated through His oppressor. There is still a significant word play through metonymy when YHWH refers to Israel as *(haggôy)* "nation" with its negative implication associating it with the Canaanite nations rather than the more relational *(ha'am).*[506] This is especially poignant because the same word describes the Canaanite nations who will be used in the test against Israel.[507]

INTERPRETATION. For Block, the coda of the second prologue provides the theme of the book as the Canaanization of Israel.[508] That the Israelites were Canaanized is without question; however, this makes no mention of the contrastive beginning of where Israel had been with YHWH. And as such, this brings the focus to the macro-character of Israel, which is actually the antagonist of the book. Rather, the approach of Hamlin notes the theological nature of this passage is that despite the faithlessness of this or subsequent generations of Israel, YHWH's anger is constructive in dealing with sin and proffering grace through His agents of salvation.[509] Polzin offers a mediating position of the second expository bloc.

> The cyclical preview of the entire period of the judges found in 2:6 – 3:6 is not, therefore, a recurring pattern of disobedience/repentance, but rather one of punishment/mercy. What is emphasized throughout the book is an unrelieved picture of Israel's continual disobedience to the way of the LORD.[510]

For the author, the second prologue operates in tandem with the first prologue by providing a historiosophic oration that functions historically, theologically, and

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[504] Jg. 2:17. Cf. Burney, 60.

[505] P. Bird, "'To Play the Harlot': An Inquiry into and Old Testament Metaphor," *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel,* (Ed.) P.L. Day (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989), 75-94.

[506] הַגּוֹי, and הָעָם. *BDB,* 156, 766; and Block, *NAC,* 133.

[507] Jg. 2:21, and 23.

[508] Block, *NAC,* 140-141.

[509] Hamlin, 58-63.

[510] Polzin, 155.

didactically for the reader.[511] The two prologues are distinct temporally and in the mode of narration with the narrator revealing his perspective after the onset of the apostasy. Yet, the second prologue functions as an abstract for the entire plot and theme of Judges while it succinctly elucidates the position of YHWH as the chief protagonist.

OTHNIEL STORY

Although modern translations do not begin a new paragraph to introduce this story, the formulaic statement "and the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of YHWH" establishes a new beginning rather than connecting this event with the test nations at the beginning of the chapter.[512] The death of the hero is the understandable end of the story and the discourse.[513]

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. The story is simplistic and presented in a banal form that constitutes a series of formulaic statements that further defines the framework of the cyclical pattern established in the prologue.

ABSTRACT. The story itself is an abstract of the Judges text and as such the narration moves so quickly that nothing is dramatized in five verses that spans 48 years that describes apostasy, oppression, repentance, deliverance, and peace.

ORIENTATION. The geographical setting may only be implied from the earlier pericope of Othniel, such that the oppression may have been in the tribal area of Judah and an area in the Negev and potentially also around Kiriath-sepher, providing that Othniel was not nomadic.[514] The only external spatial clue is to Mesopotamia; but, that is a geopolitical area northeast of Canaan and the area from which the antagonist hails rather than the setting of the story. Temporally, the story is divided into two time periods: an eight year oppression and a forty year peace.[515] However, despite not being overtly identified by the narrator there would have been a period of apostasy prior to the oppression and at least a brief period of deliverance that transitioned from the oppression to the time of peace.

COMPLICATING ACTION. For the reader, this is the first cycle in the Judges narrative. The main antagonist Israel is immediately characterized as guilty of three sins:

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[511] Amit, The Book of Judges, 153.

[512] Jg. 3:7.

[513] Jg. 3:11.

[514] Jg. 1:15.

[515] Jg. 3:8, and 11.

doing evil in the sight of YHWH, forgetting YHWH their *Elohim*, and serving the *Baals* and *Asheroth*. YHWH responds with kindled anger by introducing Cushan-Rishathaim, a Mesopotamian king, who as a micro-antagonist is the agent for the protagonist, and thus the oppressor of the macro-antagonist Israel.

EVALUATION. The only type of evaluation that may be discerned is the renewed description of the anger of YHWH being kindled against Israel.

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. Whether the anger of YHWH continued for eight years is unknown, but the narrator states that Israel lived under this oppression for eight years and intimates that only then did Israel cry out to YHWH. The divine response is immediate by raising up Othniel and having the Spirit of YHWH come upon him. Again, no time frame is given between the call of Othniel and his deployment in war that involved divine participation to defeat Cushan-Rishathaim. The result is a forty year period of peace in which Othniel judged.

CODA. The coda is marked by a death announcement of Othniel.

PLOT. The simplicity of the events described is part of the narrative structure. The details are of limited importance when compared to the succinct realization that the macro-protagonist will prevail with or without the assistance of the micro-antagonist. The narrator has chosen to leave out much information about this event that is related in summary story time. What is more important is not the micro-antagonist and micro-protagonist, although they both fulfill divine character roles; but, the macro-characters of which a brief glimpse is given. Thus, how Othniel succeeded to defeat his opponent, apart from the brief note about the Spirit of YHWH, whether any tribes were mustered for the war, how, who, and where he judged, as well as the extent of the first oppression are all subverted unimportant elements that would tend to draw away attention from the narrator orchestrating everything through YHWH. Each summary event is intrinsically linked to its antecedent and this is reinforced by repetitive narration (not in the story) but from the prologue concretizing the paradigm for the future stories.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. As with the limited amount of story, the characters are limited. Of the individual, collective, and divine characters mentioned, the only new one to the text is Cushan-Rishathaim, who disappears from the text as quickly as he appears. The sons of Israel, true to form, continue in their predetermined character role. The character of YHWH is slightly expanded so that for the implied reader, He is seen working through His agents an imperial oppressor and an Israelite judge. Even the

judgment given is appropriately just because "those who choose to serve foreign gods are made to serve a foreign tyrant – the punishment fits the crime."[516]

CUSHAN-RISHATHAIM. This agent is only ascribed two verses within which his name is mentioned four times. Little is known about him other than he is the king of Mesopotamia and that in some divine transaction he received the title deed to Israel when the people were sold to him by YHWH. Any personal designs this foreign potentate had on the people or the land is irrelevant because he has been given divine and legitimate sanction. The details of this contractual agreement are not included so whether Cushan-Rishathaim perceived this as a temporary or a permanent situation is not known. No doubt for the characters, this oppression was real as they experienced it for eight years of story time. However, only in his name, as is discussed later does the nature of that oppression become apparent to the reader.

OTHNIEL. The hero for the characters in the story is Othniel. Yet for the reader he is a flat character. Most of the description about Othniel is repeated from the earlier pericope. But, what is new is that he is the answer YHWH chose to provide for the cry of the sons of Israel. He is a divinely sanctioned agent of YHWH, with further evidence of that sanction being the presence of the Spirit of YHWH. This divine participation effects a removal of the Mesopotamian oppression. His character is best identified by the verbs "deliver" and "judge" that describe his saving actions.[517]

CHARACTERIZATION. The manner in which the characters are described by the narrator does not engender empathy, sympathy, or antipathy. Rather the reader is aloof to the story although mental assent is given that YHWH's scheme of justice as portrayed in the story is just.

POINT OF VIEW. The narrator maintains an omniscient point of view in the story; however, he holds back his knowledge of the details of the event from the reader. Everything given is limited with "no dialogue, no reported speech of any king, no dramatization of events, [and] no scenic presentation."[518] What is important for the narrator is that his point of view is conveyed to the reader by means of his lack of negative characterization of the judge in order to idealize the institution of the savior-deliver-judge. Othniel embodies this concept.

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[516] Webb, The Book of Judges, 128.

[517] Hamlin, 69. Cf. Jg. 3:9, 10.

[518] Webb, The Book of Judges, 127.

LANGUAGE PLAY. The brevity of the account does not deny the story plays on language. The most prominent are the names given to the micro-antagonist and micro-protagonist. If one only accepts the adjectival use then the oppressor is "Cushan of Double-Wickedness."[519] Certainly an epithet to indicate the kind of oppression that Israel was forced to endure. But, if fully translated he becomes "Doubly Wicked Darkness." O'Connell sees this as the "characteristic satirization of foreign kings in Judges."[520] This furthers the biblical binary motif of light and darkness and casts Israel and its sin in that shadow. Because the name "does not fit the patterns of Semitic name-giving, which typically exalt some aspect of a deity...any Israelite reader was likely to pick up on the strangeness of the name" and know how to read the story.[521] Thus, for the ideal reader, "the name encapsulates a certain perception of the tyrant; in it we see him through the eyes of his victims."[522] The narrator makes this pseudonym a mocking parody of both the foreign king and of the situation Israel must endure. On the other hand, an onomastic examination of Othniel reveals a meaning of "the force of *Elohim*" in which YHWH may be seen as acting through.

The narrator indicts Israel by commenting that it "served" the Canaanite gods. Then ironically, the volitional service toward that which was nothing was replaced by a manifested reality when they "served" Cushan-Rishathaim. The narrator uses an economy of word but by saying that YHWH sold Israel into "the hands" of Cushan-Rishathaim he could later use the same phrase for YHWH to give Cushan-Rishathaim into "the hand" of Othniel. This is reinforced by the idiom that described of Othniel "his hand was strong" over Cushan-Rishathaim.

INTERPRETATION. The narrative pattern of the Othniel story serves several functions. At one level, it provides the formulaic framework that consistently works through the text. However, at another level the near verbatim repetition of the second prologue with the insertion of characters serves to move from generalization to particularization through a specific historicized fictional incident.[523]

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[519] Block, *NAC*, 153.

[520] O'Connell, 83-84.

[521] Brettler, The Book of Judges, 27.

[522] Webb, The Book of Judges, 128.

[523] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 160-162.

Brettler sees the story function allegorically "for the ability of a good, righteous Judean judge to defeat the wicked enemy 'from the North.'"[524] This Judean tendency is not in the story, even though the allegorical approach might suggest that Othniel fought this war outside the boundaries of Israel because no Israelite geography is used. This of course is speculation. However, this does fulfill the *Torah* and the promised curse of a foreign nation being brought against Israel.[525] Instead, the satirical approach against foreign kings may be to serve a didactic function regarding monarchy as opposed to theocracy.

But what should be seen is the theme of YHWH's glorification.[526] *Contra* Klein, YHWH is the protagonist and Israel is the antagonist. From this point forward this is seen in the narrative, just as the glorification of YHWH is initialized in the Othniel story and continues in the text.[527] A strict literary designation should not subvert theology even when divine acts appear antagonistic as this is causally related to the sinful antagonism of Israel that is perpetuated in the narrative toward YHWH.

EHUD STORY

Unlike the Othniel story, the second hero story has a defined beginning; however, its ending may be placed at three different verses, contingent upon how one treats the Shamgar story. Since Shamgar is a complete unit, it will be treated as such, and the death notice of Ehud is a temporal marker for the fourth hero story, the Ehud story may appropriately end with the rest formula.[528]

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. Of the stories with a narrative structure, this story is the simplest of those found in the book of Judges.[529]

ABSTRACT. Also like the Othniel story, there is no defined abstract that embodies the entire plot; however, this is not bothersome to the reader because the second prologue has provided that abstract for this and other stories.

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[524] Brettler, The Book of Judges, 27.

[525] Dt. 28:49-50.

[526] O'Connell, 83.

[527] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 35.

[528] The story is from Jg. 3:12-30. The other two alternatives not chosen include: Jg. 3:12-31 and 3:12 – 4:1.

[529] The accounts of Shamgar and the minor judges are excluded as there is no formative plot. The only possible exception would be the Othniel story where the plot structure is tentative at best. O'Connell, 84.

ORIENTATION. The narrator has used all three types of settings to orient the story. Spatially, the geopolitical setting is established with a trilateral axis of Moab, Ammon, and Amalek, which are geographically in the Transjordan. Yet, the action does not take place there, but rather in Israel proper with an occupied possession of the city of the palm trees. Whether this was Jericho, or another representation for the identified Gilgal is immaterial for the story. The other important geopolitical location is *(haśŚ°'îrātāh)* Seirah which was in the topographical setting of the hill country of Ephraim.[530] The final action takes place at the fords of the Jordan River. But there was yet one another spatial setting, which though enigmatic is part of the crux of the story. This is the cool roof chamber of Eglon and its outer vestibule.

Temporally, the narrator implies that these events occurred after the death of Othniel; yet within the framework of the story only two time periods are identified: the eighteen year oppression under Eglon and the eighty year rest that followed. The time for the actual deliverance event is not indicated but leads the reader to believe that it occurred on one day.[531] The narrator also employed a social orientation which is exhibited in the paying of tribute to Eglon and in the actions of Eglon's servants.

COMPLICATING ACTION. The forty years of rest secured for Israel by Othniel is disturbed by the formulaic repetition of Israel doing evil again in the sight of YHWH. This setting of peace is altered by a divine strengthening of Eglon. However, whereas the normal formula involves the selling or giving into the hand of the enemy the narrator chose to concentrate on the word strengthen.[532] Whereas the irony of double wickedness was present in the Othniel story, the new agent of oppression is joined by two other nations and the intensity of the judgment is magnified by a threefold participation that lasts for eighteen years, a full decade longer than the first oppression.

EVALUATION. Not only has the narrator established the setting but has carefully expressed his *raison d'être* by twice repeating the phrase "Israel did evil in the sight of YHWH" in the same verse. Whereas the first usage is temporal and expresses causative repetition through the *Hiphil* verbal form *(wayyōsipû)* "added again" focusing on the

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[530] **H** הַשְּׂעִירָתָה.

[531] Jg. 3:30.

[532] Amit, "The Story of Ehud," 104.

Othniel story, it is in his second usage that the principle of causation is attributed to the divine action.[533]

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. Once again, consistent with the pattern established, the narrator does not allow for the conflict to be resolved until the sons of Israel cried out to YHWH. This initiated the dramatic deliverance through Ehud conveyed through enigmatic and ambiguous speech. But before this event is resolved through the death of Eglon and later his countrymen, the narrator introduces Ehud's anatomical disposition and his sword making which alerts the reader that this information is not extraneous but connected to the climax of the plot.

CODA. The common formula is used expressing that the land had rest for eighty years.[534] Although the discourse ends here, technically the story does not end until the death of Ehud that corresponds with the beginning of the third cycle.[535]

PLOT. At long last, after reading through a double prologue introduction and a summarized story, the narrator provides a micro-plot complete with a detailed setting (as earlier discussed) and a series of events.

KERNELS AND SATELLITES. The story begins with the kernel event of Eglon's oppression of Israel. It then transitions to the next episode of Ehud delivering Israel from Eglon. This is presented through five fast moving scenes each of which are kernels. Israel cried to YHWH, who raised up Ehud as a deliverer. Ehud makes a sword. Ehud presents the tribute to Eglon along with their retinues. Ehud returns to Eglon for a private audience at which time the king is murdered. Ehud escapes the scene of the crime. At this point, the narrator as a means of stretching the story and the story time provides a satellite event focusing on the Moabite servants. The third episode is the kernel of Ehud delivering Israel from the Moabites. As a postscript, the narrator pauses to describe an eighty year period of rest and thus prepare the reader for another cycle.

ORDER, DURATION, AND FREQUENCY. The only time that story time and discourse time differs is the synchronism of Ehud's escape from Eglon's chamber while the Moabite courtiers were waiting outside that same chamber. The initial episode is reported as a summary event. The second episode is both summary and scenic as the reported

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[533] ‭הַ וַיֹּסִפוּ‬. The rhetorical effect is not only accentuated by the *Waw* consecutive, but by the verb initiating the sentence. It is parsed as *Hiphil* Imperfect 3MP. Whereas the first clause is governed by this verb meaning "to add" or "to do again" it is the second clause that seals the indictment by using the verb meaning "to do" or "to make" giving an almost creative element to Israel's making of evil. Jg. 3:12.

[534] Jg. 3:30.

[535] Jg. 4:1.

discourse also includes dialogue. The third dramatized episode is both summary and scene. Apart from the previous mentioned repetition in the initial verse, the only other time the narrator in the micro-story departs from singular narration is when Ehud addresses the king in the presence of his courtiers and then repeats a near verbatim message to the king in their private meeting. The significance of this repetition is addressed later.

CAUSATION. The cyclical elements are all present in this story. Although the cause and effect relationship is not specified between the death of Othniel and the apostasy of the sons of Israel, the reader recalls the second prologue and makes that connection. The link between the apostasy and the oppression is explicitly narrated. The same is true for the repentance and deliverance motifs. Even the satellite event of the waiting courtiers is contingent on Ehud's locking of the royal door.

CONFLICT. Conflict is implied throughout the story by nature of YHWH strengthening Eglon against Israel. Though micro-antagonists, the conflict is not really between the Moabite confederacy and Israel as it is about the continuing conflict began in the prologue between YHWH and His people. However, on the micro-level Israel experiences conflict through the Moabite agency which is demonstrated in their crying to YHWH and their paying tribute to Eglon. The main conflict is between Ehud and Eglon, of which the latter is too obtuse to even recognize the pointed fatality until it was too late. While fulfilling one ruse against the leader of the Moabites, the Benjaminite hero is simultaneously fulfilling a ruse against the courtiers. Naturally, the battle that ensued was the final conflict, albeit anticlimactic. The only brief concern for the reader is whether Ehud would safely escape and whether the sons of Israel, presumably Ephraimites would follow him into battle against Moab.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. The narrator introduces a few new characters, although they are restricted to this story. There are only two individual characters, six composite characters, and YHWH.[536] The majority of the characters function as agents of the plot, including the two main macro-characters in their micro-roles.

EGLON. The Moabite king is a flat character despite his obesity. The narrator tells that he was divinely strengthened for this task which would be his undoing. We also know that he was able to create a geopolitical alliance with the Ammonites (an ethnic

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[536] The individual characters are: Eglon and Ehud. The composite characters are: the sons of Israel, sons of Ammon, Amalek, the Moabites, the Israelites carrying the tribute, and the Moabite royal courtiers.

people to the north) and the Amalekites (an ethnic people to the south) in order to oppress Israel for a period of eighteen years. Further, that power was enough to possess the city of palm trees and to exact tribute from Israel. Then, as had been done with Ehud, anatomical description is given with superlative accentuating that he was very fat. He is characterized by the narrator as a buffoon, who does not recognize what the ideal reader would in the paronomasia surrounding his name.[537] This prophetic obtuseness is part of the irony of the situation. Even more telling is how this strengthened larger than life king who is only named once after the deliverance episode has started is now reduced to a title in subsequent references. And then in the private audience he is no longer given a title only pronominal reference which Block concludes "the man who was 'somebody' for eighteen years is reduced to a nameless 'nobody'!"[538]

ROYAL COURTIERS. The men who attended Eglon are anonymous. They were in the presence of Eglon at the time that Ehud brought him tribute. Likewise, they were outside the chamber during the assassination. They were observant about the locked door and presumed that the king was performing scatological function. However, we are unaware whether they were aware of Ehud's presence. The traits ascribed to them are patience and anxiety. However, no emotion is given to them regarding their observance of the king's death. Neither is there any enlightenment on whether they were perceptive enough to know the reason of the king's demise. But, through irony we see that in the dialogue assigned to them, the narrator has contrasted their certainty of the situation regarding Eglon relieving himself "and the obvious error of their judgment [which] is underlined and symbolized in the story by the image of the locked doors."[539]

EHUD. The micro-protagonist is introduced by patronym and implied Benjaminite tribal affiliation. However, in the naming, the narrator comments on his left-handedness. This is obscured in the translation, whereas the phrase is actually *('îš 'iṭṭēr yad-yᵉmînô)* "man bound in his right hand."[540] His entrance onto the scene is the result of YHWH raising him up because of the cries of Israel. He had the wherewithal to make a two-edged sword and by implication an assassination plot. Although the narrator does not overtly comment on the character's motivation or other traits, he shows premeditation and

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[537] Block, *NAC*, 158. The play on his name is discussed later.

[538] Ibid.

[539] Polzin, 157.

[540] אִישׁ אִטֵּר יַד־יְמִינוֹ. Jg. 3:15.

cleverness in the execution of his action and escape. He allows his character to ascribe the ensuing battle victory to YHWH although no divine discourse has been noted. The narrator characterizes Ehud as a valiant warrior, although guerilla warfare might be more appropriate because of the deceitfulness and cruelty in which he operated.[541]

YHWH. A problem for the story is the absence of YHWH and the reticence that exists. While it is true that the evil done by Israel was acknowledged by YHWH and that He strengthened Eglon against them, He disappears from the story after the first verse. Only in the rally cry of Ehud to the sons of Israel after the regicide does YHWH's name appear again. But as will be addressed later, is YHWH really acting through Ehud with his characteristic deception and warfare?

POINT OF VIEW. As the reticence regarding YHWH illustrates, the narrator has more knowledge about this event than he desires to bestow on the reader. Even so, his narration is reliable and external to the story. He allows the characters to tell the story only briefly to show Ehud manipulating the scene to gain access to Eglon in private. Although everyone left the private encounter, the narrator stayed as a fly on the wall overhearing and watching Ehud's interaction with the king. The narrator escaped along with Ehud from the defecatory odor and with purposeful ambiguity guarded Ehud's escape route from the courtiers and the reader. The narrator allows one eye to be focused minutely upon the courtiers' anxiety outside the locked chamber while his other eye stares into the distance toward the hill country of Ephraim watching Ehud arrive in safety. The narrator overhears Ehud's battle cry and watches the deployment of Israel to the fords of the Jordan River where the Moabites, for the first time described, as robust and valiant men are following the footsteps of their king.

LANGUAGE PLAY. In such a brief passage the narrator includes familiar motifs as well as numerous word plays and sound plays.

SYMBOLISM AND IRONY. The narrative beauty of this story is in the richness of its symbolism which has lost much of its impact through translation. The ideal reader steeped in the sacrificial system would immediately apply a sacerdotal function to the story. One who is to be honored must be brought tribute or a worthy offering. However, the tables turn in that the recipient of that offering will never partake of it and instead become the offering himself. There is oblique reference to the *Akeidah* in that the initial offering of Abraham was not what was given, but that YHWH provided the sacrifice at

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[541] Polzin, 160.

the site of the offering after Abraham had arrived. In a sense, YHWH had likewise strengthened Ehud for his task of sacrifice. This is further illustrated by the paronomasia of the king's name. With its diminutive ending the onomastic appellation is of a "bull" or "calf." The narrator uses metonymy to describe his fatness rather than belabor the pun of his fatness with the word *('āgôl)*.[542] The image of the fatted calf being prepared for slaughter is conveyed through Ehud's making of a double-edged sword. Block has noted the double *entendre* of the image being not only the obvious *(ḥeleḇ)* "fat" of the sacrifice offered up but that the term embodies "fatness/dullness" of the mind because of his stupidity of being alone and unable to defend himself.[543] No doubt this was a difficult task for Eglon because of his obesity hindering agile movement. Scatological humor is employed that implicates the courtiers in the satirization of the Moabite king, at his expense.

> An enemy's obtuseness is always an inviting target for satire in time of war, but here the exposure of Moabite stupidity has a double thematic function: to show the blundering helplessness of the pagan oppressor when faced with a liberator raised up by the all-knowing God of Israel, and to demonstrate how these gullible Moabites, deprived of a leader, are bound to be inept in the war that immediately ensues.[544]

As Amit has observed, Eglon had been invested with strength to accomplish the divine task. However, in his disregard for that strengthening or lack of trust in YHWH's empowerment, he relies on his northern and southern neighbors.[545] This supports the negative characterization of obtuseness that contributes to divine judgment of him by trusting in his own strength.

The narrator uses a pun to convey his secret message, which the reader knows is a double-edged sword. Literally, *(ḥereḇ wᵉlāh šᵉnê pēyôṭ)* "a sword with two mouths" is more than a sword with two edges.[546] It has the capacity of oral potency of speech as a metaphoric pun, while also allowing the sword to function as a weapon that smites and devours its enemy.[547] Greenstein illustratively makes this point saying "the dagger's 'mouths' surely have a 'word' to say to the king."[548]

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[542] **Ħ** עָגוֹל. The word used in the text is *(bārî')* בְּרִיא. Cf. Jg. 3:17.

[543] **Ħ** חֵלֶב. Cf. Block, *NAC*, 158-159.

[544] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 40.

[545] Amit, "The Story of Ehud," 104.

[546] **Ħ** חֶרֶב וְלָהּ שְׁנֵי פֵיוֹת. The phrase only appears six times in the bible: Jg. 3:16; Ps. 149:6; Prov. 5:4; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16; and 2:12.

[547] J. Berman, "The 'Sword of Mouths' (Jud. III 16; Ps. CXLIX 6; Prov. V 4): A Metaphor and its Ancient Near Eastern Context," *VT 52* (2002), 293, and 299.

[548] E.L. Greenstein, "Humor and Wit," *ABD 3*:331.

Just as has been demonstrated through the character Eglon, the narrator also uses irony through the character Ehud. This is augmented by the *leitwords* "hand" and "right."[549] This is important because rather than use the normative tribal distinction of Benjamin, the narrator refers to Ehud as *(ben hay'mînî)* "the son of the right," even though the reader knows that Ehud is bound in his right hand.[550] This sets up the irony of a left-handed man from a tribe that is never characterized as being right handed, but left-handed men who in the context of war are "fearless warriors from the tribe of Benjamin."[551] This is crucial for the plot because the right hand of a warrior arouses suspicion, whereas the left hand that normally fulfills a defensive position with a shield transgresses expected practice allowing an additional element of surprise for Ehud to grab his concealed sword and strike the king. Another irony is connected with the paronomasia of his name. It should not surprise us that the name is a derivative of the number one, and it is with one hand, not the withered right hand, but the secret left hand that the dastardly deed is done in this plot. But the symbolism is two fold because whereas the left hand will triumph, it is the current withered state of the right hand that represents a conquered people.[552] This also serves an ironic purpose that might be missed by Western readers. Once the sword was thrust into Eglon, it was left there. Thus for a crime scene, there is forensic evidence that links the murder weapon to the perpetrator. This identifies for the Moabites that this was in fact a murder and would make Ehud the prime suspect because he was the last known person in Eglon's presence. This is not problematic, because the narrator wants both the characters and the reader to know that the fatal blow was inflicted by the Israelite. The murder weapon left behind serves this purpose. In Western society, the idea is that through stealth the criminal conceals his secret in order to avoid punishment. However, especially in Islamic practice rather than conceal the criminal activity, especially where murder occurs, the criminals claim responsibility overtly such as militant groups like *(Hamas)* Hamas, *(Fatah)* Fatah, *(Hezballah)* Hezballah, and *(al Gihad al-slamiya)* Islamic Jihad.[553]

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[549] The word "hand" is used in Jg. 3:15, 16, 21, 28, and 30. The word "right" is used in Jg. 3:15, 16, and 21. Although when the word "Benjamin" is used its presence is noted covertly. Cf. G.S. Ogden, "The Special Features of a Story: A Study of Judges 3.12-30," *BibTran 42* (1991), 410.

[550] בֶּן הַיְמִינִי H. Jg. 3:15.

[551] Amit, "The Story of Ehud," 106.

[552] Wilcock, 42.

[553] A حماس, فتح, حزب‌الله, and الجهادالاسلمي.

RHETORICAL DEVICES. One of the choices the narrator makes is the use of the simple verb *('āśah)* meaning "make."[554] He uses this verb to describe Israel had *made* evil in the sight of YHWH.[555] This action causes a chain of events. However, the narrator uses the same verb to show that Ehud had *made* a sword, thus connecting the apostasy and the deliverance.[556] The verb *(nākah)* "strike" is used as an *inclusio* for the story.[557]

In the scene of Ehud meeting Eglon, it begins with euphemism. The tribute, a word that is used in the sacrificial system implies that Eglon presumed that he was receiving worship from Ehud. This is further asserted because of the presence of idols there at Gilgal. However, in the ambiguity of Ehud's secret message, it has euphemistic overtones that are ironic for the reader. Ehud metonymically used *Elohim* as a substitute for the secret, which could for Eglon mean "the gods" and for the reader mean the Israelite deity.[558] Being lured into Ehud's scheme, Eglon responds with his onomatopoetic utterance quieting Ehud until the courtiers have been dismissed so the secret can be delivered.[559] The irony is that Eglon's own action "unknowingly characterizes this secret word as one which will not be heard, but somehow felt."[560] The passage also includes three different *hapax legomena* which each contribute their own value in different levels of ambiguity, especially regarding the execution and the escape. However, the ambiguity of these words and the interior floor plan of this chamber would have been recognized by the narratee although lost to the modern reader.[561]

The cleverness of Ehud's escape shows a fastidious premeditated plan. It is presumed that during the secret meeting, the door to the chamber would have been closed and unlocked, although the latter is unknown. Further it is presumed that the key was in the lock so that Ehud could lock the door and that the only time that the door would need to be locked, from the courtiers' viewpoint is when the king needed privacy to defecate or urinate. We do not know if the courtiers heard the sound of the door locking. But upon knowing that the door was locked it would be anticipated, that is if they were standing

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[554] 𝔐 עָשָׂה.

[555] 𝔐 *('āśû)* עָשׂוּ. This is parsed as *Qal* Perfect 3CP. Jg. 3:12.

[556] 𝔐 *(wayya'aś)* וַיַּעַשׂ. This is parsed as *Qal* Imperfect 3CP with a *Waw* consecutive. Jg. 3:16.

[557] 𝔐 נָכָה. Ogden, 409. Cf. Jg. 3:13, and 29.

[558] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 38.

[559] 𝔐 *(hās)* הָס. Jg. 3:19. Burney, 71.

[560] Polzin, 157.

[561] Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, 38.

near the door waiting to be summoned, that Ehud must have used a rear exit and conceivably locked that door also.[562] But the cleverness is the illusion created. The upper room which also was used for excretory function would no doubt waft a pungent aroma after its usage. Thus, when Eglon was stabbed and his anal sphincter released itself the outflow of feces would give an immediate clue to the royal attendants that the secret meeting had been concluded and the king was sitting on a different throne.[563] The opening of the door and closing them would have left the overpowering clue that elicited the euphemistic response Ehud desired from the courtiers while he escaped. Would there have been any sound from the king overheard by his servants, it could equally be reasoned away by the groans of a constipated man in a state of tenesmus.

INTERPRETATION. The story is not without its problems. The aside made by the narrator regarding the idols at Gilgal does not bode well for Israel. Its unexplained presence is not simply a geographical feature, but an acknowledgement that the Canaanization of the land had been defiled with foreign idols. Whether they were placed there by Israel or by Moab is unknown. But their very presence is a sign of foreign domination and a reminder "this was *Chemosh*'s land rather than Yahweh's land."[564] This displacement of deity in the narrative moves us to the next problem.

The relationship of YHWH to this story is problematic and is characterized by His seeming noninvolvement. This is not a problem for Amit, who suggests,

> [T]he narrator emphasizes God's salvation by constructing a detailed plot that describes the succession of tactics Ehud used, while avoiding information about the actual difficulties he might have had in carrying out his plan. This systematic refusal to describe even expected difficulties makes Ehud's tactics appear as a series of successful coincidences, and causes the reader to doubt that human planning alone could be responsible for it. Thus the narrator proves to the reader that the success of any human plan must be connected with and guided by divine intention.[565]

Nonetheless, YHWH is conspicuously absent. This may be observed by the fact that Ehud was not empowered by the Spirit of YHWH as was his predecessor. Further, there is the tinge of blasphemy in his use of the word *Elohim* before Eglon. Although ultimately a divine agent, there is a disparity between him and YHWH.

> In his actions, Ehud has valued ends over means; implicitly, Yahweh is not in accord. Yahweh withdraws his help in conquering the Moabites, but Ehud is a good leader and manages on his own. However, the deeds of humankind and god are kept separate. Here

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[562] The narrative speaks of doors in the plural. Jg. 3:23.

[563] Ibid., 39.

[564] Hamlin, 71.

[565] Amit, "The Story of Ehud," 98.

as in the following narratives, Yahweh's spirit is never involved in duplicity, even to the advantage of Israel.[566]

Webb would disagree with this position, and equate the secretive and deceptive elements as an aspect of YHWH's activity.[567] O'Connell takes a similar approach by connecting Ehud's deceptiveness as a sign of divine sanction because of the successful resolution of the first killing that is restated through hyperbole that "in contrast to Ehud, whom God helped to escape, none of the Moabites escaped."[568]

One function of the story is aesthetic, not only because of the plot, but the word play and sound play the narrator uses. There is some debate as to whether this story functions as historicized fiction or fictionalized history. Rather than engage in that argument, the narrator has satirized a foreign monarch and from a distance glorified the divine king although the methods used by Ehud do not appear consistent with divine character. The reader is surprised that YHWH would even use the Moabites as an oppressive force against Israel, because of their kinship; but that works to the author's advantage that his reader must recognize his own oppression that prevents him from knowing the true character of YHWH. So at different levels, if viewed through a political framework, this satire addresses Israelite-Moabite relations.[569] Whereas if this is strictly theological, the sacrificial language the narrator uses works to deconstruct the priesthood because of the way that Eglon becomes a human sacrifice (not to *Chemosh*) but to YHWH, something that is *anathema* to the *Torah*. In this light, the effect of Canaanization is characterized. Nonetheless, YHWH is able to step into the story and exercise judgment on whomever with a sense of humor by exposing and removing even a king in the toilet, which is a contemptuous reference to idolatry.[570]

SHAMGAR STORY

The story itself is limited to one verse and a rejoinder to it in the Song of Deborah.[571] The narrative structure is limited to a temporal setting after Ehud that summarizes a single event in the life of Shamgar. From the other passage mentioning his

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[566] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 38.

[567] Webb, The Book of Judges, 132.

[568] O'Connell, 91-92, and 98.

[569] Brettler, The Book of Judges, 32.

[570] Ogden, "Special Features of a Story," 413. This corresponds with the mocking of *Baal* by Elijah in 1 Kg. 18:27.

[571] Jg. 3:31; and 5:6.

name, it may be assumed that this event occurred prior to the Canaanite oppression of Jabin. As such there is no reason given for the action of killing six hundred Philistines.

There are only two characters in this story. Shamgar and the Philistines he killed. The latter is an agent of the summary action. Shamgar is introduced by patronym and is attributed to saving Israel. What little information we have is told by the narrator who highlights the event by contrasting Shamgar as an individual that struck down a large number of Philistines. But, for the narrator, it was important to describe the murder weapon which ironically is a peaceful agricultural tool.

Although a distinct story in its own right, it loses its impact if isolated from the Ehud narrative. The narrator through contrast and comparison is able to satirize the Philistines in one brief moment. Whereas Ehud fashioned a specific weapon for slaughtering his "calf;" Shamgar used a makeshift tool meant for beasts-of-burden to slaughter his implied oppressors, thus characterizing him as a makeshift warrior. Webb notes that both Ehud and Shamgar were fitted for a singular role: tribute bearing and farming, respectively. But whereas the weapon and plan of Ehud were subtle, this is not so of Shamgar, who appears to be impulsive, acting on the spur of the moment using what was at hand to accomplish his task.[572]

There is controversy regarding Shamgar's name and whether he has a patronymic designation or a theophoric one. In either case, paronomasia may be applied with his name meaning "stranger there." This has a double meaning that Shamgar is the stranger there, asserting his non-Israelite status or that it may refer to the fact that his divine mission is to remove the Philistines, the stranger that is there in Israel. The narrator simply leaves out too many details surrounding this character in order to properly evaluate him. However, to defend the theophoric nature of his name and his other citizenship, YHWH is completely absent from the story. This may be attributed to Shamgar as it was to Ehud that although the actions were advantageous for Israel they were not ethically Yahwistic, such that "when Israel's actions are counter to Yahweh's will, Yahweh withdraws into silence."[573] The argument that Shamgar was not an Israelite is based on the theophoric argument and that his name is Hittite embodying a quadrilateral root. However, the most persuasive argument is one from silence. The narrator even with the minor judges gave their tribal designation, but that is not given for

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[572] Webb, The Book of Judges, 132.

[573] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 40.

Shamgar intimating that the reason is because he was not from an Israelite tribe. This argument is underscored by the fact he is named along with Jael, a non-Israelite.[574]

As a result, this seems problematic for the reader when the conclusion is given. The narrator uses *hapax locutio* in the book *(wayyōša' gam-hû' 'et-Yiśrā'ēl)* "and he also saved Israel."[575] The emphasis being placed on the particle in this manner is unparalleled. It stressed him and his action so that the word "is used only when there is an inclination to forget or to pass over in silence."[576] The narrator did not want Shamgar to be left out of his narrative and by implication did not want the reader to miss the fact that a non-Israelite was given a task of saving Israel. This works to foreshadow the incident with Jael, for which he is also coupled in the Song of Deborah. Once again, from a distance the narrator has used another micro-character to represent the macro-character YHWH. Although it is only implicit, the narrator tacitly proves it with the divine speech recalling His saving Israel from the Philistines.[577] Whether the story is an anachronism is not as important as it is to note the aesthetic and didactic functions that whether by many (as with Ehud and his army) or by one against the many, YHWH is glorified and judges the situation. But, before moving on to the next story, there is one ironic element that bears discussion. It is the *(b³malmad habāqār)* ox-goad.[578] The absolute form prefixed with a preposition carries the idea of training the animal in reference to a yoke. However, because the verbal form also means "teach," the word play suggests that Shamgar is teaching the Philistines a lesson.[579] For the reader, the narrator is teaching about YHWH's deliverance and judgment.

DEBORAH/BARAK/JAEL STORY

The next story, the third cycle of deliverance, is unique in the fact that there are three heroes in the story and that it is told by narrator twice: in prose and poetry. Each of the two accounts follows the standard chapter divisions. Although the accounts are distinct literary genres, the traditional linear analysis is abandoned in order to synthesize

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[574] Fensham, 197-198.

[575] וַיֹּשַׁע גַּם־הוּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל H.

[576] van Selms, 296.

[577] Jg. 10:11.

[578] בְּמַלְמַד הַבָּקָר H. Literally, "on the ox goad."

[579] Burney, 77.

the story, which is the reader's response to use the Song of Deborah to fill in the gaps of the prose account.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. The structure of this narrative is considerably more multifaceted than the earlier stories. The complexity is much more than two different writing styles, as it relates to multiple plots, which in its own way contributes to illustrate the complexity of sin in which Israel is entangled.

ABSTRACT. As with the previous stories, the prologue serves as the abstract for this story. However, if the prose and poetic accounts are viewed separately, the latter is introduced with an abstract formula informing the reader that Deborah and Barak sang on that day. What naturally follows is the song.

ORIENTATION. Whereas the Othniel and Ehud stories involved external elements, this story is set within the internal boundaries of Israel. Although action does not occur there, geopolitical settings are identified as Canaan, Hazor, and *(Harōšet haggôyim)* Harosheth-hagoyim as the locations from where the enemy hails.[580] The general setting begins topographically where Deborah is sitting under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim. Although Kedesh-naphtali is mentioned, it is important for the tribal designation of Barak. But more important is the battle site of Mount Tabor and the Kishon River. The final episode occurs at the tent of Jael, which was at the oak of Zaanannim, near Kedesh. The geography orients the story and sets the episodes in order. These spatial settings also follow from geopolitical, to topographical, to architectural as part of the plot design. In the Song of Deborah, there is a similar organizing principle, but it also incorporates a durative temporal use with references to the Wilderness wandering prefacing a time of fearful traveling during the era of Shamgar and Jael, followed by the Sisera event occurring on the battlefield and at Jael's tent, and concluding at the home of Sisera's mother. The story itself involves a period of sixty years: a twenty year oppression and a forty year peace. There is no reason to doubt that the deliverance event was actuated in a single day.

COMPLICATING ACTION. As has been the narrator's pattern, the exposition is straightforward using formulaic language of Israel doing evil in the sight of YHWH again after Ehud had died, which resulted in Him selling Israel into the hand of Jabin, king of Hazor. There is some question as to whether there was a hierarchy of Jabin followed by Sisera, his general, or if the two were co-regents with Sisera being the military might of

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[580] **H** חֲרֹשֶׁת הַגּוֹיִם.

the confederation. The story is complicated by Israel crying out to YHWH, which is the expected pattern of response. However, what is not expected is that Israel would be going to receive judgment from a woman, who might be interpreted as a seer. Her judgments guide the story line, although she disappears from the narrative once the story is developed. Traditionally, the scenic approach is followed based on the geography of the story that makes Sisera the focus of the story. This approach uses eleven scene changes in order to unfold the plot.[581] However, this scenic approach destroys part of the rhetorical force of the narrative. Rather the micro-protagonist characters should move the action instead of geography. Following O'Connell, there are three distinct plots: 1) YHWH's deliverance of Israel from Jabin's military domination by the word of His prophetess Deborah; 2) Deborah's limitation of Barak's glory in battle because of his reluctance to follow YHWH's instructions to deliver Israel; and 3) Glorification of the woman who would achieve YHWH's plan to deliver Israel.[582]

EVALUATION. The narrator does not give a lot of evaluative remarks regarding the exposition. The restatement of Israel's evil being repeated is characteristic; yet, the only new information is that this oppression took place for twenty years which was described as being severe.

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. The narrator has not kept the plots entirely independent of each other. Rather, they are often interwoven and scenes portrayed work toward the development of two or all three plots simultaneously. With Deborah and Barak having been introduced, their characters are revealed through discourse that alerts the reader that the main plot, which actually focuses on YHWH now takes a tangent which itself bifurcates following the action of Barak and Jael. The secondary plots alternatively assume the foreground and function to fulfill the main plot. Since the discourse is linear, the narrator must alternate between the plots, and as such makes a brief aside from the first two plots operating in tandem in order to establish the setting for the third plot, while forming suspense about who the hero will be. The narrator returns to the first two by contrasting the Yahwistic army with the antagonist Sisera and his army. As the first plot continues with the prophetic word of YHWH giving Sisera into Barak's hand, this creates the ironic complication of the second plot while setting the events that will place the third plot in motion. The narrator makes it clear that YHWH transcended the bounds of the

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[581] Murray, 157.

[582] O'Connell, 103-106.

story and confused Sisera and his army. Whereas it has been the design of the first plot to be developed and the second plot to be complicated, the narrator reverses this action. Although the enemy army is decimated, it appears that both plots will falter, because Sisera has escaped making it a foil to the initial plot. Further, the second plot hardly seems to allow Deborah's word to be fulfilled with the complete annihilation of Sisera's army less one. But, because Sisera did escape, the third plot takes center stage while the other two plots are shadowy observers. Once Sisera arrives and is welcomed into Jael's tent, the scene is set for his murder which resolves all three plots simultaneously. The narrator allows the reader to glory in this action by prolonging each of the plots with extra information that restates what the readers already know, but the characters do not. For the first time, both Barak and Jael are at the same location. For Barak, he recognizes that the prophetic word has been fulfilled in all three plots. Jael, unprivileged to the prophetic utterance, certainly is aware of part of her plot; but the narrator does not tell us whether Barak filled in the gaps for her regarding the rest of it or the other two plots. The prose account appears to end with a restatement of the first plot's resolution with *Elohim*'s subduing of Jabin the king of Canaan. However, this is not the end; because the first and third plot resolutions are prolonged through a retelling of the event through the Song.

CODA. The story comes to a conclusion as the song ends and the land is unmolested during another forty year period.[583]

PLOTS. The three plots at times occur simultaneously within three episodes.

EPISODE ONE. The first episode telescopes the summary of the standard formula statements of Israel's evil, the establishment of an oppressor for twenty years, and Israel crying out to YHWH. Story time is followed in this kernel episode using the repetitive formulae suggesting causative links between the three internal quick moving scenes. No conflict is presented although it is implied in the story.

EPISODE TWO. The second episode slows the action down to a period of possibly only a few days, where Deborah is judging Israel. The length of time of this first scene is not as important as the fact that she was in a place to provide a prophetic word. In the second scene, nothing is known of any previous relationship between Deborah and Barak when she summons him. Presumably she may have known of him from her judging action either personally or through others who had come to her. The implication is that through divine discourse he was summoned. A divine command received, though not

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[583] Jg. 5:31b.

previously reported, is given within her judgment command to Barak, which would involve the deployment of forces within Naphtali and Zebulun. However, in the first words attributed to Barak, he remonstrates with the precondition that Deborah accepts. However, it is her response that institutes what should have been an unnecessary second and third plot. The narrator transitions to the third scene where the duo travel to Kedesh and the tribal armies meet. Only later in the song do we learn that others were summoned but chose not to participate. The narrator does not choose to provide the reader with knowledge of whether in the other tribal summons they had the awareness of divine accomplishment regarding the disposition of the battle. Even though the narrator has paused the action to set the scene for the third episode, the reader knows that simultaneously Sisera is gathering his army to the divinely appointed Waterloo. With all of the character conflict in place, scene four begins the one-day battle with the prophetic word from Deborah that is realized in the entire destruction of the Canaanite army and the escape of Sisera.

Each scene is a kernel event. The only time when discourse time alters from story time is the simultaneity of Sisera rallying his troops as was being done by Barak, while at the same time the site of the resolution is brought into brief focus. In the second scene the narrator changes his summary mode to make his singular narration scenic through dialogue between Deborah and Barak. The ultimate conflict is set between the clash of Barak and Sisera's armies; however, the penultimate conflict that was unexpected was the clash of Barak and Deborah's wills. Only later in the song do we learn that the conflict Sisera experienced was not only related to Barak, and to Deborah's prophecy, but to YHWH with the natural and supernatural elements.

EPISODE THREE. The third episode has three scenes moving even quicker in action than the previous episode. In the first scene, the narrator follows Sisera's flight from Barak in the last episode until his arrival at Jael's tent. The second scene is the presumed hospitality of Jael that results in Sisera's assassination. The final scene is Barak's arrival to find his prey already killed and learn of the fulfillment of the prophecy. Technically, there is a fourth scene, which is the vigil of Sisera's mother related in the song. Each kernel scene is told in story time. The first scene is proleptic. The second and fourth scenes are scenic in duration. The third scene slows to stretch out the action. All of the scenes are causally related through contingency. The fate of Sisera is ironic in that where the narrator had reported there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber; he succumbed to the ultimate conflict.

EPILOGUE. Although the story is finished, the discourse continues by summarizing the subjugation of Jabin, allowing Deborah and Barak to sing a song, which in itself restates the previous story in hymnic fashion, and then formally concludes with the rest formula.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. In the prose account, the narrator includes seven individual characters, four collective characters, and YHWH, as a divine character.[584] In the song, he augments the story with agents, which include two additional individual characters, thirteen collective characters, two anthropomorphic characters, and one divine character.[585]

DEBORAH. Of all the characters in the story, Deborah by necessity must take precedent because she is the only one who is described as judging Israel. The distinction should be made that the narrator never says that she saved Israel. In her naming, she is identified as a woman prophetess. Her third appellation has caused some dispute as to whether it should be translated or transliterated. If translated, this describes a character trait of her being a "fiery woman." However, if this is transliterated, then she is introduced as the wife of Lappidoth. There is speculation that she could even be the wife of Barak and the word translated as "torches" is his referent. In either case, the prophetess is characterized as a great light in the midst of the darkness of oppression.[586] The narrator does not say that YHWH raised her up because of the cry of the sons of Israel; rather it is implied that she was performing her judicial function during the time of oppression. As earlier discussed, there is a sense of her performing an oracular function connected with her location. What is remarkable is her stationary position and that she did not go to Israel to pronounce judgment, but rather the sons of Israel came to her. When she is given voice it is after she has summoned Barak and given him a directive that she had received through her divinatory ability. Her prophetic ability is shown when her response to Barak's remonstration alters his destiny and that of an unidentified woman. Deborah is given a prophetic voice again which sets the battle plan in motion. If it were not for the

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[584] The individual characters include: Ehud, Jabin, Sisera, Deborah, Barak, Heber, and Jael. The collective characters include: Jabin's army, the sons of Israel, the 10,000 men from the sons of Naphtali and Zebulun, and the sons of Hobab.

[585] The new individual characters to the story include: Shamgar and the mother of Sisera. The additional collective characters include: the kings, the rulers, the peasantry, the commanders of Israel, Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir, Issachar, Reuben, Gilead, Dan, Machir, and the princesses of Sisera's mother. The two anthropomorphic characters include the stars and the Kishon River. The additional divine character is the angel of YHWH.

[586] Block, *NAC*, 192.

song that she and Barak sang at some point after the battle, she would disappear from the story in ambiguity. Through the song, we learn the exultant nature of her character that knew premonarchic history and more specifically the works and ways of YHWH. She describes herself as a mother in Israel that arose for the occasion. Because of the doxological character of the song her promotion is connected to the action of YHWH, although it is not explicitly stated.

BARAK. He is introduced as someone that is summoned by the prophetess and called by patronym and tribal heritage. The narrator does not tell us whether his summons was because YHWH had specified him to Deborah or he was her personal choice based on the divine message she received. In either case, his summons sets him up for greatness in leading an Israelite army against Sisera. Despite the divine pronouncement of victory, his character is sullied when he opens his mouth and sets his own precondition. "The flat character gains rotundity with vengeance as soon as he betrays his lack of self-confidence."[587] Simultaneously it seals his fate and limits his greatness. From that point forward the narrator has silenced Barak until he sings a duet with Deborah.

JAEL. This character is pre-introduced twice by the narrator before her scene arrives. The first mention is the ambiguous statement uttered by Deborah of whom the reader does not know whether Deborah is talking about herself or another. But, the prophetess does tell us that she will displace Barak where honor is concerned and that as a woman, YHWH will sell Sisera into her hands. Then, Jael is properly named as the wife of Heber the Kenite. Since he had been briefly introduced, the reader knows that both Heber and presumably Jael are non-Israelites and distant semi-nomadic in-laws to Moses, who dwelt in a tent near Kedesh. Even though Sisera has approached her tent, it is Jael that dictates the scene action. She decides what she says to him, with what she quenches his thirst, and how she hides him (from her action). She is characterized as gracious and hospitable, yet, strong and resourceful. Not withstanding, she is also a devious cold blooded murderer that took advantage of a situation. When the narrator gives her voice in her meeting with Barak, we are not told how she knew that Barak was seeking Sisera, although this knowledge was clearly communicated to Barak by Jael. In the song, Jael is described as most blessed of women, which is followed with a parallel statement that underscores her tent-dwelling lifestyle. This descriptive appellation is only used

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[587] M. Sternberg, The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading (ILBS: Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 274.

elsewhere to speak of *(Mariam)* Mary by *(Elisabet)* Elizabeth in the New Testament.[588] The contrast between Jael and Mary is stark in their morality and actions. Even though Deborah called Jael most blessed of women "does not necessarily mean that God does the same."[589] Instead of following the paradigmatic characters of Othniel or Achsah "she partakes of the unorthodox qualities of Ehud and Shamgar."[590] The song has figurative language that may be interpreted sexually. This sets the contrast between Deborah and Jael.

SISERA. Although the primary plot reveals Jabin as the central antagonist, the reality of the story is that Sisera functions as his surrogate and assumes the antagonistic role in each of the three plots. The narrator describes Sisera as the commander of Jabin's army and states that Sisera lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. It is presumed that the 900 Canaanite chariots and charioteers were under Sisera's command and that he may have been the one enforcing the severe oppression. The narrator makes it clear to the reader that Sisera's steps are ordered by YHWH, when Deborah repeats the divine oracle that YHWH will draw Sisera and the chariots out to Barak at the River Kishon, where they will be handed over to the Israelite general. The Canaanite general unwittingly follows divine orders when he acts on his reconnaissance report. The reader knows that YHWH is Sisera's real adversary, even though Jael strikes the final blow. The narrator describes Sisera in terms of humanity. He fled away on foot. He was afraid. He was thirsty. He was exhausted. He was sound asleep. He died. But before his mortality was displayed, he symbolized "the power of military technology in the service of oppressive political policy."[591] The contrast serves to underscore the importance of being on the right side of YHWH.

YHWH. Of our two macro-characters, only YHWH comes to the foreground in this story. His character responds predictably, this time selling Israel into the hands of a foe living within the internal boundaries of the Promised Land. This story differs from the Othniel paradigm, because the narrator does not explicitly report YHWH's action in relationship to a savior-deliver with the formulaic language. Nevertheless, based on the previous pattern, the reader understands that YHWH is not ignoring Israel's cries, because there was already a functioning judge, who after being introduced is given a divine oracle with the *Übergabeformel*. In that same oracle, Deborah names YHWH as

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[588] ⑮ Μαριάμ and 'Ελισάβετ. Lk. 1:42.

[589] Hamlin, 87.

[590] Webb, The Book of Judges, 137.

[591] Hamlin, 81.

the *Elohim* of Israel, who takes on the task of drawing Sisera to the battleground of His choosing. On the day of the battle, Deborah restates the *Übergabeformel* and by using the particle *hinneh* alerts the characters and the reader that YHWH has gone out before them. This activity by the Commander-in-Chief also displaces Barak and further delimits his honor. YHWH is described as routing Sisera, and with hyperbolic language all his chariots and all his army with the idiom "the edge of the sword" before Barak. Unknown to the reader at the time, the song states that the stars of heaven and the River Kishon came to the help of YHWH against Sisera. YHWH steps out of the spotlight briefly during the Jael episode, but the narrator in his epilogue tells the reader that it was *Elohim* who subdued Jabin the king of Canaan. The opening stanza of the song recounts historical memory of YHWH's actions at Seir, Edom, and Sinai. The final stanza contrasts humanity in a bipolar relationship to YHWH as either being His enemy that will perish or being those who love Him that will be like the rising of the sun in its might.

CHARACTERIZATION. The narrator is not opposed to allowing the names to perform an onomastic function of paronomasia. But with the female character names he has assigned them names from the animal kingdom. Deborah is the bee. This connotes the idea of a queen bee who leads her worker bees to fulfill her directives, while having the ability to produce honey and sting her opponents. The traits of the *Apis mellifera* may have been in mind to the narrator.

> The wild bees of this region are especially noted for their ferocity in attack. The virulence of their venom increases in warm weather.... Bees have a very complex social structure which centers around the queen bee.[592]

The name Jael means ibex. This is an agile mountain goat of the area that is able to live and prosper in harsh circumstances. It is described as an extremely wary creature that is able to retreat into the mountains for refuge when pursued.[593] Ironically, it is Jael who does the pursuing of the one who takes refuge with her.

Before the narrator allows Jael to kill Sisera, he intentionally identifies her as Heber's wife. This causes the reader to remember that Heber has an alliance with Jabin. As such, Jael's actions may be interpreted politically as an act of treachery, highlighting that she as the wife of Jabin's ally makes her prominent in the story not only for Israel but also for the Canaanites.[594]

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[592] Pinney, 182.

[593] Ibid., 110.

[594] Block, *NAC*, 207. Jg. 4:21.

The narrator also used botanical references in order to elevate the characters of Deborah and Jael over and above Barak, for which there is no similar reference. "The encampment at 'the *Oak* in Za'ananim' does invoke one by sly analogy to the seat at 'the *Palm* of Deborah.'"[595]

POINT OF VIEW. The narrator reports the prose account through Yahwistic eyes even when the characters are given dialogue. His approach is essentially external, neutral, and retrospective. Unlike the earlier stories, the narrator refuses to bring the reader into his confidence, requiring the reader to experience the events together with the characters.[596] However, the Song of Deborah is presented from the point of view of Deborah, even though it was sung by her and Barak. Deborah acts like the omniscient narrator as she questions the inner motivation of the non-participatory tribes, as well as the scene at Jael's tent and Sisera's mothers' home, when there is no evidence that she was present to witness either event.

LANGUAGE PLAY. With the expanded plots and character development, the narrator is able to employ symbolism and to invoke irony and satire regarding character roles and the Canaanite institutions. Further, there is a wide array of rhetorical devices in this story.

PARALLELISM. There are points where this story parallels the Ehud story. Both stories have a murder scene and a discovery scene. Ehud murders Eglon and Jael murders Sisera. Then the courtiers discovered the dead Eglon and Barak discovered the dead Sisera. Not only did both unsuspecting victims get stabbed; but they both had let down their guard because they had been given something. Eglon received tribute and Sisera received shelter and drink. Further, both victims misinterpreted a crucial but ambiguous element. For Eglon it was the secret message. For Sisera it was a presumed loyalty because of her husband's alliance with Jabin.[597] The murders can also be characterized as being ferocious in nature, deceitful in action, and private in location.[598] The only real distinction is that the battle occurred after the murder and discovery scene with Ehud, whereas it occurred before the two scenes with Barak. These parallels provide the reader the opportunity to negatively characterize Barak by associating him Eglon's courtiers.[599] Even in this, through satire a general biblical motif appears that ridicules "those who

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[595] Sternberg, 281.

[596] Polzin, Moses and the Deuteronomist, 163.

[597] Gane, 54.

[598] Wilcock, 60.

[599] Webb, *The Book of Judges,* 136-137.

realize too late that victory belongs to those who act with ardour for YHWH" as opposed to those who are lethargic and slow to respond.[600]

SYMBOLISM AND IRONY. Within the Song of Deborah the narrator includes the familiar water motif. In the opening stanza the heavens dripped, even the clouds dripped water.[601] The second stanza has an unidentified group dividing what would appear to be flocks at the watering places.[602] The third stanza connects three of the tribes with water: Gilead across the Jordan River, Dan with ships, and Asher at the seashore.[603] The fourth stanza includes the waters of Megiddo and the torrent Kishon.[604] The fifth stanza has Sisera asking for water.[605] Only in the final stanza is the motif missing. The repeated use of this motif serves a judging function. The obvious climax is the part the Kishon River played in sweeping away the army of Sisera. However, the water may have posed a threat to the three tribes mentioned who did not participate in the battle. Through the motif of water and the other primordial worldly ingredient of land, "the poet has used these images to portray vividly the absolute power of Yahweh over the creation."[606] It is ironic that Sisera would ask for water, knowing full well that it was water that was used to bring his army's demise; yet, this fulfills a foreshadowing of his own death.

As part of a plan to glorify YHWH, the narrator allows YHWH to transcend heaven to confuse Sisera and his army. This reminds the reader of the Red Sea crossing at several points. In the *Torah* event, YHWH specifically led Israel along with Pharaoh and his army to *(Pî haḤîrōṭ)* Pi-hahiroth at the edge of the sea.[607] Whereas Israel had the mountains closing them in on one side and the ocean on the other, in the Judges' story there is the parallel of Mount Tabor and the Kishon River. Neither of these was as ominous as what Moses and the sons of Israel faced. As Pharaoh and his charioteers attempted to follow Israel through the midst of the divided Red Sea, the narrative states that YHWH "brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion."[608] By His removing the

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[600] O'Connell, 127.

[601] Jg. 5:4.

[602] Jg. 5:11.

[603] Jg. 5:17.

[604] Jg. 5:19, and 21.

[605] Jg. 5:25.

[606] A.J. Hauser, "Judges 5: Parataxis in Hebrew Poetry, *JBL 99* (1980), 31.

[607] פִּי הַחִירֹת. Ex. 14:2.

[608] Literally, "brought the camp of the Egyptians into confusion." Ex. 14:23.

chariot wheels and the difficulty they faced, the Egyptians realized that YHWH was fighting against them and for Israel.[609] The narrator uses the same word "confused" to describe YHWH fighting against Sisera.[610] As the Red Sea swept away the charioteers and the chariots, the Kishon River followed suit. In the deliverance from Egypt, a strong wind assisted Israel and the Red Sea and later worked against the Egyptians. Instead of the wind, the stars of heaven fought with them.[611] The *wadi* overflowing its banks with its torrential force would have occurred only as a result of a torrential storm, which may have a hidden symbolic meaning in the paronomasia surrounding Barak's name, in that it means a flash of lightning.

Even more, Barak is able to serve an ironic function. Through role reversal, he follows a woman into battle.[612] Yet, this irony functions in another way also.

> Since God has "gone out before" Barak, Barak's eventual descent "and then thousand men after him" sounds a mocking note: the nominal leader is himself a follower.... [Deborah] has initiated and forced the battle; God has won it; and Barak remains with a mopping-up operation to his credit.[613]

Then, when Barak arrives at Jael's tent in hot pursuit after Sisera, the narrator gives him a deafening silence by refusing him dialogue with Jael, when he discovers Sisera's murder. The next irony is in his name.

> In a flash, gone is the victory! In a moment, gone is the glory, from Barak that is! With magnificent irony Deborah's dual prophecy has been fulfilled. Yahweh has committed Sisera into Barak's hands (v. 7), but he has also committed him into the hands of a woman. Unfortunately for him, the woman has won the honor (v. 9).[614]

As with lightning, there must be thunder, but for Barak Jael steals his thunder.[615] The irony is immortalized in the Song of Deborah, when in giving praise, he must sing this song, and especially the stanza regarding Jael, which is an ever present reminder that he is retelling his own honor which has been subverted by two women: Deborah with her prophecy and Jael with the fulfillment of that prophecy. It is not only the women that undermine Barak but also Sisera. With the assembled army, Barak has ten thousand men who went up *(bᵊraglāyw)* "at his feet."[616] This serves a double *entendre* of the obvious

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[609] Ex. 14:24.

[610] 𝔐 *(wayyāhām)* וַיָּהָם. This is parsed as *Qal* Imperfect 3MS, with *Waw* consecutive. Jg. 4:15.

[611] Ex. 14:21-28; and Jg. 5:20-21.

[612] Sternberg, 273-283.

[613] Ibid., 276-277.

[614] Block, *NAC*, 208-209.

[615] Kawashima, 164.

[616] 𝔐 בְּרַגְלָיו. Jg. 4:10.

fact that the men were under his command, but also to contrast that Barak was on foot and Sisera was in a chariot.[617] Later in the story, this word that implies tactical superiority will be used to impugn Sisera.

Sisera likewise is not immune from the narrator's irony. The song describes kings that came and fought. The implication is that this referred to Jabin and to Sisera. Battle conquest anticipates financial gain for the victor at the expense of the conquered. The initial gain would be war booty followed by annual tribute. The song has a sarcastic meiosis whereby Deborah uses understatement that the kings took no plunder in silver.[618] The irony is that instead of coming out with booty, the Canaanites themselves were plundered and the battle was costly, to the point of their lives. This motif is carried further when the narrator satirizes the wisdom of Sisera's mother's princesses. These Canaanite women expect that their warriors are delaying because they are receiving booty that includes *(raham rah^amatayim)* the raping of Israelite women, which could be their fate, should the Israelites come to plunder their city.[619] The power of the satire is amplified by using the *hapax locutio (l^ro'š geber)* "for every warrior."[620]

But, for Sisera's mother when she is compared and contrasted with Jael, the irony comes into focus. Jael is a simple *Bedouin* woman living in a tent. Sisera's mother is the regal queen-mother living in a palace. Jael acts in a dishonorable manner, especially as would be viewed by Sisera's mother. However, the warrior's mother receives consultation from her wise women *(sic)*; when it is the mighty woman that needs to know what is already known by the simple woman.[621] What is disconcerting about the story is that it sounds like a later denunciation by the prophet Isaiah of calling good evil and evil good.[622]

> Ironically, the Israelites honor Jael's deceptive (and brutal) acts on her own initiative more than Deborah's honorable and ethical leadership under Yahweh's guidance.[623]

As has already been discussed there was the issue of role reversal regarding Barak. However, the verbal description of most of the characters in their initial exposition ironically is reversed by later characterization. The reader observes Deborah

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[617] Murray, 170.

[618] Burney, 145. Jg. 5:19.

[619] 𝕳 רַחַם רַחֲמָתַיִם; literally, "a womb, two wombs." Jg. 5:30.

[620] 𝕳 לְרֹאשׁ גֶּבֶר; literally, "for the head of a man." Cf. Block, *NAC*, 243.

[621] J. Krašovec, *Antithetic Structure in Biblical Hebrew Poetry (JSOT Supp. 35*: Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1984), 33.

[622] Isa. 5:20.

[623] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 47.

sitting and judging; however, because of plot complication she has to arise and go to battle. Barak is shown as pursuing Sisera but never capturing him. Sisera is described as fallen dead, although he had fallen asleep, only then he was killed.[624] Then there is Jael, who as an ally to Jabin kills his general Sisera. All that she offers or should offer differs from what she gives: "milk instead of water, death in place of sleep, [and] a corpse instead of a captive."[625] The two men of the story are deprived of their strength and virility and are reduced from manhood to boyhood by the women as "Sisera's boyish retreat to Jael's maternal shade ingeniously complements Barak's timid stand under Deborah's protective wing."[626] The irony of Sisera being reduced to a vulnerable child is presented in his own words when he commands Jael to answer "No!" in the event she is asked the question *(hᵃyēš-pō 'îš)* "Is there here [a] man?"[627]

RHETORICAL DEVICES. One of the devices used is the pun. The narrator uses syllepsis to play on the word Canaan. Now after twenty years it is Canaan that is *(wayyaḵna')* brought low by *Elohim.*[628] Burney suggests that the substantive with the prepositional prefix *(lᵉḥôqᵉqê)* "commanders" embodies the *(ḥuqqîm)* "statutes" of the *Torah* which they would impose.[629] This verse carries a double *entendre* with the second meaning being "my heart is toward the commandments/statutes of Israel." There is a pun through sound play that prophetically connects the *(tōmer Dᵉḇôrāh)* "palm tree of Deborah" with her utterance to Barak on the day of battle *(wattō'mer Dᵉḇôrāh)* "and Deborah said."[630] Paronomasia is present when the phrase *('ûrî 'ûrî Dᵉḇôrāh)* "Awake, awake, Deborah" is almost repeated verbatim in the parallel cola *('ûrî 'ûrî dabbᵉrî-šîr)* "Awake, awake, sing a song!"[631] Muilenburg suggests this repetition further works to express urgency.[632] There is a play on the name of Ephraim when its meaning "fruitful" is connected with the word *(šoršām)* "root."[633] The change of a single consonant plays on

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[624] Polzin, Moses and the Deuteronomist, 163.

[625] Ibid., 166.

[626] Kawashima, 159.

[627] H הֲיֵשׁ־פֹּה אִישׁ. Jg. 4:20. D.N. Fewell and D.M. Gunn, 393.

[628] H וַיַּכְנַע. The word is parsed as *Hiphil* Imperfect, 3MS, with *Waw* consecutive. Jg. 4:23.

[629] H לְחוֹקְקֵי and חוקים, respectively. Burney, 122. Jg. 5:9.

[630] H וַתֹּאמֶר דְּבוֹרָה and תֹּמֶר דְּבוֹרָה. Jg. 4:5, and 14.

[631] H עוּרִי עוּרִי דַּבְּרִי־שִׁיר and עוּרִי עוּרִי דְּבוֹרָה. Jg. 5:12. Casanowicz, 131.

[632] Jg. 5:12. Muilenburg, "A Study in Hebrew Rhetoric," 102.

[633] H שָׁרְשָׁם. Jg. 5:14. Casanowicz, 141.

(gᵊḏōlîm ḥiqqê-lēḇ) "great resolves of heart" and *(gᵊḏōlîm ḥiqrê-lēḇ)* "great searchings of heart" that Reuben experienced.[634]

The narrator does not stop with word plays, but also includes sound plays. He pictures Reuben as being entranced to *(šᵊriqôṯ)* the piping, which in itself is onomatopoeic of the English "shriek."[635] Repetitive onomatopoeia is used to describe the sound of the galloping horses *(midaháróṯ daháróṯ)*.[636] Simple sound plays are present with *(hālōḵ 'ēlēḵ 'immāḵ)* "I will surely go with you;" *('el-'ōhel Yā'ēl)* "to the tent of Jael;" and *('ōrû 'ārôr)* "utterly curse."[637] Even Jael's repetitive seductive invitation to Sisera *(sûrā ᵃḏōnî sûrā 'ēlay)* plays on the sound of his name.[638] Perhaps one of the most pronounced sound plays is the aural chiasm found in the verbal metonymy describing Sisera's death: *(wᵊhālᵊmāh)* "she hammered," *(māḥᵃqāh)* "she crushed," *(ûmāḥᵃṣāh)* "she shattered," and *(wᵊhālᵊp̄āh)* "she pierced."[639]

The narrator also uses ambiguity which is seen in the imperative prophetic call, "Arise!" The question remains whether upon arising Barak and his army "are to go on the offensive or simply to stand back and watch the salvation of Yahweh."[640] In the song, there is some ambiguity regarding Deborah's heart in relation to the commanders of Israel because of ellipsis of the verb.[641] There is also another verbal ellipsis regarding Ephraim, and an ellipsis of the subject taking place at the watering places.[642] The onomatopoeic sounding of the hammering hooves of the horses works to foreshadow the sound of the metonymic heavy hammer that will be used by Jael.[643] Even the hammer and the tent pegs which are in Jael's hands serve to remind the reader of the prophecy that Sisera will be sold into the hands of a woman.

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[634] 𝕳 חִקְקֵי־לֵב גְּדוֹלִים חִקְרֵי־לֵב and גְּדוֹלִים. Jg. 5:15-16. Casanowicz, 136.

[635] 𝕳 שְׁרִקוֹת. Jg. 5:16.

[636] 𝕳 מִדַּהֲרוֹת דַּהֲרוֹת. The verse has been emended, but even with the ending change, the onomatopoeia remains. See the section, "Wrong Division of Words," in Appendix 1, "Listing of Textual Errors in Judges by Alteration," page 710; and "Error Due to the Use of Abbreviation in Writing," also in Appendix 1, page 711.

[637] 𝕳 הָלֹךְ אֵלֵךְ עִמָּךְ; אֶל־אֹהֶל יָעֵל; and אָרוֹ אָרוֹר. Jg. 4:9, 17; and 5:23.

[638] 𝕳 סוּרָה אֲדֹנִי סוּרָה אֵלַי. Jg. 4:18. Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 212.

[639] 𝕳 וְהָלְמָה; מָחֲקָה מָחֲצָה וּמָחֲצָה; and וְהָלְפָה. Jg. 5:26. Casanowicz, 141; and Block, *NAC*, 241.

[640] Block, *NAC*, 204. Jg. 4:14.

[641] Burney, 122. Jg. 5:9.

[642] Jg. 5:11, and 14, alternatively.

[643] Jg. 5:22, and 26. Burney, 153.

The opening exposition regarding Barak is immediately complicated with *para prosdokian* as a comic device for his character.[644] In the account of Sisera's demise, the syntax reflects *hysteron proteron* reversing the order of his falling asleep before mentioning his exhaustion.[645]

INTERPRETATION. The real conflict in the story is for the reader, who while enmeshed into the story considering the characters and their actions may be tempted to forget the text and the overall story of Judges. This is not about Deborah, even though she gives the prophetic word that guides the three separate plots. She is the agent of YHWH, and once she has fulfilled her story function can easily disappear into the background. Nor is the story about Barak and his fear or pride; but that YHWH chooses to raise one person up and to put another down. And neither is the story about Jael who has her moment in the spotlight which immortalizes a non-Israelite woman for killing the Canaanite general. The narrator returns the reader to a proper Yahwistic focus with the Song of Deborah and its doxological function. YHWH is the focus of the story. Even in what would appear to be overwhelming odds against Israel and the description of tribes and villages not coming to the aid of YHWH are agents of the plot who glorify the superior position of YHWH.[646]

The story also serves to remind the reader that YHWH has his agents ready to do His bidding at any place or time. Thus far, we have seen oppression come from Adoni-bezek in the south and Jabin in the north, with the external forces of Cushan-Rishathaim and Eglon to the east. But even more so, the manner in which the narrator has composed the phraseology of the story, so that reported speech and reporting speech are obfuscated does more than provide irony.

> We thus see how the phraseological composition of a story so surrounded by the certainty of Israel's victory and Sisera's defeat can still strongly suggest the inability of man, even God's elect, fully to understand God's words or his own, or to predict his own destiny.[647]

It is not surprising that the story concludes with the penultimate declaration regarding Israel's yearning that YHWH's enemies perish in similar fashion. The ambiguity of this desire leaves the reader in a quandary, as a new cycle is to begin, whether Israel grasps the truth of this plea and whether they will become the enemy themselves.

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[644] ⑮ παρὰ προδοκίαν. Murray, 167.

[645] Block, *NAC*, 208. Jg. 4:21.

[646] Y. Amit, "Judges 4: Its Content and Form," *JSOT 39* (1987), 95.

[647] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 164.

Gideon/Abimelech Story

The next story involves two distinct generations: Gideon and his descendants, with the primary focus upon Abimelech. The stories naturally separate along temporal lines with Gideon's death being the point of demarcation.[648] But like the previous Deborah/Barak/Jael story, this story is even more complex with its three plot structure. Following the traditional methodology of bifurcated stories alters the rhetorical effect when the story of two generations is narrated as a single unit. There is no dispute among scholars where the Gideon story begins or where the Abimelech story ends.[649]

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. The narrator does not have a simplistic scenic understanding that follows the actions of Gideon and his son Abimelech for his narratee. The overall purpose of the book serves as a guiding principle; however, it does not restrict him from developing a central plot with two subplots that illustrate themes set out in the prologues.[650] The primary plot is YHWH's deliverance of Israel from the Midianites through Gideon. The secondary plots flow out of this. The first subplot is YHWH's judgment for the failure of Gideon and his tribe to abandon foreign cultic practices. The other subplot is YHWH's judgment for the failure of Gideon, his sons, and his tribe to refrain from covenant (social) injustice.

ABSTRACT. The narrator does not include an abstract in this story, but allows the second prologue to fulfill this function. Yet, the central plot is succinctly stated "Arise, for YHWH has given the camp of Midian into your hands."[651]

ORIENTATION. The main plot occurs in the space of 47 years, with the first seven years related to the period of oppression and the final forty years being the period of peace after the deliverance. As is customary with the narrator, the deliverance occurs quickly. But there is a slight departure from the earlier stories. Whereas the deliverance by Ehud was a single day event and the deliverance through Deborah\Barak\Jael was a one or two day event, the Gideon deliverance took several days, although the exact number is somewhat ambiguous. Spatially, the setting shows a marginalization of Israel's tribal and political structure as Israel is not described as living in cities or villages but

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[648] This demarcates the Gideon story as Jg. 6:1 – 8:28. The Abimelech story comprises the passage of Jg. 8:29 – 9:57.

[649] This examination accepts a combined Gideon/Abimelech story that includes Jg. 6:1 – 9:57.

[650] Allowing the themes of narrative to emerge rather than forcing an ideological perspective upon them, O'Connell has astutely discovered the three plot lines that is used to examine this story. See his, *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges*, 140-146.

[651] Jg. 7:15.

hiding in the mountains, caves, and strongholds.[652] Even the hero is hiding in a winepress.[653] The location is not given of the prophetic denunciation scene. The character expresses an awareness of the geopolitical realities of Midian, Amalek, and Qedem, as well as historical memory of Egypt or the land of the Amorites. The narrator delays revealing that the second episode occurred at Ophrah. The events of that episode occurred within a twenty-four hour period, beginning with the day time scene of Gideon meeting the angel, the night time scene of razing the altar, and the morning scene of the discovery of the altar. Although the story transitions quickly into the third episode, the gap of time between it and the previous scene is unknown, but it is doubtful that it occurred immediately after Gideon was renamed. The third episode begins in the Jezreel Valley, with Gideon's camp near the spring of Harod and the Midianite camp north of them in the valley by (migGib'at hamMôreh) the hill of Moreh.[654] Gideon described that location as (Har HagGil'ād) Mount Gilead.[655] All of the events of this episode take place outside, making reference to the ground, the valley, the mountain, and the water. This episode must have taken at least one week to elapse. Two days were necessary for the fleece test. It is unknown how long it took to send out messengers to the tribes and muster the army or the period of time to reduce Gideon's army from 32,000 to 300. However, once the extra soldiers were dismissed the action takes place that same night and what would appear to be on into the next day to remove the Midianite oppression and its leaders. The main battle would have occurred at the camp of the Midianites continuing as far as (Bêt HašŠiṭṭāh) Beth-shittah toward (Ṣ°rērāṭāh) Zererah and as far as the edge of ('ābēl M°ḥôlāh) Abel-meholah, by (Ṭabbāt) Tabbath.[656] The subsequent flight of its princes occurred near the Jordan River; whereas the flight of the kings included Succoth, Penuel, Karkor, the area east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and the ascent of Heres. The final scene occurs at Gideon's ancestral home of Ophrah, which was part of the forty year period the land was undisturbed.

The second plot begins in the middle of episode two of the first plot. The first scene of the razing of the pagan altar takes place at night and it is followed by the

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[652] Jg. 6:2.

[653] Jg. 6:11.

[654] 𝕳 מִגִּבְעַת הַמּוֹרֶה. The first word is prefixed with the *Mem* preposition. Jg. 7:1.

[655] 𝕳 הַר הַגִּלְעָד. Jg. 7:3.

[656] 𝕳 בֵּית הַשִּׁטָּה, צְרֵרָתָה, אָבֵל מְחוֹלָה, and מַבָּת. Jg. 7:22.

discovery of its destruction the following morning. Both events occur at Ophrah. The action is temporarily suspended until the conclusion of the battle narrative when Gideon requests the gold earrings from his soldier in order to make an ephod. Then there is a forty year hiatus of action until Gideon dies, although it is implied that there is cultic infidelity because of the ephod. When the action resumes the worship of *Baal* is in full swing. As the plot unfolds the action is centered in and near Shechem. The cultic temple of *Baal-Berith* is in stark contrast to Mount Gerizim where Jotham offers his oracle. The events of the fifth episode of the story occur within a short span of Abimelech's accession to the throne. A three year period elapses and the final episode begins. Most of the spatial settings are exterior locations including the nearby villages of *(Bêt Millô')* Beth-millo, *(bā'rûmāh)* Arumah, and Thebez.[657] However, the narrator also used topographical settings of the tops of mountains, road sides, fields, and even *('ēlôn mᵉ'ônᵉnîm)* the diviner's oak.[658] Two architectural structures are also important. The pagan temple is equally important to the setting as is the tower of Thebez. The time elapsed in the final episode can not be determined as there are several different days represented; but most likely they are all in close proximity to each other.

The third plot begins in Succoth and Penuel. From that point when the plot resumes at the conclusion of the first plot, the setting runs concurrently with the second plot.

COMPLICATING ACTION. The central plot begins with the standard formulaic exposition regarding the sons of Israel doing evil in the sight of YHWH and then being given over into the hands of an oppressor, this time Midian. The exposition of the oppression is more detailed than the previous stories. The initial complicating action is the formulaic cry of Israel which initiates the sending of an anonymous prophet with a denunciating message that appears to prolong the exposition rather than to complicate it. However, it is immediately followed by the introduction of the central micro-protagonist that sets the plot in motion as Gideon receives his divine commission from the theophanic representative. In the next scene, where Gideon is reluctant to follow YHWH's command to raze the altar to *Baal*, as well as his subsequent destruction of it, the erecting of a Yahwistic altar, and the discovery of his actions the following morning serves to concurrently complicate the central plot while foreshadowing the motif that establishes the second plot related to judgment against cultic practices. The narrator returns the focus

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[657] 𝔐 בֵּית מִלּוֹא and בָּארוּמָה. The second word includes the *Bet* preposition prefix. Jg. 9:20, and 41.

[658] 𝔐 אֵלוֹן מְעוֹנְנִים. Jg. 9:37.

squarely on the central plot and to its development with the mustering of armies on both sides, while pausing the action to complicate the characterization of Gideon with his need for a confirming sign. But, because the army of Israel was too large and would present a problem of pride, the narrator complicates the plot further by reducing the army two times. Instead of the battle occurring, the narrator once again pauses the action in order to complicate Gideon's character underscoring his fear while paralleling it in the Midianite camp because of the dream of the Midianite soldier. Now, when the reader expects the plot to be resolved with the characteristic annihilation of the enemy, the narrator complicates the plot further by allowing two pairs of Midianite leaders to escape and introducing intertribal conflict with the Ephraimites, which Gideon is able to diffuse. However, this double complication works to foreshadow the introduction of the next subplot regarding social injustice.

The resolution of the central plot serves to illustrate the social injustice that Gideon inflicted upon Succoth and Penuel and the insensitive predicament in which he placed his eldest son Jether. Likewise, Gideon's request of the golden earrings to make an ephod develops the second plot. The summary notice of Gideon's offspring gives exposition to the third plot and formally introduces Abimelech, which is alternately followed by the exposition of the second plot with the summary about full scale idolatry. At this point, the narrator allows the ensuing scenes to do double duty developing both subplots at the same time. Abimelech succeeds in getting his matriarchal citizenry to enthrone him as king and enable him to commit fratricide against all but one of his brothers. This does not complicate either subplot; however, with Jotham's confrontation of Abimelech it does foreshadow the resolution. The temporal setting changes to the final episode and *Elohim* sends an evil spirit between the citizens of Shechem and Abimelech. This is a complicating action for Abimelech, but not for the subplot as it works to simultaneously fulfill YHWH's two-fold judgment. Several scenes follow illustrating the various treacheries perpetrated against Abimelech by the men of Shechem. This is followed by three repressive acts by Abimelech that lead to the resolution of the two subplots.

EVALUATION. As soon as the first complication to the plot arises, the narrator uses embedded evaluation through the words of a prophet to characterize the nature of the evil Israel had done. It was significant enough that it recalls the theophanic indictment that

occurred at Bochim underscoring Israel's disobedience.[659] The narrator interrupts the story after the disappearance of the divine messenger when he comments on Gideon's Yahwistic altar and notes its presence in the time of the narrator.[660] The narrator briefly intrudes into the story to make sure his narratee understands the paronomasia associated with Gideon's name change to Jerubbaal and is able to grasp the satire of that event.[661] The narrator knowing the propensity of his characters to unduly take credit for warfare victory embeds his comments in YHWH's speech to Gideon that results in the numerical strength of his army being reduced.[662] In order to give Gideon and his servant Purah ample story time to reach the Midianite camp, the narrator uses a metaphoric rejoinder to describe the vastness and veraciousness of the enemy camp they were approaching.[663] Once again, the narrator stops the action. This time it is to focus the attention on the location of the two Midianite kings that Gideon was pursuing.[664] As Gideon was initiating his own cultic aberration, the narrator makes an external evaluation that stated the Midianites were also Ishmaelites.[665] As the Abimelech episode began, the narrator made sure that the narratee knew that he was referring to Gideon when he used the name Jerubbaal as Abimelech's father, as he had previously done once his army had been assembled.[666] But to make the contrast between father and son more obvious, the narrator used embedded evaluation allowing Jotham through his fable and extemporaneous remarks to characterize Abimelech and set the stage for the ensuing action.[667] This is further declared after a three year reign, when the narrator reminds his narratee that the treachery directed against Abimelech is because of the treachery he directed toward his half-brothers.[668]

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. The main plot situation reaches its climax when Gideon is able to capture Zebah and Zalmunna. His subsequent discipline of Succoth and Penuel

[659] Jg. 6:10.

[660] Jg. 6:24.

[661] Jg. 6:32.

[662] Jg. 7:2.

[663] Jg. 6:5; and 7:12.

[664] Jg. 8:10.

[665] Jg. 8:24.

[666] Jg. 7:1; and 8:35.

[667] Jg. 9:7-20.

[668] Jg. 9:23-24.

and the execution of the two Midianite kings are anticlimactic and as earlier discussed they further the subplots. The same is true for the ephod. The improper cultic subplot is resolved during Abimelech's second act of repression, when he summarily executes the idolaters in their temple. The social injustice subplot is resolved when Abimelech dies at the tower of Thebez.

CODA. Because of the complexity of the story, there are actually two codas. The first relates to the central plot. The narrator uses the standard formulaic language and declares that Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel, and that they did not lift up their heads anymore. The land was undisturbed for forty years in the days of Gideon.[669] This directs the reader to his character resolution with his death at a ripe old age. The two subplots conclude with the parallel summary statements that *Elohim* repaid Abimelech and the men of Shechem for their wickedness.

PLOTS. Since the events that comprise the three plots at times operate concurrently, it is best to discuss them based on their placement in the episodes.

GIDEON EPISODE ONE. The first episode is divided into four scenes, of which the first three are the standard kernel events. There are no anachronies in the order the narrator uses nor is there any conflict between characters. The first scene is a summary of Israel's evil. The narrator changes his normal practice and presents the second scene of Israel being sold over to Midian as a stretch scene vividly characterizing the oppression. Contingency operates between the first three scenes and it is natural that the third scene of Israel crying to YHWH would be presented as a summary. As the final scene begins, which is scenic in duration, the narrator uses repetitive narration to accentuate the causation of Israel's cry that results in a prophet being sent to them, even though that prophet does not bring resolution to their situation.

GIDEON EPISODE TWO. This episode is more involved; however, it does not resolve the oppressive situation and offer salvation. It provides a transition between the first and third episode where the salvation motif appears. The second episode is comprised of four kernel events. The events are presented in pairs. The first pair focuses upon the divine messenger and Gideon. In the first scene Gideon meets the divine messenger and receives a commission; however, the central character does not know what the reader does. Only in the ensuing scene regarding the meal and offering does Gideon

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[669] O'Connell sees the coda as the situation resolution of the first plot, whereas that which I have listed as the resolution he sees to be a combination of plot development and complication. See his, *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges*, 143.

learn of the messenger's identity. The second pair of events relates to the pagan altar. All of the events are scenic in duration and are generally presented logically. The first anachrony is when the Yahwistic altar is built at the end of the second scene, which only occurred in the third scene after the altar to *Baal* was razed. In the fourth scene, at the point of Joash renaming Gideon the narrator becomes analeptic showing causation back to the third scene.

GIDEON EPISODE THREE. This episode consists of nine kernel events and four satellite events. The first summary event is the assembly of the two opposing armies in the valley of Jezreel. While Gideon's messengers were recruiting his army, the narrator slows the action to the scenic event where Gideon requests two confirming signs. The causation between the first two events is only remotely possible, because the scene is only a satellite event. Causation does occur between the first event and third event, both of which are kernel events. The next event is scenic as the army is reduced by twenty two thousand men. This has a contingent effect on the following stretch event in which the number of men is reduced to three hundred. Now that the army has been reduced, the narrator deals with Gideon's fear in a satellite scene that takes him and his servant on a reconnaissance mission into the Midianite camp. Whereas the satellite event is probably related to the previous event, it is contingent for the first climax kernel scene of the confusion of the enemy and its destruction. Within this scene there is near repetition of the phrase "for YHWH and for Gideon" with its second usage prefixing it with the word "a sword."[670] The narrator then switches back to a summary satellite event resending messengers to muster Naphtali, Asher, Manasseh, and Ephraim to pursue Midian and its two leaders. This makes the next satellite scene of Ephraim's contention contingent on being mustered. This disruption of the action allows story time to elapse so that the Midianite kings have ample time to escape. The kernel scene of Gideon pursuing after the kings takes him to Succoth where additional conflict is foreshadowed because of their inhospitality to Gideon and his famished militia. The next scene in Penuel is a near repetition of what had happened in Succoth with them contingently related. The narrator temporarily changes the perspective from Gideon's pursuit to reveal the location of the Midianite kings and summarizes the kernel event leading to their capture and the routing of the Midianite camp. Logically, Gideon travels back to Succoth with his captive kings in order to punish the elders and men of Succoth in the kernel scene. Then, the narrator

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[670] Jg. 7:18, and 20.

summarizes the Penuel killing event. As the climax is being prolonged, finally, Gideon kills the Zebah and Zalmunna after his son Jether was fearful to kill them. Immediately Gideon begins to spoil his enemy and collects the booty that results in the making of the ephod in this stretch kernel event that is contingently related to the previous events.

ABIMELECH EPISODE ONE. The first episode of the Abimelech part of the story also serves as an epilogue to the Gideon part of the story. The episode has two kernel events. Midian has been subdued, Gideon returns home to live out the rest of his life, which is a forty year period in which the land is undisturbed. Within this summary event, Gideon's fruitfulness is expressed which presents his progeny as part of the conflict of the next episode. The scene ends with Gideon's death. The second summary event has a probability of causation due to Gideon's death in that the sons of Israel played the harlot with the *Baals* and turned away from YHWH and in acts of kindness to Gideon's household.

ABIMELECH EPISODE TWO. The second episode takes place in a period of three years, although almost all of the action occurs during what would appear to be the opening days of that reign and immediately before it. There are four kernel events. The first scene occurs in Shechem with Abimelech securing a vote of confidence to become their leader. It naturally leads to the summary event of fratricide in Ophrah. Then, with all of his opposition removed (except Jotham), Abimelech returns to Shechem and is enthroned as their king in a summary event. The final event at nearby Mount Gerizim is stretched so the narrator can use the embedded narrative of Jotham's fable and interpretation to foreshadow the subplot resolutions. Each of the four events is related through causal contingency.

ABIMELECH EPISODE THREE. Once again, the narrator places most of the action in the final episode which contains only kernel events. The tenor of the story shifts to highlight YHWH's judgment in the initial summary event of YHWH sending an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem. This is followed by a summary of the first act of treachery by the men of Shechem. Then, there was a second act of treachery by them against Abimelech. This is illustrated by four events. A new character, Gaal is introduced who usurps Abimelech's position and leads the men of Shechem in a scene of treason. The narrator reports the response of Abimelech's second in command Zebul in a

scene that alerts Abimelech of the uprising and prepares him to respond militarily.[671] Naturally, this scene transitions into a confrontation between Abimelech and Gaal, while allowing Zebul to betray Gaal in the process. As such many of the men of Shechem are wounded and Gaal is exiled to disappear from the story. The following day, the next scene unfolds with Abimelech waiting in ambush to act out his repression of the people in which many are killed in the summary event that results in Shechem being razed and sown with salt. This leads the narrator to report the scene of Abimelech at *(Har-Ṣālmôn)* Mount Zalmon denuding the land in order to lay siege against the leaders of Migdol-Shechem held up in the temple of *El-Berith*.[672] Ultimately, Abimelech and his men kill these Shechemites by destroying the temple through fire. The final scenic event of the story occurs as Abimelech attempts to repress the people taking refuge in the tower of Thebez. There, Abimelech is mortally wounded by a woman dropping an upper millstone on his head; however, the fatal blow comes from the sword thrust of his armor bearer. With the story and plot resolved, the narrator allows the men of Israel to return home.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. The narrator uses a vast array of characters to tell this story. There are twenty individuals, twenty-two collective characters, eight divine characters, and eight objects.[673] Obviously the large majority of these characters are agents of the plot.

MIDIAN. As with the first and second judgment cycles, the narrator has introduced a third oppressor which was not included in the test nations listed at the end of the second prologue. But, what is different in this cycle from the previous three cycles is that the

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[671] The *NASB* chooses to translate *(b°ṭor°māh)* בְּתָרְמָה as the adverb "deceitfully," literally, "in deceit." As such it colors the character of Zebul as one who also has designs on Abimelech's authority. Since this is not further developed, and based on other usages of the word, that there is no other site of Tormah, it has been emended to the geographical location of Arumah. See the section "Confusion of Letters" in Appendix 1, "Listing of Textual Errors in Judges by Alteration," page 702; and Appendix 4, "Translation of Emended Verses in Judges," page 738.

[672] 𝔐 הַר־צַלְמוֹן. Jg. 9:48.

[673] The individual characters include: an unnamed prophet, Gideon, Joash, Purah, the Midianite dreamer, the Midianite friend of the dreamer, Oreb, Zeeb, Zebah, Zalmunna, a youth from Succoth, Jether, Gideon's *pîlegeš*, Abimelech, Jotham, Gaal, Zebul, Hamor, the unnamed woman at Thebez, and Abimelech's armor bearer. The collective characters include: the sons of Israel, Midianites, Amalekites, Qedemites, Egyptians, ten men of Gideon's servants, men of Ophrah, Gideon's messengers, Gideon's initial army of 32,000 men (from Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali), Gideon's reduced army of 10,000 men, Gideon's final army of 300 men, the men of Ephraim, men of Succoth, men of Penuel, the princes and elders of Succoth, the 70 sons of Gideon, the wives of Gideon, Abimelech's maternal relatives, the leaders of Shechem, the worthless and reckless men of Shechem that Abimelech paid, the men of Shechem, the men of Beth-millo, and the leaders of Migdol-Shechem. The divine characters include: YHWH, the gods of the Amorites, the angel of YHWH, *Baal*, the Spirit of YHWH, *Baal-Berith*, an evil spirit, and *El-Berith*. The objects of the story include: small goat, two bulls, fleece, ephod, trees, fig tree, vine, and bramble.

oppressive nation does not have any recognized leader at the onset of the story. When it is time to remove the Midianite threat the names of its two under-leaders Oreb and Zeeb and its two kings Zebah and Zalmunna come to the fore. Although the kings appear prominently in the pursuit and capture scenes, they function as agents of the plot. As with the Ehud-Eglon story, a confederacy of nations is composed of the Midianites, Amalekites and Qedemites, all nomadic Transjordanian tribal people. What is distinct about this oppressor is the exposition the narrator gives to characterize its scorched earth policy and the metaphorical vastness in the times of their raids, which describe them in terms of a locust plague. Immediately before Gideon's battle with the Midianites, the narrator repeats his numerical evaluation of the oppressive army, using the same insect metaphor and adding to it the metaphor of sand of the seashore, which is reminiscent of *Elohim*'s promise to Abraham. The repetition serves to enforce the fact that Israel is outnumbered; however, with the new metaphor, it marks an irony that the ideal reader would equate with covenant theology and foreshadow the covenant and what YHWH had promised to Abraham will occur again with Gideon. Yet what could not be numbered before the battle hyperbolically has 120,000 Midianites dead before the capture of the two kings and another 15,000 dead afterwards. This character is designed to cause the reader to have antipathy towards him.

PROPHET. The prophet who appears following Israel's cry to YHWH is distinct because of his anonymity. This may marginalize him as an agent of the plot; however, it serves to focus upon his divine message, as the narrator allows him to disappear from the story as quickly as he appears. The elusiveness of this character almost causes the reader to stand aloof of him; although sympathy is created for him and the role he must perform.

ANGEL OF YHWH. The narrator creates ambiguity regarding this theophany by switching back and forth in the story with the terms angel of YHWH and YHWH. This character is shown sitting under the terebinth tree and addressing Gideon without fully disclosing his own identity. When Gideon brought his offering, the angel did not reject it but gave him instructions about how to present it. Then through supernatural manifestation fire came from the rock, consumed the sacrifice, and the angel of YHWH vanished. Once again, a character representing divinity serves as an agent of the plot, with its most important function being Gideon's call, which is discussed later as a type-scene.

GIDEON. Whereas the previous story made us question who the hero figure was, the narrator removes the ambiguity when he makes known Gideon's function is to deliver Israel. He also serves as a microcosm of the macro-character Israel. The parallel between

Israel being brought low and Gideon being the weakest in his clan furthers this theme "that God will work out His purposes in those who are truly helpless."[674] The deliverer is characterized by his actions as fearful and hiding. Only in his hunger and need for food does he come out of his place of hiding, to partially hide in the wine press while he was preparing the wheat. Ironically, his stealth was no match for the angel of YHWH. The divine messenger sees Gideon from a different perspective and acknowledges YHWH's presence with him and uses the vocative expression "valiant warrior." In response, Gideon opens his mouth and reveals his obtuseness, by failing to hear that the discourse of the angel was in the second person singular form and Gideon has used the first person plural. The angel never said that YHWH was with Israel, a fact that the reader knows but for some reason the character does not. Only after remonstration does Gideon understand that the angel is talking to and about him and not about corporate Israel. As the story progresses, the reader is unsure of whether Gideon is guilty of monolatry or polytheism. He is characterized as offering his sacrifice to YHWH; however, the *Torah* is disregarded at many points. When Gideon recognizes that he had been engaged with the angel of YHWH his fearful response parallels that of many other biblical characters. The narrator reminds the narratee of the obvious, when he states that Gideon was afraid of his father's household and causes the scene of the razing of his father's pagan altar to be done under the cover of night. Then as a surprise, the narrator has Gideon's father rename Gideon as Jerubbaal. Despite the pagan theophoric element in his name, the narrator reminds us of the Othniel paradigm by having Gideon clothed with the Spirit of YHWH.[675] In doing so, he associates the divine Spirit with the name Gideon and not with Jerubbaal. After this empowerment, Gideon marshals his own בית אב; but then acts out of his own initiative contrary to divine plan by amassing a thirty-two thousand man army. Through his requiring *Elohim* to provide three confirming signs (twice with the fleece and once with the dream) his fearfulness is shown. But in the event of the fleece, it is shown that Gideon knew the divine will but refused to act on it which anticipates his expectation that he would be the object of divine anger. Gideon is a creature of habit. His army had to be reduced to the level YHWH desired, but after the initial foray, Gideon sends messengers again into the territories of Naphtali, Asher, Manasseh, and Ephraim to pursue the

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[674] Wilcock, 79.

[675] The syntax of this phrase implies that the Spirit of YHWH is the subject of the sentence. As such, it may be interpreted that the Spirit is not simply clothing/covering Gideon, but He is wearing Gideon, making the divine manifestation within Gideon rather than upon him. N.M. Waldman, "The Imagery of Clothing, Covering, and Overpowering," *JANES* 19 (1989), 163-164.

Midianites, even though YHWH had turned the swords of the Midianites against one another. The cruelty we have noticed with Ehud, Shamgar, and Jael resurfaces in the manner in which Gideon treats the people of Succoth and Penuel. But, whereas the earlier characters inflicted cruelty and death upon foreigners, Gideon is doing this to his own countrymen. Only a little time elapsed in the story from the time that Gideon razed the altar to *Baal* until he made an ephod that became a snare to him and his household. Although negative comment is made about the procreative ability of Gideon with his many wives it is implied regarding his liaison with the *pîlegeš* of Shechem who produced Abimelech. The way that Gideon is presented, the reader reacts to him at different times with realistic empathy, sympathy, and then at the end with a degree of antipathy for the way that his character has deteriorated.

YHWH. The macro-character is much more present in this story than He has been in previous stories. There is little to His character that is introduced that is not already known. It is significant that instead of sending either a prophet, the angel of YHWH, or His Spirit, that He sends all three of them, plus an evil spirit later in the story regarding Abimelech. Through Gideon, the narrator uses five different divine appellations: the familiar YHWH, *Elohim*, and YHWH your *Elohim*, as well as *Adonai* YHWH, and YHWH-*Shalom*. In the Abimelech part of the story, YHWH uses Jotham to pronounce divine judgment on Abimelech, although Jotham is neither prophet nor deliverer.

ABIMELECH. Instead of following the normal deliverer paradigm, the narrator introduces into the narrative an antithetical character who represents another leadership possibility. The initial mention of Abimelech sets a negative tone. Even though he is the offspring of Gideon, his mother unnamed in the story is marginalized as a *pîlegeš* from Shechem. From the outset there are two strikes against him which serve the story to characterize a different kind of action. The narrator leaves the mention of this character to allow sufficient story time to elapse for Gideon to die and Abimelech to reach an age of maturity. Guesses at Abimelech's age or where he was in the birth order of Gideon's sons would be conjecture. When this part of the story begins there is no mention of Abimelech being raised up by YHWH, being empowered by the Spirit, or being a deliverer. Further, the cycle that begins with apostasy was not followed by YHWH raising up an oppressor against Israel. Following in a pattern of Gideon who introduced vignettes of regionalized oppression of Israel as part of the deliverance process, his son Abimelech begins a reign of terror of oppression and murder. The narrator allows

Abimelech to show himself as clever and methodical in his actions of being enthroned as king, from the securing of ethnic backing, finances, *protekzia*, and the removal of his adversaries. Nonetheless, he is shrewd and violent in the manner in which he treats the other characters. At the point of his mortal wounding, he is characterized as vain and proud, fearing the way he would be remembered. The irony is he is remembered as being killed by a woman rather than his armor bearer. As a character, he creates antipathy for the reader.

POINT OF VIEW. Throughout the story the narrator clearly is telling this story using the evaluative point of view. At times, he allows the characters to emerge with dialogue. Unlike the previous story, the narrator is more generous to his reader by giving background information to the plot so that there is expectation of plot direction rather than the reader and characters learning what the narrator knows at the same time. When the prophet appears, he delivers his denunciation but the narrator silences the reply of Israel, suggesting that as with previous cries they are marked with words rather than actions of repentance. Proper dialogue occurs between the angel of YHWH and Gideon, although it is clear that everyone knows more about the situation than Gideon. Generally, the narrator remains inconspicuous, but regarding the additional naming of Gideon to Jerubbaal, the repetition of the description of the Midianite army, and the fulfillment of Jotham's prophecy he is intrusive to make sure the reader knows his point of view. The narrator does not often allow two characters to engage in dialogue, usually leaving the response of the interlocutor out. Proper dialogue does occur between the Midianite dreamer and his friend, the men of Ephraim and Gideon, Gideon and the leaders of Succoth, Gideon and the two Midianite kings, and Gideon's victorious army and Gideon. Usually, it involves issues of violence, with the latter being a precursor to more sin. The narrator is not shy to present Gideon's inner life at times by means of his monologue and dialogue. Most often, it centers upon his fear and toward the end of the story his anger.

In the Abimelech part of the story, proper dialogue is repressed in all but one instance between Gaal and Zebul. Otherwise, the narrator allows some monologue to enter the story. In each case the evaluative point of view is seen with the narrator able to communicate the action through his narration and through the characters.

LANGUAGE PLAY. The narrator employs type-scene, multiple parallel allusions, as well as symbolism, irony, and a wide variety of rhetorical devices.

TYPE-SCENE. When the character of Gideon is introduced, the narrator goes beyond parallelism and allusion to invoke a type-scene of divine calling and commission.

This technique has not been used with the previous deliverers, but, as the overall narrative approaches its chiasmic center, Gideon is ironically juxtaposed against the character of Moses due to the similarities in their calls. Klein has noted three parallels between them, as reflected in Table 18.[676]

TABLE 18

PARALLELS IN THE APPOINTMENT TYPE-SCENE

OF MOSES AND GIDEON

	Exodus (Moses)	Judges (Gideon)
Call	and I will send you	Have I not sent you
Objection	who [am] I... that I should bring the sons of Israel from Egypt?	with what shall I... my family is weakest. I am the least in the house of my father.
Affirmation Sign	for I will be with you this [will be] the sign	for I will be with you give me a sign

However, there are other areas as well. Webb has noted that Gideon was hiding from the enemy, as Moses was hiding from the Egyptians, although hiding for different reasons. Further, Gideon was "working for his father Joash who is clan head and priest of a pagan shrine (Cf. [*(Yitrô)*] Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, whose flocks Moses was tending when Yahweh's angel appears to him)."[677] Even the words that Gideon speaks to the angel about deliverance from Egypt connect the reader with these two characters. Moses was drawn toward his fire theophany at the beginning of his commissioning event and with humility recognized who was calling him, by hiding his face for he was afraid to look at *Elohim*.[678] "In contrast, Gideon is slow to recognize the speaker and does not shield his eyes from direct vision," and consequently does not have his proof until the fire theophany disappearance that evokes further fear in the character.[679] Although Moses' burning bush was probably a terebinth tree as was the tree that the angel of YHWH was sitting under when he met Gideon, this parallel should not be taken as far as Soggin proposes that this tree was the nucleus of the cultic site.[680] There is no evidence that Moses established the location of his burning bush for a sanctuary. Further, the cultic *Asherah* which Gideon razed is not connected with the tree where he met the divine

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[676] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 51.

[677] יִתְרוֹ. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 148.

[678] Ex. 3:6.

[679] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 51.

[680] Soggin, *Judges*, 117.

messenger. Nonetheless, the similarities between the call of Moses and Gideon establish for the ideal reader an image of a deliverer who will lead Israel from their oppression.

Although not as frequent as the first type-scene, the narrator also uses the interruptive/delaying type-scene.[681] In contrast with the previous stories, the raising of the deliverer is interrupted to bring a prophet on the scene. Likewise, once the deliverer has been raised up his action of deliverance is interrupted so that YHWH can confront His emissary with a potential death threat. In this case, the deliverance action is postponed until Gideon desecrates the altar of *Baal*. If he failed to follow through he faced the presumed wrath of YHWH; but if he obeyed YHWH he faced the threat of death at the hands of the men of Ophrah. It is ironic that in the place where deliverance was postponed to remove idolatry that in the same locale Gideon begins a new pagan practice suggesting that once again proper deliverance would be interrupted.

PARALLELISM. The narrator is not opposed to creating parallels between his stories. He does this at three points. The first regards the prophet. In this story as well as the previous one, immediately after the action is complicated by Israel crying to YHWH, He sends a prophet. In the earlier story, it is the female prophetess Deborah. However, in the current story, the prophet who comes is an unnamed male. The parallelism abruptly ends past the arrival of the prophets, as they function differently. He does not set in motion the process of deliverance but rather he serves "to indict the Israelites and tell them that they have forfeited all right to deliverance."[682] The parallelism accentuates that this is not just a repetition of apostasy, but rather because of the contrasts that it is an intensification of rebellion that suggests a variation in divine action.

The next parallel item surrounds the words of the angel of YHWH and the prophet. The messenger first appeared at Bochim. It is interesting that the unnamed prophet of our story repeated the phrases he used: "I brought you up from Egypt" and "you have not obeyed Me."[683] At Bochim the people cried after the angel spoke; but with the prophet they cried before he spoke.

When the angel of YHWH came to Bochim it was for a denunciating speech. When he appears again, it is to curse Meroz and its inhabitants.[684] Now that the narrator has introduced him into the Gideon story, the reader expects a similar character function.

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[681] O'Connell, 154. Other examples of this type-scene are Ex. 4:24-26; and Num. 22:22-34.

[682] Webb, The Book of Judges, 145.

[683] Jg. 2:1-2; and 6:8-10.

[684] Jg. 5:23.

However, because the unnamed prophet has assumed the negative judgment role the theophanic messenger can introduce the salvific judgment role. Ironically, it is Gideon who uses the typical theophanic language of deliverance from Egypt in addressing the angel. Rather than paralleling the earlier two appearances, this new role sets a paradigm for his later appearance with Samson's parents.

The narrator also carries forward the familiar motif of killing the king with a sword. Already we have seen king Eglon killed by Ehud's sword. In a close parallel, Sisera, most probably a Canaanite king was killed by Jael's tent peg functioning as a dagger or sword. In the Gideon story, the motif is foreshadowed through the battle cry: "A sword for YHWH and for Gideon."[685] Although Eglon never escaped from Ehud, Sisera did escape from Barak, as did Zebah and Zalmunna from Gideon. The narrator does not explicitly say that Gideon killed the two kings with his sword, although the context implies it when he had requested that Jether kill them with his sword.[686] With Abimelech, as the king, following his mortal wounding by the upper millstone dropped upon him, it is his Shechemite armor bearer who pierced Abimelech with his sword so that he died.[687]

The narrator returns to the motif of a snare, from the incident at Bochim. Just as the angel had prophesied, the gods of the land would become a snare to Israel. The irony is that Gideon used gold from holy war booty to make an ephod that would become a snare. That he did not follow the *Torah* and require the purification of the gold and the sanctification of it being brought to YHWH implies self-glorification and the tangible exchange of gold and idol in the place of YHWH and His Spirit.[688]

> The ephod introduces a motif which gains in significance in the remaining narratives: Israel's increasing secession from ethical Yahweh worship to worship of humanity's self-determined values, its own creations. This motif represents a shift from 'merely' worshipping the local gods with which the Israelites come into contact. Israel is no longer the innocent of the desert who is easily seduced into apostasy. Grown more confident, more worldly, more sophisticated, Israel creates its own trap, its own lure from Yahweh.[689]

The old adage "like father like son" applies to Gideon. Gideon is characterized as fearful in the early stages of the story. However, later in the story, rather than having his

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[685] Jg. 7:20.

[686] Jg. 8:20-21.

[687] Jg. 9:54.

[688] Num. 31:23.

[689] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 65.

(na'arkā) Purah at his side, as with the Midianite espionage trip, the narrator shows his (hanna'ar) Jether, his first-born son at his side, at the time of the execution of Zebah and Zalmunna.[690] The second usage of the word betrays its primary meaning of a submissive servant. This is to identify Jether as a fearful youth, a trait his father had at the beginning of the story and which is emulated by his progeny. Another example is between Gideon and Abimelech.

> Gideon's ruthless reprisal against two Manassite cities (Succoth, Penuel) while conquering two foreign kings is echoed when Abimelech represses two cities in Manasseh (Shechem, Thebez) while ruling as a semiforeign king.[691]

SYMBOLISM AND IRONY. In addition to type-scenes, there are other biblical parallels. Although his army was reduced down to the size of 300 men, this is reminiscent of Abram's 318 men in his army that went to battle against the four kings in the Transjordan who had stolen away Lot.[692] Returning back to Judges, the lesson that Gideon taught the men of Penuel with thorns and briers, parallels the word play of Shamgar striking down the Philistines with an ox-goad. Further, after Zebah and Zalmunna had been captured, the reader learns that they had killed Gideon's brothers. There is a conversation that develops between Gideon and his captives, but as the principle of *lex talionis* was involved, the story mirrors Adoni-Bezek receiving retributive punishment but likewise speaking with his captors after being pursued. In both cases, *Elohim* is credited with repaying these kings.[693]

When Gideon was called to deliver Israel from the hand of Midian, it is not surprising that he objected to the call, as the refusal motif is characteristic of the appointment type-scene. The irony, which serves as an indication of divine judgment, is in the angelic imperative "Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian."[694] It was obvious to everyone that Gideon had no strength. Contrary to Rabbinic interpretation placing the onus on Gideon's merit or faith, it would be a divine deliverance.[695]

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[690] אֵ‎ נַעַרְךָ and הַנַּעַר. Jg. 7:10; and 8:20.

[691] O'Connell, 153-154.

[692] Gen. 14:14-15.

[693] Gane, 78. Jg. 1:6-8.

[694] Jg. 6:14.

[695] *Tanh.*, *Shoftim*, 4. 2 Cor. 12:10.

The *leitword* "hand" figures prominently in this story, as it does in the overall narrative. The narrator uses this term twenty-three times.[696] From the outset, YHWH gave Israel into the hand of Midian and as a result, the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. The prophet reminds Israel that YHWH had delivered them from the hands of the Egyptians. Yet, Gideon protests to the angel of YHWH that Israel has been given into the hand of Midian to which the divine response is to have Gideon deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Later, in the first reduction of Gideon's army, YHWH explains He will not give Midian into their hands so that Israel does not become boastful thinking their hand has brought the deliverance. In the second reduction of the army, the three hundred used their hand to bring water to their mouth. By this, the *leitword* continued to be used as a vehicle to express that the Midianites would be delivered into their hands. That the hand would be used in a symbolic and different form is expressed by the soldiers using both hands to carry provisions and *shofars* with no mention of weapons. Once again, YHWH reiterates to Gideon that He has given Midian into his hands. Even the Midianite interpretation of the dream used the exact phraseology. Then with an allusion to the Joshua event at Jericho, an unorthodox battle plan is announced with the soldiers carrying a pitcher in the left hand to conceal the torch and a *shofar* in the right hand.

> The description of the function of the hands for the purposes mentioned, rather than for using a sword or the like, is the author's way of concretizing by story-telling the removal of the possibility that Israel will attribute the victory to the might of its own hands. The loading of the hands concretizes the negation of their being used for war-like purposes. Hence, the only possibility left is that of admitting that "the hand" of God brought about the victory.[697]

The capture of Oreb and Zeeb is attributed to *Elohim* giving them into the hands of the men of Ephraim. When it comes to the fleeing kings, Zebah and Zalmunna, the narrator uses metonymy when the men of Succoth request the palms of the kings as proof of their capture and death. But instead of amputating the palms, Gideon presents them alive in his hand to the men of Succoth before he disciplined them all. Following their death, the soldiers with Gideon attributed their victory to him, declaring that he had delivered Israel from the hand of Midian. Thus, the narrator's purpose through YHWH was that Israel would not claim that it was their hand that brought the victory as the characters failed to credit YHWH with His action of deliverance.

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[696] Jg. 6:1, 2, 9, 13, 14; 7:2 (2x), 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20; 8:3, 6 (2x), 15 (2x), 22; and 9:24.

[697] Amit, The Book of Judges, 265.

In the Abimelech part of the story, the term "hand" only appears once. Rather, the author chooses to use the *leitwords* "one," "head," and "stone." The parallelism begins with the use of the word "one." Abimelech kills the seventy brothers on one stone. It is one woman with one stone that kills him.[698] The second parallel in the account is with the Hebrew words *(rōš-'eḥād)* "one head."[699] As the single head or the chief person, Abimelech is destroyed by a stone that drops on his head.[700] The third word "stone" is the object where Abimelech kills his brothers and in retributive fashion the object that brings his demise.

Certain of the *leitwords* also function botanically, as a tree. The angel of YHWH who was sitting under the terebinth in Ophrah begins the deliverance story.[701] The sacrificial offering was brought to the messenger at the terebinth.[702] Abimelech was crowned at the terebinth in Shechem.[703] Then the unnamed species of trees, as well as the fig and olive trees, all representative of Israel are given anthropomorphic character to rebuke and satirize the Abimelech monarchy.[704] Then, the terebinth of the diviner features; this time it overshadows the fate of the Shechemites with the ambush set by Abimelech.[705] The final mention is when Abimelech cut down tree branches, from Mt. Zalmon, symbolic of Jotham's brambles, to use as kindling to kill the sequestered people of the tower of Shechem.[706]

Likewise the motif of fire is present. Fire first appears with the theophanic acceptance of Gideon's offering.[707] Then, it is manifest in the surrounding flames of three hundred torch bearers.[708] The destructive element of fire appears with the prophecy of Jotham against Abimelech and the men of Shechem.[709] Part of the prophecy is fulfilled by Abimelech in his arson of the temple of *El-berith* and the deaths of the thousand people

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[698] Jg. 9:5, and 53.

[699] רֹאשׁ־אֶחָד H. Jg. 9:37.

[700] Janzen, 35.

[701] Jg. 6:11.

[702] Jg. 6:19.

[703] Jg. 9:6.

[704] Jg. 9:8-15.

[705] Jg. 9:37.

[706] Jg. 9:48-49.

[707] Jg. 6:21.

[708] Jg. 7:19-20. The fire or light from the torch is implied, although the word is not used.

[709] Jg. 9:15, and 20.

inside.[710] At Thebez, Abimelech intended to destroy the tower by fire, but before he could accomplish it, he was killed.[711] Thus, that part of Jotham's prophecy had a figurative rather than literal fulfillment.

Traditionally, towers are symbols of strongholds or places of safety. In the three instances in Judges they perform an ironic function that does not provide safety for the people but results in destruction. At Penuel, the tower was torn down and the men killed by Gideon.[712] At the tower of Shechem, the chambers were burnt by fire and nearly one thousand people were killed by Abimelech.[713] At the tower of Thebez, instead of the expected motif, the tower was not destroyed, despite Abimelech's intentions, but Abimelech was destroyed by one from the tower.[714]

At one point, there is the question of whether the micro-character Gideon was directing the action of the macro-character YHWH. From the second prologue, we know that YHWH had prepared a test for Israel. But, once Gideon comes on the scene, he turns the tables and tests *Elohim* unnecessarily twice regarding the fleece. The irony is that in fulfilling Gideon's test, Gideon has to face YHWH's double reduction of the unnecessary army he had amassed.

In similar fashion, the renaming of Gideon to Jerubbaal suggesting that *Baal* will contend for himself is connected with the event of Gideon's army requesting that he rule over them. Did *Baal* ever contend for himself? In essence, when Gideon refused to rule over Israel he established a vacuum that Israel wanted to be filled. Although the episodes involving Abimelech point to him ruling over Israel, the question that exists is whether the ephod Gideon made, which became an idolatrous snare to Israel was a covert *Baal* action of contention which reinstituted *Baalism* and subverted Israel to the rule of a pagan deity.

After Gideon understood the interpretation of the Midianite dream, he gave his militia the battle plan which included the two word proclamation "For YHWH and for Gideon" that would follow the blasts of the *shofars*.[715] However, when the battle cry was made, the enthusiastic warriors inserted the word "a sword" at the beginning of their

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[710] Jg. 9:49.

[711] Jg. 9:52.

[712] Jg. 8:9, and 17.

[713] Jg. 9:46-49.

[714] Jg. 9:50-53.

[715] Jg. 7:18.

proclamation.[716] The directive of Gideon and the action of his soldiers are telling. Already, before the battle has occurred Gideon has begun to share in the divine glory with his own boasting. It was this very reason that resulted in the reduction of his army. But with the actual battle cry, the soldiers invoked the use of the sword unnecessarily for both YHWH and Gideon. Neither needed a sword.[717] YHWH had brought confusion into the Midianite camp with the enemy turning its swords upon itself. The late night confusion that erupted in the camp with the soldiers being awakened by the blasts of shofars surrounding them served as psychological warfare.[718] The utterance has ironic prophetic value, also. Since the men figuratively have put a sword in YHWH's hand, it will ultimately be drawn against Israel in the apostasy that will follow at the conclusion of the battle. Likewise, with Gideon prophetically given a sword by his men, this points to the judgment being twofold. First, there was the divine judgment. Second, there is the human judgment through Gideon which he inflicts upon Succoth and Penuel, and later his household and Israel through his making of the ephod.

The narrator was not opposed to using the agricultural motif of the land in order to mirror the spiritual condition of Israel. Hamlin has noticed three ironic symmetries that accomplish this.[719] First, the Midianite devastation of the land begins the story whereas Abimelech sowing the land with salt is at the end of the story.[720] Gideon is met by the messenger of YHWH at a winepress to begin the deliverance; but, Gaal and his drunken revelers have taken the fruit of the vineyards into their pagan temple to plan treason against Abimelech.[721] The third symmetry where Gideon disciplines the men of Succoth with thorns and briers is paralleled by Jotham's parable of the bramble destroying the trees.[722]

As just mentioned, the winepress serves as a symbol that is repeated. But the greater rhetorical value is as a metaphor for the destruction of the enemy. Gideon employs this metaphor when referring to the destruction of Oreb and Zeeb as the gleaning

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[716] Jg. 7:20.

[717] Cf. 1 Sam. 17:47.

[718] Block, *NAC*, 283. In modern day Israel, the current *(al intifaḍa)* الأنتفاضه "uprising" against Israel by the Palestinians has the same type of psychological affect and functions as an element of judgment.

[719] Hamlin, 91.

[720] Jg. 6:5; and 9:45.

[721] Jg. 6:11; and 9:26-28.

[722] Jg. 8:7, 16; and 9:14-15.

of the grapes of Ephraim and as an allusion to the destruction of Zebah and Zalmunna as the vintage of *(ᵃbî'ezer)* Abiezer.[723]

The strange weapons that Gideon's army uses also invoke three symbols.[724] The empty pottery jars which shielded the torches from Midianite observance become an object in the hand of the divine Potter to be used as He pleases, which includes being destroyed.[725] This metaphorically pictures what will happen to the Midianites. The lit torches are symbolic of salvation that shines forth through the darkness.[726] The sound of the *shofar* heralds a time of deliverance and jubilee, where property rights are restored.[727]

The dream of the Midianite soldier allows the narrator to be ironic through their telling of the story. The destructive item that the Midianites interpret to be Gideon and his sword is barley bread. Bread has no destructive value to tents or to the army encampment. The irony is supported by the fact that barley is an inferior grain to wheat, which symbolizes from the Midianite perspective the inferior Gideon will supplant their collective superiority represented by the encampment.[728] For the dreamer, that the bread was rolling around loose symbolized that Gideon was likewise moving freely and not under Midianite control.[729] Interwoven into the text is a pun that is lost in interpretation *(sic)*. Most translators use the word "interpretation" rather than the literal *(šibrô)* "its breaking" that refers to the solution of the dream.[730] This serves to foreshadow when *(wayyišb°rû)* they broke the clay pitchers and no doubt the spirit of the Midianite dreamer and his friend.[731] The irony is carried further as the motif of bread is used. The metaphor of bread is used to signal Midian's defeat and as this action is being carried out, bread (or the lack of it being given to Gideon) signals the defeat and destruction of the men of Succoth.

RHETORICAL DEVICES. The narrator continues to use puns to tell his story. The three most obvious instances of paronomasia are in the names of Gideon, Jerubbaal, and

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[723] 𝕳 אֲבִיעֶזֶר. Auld, "Gideon Hacking at the Heart of the Old Testament," 266. Jg. 7:25; and 8:2.

[724] Hamlin, 96-97.

[725] Ps. 2:9; Isa. 64:8; and Jer. 19:11.

[726] Isa. 62:1.

[727] Lev. 25:9.

[728] Moore, *ICC*, 206.

[729] Gane, 70.

[730] 𝕳 שברו. Jg. 7:15. Block, *NAC*, 280.

[731] 𝕳 וַיִּשְׁבְּרוּ. Jg. 7:20.

Abimelech. Gideon means hacker or hewer.[732] Ironically, the paronomasia that surrounds his name with the hacking down of the *Asherah* and the destruction of the altar to *Baal* becomes the event for his renaming. This results in his father changing his name to Jerubbaal, which means "let *Baal* contend."[733] Through this ridicule and satire is cast upon Joash's kinsmen for *Baal* worship; but at the same time it begins to undermine the story with the use of a suspect theophoric name. As Klein has observed, it is not *Baal* who contends with Gideon, but ironically, it is Gideon who contends with YHWH.[734] The third onomastic paronomasia regards Abimelech, with its primary meaning of "my father is king." Yet, it also has the possibility of being theophoric. All of the circumstances surrounding Abimelech's parentage and his subsequent character actions suggest that this has a negative association that is implied for the reader.

But the onomastic puns do not stop there. The names of the four named Midianites also contribute to their characters. Oreb means "raven" and Zeeb means "wolf." As a bird of prey and a carnivorous animal, there is a near merismic affect using the aggressive side of the animal kingdom to characterize their activity of preying upon Israel but likewise fleeing into the arid areas until their next attack. When the narrator introduces the Midianite kings, he leaves the zoological realm but uses symbolic imagery. Zebah means "sacrifice" and Zalmunna (although having possible theophoric use) means "shade has been denied" with shade referring to protection. In an imprecatory psalm, these four are remembered for their desire to possess the pastures of *Elohim*.[735] As with his name, Zebah was sacrificed (literally, murdered) in Gideon's personal revenge for the deaths of his brothers at Tabor.[736] The symbolism with Zalmunna's name is a little more tenuous. Nonetheless, Gideon violated a proverb, and he used the name of YHWH in order to withhold protection from Zalmunna choosing to kill him instead.[737] But, on the other hand as the avenger of blood, for his brothers, he fulfilled the *Torah*.[738] When the story transitions to the Abimelech episodes, three other names have onomastic pun value. The first is Jotham. As previously addressed, this theophoric meaning is "YHWH is

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[732] Block, "Will the Real Gideon Please Stand Up?," 356. Jg. 6:11.

[733] Casanowicz, 156. Jg. 6:32.

[734] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 58. Cf. Jg. 6:13-16, 36-37, and 39.

[735] Ps. 83:11-12.

[736] Jg. 8:18-21.

[737] Hamlin, 98-99. Jg. 8:19; and Prov. 24:11.

[738] Num. 35:19; and Dt. 19:12.

perfect." This name suits the story when Jotham's parable and address to the men of Shechem is a prophetic statement of what YHWH will do to bring judgment. The second is Gaal, whose name means "dung beetle." The implication of the name is an insect that is loathed because of its activity. The character of Gaal connects well with the concept of dung, as his actions of treason and deceit permeate the story with an unfavorable odor. Following the lead of Boling, Janzen alternately translates Zebul as "Big Shot" rather than "exalt" which allows Zebul in his subordinate role to Abimelech to contrast with the lowly dung beetle.[739] Even in the name Big Shot there is a negative characterization that matches his performance.

The paronomasia also extends to geography. Once Gideon had assembled his army at the spring of Harod, it is not surprising that the majority of the encampment is *(yārē' w*ᵊ*ḥārēd)* fearful and trembling.[740] The image of a water spring presents a word play of crying associated with the hendiadys trembling fright.[741] Burney sees this as the narrator casting ridicule upon the cowardly.[742] Yet, the pun is carried further when Gideon reaches Zebah and Zalmunna and *(heḥᵉrîd)* he "frightened" the whole camp.[743]

When the narrator describes Israel crying out to YHWH, he uses repetition that employs chiastic parallelism whereby Israel is stressed as agents and recipients of YHWH's judgment.[744] That crying out was because Israel *(wayyiddal)* became small because of Midian, "which says as much about her emotional state as about her economic condition." [745] Through merismic alliteration the refuges where Israel fled are presented.[746] It is ironic that when Gideon is presented as the deliverer, he is shown fearfully hiding in a winepress threshing out wheat in order to save it from the Midianites; however, by the time he has crossed over the Jordan River, he is boldly out in the open in pursuit of the Midianite kings; yet, his precious commodity of food does not exist, even though in the Midianite dream Gideon represents a barley loaf.

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[739] Janzen, 34.

[740] 𝔐 יָרֵא וְחָרֵד. Jg. 7:1, 3.

[741] Block, *NAC*, 275.

[742] Burney, 207.

[743] 𝔐 הֶחֱרִיד. This is parsed as *Hiphil* Perfect 3MS. Block, *NAC*, 291. Jg. 8:12.

[744] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 49-50. Jg. 6:6-8.

[745] 𝔐 וַיִּדַּל. Block, *NAC*, 253. Jg. 6:6.

[746] 𝔐 *(hamminhārôṯ)* הַמִּנְהָרוֹת, *(hammᵊ'ārôṯ)* הַמְּעָרוֹת, and *(hammᵊṣāḏôṯ)* הַמְּצָדוֹת. Jg. 6:2.

At the end of Gideon's life which serves to transition to the Abimelech episodes, the irony is tragic for his household and for Israel. His public pronouncements do not match his actions. Gideon emphatically stated he would not rule over Israel. At the surface this appears to be the case. However, through *hysteron proteron* a Gideon dynasty is presented in him having a household, prior to him returning to live in his own house and begetting his own Abiezrite kingdom. Through the pun of the word "house" and his son's name "Abimelech" the reality of his rulership is implied and emulated by Abimelech who overtly assumes the role that his father held covertly.[747]

Much has been made of the paronomasia surrounding Abimelech's name. But semantically and rhetorically this is important because the typical naming verb is not used and in its stead, Gideon *(wayyāśem)* "set" his son's name and his destiny.[748] Ironically, it was through his mother that he assumes the ruling function. Whereas, normal judging, ruling, and holy activity thus far have been associated with the terebinth, there is a semantic alteration here as well. The terebinth where Abimelech was made king was *(muṣṣāb)* "set" there stressing human pagan ceremonial activity rather than the normal growth process associated with the sacred terebinth that was in Shechem.[749] Thus the placing of the tree becomes a perversion of what is natural. This is significant because the tree draws the ideal reader back to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden.[750] When it is seen in this reality, Abimelech becomes a type of serpent in the original story who with his beguiling speech brings reality into question.[751] He even uses the idiomatic expression of kinship initiated between Adam and Eve.[752] In the place of *Elohim* stands *Baal-berith* meaning "god of the covenant" which is another perversion of reality. Although the narrator does not bring the fruit of the tree into the story, the activity that occurs under this tree likewise produces death.[753] Naturally, the first fratricide between *(Qayin)* Cain and Abel is paralleled by Abimelech's activity of killing

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[747] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 154.

[748] **וַיָּשֶׂם**. This is parsed as *Qal* Imperfect 3MS, with a *Waw* consecutive. Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 70. Jg. 8:31.

[749] **מֻצָּב**. This is parsed as *Hophal* Participle MS. Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 72. Gen. 35:4-5; and Jg. 9:6.

[750] Hamlin, 101. Gen. 2:17.

[751] Gen. 3:1-6.

[752] Gen. 2:23.

[753] Gen. 2:17.

his brothers.[754] The difference is that instead of the blood crying from the ground, the sole survivor Jotham cries out the curse in the hearing of YHWH.[755]

Once again, Israel has been Canaanized. This time, they have chosen to have a king like the Canaanites. The Canaanization is also implied by the generic use of *Elohim* throughout the Abimelech episodes. However, from a Yahwistic perspective, it is important for Jotham to direct his fable from Mount Gerizim, a known covenantal platform where the *Torah* was recited. This required the men of Shechem to be in a position of lower elevation, whereby they "must *look up* to Jotham; [and] they must *look up* to the ethical ramifications of their situation."[756]

In order to facilitate the anti-climax, the narrator polarizes Abimelech from his father and shows that with similarity of action the ironic deterioration in the book, as reflected in Table 19.[757]

TABLE 19

GIDEON AND ABIMELECH CHARACTER DETERIORATION

Gideon (7:15-25)	*Abimelech* (9:22-49)
Theophany, belief in Yahweh	No evidence of any belief
Yahweh's Spirit surrounds	Evil spirit intervenes
Fights superior and attacking forces, conquers	Fights non-combatants, cruelly murders
Fights to deliver Israel	Fights for personal power
Uses noise and fire to frighten	Uses fire to kill
Frees Israelites from oppression	Oppresses Israelites (and others)

Even in the background, *Elohim* does send an evil spirit to do His bidding and to turn this disparaging situation around. It is by His initiative rather than any cries or petitions from Israel. The demonic emissary functions to assist in the divine retribution because of the *(ḥāmās)* violence Abimelech and the men of Shechem's caused to the seventy sons of Gideon.[758] It is tragically ironic that in modern Israel one of the main perpetrators of violence is an Islamic group with the name *Hamas*. When the elements of Abimelech's encounter with the men of Shechem is compared with Gaal's encounter with them later, there is a commonality of six items that serve rhetorically as poetic justice for the retributive activities in Abimelech's life.[759]

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[754] H קַיִן. Gen. 4:8.

[755] Gen. 4:10-11.

[756] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 72.

[757] Ibid., 76-77.

[758] H חָמָס. Jg. 9:23-24.

[759] Boogaart, 50.

TABLE 20

PARALLELS BETWEEN ABIMELECH AND GAAL

Common Incidents	Abimelech	Gaal
A man comes to Shechem	9:1	9:26
The man is accompanied by his brothers/kinsmen	9:1-3	9:26
The man conspires against the absent ruler of Shechem with a speech delivered at a gathering	9:2-3	9:28-29
The speech emphasizes that the ties of the conspirator to Shechem are closer than those of the ruler	9:2	9:28
The Shechemites put their trust in the conspirator	9:3	9:26
The conspirator encounters the ruler	9:5	9:30-42

INTERPRETATION. For the first time, an exodus motif serves as the background of Gideon's conquest after Zebah and Zalmunna. But, where Gideon had previously paralleled Moses in the appointment and epiphany through acts of piety, by the latter part of the story Gideon has begun to exercise impiety through his actions with Succoth, Penuel, and the ephod incident. Gideon and his followers find themselves in the Transjordanian wilderness faint and hungry. This contrasts with the generation of Moses who were supernaturally sustained and fed through manna. Whereas, Moses had the pillar of fire to lead by night and the cloud to lead by day in pursuing after the Heavenly King, Gideon has no such manifestation. Even though Gideon anticipates that it is YHWH who will give the Midianite kings that he is pursuing into his hand, the narrator provides no evidence that YHWH is involved in this activity. Much like the previous story, there are times when YHWH disappears from the action of the characters because their action is inconsistent with His nature. The acts of salvation that occurred west of the Jordan River in the Gideon story are directly or implicitly related to YHWH; however, once Gideon crosses over to the east side of the Jordan River, his character changes and YHWH recedes into the background so as not to be involved or associated with ungodly activity.[760] This is not surprising considering the irony of a man once clothed by the Spirit of YHWH can be clothed with the ephod and led away from YHWH by a spirit of harlotry.[761]

Perhaps one of the greater ironies in the story is how it relates to the second prologue. The narrator has told his readers that YHWH had left nations to test Israel. Even so, more frequently than not, other nations not a part of the original list are used to perform the test. However, Gideon assumes a role of one initiating tests for YHWH to

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[760] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 151-153.

[761] Hos. 4:11-12.

respond. The difference is that YHWH's tests are designed to measure Israelite obedience and Gideon's tests are designed to determine whether he would be obedient to what he already knew of the divine will. It is not surprising that the narrator himself allows a vacillation in the story in the choice of divine names, the ambiguity of Israel's relationship to the generic *Elohim* or the covenant YHWH *vis-à-vis* Gideon with the name usage. This should not be taken as evidence for two different source strands but a rhetorical device showing "this instability in naming the deity has a compositional relationship with the twofold name of Gideon/Jerubbaal" which is evidence that Israel is once again failing YHWH's test.[762] Because the initial scene reveals Gideon's imperceptibility of his interlocutor, this further serves to illustrate the main plot that once again Israel did not know YHWH. It is not surprising that the motif of knowledge which is portrayed through ambiguity in the Gideon part of the story comes into full view with Abimelech. The narrator emphasizes through rhetorical questions that even those who appear to have knowledge of the situation, do not enjoy the same position as the narrator, Jotham, YHWH, and the reader. The motif of those who know and those who do not know point back to the central issue of Israel not knowing YHWH or His ways. This is emphasized through the continued use of the name *Elohim* through the Abimelech section that Yahwism has disappeared from Israel.

> From beginning to end, all the characters in the story, Jotham included, exhibit no knowledge of or allegiance to Yahweh, the God of the Israelites. The only insight that Jotham and the narrator share, and all the other characters of the story lack, is the retributive nature of "God" who requited the crimes of Abimelech and the men of Shechem.[763]

Amit asserts that through the paradigm alteration with the raising up of a deliverer not immediately following after the crying out of Israel functions didactically for the reader to better understand the judgment and ways of YHWH.

> God's behavior is described as an educational tactic, combining punishment and delivery. Here, since there is no more hope that the people will realize that the acts of delivery and punishment are both expressions of God's providential involvement in history—since the deliveries performed by Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar did not help, and even following the victory of Deborah and Barak and their song of praise the Israelites continued to do evil—God decided to try a different path: to send a prophet before raising up a deliverer. It follows from this that the sending of the prophet constitutes a variation, innovation and improvement in the divine attempt to reveal His providential ways and to bring His people to exclusive loyalty and recognition.[764]

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[762] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 170.

[763] Ibid., 174.

[764] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 251.

But, for Hamlin, this serves the motif of providing a prophetic forerunner to the deliverer in much the same way as John the Baptist functioned for *Yeshua*.[765] Both had a message of repentance, deliverance, and remembrance that YHWH is the *Elohim* of Israel. The prophet was not the important one; but, rather his message that pointed to the true Deliverer.

TOLA/JAIR STORY

The notices of the two judges that follow briefly take the focus off the heinous nature of the previous stories in order to preserve a relative peace in the narrative. But at the same time, they function as transition devices. Tola arises from Ephraim to displace Abimelech; whereas Jair arises from the northern Gilead region in order to transition to the Jephthah story.

TOLA. The narrator has left us in shock after the Gideon/Abimelech story. Gross apostasy began while Gideon was still alive. The cyclical pattern begun in the prologue has mutated. Abimelech was not expected as a character neither were his actions nor *Elohim*'s with the sending of an evil spirit. The reader is able to breathe a sigh of relief that the anti-hero has been removed from the scene. Immediately, the narrator resumes the story by introducing Tola, son of *(Pû'āh)* Puah, son of *(Dôḏô)* Dodo.[766] It appears as if the narrative paradigm will be reinstituted. Abimelech has died and Tola has risen to save Israel. The narrator has introduced a judge; but YHWH is completely absent from the story. In fact, the story itself is absent. There is no antagonist or plot. There is no mention of Israelite apostasy, although that may be assumed from the Abimelech narrative where he functions as an oppressor; but at the same time, there is no Israelite cry unto YHWH, nor any description as to how Tola arose to his position, which he held for twenty three years. The story is the epitome of ambivalence. The only connection that can be made with Tola is that like Deborah, they were both from the hill country of Ephraim and both were described as judging Israel, something which could not be said of the other deliverers. As quickly as the narrator introduces Tola, the judge dies and is buried in *(Šāmîr)* Shamir.[767] Klein makes the distinction that Tola is of Issachar lineage; however, in his judging and burial, he is in Ephraimite territory, which subtly introduces the

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[765] Mk. 1:3. Hamlin, 92.

[766] 𝕳 פּוּאָה, and דּוֹדוֹ.

[767] 𝕳 שָׁמִיר. Jg. 10:2.

stranger motif, which becomes important in subsequent narratives.[768] This summary story is unique in that it is the first one in which no one dies through military action or murder.[769] Even though there is no antagonistic oppressor, it is important for Tola to save Israel, from itself and to restore "order after the rampage of Abimelech."[770] Tola functions throughout his judgeship as a symbolic instrument of peace for Israel with "a peaceful and orderly transfer of power from one [judge] to another."[771] There is a subtle negative characterization, since Tola's name means "worm," which is considered to be an unclean animal in the dietary law.

JAIR. Once again, the narrator surprises the reader by introducing another minor judge. The question is whether the Othniel paradigm is no longer viable and a new paradigm has been established that is devoid of scenic action and the mention of YHWH or at the very least *Elohim*. But a parallel has been established. There is no mention of Israelite apostasy after Tola's death. Could it be that its absence from the story means that it had disappeared? That is doubtful as the successive stories reveal. But, likewise, there is no appeal to YHWH. Another judge has arisen, this time it is Jair from the land of Gilead. There is no information as to how he arose to his position nor is there any mention of any saving act, although he did judge Israel for twenty-two years. While the information the narrator gave about Tola was banal, he has chosen to discuss the procreative ability of Jair. He has sired thirty sons, who ride on thirty *("yārîm)* donkeys, having thirty *('ārîm)* tent-villages, which corporately are called *(Ḥawwôt Yā'îr)* Havvoth-Jair.[772] Then, after the narrator briefly intrudes to acknowledge this dynastic type of encampment in his day, he resumes the summary story by having Jair die and become buried in *(Qāmôn)* Kamon.[773] Rather than being an actual site, it might have paronomasic value referring to the burial at some place "on the heights" of the Transjordanian plateau.

INTERPRETATION. Even in the brevity of these two notices there is some language play. As earlier addressed, Tola and Jair, both geographically are situated in the same

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[768] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 82.

[769] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 160.

[770] Beem, 149.

[771] Ibid., 151.

[772] 𝔥 עֲיָרִים, עָרִים, and חַוֹּת יָאִיר. Jg. 10:4. The pun requires the second usage to be emended, as is with all modern translations. Burney, 292. See the section "Confusion of Similar Words and Forms" in Appendix 1, "Textual Errors in Judges by Alteration," page 707.

[773] 𝔥 קָמוֹן. Jg. 10:5.

region as their predecessor and follower, respectively. When the chiasm is viewed geographically, Abimelech and Tola are on the western side of the Jordan River, whereas Jair and Jephthah are on the western side "and in a north-south opposition as well."[774] Chronologically, the narrator speaks of Tola's ancestors; whereas Jair who follows is described in the context of his descendants.

The stories are more than transitional devices. They provide a new paradigm for the other minor judges that follow. Perhaps the most significant element of the stories is what is not mentioned: YHWH. His silence in this story does not mean he was not inexorably involved in the life of Israel. There is relative peace for forty five years and a space of time for Israel to repent and in truth and integrity return to YHWH. His divine mercy is apparent that through these two judges, even though absent in the story, "Yahweh is the gracious God who never allows 'Abimelech' to be the last word for His people."[775]

JEPHTHAH STORY

Naturally, the reader is returned back to the flotsam and jetsam of the turbulent story time across the Jordan River. Where peace and stability had been experienced for forty five years with Tola and Jair, things disintegrate and the narrator plunges the reader back into the whirlpool of Israelite rebellion. The extensive male progeny of Jair serves as a natural foil to the single daughter of Jephthah. Although the narrator does not introduce Jephthah until chapter eleven, there is general agreement that his story begins with the formulaic statement "the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of YHWH."[776]

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. Although the size of the story is only sixty verses, its structure is the most complex thus far. Rather than following the traditional scenic principle of following the five episodes, O'Connell has observed four plots.[777] The primary plot follows the expected divine deliverance of Israel from the sons of Ammon

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[774] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 82.

[775] Davis, Such a Great Salvation, 130.

[776] Jg. 10:6.

[777] O'Connell, 171-178. His actual plot descriptions are: Plot A – YHWH's deliverance of Israel from Ammon through Jephthah; Plot B – Consequences of Gilead's failure to uphold covenant loyalty without ulterior tribe-centered motives and to refrain from covenant (social) injustice – the oath to Jephthah; Plot C – Consequences of the failure of Jephthah to uphold covenant loyalty without ulterior motives and of his adoption of foreign cultic practice – the vow to YHWH; Plot D – Consequences of Ephraim's failure to uphold covenant loyalty without ulterior motives and to refrain from covenant (social) injustice.

through the agency of Jephthah. Accordingly, the three subplots are based on the failure to uphold covenant loyalty without ulterior motives by Gilead, Jephthah, and the men of Ephraim. The subplot observation is doubtless correct; however, even by O'Connell's own admission, the covenant is not mentioned at all in the story.[778] Therefore, in order to allow the syntax to carry the plots forward, the three subplots are emended to be more consistent with the story. Plot B is the consequences of the ulterior motives of the elders of Gilead in their words to Jephthah. Plot C is the consequences of the ulterior motives of Jephthah in his vow to YHWH. Plot D is the consequences of the ulterior motives of the men of Ephraim in their words to Jephthah.

ABSTRACT. There is no abstract *per se* in this story. Instead, it returns to the pattern established in the second prologue and illustrated through all the previous stories except for the minor judges. Nonetheless, the optative declaration by Jephthah "May YHWH the Judge, judge today between the sons of Israel and the sons of Amman" does express the macro-theme of the story.[779]

ORIENTATION. The narrator emphasizes the spatial settings over and above those of temporal or social categories. Often the setting of the story at hand is eclipsed to focus on a historical setting of a *Torah* story. The majority of the references are geopolitical.[780] In addition, there are a number of topographical references.[781] The narrator also makes use of the social setting of Jephthah's house.[782] Ironically, Jephthah is introduced when he is run out of his father's house (the house of his youth) and later, at his own house (the house of his maturity), he in essence runs his daughter off as well.

The first episode takes eighteen years to elapse with most of the action occurring in the Transjordan land of Gilead. Since this event takes place during a time of subjugation, the narrator negatively characterizes this area as "beyond the Jordan [River]"

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[778] O'Connell, 173.

[779] Jg. 11:27.

[780] The geopolitical references include: Gilead, land of the Amorites, land of Tob, Mizpah, land of Israel, land of the sons of Ammon, Egypt, land of Moab, *(Qādēšāh)* קָדֵשָׁה Kadesh, land of Edom, Heshbon, *(Yāhṣāh)* יָהְצָה Jahaz, *(ᵃrôʿēr)* עֲרוֹעֵר Aroer, twenty cities on the banks of the *(ʾarnôn)* אַרְנוֹן Arnon [River], Manasseh, entrance of *(Minnît)* מִנִּית Minnith, twenty cities, and *(ʾāḇēl Kᵉrāmîm)* אָבֵל כְּרָמִים Abel-keramim.

[781] The topographical references include: beyond the Jordan [River], Arnon [River], Jabbok [River], Jordan [River], wilderness, Red Sea, beyond the Arnon [River], mountains, and the fords of the Jordan [River].

[782] Jg. 11:2, 7, and 34-39.

and in "the land of the Amorites."[783] At some point, the oppression also extended westward to include the tribal areas of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim.[784]

In the second episode, the narrator squarely returns the focus to Gilead and nearby Mizpah. The second scene is anachronous as the focus returns to some earlier period, even before the Ammonite oppression, when Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob. The third scene returns the action to story time with the elders of Gilead pleading with Jephthah in Tob to assume a military conquest against the Ammonites. He acceded to their requests and Jephthah returned with the elders to Mizpah to become their leader.

The third episode begins with Jephthah sending messengers to the Ammonite king; however, the locations of the protagonist and antagonist are not specified. Nonetheless, in this political dispute over the land of Israel, the Ammonite king claims it as his land.[785] Since the first meeting did not elicit a positive response, the messengers returned with a second message.[786] The time elapsed between these two scenes is not as important for the narrator as the dialogue of the event. Jephthah's messengers functioning as ambassadors give the king a history lesson filled with the geographical travel of Israel during its final year of wandering in the wilderness. What is significant is the durative temporal reference of this event which occurred three hundred years earlier.[787]

Episode four begins the deliverance event, with the battle carrying Jephthah through Gilead, Manasseh, and Mizpah, to the Ammonite territory in which the battle occurred from Aroer to the entrance of Minnith as far as Abel-keramim.[788] The second scene has Jephthah return to his home in Mizpah, where his daughter comes out of his house to meet him.[789] After their dialogue, the daughter travels to the mountains for two months to bewail her virginity.[790] The final summary scene is Jephthah's fulfillment of his vow, which implicitly would have been in Mizpah.

The final episode is the confrontation between the men of Ephraim and Jephthah. The Ephraimites crossed northward or to (Ṣāp̄ônāh) Zaphon and met their fate in a battle

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[783] Jg. 10:8.

[784] Jg. 10:9.

[785] Jg. 11:12-13.

[786] Jg. 11:14-28.

[787] Jg. 11:26.

[788] Jg. 11:19, and 33.

[789] Jg. 11:34.

[790] Jg. 11:37-38.

at the fords of the Jordan River.[791] The narrator concludes the story with the formulaic statement that Jephthah judged Israel for six years, died, and then was buried at some undisclosed location in one of the cities of Gilead.

COMPLICATING ACTION. The first episode begins with the familiar situation exposition of Israel doing evil again in the sight of YHWH, in which idolatry is the focal point. As would be expected, YHWH responds by selling Israel into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites.[792] However, the narrator never develops the theme of the Philistine oppression until the Samson story. This ambiguity questions the nature of the Philistine subjugation, which is unaddressed and is apparently a different time than Samson, considering they oppressed Israel for forty years.[793] The focus is clearly upon the Ammonite oppression, which for some time remained in the Transjordan and only later in the story bifurcated to include the Cisjordan. The Israelite cries to YHWH for the first time acknowledge their sin; ironically, it appears to be too late for divine reconciliation. Yet, the efficacious repentance had an affect upon YHWH; however, there is no scene where He raises Jephthah up as a deliverer. Instead, the narrator presents the appearance of a deployment of Ammonite and Gileadite forces in nearby towns.

The narrator stops the action of the first plot to present an analeptic subplot that initiates the second episode. Jephthah is introduced as the son of a harlot. This sets the tone for the internal household conflict between siblings, where he is thrust out of his father's home. This establishes a foil for the exposition of the second plot while complicating the action of the main plot. The narrator returns the reader to the primary action by allowing the main plot and first subplot to function simultaneously. Ambiguity follows when the narrator uses *hysteron proteron* regarding the Ammonites fighting against the Gileadites and the elders of Gilead going to the land of Tob to summon Jephthah to be their military leader. Jephthah assumes the role into which he has been invested and testifies to this role before YHWH at Mizpah.[794] When the third episode begins, the first two plots continue to be developed with Jephthah sending messengers to the Ammonite king twice in an effort to diffuse the conflict through diplomacy. Since the diplomatic efforts failed, military efforts are employed that initiate the fourth episode.

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[791] צָפוֹנָה H. Jg. 12:6.

[792] Literally, it is the "sons of Ammon." Jg. 10:7.

[793] Jg. 13:1.

[794] Jg. 11:11.

Even though the narrator does not credit YHWH with raising up Jephthah as a deliverer, the inference is appropriated as YHWH acting through the agency of the elders of Gilead and then affirmed by having the Spirit of YHWH come upon Jephthah.[795] By Jephthah making his pre-battle vow, the narrator introduces the next subplot, which is built upon the consequences of Jephthah's vow.

EVALUATION. The narrator begins the story with a catalogue of various idolatrous actions. As if the indictment were not enough, he makes sure his readers know his assessment that Israel forsook YHWH and did not serve Him.[796] Again, he steps into the story to underscore the oppression to explain that Israel was greatly distressed.[797] Then, after the severe indictment of Israel by YHWH, the narrator gives a glimpse of YHWH's inner life that He could bear the misery of Israel no longer.[798] The narrator does not become conspicuous again until after the vow of Jephthah has been fulfilled. Then he gives the iterative etiology for the annual commemoration of Jephthah's daughter.[799]

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. Once Jephthah has made his vow, the military conquest begins. He struck the Ammonites with a very great slaughter and the sons of Ammon were subdued. This brings the main plot situation to a resolution. The subplot regarding the elders of Gilead is temporarily paused to focus on the subplot development regarding Jephthah's vow. This subplot is complicated by Jephthah's daughter requesting a two-month postponement of the vow's fulfillment. Then, with the vow being fulfilled the subplot (*albeit* unnecessary) is resolved. Expecting the narrator to resolve the first subplot, the story is complicated again by the introduction of a third subplot regarding the men of Ephraim. As the final episode unfolds the words of the men become their downfall and the plot is quickly resolved without any complication, although the test question might serve to temporarily complicate the subplot.

CODA. The minor judge death and burial formula is used to draw closure to this story and resolves the main plot and first subplot.[800]

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[795] Jg. 11:29.

[796] Jg. 10:6.

[797] Jg. 10:9.

[798] Jg. 10:16. For a discussion of this idiom that only appears three other times in the Hebrew Bible (Num. 21:4; Jg. 16:16; Job 21:4; and Zech. 11:8), see R.D. Haak, "A Study and New Interpretation of QṢR NPŠ," *JBL 101* (1982), 165.

[799] Jg. 11:39-40.

[800] Jg. 12:7.

PLOTS. The events that comprise the main plot require an examination of the episodes. Generally, the three subplots are confined to their respective episode. Webb has observed a dialogic confrontation between two characters that serves as its kernel.[801]

EPISODE ONE. The first episode consists of three summary events and one scenic event, all of which are kernels. Story time is observed throughout the episode, with the expected contingent causation of apostasy leading to a divine response of selling Israel into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites followed by the oppression which results in Israel crying out to YHWH. Singular narration is used. Only in the scene of Israel's pleas to YHWH is dialogue offered. YHWH responds to their petition with rhetorical questions with the narrator creating a conflict in which the divine response initially is not one of penitence and change.

EPISODE TWO. The second episode occurs over a period of a few days; however, because the second scene is a historical analepse an unspecified time of two complete generations has elapsed. In the normal biblical economy of words, all four scenes are kernel events using singular narration. The narrator begins this episode with ambiguity. YHWH is absent from the episode until the final scene. In fact, He does not raise up Jephthah as a deliverer. Then there is the question of who summoned the Ammonites to encamp in Gilead as well as the responsive action of Israel encamping at Mizpah. With the Israelite host gathered, the Gileadite leaders posed a question in which any respondent could assume the leadership role. Ironically, Jephthah did not respond, because he was not present. He had been exiled by the ones who would later seek him out in the third scene. Although the collective Israel in the first episode called on the name of YHWH, the elders of Gilead did not. Jephthah returns YHWH to the story despite his subsequent activity. Conflict exists between Jephthah and the Gileadites. This had been an ongoing conflict because his brothers rejected his matriarchal parentage from a prostitute. Whether any of Jephthah's brothers became elders of Gilead is unknown. In many ways, the first two episodes are thematically structured, as reflected in Table 21.[802]

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[801] Webb, "The Theme of the Jephthah Story," 42. The episodes are: 1) Israel vs. Yahweh, Jg. 10:6-16; 2) The elders vs. Jephthah, Jg. 10:17 – 11:11; 3) Jephthah vs. the Ammonite King, Jg. 11:12-28; 4) Jephthah vs. his daughter, Jg. 11:29-40; and 5) Jephthah vs. the Ephraimites, Jg. 12:1-7.

[802] The Table is adapted from Davis, *Such A Great Salvation,* 141.

TABLE 21

THE STRUCTURE OF JUDGES 10:6-16 AND 11:1-11

Theme	Chapter 10	Chapter 11
Rejection	10:6	11:1-3
Distress	10:7-9	11:4
Repentance	10:10	11:5-6
Objection	10:11-14	11:7
Appeal	10:15-16	11:8
Acquiescence	10:16	11:9-11

EPISODE THREE. The third episode introduces the Ammonite king as an antagonist and presents Jephthah as the protagonist. However, Jephthah is only represented in his words that are spoken by his ambassadors. Yet, even so, these are not Jephthah's words as they are a compressed reiteration of the *Torah*. As such, the Ammonite king seals the fate of his territorial claim by not listening to the words of the *Torah* in the mouth of Jephthah, through his messengers. Each scene represents a kernel event. The *Torah* event serves as a foil for the ensuing action of the next episode.

EPISODE FOUR. The response of the Ammonite king is countered by the Spirit of YHWH coming upon Jephthah. Jephthah responds by making a vow to YHWH. This superfluous vow sets another subplot in action that unnecessarily affects his daughter. This scene transitions to a summary event of the battle against the Ammonites. However, there is an ellipsis in the event because although the Ammonite king was represented in the earlier episode, nothing is said of his removal from office by death. Apparently in the subjugation of Ammon, the king is allowed to live, whereas, the next scene at Mizpah shows the encounter between Jephthah and his daughter in which her life is ultimately taken in the following scene after her two month mourning period.

EPISODE FIVE. The final episode introduces the last subplot and carries the confrontation and death motif further. Just as the vow was unnecessary in the story and for the story, the same is true with the Ephraimite confrontation with Jephthah. This parallel which had been introduced between the Ephraimites and Gideon is brought to its expected resolution; but unfortunately at the loss of 42,000 lives. This episode has one scene followed by a kernel summary that concludes the story.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. Within this story a number of new characters emerge, some of which although new to the Judges narrative are characters introduced earlier in the *Torah*. There are ten individual characters, of which most of them remain

nameless.[803] In addition, there are eighteen collective characters and ten divine characters in the story.[804]

SONS OF AMMON. The first collective antagonist to Israel is the Ammonites. There is nothing remarkable about this character who serves as an agent of the plot. As expected with an oppressive regime, they shattered and afflicted Israel primarily in the Transjordan and later in the Cisjordan for a total of eighteen years. They fought against Israel and the oppression was ultimately severe enough that the Israelites cried to YHWH for help. After Jephthah assumed a military role the Ammonites were subdued, *albeit* after they had suffered a very great slaughter. Jephthah's daughter describes them as the enemies of her father of whom YHWH has avenged.[805]

YHWH. The name YHWH has not been used since the conclusion of the Gideon story. Even the name of *Elohim* was only remotely used in the Abimelech story. There was no reference at all to deity with Tola and Jair. Although Jephthah may appear to be an example of piety with his references to YHWH, He is never recorded as speaking to Jephthah and is reported as giving the Ammonites into Jephthah's hand. YHWH is conspicuously absent when Jephthah utters his vow, when he confronts his daughter, and when he confronts the Ephraimites. This pattern has been earlier observed with Ehud and Jael, whereby YHWH is not contaminated by human acts that are inconsistent with His divine nature.

However, YHWH is in the Jephthah story. The messengers of Jephthah to the Ammonite king are slow to ascribe divine guidance in the wilderness wanderings. However, once they mention YHWH to the foreign king, He does take center stage. This historical memory recalls that YHWH, whose name is appended with the *Elohim* of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and He drove out the Amorites from before His people Israel. The messengers express that whoever YHWH drives out, Israel will possess their land. Perhaps, the most crucial observation about YHWH in the text of Judges comes in the last statement the messengers make when they

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[803] The individual characters include: Jephthah, a harlot (who is Jephthah's mother), Gilead, Gilead's wife, the king of the sons of Ammon, the king of Edom, the king of Moab, Sihon, Balak, and Jephthah's daughter.

[804] The collective characters include: sons of Israel, Philistines, sons of Ammon, Judah, Benjamin, house of Ephraim, Egyptians, Amorites, Sidonians, Amalekites, Maonites, leaders of Gilead, inhabitants of Gilead, Jephthah's brothers, the men of Belial, elders of Gilead, messengers of Jephthah, and the men of Ephraim. The divine characters include: YHWH, *Baals*, *Ashtaroth*, gods of Aram, gods of Sidon, gods of Moab, gods of the Philistines, the other gods, *Chemosh*, and the Spirit of YHWH.

[805] Jg. 11:36.

refer to the Israelite deity as YHWH, the Judge. The narrator does not use the substantival form "judge" in the singular for any human person. The second prologue speaks of judges (plural) being raised up by YHWH.[806] However, in the stories either the verbal form is used or alternatively the word "deliverers." Hence, for the first time in the Hebrew Bible, YHWH is officially called the Judge. Even though, the immediate context is that He will judge "today" between the sons of Israel and the sons of Ammon, the application remains for the immediacy of His judgments between Israel and any other.

But before we could learn this new information about YHWH, the narrator begins the story by telling his readers that the divine anger burned against Israel resulting in Him selling Israel into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites because of the Israelite return to idolatry. This response and activity is not new to the overall text. Whenever Israel cries out to YHWH, a confrontational dialogue ensues. Israel appropriately repents; however, rather than acknowledging that repentance a catalogue of divine deliverance activity is paraded in front of Israel. This is followed by YHWH rejecting Israel and declaring He will deliver Israel no more. Although we know from the middle of the story that YHWH gave the Ammonites into Jephthah's hand, through the ambivalence created by the narrator there is an unnatural distance that exists between YHWH and His people. Technically, from this point forward in the text, no other judges are raised up by YHWH. He is completely absent from the accounts of Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. Even with Samson, although the angel of YHWH and the Spirit of YHWH are present, any deity reference is to *Elohim*. This is not splitting semantic hairs regarding terms. Rather, it is the narrator's expression that YHWH, the Judge has judged Israel which means that His pattern of judging by deliverance has changed and only veiled allusion to it appear from this point forward in the Judges text.

Nevertheless, there is a potential problem with the character. Already, we have seen YHWH send an evil spirit to Abimelech. But, in this story, the Spirit of YHWH comes to Jephthah, who then immediately makes a vow, and then is successful in battle. The dilemma arises as to "whether or not he utters his vow under its influence."[807] The Spirit is never shown leaving Jephthah only coming upon him. How pervasive is the Spirit in the life and actions of Jephthah, especially in light of the fact that the Ammonites were given into Jephthah's hand implicitly by YHWH?

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[806] Jg. 2:16.

[807] J.C. Exum, "Murder They Wrote: Ideology and the Manipulation of Female Presence in Biblical Narrative," *USQR 43* (1989), 21.

If not a tacit acceptance of Jephthah's terms, this statement at least implicates the deity. There is otherwise no divine action in the story and, disturbingly, no divine judgment upon Jephthah's act of human sacrifice. The imposition of the vow and the coming of the spirit of YHWH upon Jephthah and the victory renders it impossible to determine whether victory comes as the result of the spirit, or the vow, or both.[808]

JEPHTHAH. The micro-protagonist is Jephthah. In four of the five dialogic episodes he represents one of the sides in the confrontation of words. He is never called a deliverer nor is he credited with delivering Israel. Rather, the narrator sullies this character by the passive statement "so the sons of Ammon were subdued before the sons of Israel."[809] Neither is he called a judge; although in his death notice he is said to have judged Israel for six years.[810] Klein views Jephthah as a complex character with the following "desirable qualities: strength, self-confidence, diplomacy, humility, overt piety; and one undesirable quality: basic ignorance of his belief and of his people."[811] Exum notes a dichotomy that characterizes the life of Jephthah as one who achieves desirable goals by unacceptable means.[812]

When he is introduced, the narrator uses the same term "mighty man of valor" to describe Jephthah as the angel of YHWH used to describe Gideon.[813] However, that positive character trait is contrasted with a dubious parentage in which his birth is the result of prostitution.[814] This stigma attached to his mother affected his fraternal relationship, as his brothers later drove him from Gilead's home citing inheritance reasons. Again an ironic contrast is made through paronomasia that Jephthah lives in the land of Tob, also meaning the "good land."[815] However, in this location, he is surrounded by (*ᵃnāšîm rêqîm*) "worthless men."[816] The essence of these men going out with Jephthah and what they did is ambiguous. The elders for whatever they thought about Jephthah at least believed that he potentially would be able to fight and defeat the Ammonites. As such, the people made him chief and head over them. The narrator

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[808] Exum, "Murder They Wrote," 22.

[809] Jg. 11:33.

[810] Jg. 12:7.

[811] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 90.

[812] J.C. Exum, "The Tragic Vision and Biblical Narrative: The Case of Jephthah," *Signs and Wonders: Biblical Texts in Literary Focus* (Ed.) J.C. Exum (*Semeia Studies*: Philadelphia, PA: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1989), 64.

[813] Jg. 6:12; and 11:1.

[814] Jg. 11:1.

[815] Block, *NAC*, 352.

[816] 𝔐 אֲנָשִׁים רֵיקִים. Jg. 11:3.

silences the words of Jephthah to YHWH, because these apparently do not have confrontational value. Thereafter, Jephthah sends his messengers to the Ammonite king and the narrator places Jephthah's words in the mouths of his messengers, although the dialogue is only reported at the time of its diplomatic delivery. The dialogue is important because through it, the narrator is able to show Jephthah's knowledge of Israelite historiography, although he commits a *faux pas* naming the Ammonite deity as *Chemosh*. Despite the absence of a proper divine calling type-scene, the Spirit of YHWH does come upon Jephthah at the onset of the battle. As before, and even more so in the vow scene, the narrator characterizes Jephthah as one who opens his mouth always having a word to say. The extensive slaughter of the Ammonites and their subjugation only serve the story to advance the plots and expose the character in his confrontation with his daughter. That this event with his daughter even occurs is the fault of Jephthah and not his daughter. He is more concerned about himself and his loss rather than having concern for his daughter and her feelings. The reader is left in shock of the manner in which Jephthah disposes of his daughter and is thus not surprised when an internecine war erupts after Jephthah has eliminated his own seed. It is almost a relief for the reader that Jephthah's judgeship only lasted six years and that his burial site is not cogently identified. It is time to move on.

ELDERS OF GILEAD. There is some ambiguity regarding this composite character, as to whether the elders of Gilead is a synonymous term for the leaders of Gilead and whether they were in fact Jephthah's half-brothers. Whoever these unnamed elders were, they had not forgotten Jephthah and they were aware of his whereabouts in order to pursue him. The issue of reconciliation between them and Jephthah is intimated in the word "returned," a possible repentance of a kind.[817] Their entrance was the removal of the Ammonite threat and for that reason past familial strife and hatred of Jephthah could be overlooked even to make him their head and chief.[818] It is unknown the cultic affinity the elders had toward YHWH. Even in their use of His name it appears to be mimetic because Jephthah had suggested YHWH would be the one who gives the Ammonites into his hand. Their response is predicated upon Jephthah's word and together they return before the people and in a quasi-enthronement he becomes their head and chief. Although it is anticipated that the Gileadites accompany Jephthah into battle against the Ammonites, the narrator is silent about this fact. The Gileadite militia is present in the

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[817] Jg. 11:8.

[818] The issues surrounding the leadership roles regarding these two different substantives is addressed in the section "Leadership Roles" in chapter three, pages 168-170.

intertribal conflict with Ephraim. The elders as agents of the plot disappear from the narrative after the event at Mizpah, as Jephthah's new role has eclipsed the need for elders.

KING OF THE SONS OF AMMON. Unlike the previous narratives having kings, this is the first one in which the character remains anonymous. It is reminiscent of the Gideon story, where the identity of the kings of Midian was withheld in the story; however, the namelessness of the Ammonite king serves to marginalize him, especially in the backdrop of the political message which recalls the names of the historical kings Sihon and Balak. The Ammonite king responds to the first question of Jephthah's messengers without properly knowing the three hundred year old history of the conflict over the Transjordanian land. When the second meeting occurs, the king is not even given voice to the lengthy speech and is dismissed from the narrative with the phrase "he did not listen to the words" of Jephthah. This king like the elders of Gilead is only an agent of the plot.

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER. The daughter of Jephthah of whom the narrator fails to name is the first full-fledged character in the story, other than her father. The particle *hinneh* introduces his daughter and shows her jubilantly coming out to meet her father with tambourines and dancing. The narrator awkwardly reinforces that she is the only child of Jephthah. Neither character refers to the other by name, only familial function as father and daughter. She is described by Jephthah as one that has brought him low and among those who trouble him. The scene is filled with ambivalence because the narrator does not disclose whether Jephthah's daughter even knew the content of her father's vow. She simply accepts his statements to her matter-of-factly with blind allegiance and submission, although she must have had some knowledge of his vow because of her request to postpone the fulfillment of the vow for two months. Now all of the focus is upon her virginity. As quickly as she appears on the scene, she immediately is dismissed from the story, even though the daughters of Israel annually commemorate her.

MEN OF EPHRAIM. Although technically a different character than the men of Ephraim mentioned in the Gideon story, for the purpose of the narrative their mention amalgamates them into a single character by virtue of tribal relation. Nonetheless, there is nothing virtuous about this agent of the plot that produces antipathy in the reader. They are seen as micro-antagonists who have been summoned by some unknown entity, which draws an immediate parallel with the sons of Ammon who likewise were summoned to confront Israel in battle. The narrator shows them through dialogue to be rash, barbaric, and insensitive. Jephthah calls these men fugitives. Ironically, though they picked the

fight with Jephthah, it was the war of words in which an improper response of a single word destroyed 42,000 Ephraimites.

POINT OF VIEW. This story is told almost exclusively through the narrator's point of view. He generally remains outside the story as an unseen and reliable observer in the five confrontational scenes. He intrudes in the opening episode to make his theological comments restating Israel's forsaking of YHWH and the resultant great distress they experienced. But, when the actual dialogues occur, his stance is internal. In the second episode, the successful negotiation he has made that invests him with a sense of self-worth, Jephthah's point of view shows that "not only [is he] being accepted by those who once rejected him, he is able to rub their noses in the past mistake."[819] In the third episode, the narrator gives voice to Jephthah, through the political monologue to the Ammonite king by Jephthah's messengers. In the fourth episode, the narrator does intrude into the story at various points. He pauses the action long enough to make sure the reader knows that Jephthah only has one child and it is his dancing daughter. After the vow has been fulfilled by Jephthah, the narrator comments on Jephthah's daughters' virginal status and then gives an etiological note about the festival honoring her. In the final episode between Jephthah and the men of Ephraim, the narrator breaks frame to insert information about the Ephraimites' inability to pronounce the test word.

LANGUAGE PLAY. The narrator is consistent with his expressive use of language. As such, the Jephthah story includes a couple of type-scenes, numerous parallels, symbolism, irony, and other rhetorical devices.

TYPE-SCENE. As with the Gideon story, from the very beginning there is the interruptive/delaying type-scene. Once again, YHWH is reluctant to deliver Israel.[820] Instead of immediately responding to Israel's cry for help, He comes on the scene with a stern rebuke and a promise not to deliver Israel. Only after Israel had repented and YHWH could endure the misery regarding Israel no longer does the action resume, despite no deliverer being raised up only a confrontation of war.

The narrator departs from the divine commission type-scene to present an analogous scene whereby the elders of Gilead assume the divine role. Obviously, no parallel can be made between YHWH and the elders other than the role in which they function to choose the one in whom they will invest as their representative. Although

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[819] D.M. Gunn and D.N. Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (*Oxford Bible Series:* Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1993), 115.

[820] O'Connell, 202. Jg. 10:11-14.

there is the familiar dialogue and refusal motif which is countered by the elders, the terminology differs. Jephthah is called to be their chief. Then in response to his refusal, they call him to be their head. To the softened refusal of Jephthah, the elders respond by agreeing to make him both head and chief of the people of Gilead. Although there is no divine manifestation, the divine element is present in their assembling together and the quasi-covenantal agreement between the two parties with a divine witness. Since the type-scene has been mutated from its standard form, it is not surprising that there are parallels between it and the Abimelech story. Both Jephthah and Abimelech were of dubious maternal parentage: a *pîleges* and a prostitute, respectively.[821] Both men had a situation of fraternal animosity.[822] Worthless fellows gathered around Jephthah whereas worthless and reckless mercenaries followed Abimelech.[823] The elders of Gilead and the people made Jephthah their head and chief at Mizpah whereas the men of Shechem and all Beth-millo assembled together to make Abimelech their king at Shechem.[824]

The third episode embodies the prophetic judgment type-scene. Jephthah makes four distinct arguments: from history, theology, precedent, and silence.[825] O'Connell has outlined how the two disputations by Jephthah's messengers are consistent with the A.N.E. *rîb* genre.[826] For O'Connell, the political message is one of satire in which other kings are named but the Ammonite king "is not even granted the recognition of being named."[827] As such, the four arguments become important for his undoing. Historically, the Ammonite claim is moot because YHWH drove out the Amorites and Israel possessed the land. Theologically, it was YHWH who was the divine action behind the event. The historical precedent of Balak shows his inability to go against YHWH's blessing on Israel. Finally, the argument from silence points to the three hundred years in which the Ammonites had not tried to claim the land, serving to show that others recognized this to be Israelite land. But, was Jephthah's intention peace? Certainly, he was not in a position where he could negotiate a peace treaty that the Ammonite king would accept because of fear of Israelite forces. Webb proposes that Jephthah had planned on going to battle and

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[821] Jg. 8:31; and 11:1.

[822] Jg. 9:2; 11:2, and 7.

[823] Jg. 9:4; and 11:3.

[824] Jg. 9:6; and 11:11.

[825] Davis, Such A Great Salvation, 143-145.

[826] O'Connell, 195.

[827] Ibid., 198.

this political move was "to secure a brief respite – possibly a very valuable one – before the battle is joined."[828] For Jephthah, his diplomatic efforts were on two fronts: before the Ammonite king in hopes of a successful outcome and before YHWH to properly adjudicate the matter.[829]

PARALLELISM. There are numerous parallels in the story. The obvious parallels to other stories in Judges and throughout the Hebrew bible are addressed elsewhere. Yet, what is significant is that the narrative artistry not only shows the episodes in terms of thematic confrontation; but, within the scenes of these episodes the actions of these events also has parallels, as reflected in Table 22.[830]

TABLE 22

PARALLEL OF SITUATIONS IN THE JEPHTHAH STORY

Israel's appeal to YHWH	The elders' appeal to Jephthah
The bargain between the elders and Jephthah	The bargain (vow) between Jephthah and YHWH
Jephthah's diplomacy with the Ammonite [king]	Jephthah's diplomacy with the Ephraimites
The war with the Ammonites (holy war)	The war with the Ephraimites (tribal feud)

In addition to the thematic parallels within the story, although not a type-scene *per se*, there is a pattern present in three of the four deliverers who are empowered by the Spirit of YHWH. Table 23 shows the pattern of which Jephthah embodies all of the constituent elements.[831] The significant difference is that in the Gideon story, even though the Israelites went out to battle it was YHWH who set the sword of one Midianite against the other. Further, in the Gideon account, the declaration of the Midianites being given into Gideon's hand occurs before the victory rather than after it. As will be discussed later, the Spirit of YHWH also comes upon Samson; however, like his counterpart Shamgar, neither musters an army but fight their battles individually.

TABLE 23

PARALLELS IN BIBLICAL VICTORY ACCOUNTS

Element	Othniel	Gideon	Jephthah
The Spirit of YHWH comes upon the deliverer	3:10	6:33	11:29
The deliverer marshals the troops	–	6:34-35	11:29
The Israelites go out to battle	3:10	7:22	11:32
YHWH gives the enemy into the deliverer's hands	3:10	7:15	11:32

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[828] Webb, The Book of Judges, 58.

[829] Webb, The Book of Judges, 59.

[830] The table is an adaptation from Webb. See his, *The Book of Judges*, 77.

[831] This table is an adaptation from Block. See his, *NAC*, 369. Block does not include the final two items in the Gideon account. He also includes a comparison to Saul. 1 Sam. 11:6-13.

SYMBOLISM AND IRONY. The narrator gives YHWH an ironic tone to His anger when Israel is petitioning once again for His aid. The confession of sin, in which they cry out to YHWH is countered with the same verb *(zā'aq)* "cry to the gods you have chosen."[832]

Even though the theological debate surrounding the outcome of Jephthah's vow has bifurcated into two positions, the vow itself typically is viewed as rash.[833] Boling sees it as hastily worded.[834] Even so, this is typical of Jephthah who is quick to open his mouth and to respond in a confrontational situation. By Jephthah making this vow he unnecessarily creates a new problem that undermines the purpose of that vow. The Spirit of YHWH had been given to Jephthah so he could rout the Ammonites making the vow superfluous. What follows is the removal of the Ammonite oppression which could be categorized as a salvation event since the enemy was subdued. However, the language of deliverance is absent from the story. Thus, O'Connell's rhetorical question: "[I]s Gilead truly saved from foreign oppression when salvation comes at the expense of making a foreign-style sacrifice of one of its number?"[835] The memory of Abimelech is not forgotten where brethren are slain and he serves as the antithesis of a deliverer. But, with Jephthah, the whole idea of a deliverer has mutated into a synthesis where he alternatively operates as both a deliverer (for Gilead against the Ammonites) and an oppressor (against his daughter and the men of Ephraim).

The obvious parallel with the vow fulfillment scene is with the *Akeidah* scene of Genesis. Of all the parallels that may be drawn between the sacrifices of Abraham and Jephthah, Block has summarized many of these elements in chart form, as reflected in Table 24.[836] Both Abraham and Jephthah describe their offspring as their only one. However, Abraham did have another son, just not the son of the promise. But there are stark differences. Abraham is contrasted with Jephthah on the grounds of favorable lineage.[837] Abraham has a son who is named; but Jephthah has a daughter who is unnamed in the story.[838] Abraham did not initiate this action, he was following *Elohim*'s

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[832] זָעַק. Jg. 10:6, and 14. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 45.

[833] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 95.

[834] Boling, *AB*, 207.

[835] O'Connell, 181.

[836] The table originates from Block, *NAC*, 371-372.

[837] Trible, *Texts of Terror*, 101.

[838] Ibid., 101.

TABLE 24

A COMPARISON OF ABRAHAM'S AND JEPHTHAH'S SACRIFICES

Narrative Element	Genesis 22	Judges 11
Literary Style	Deliberately detailed and slow-paced narrative, particularly the account of the sacrifice itself.	Cursory and quick telescoped narrative, announcing the actual sacrifice in only five words
Literary Content	Intentional climax of lengthy narrative	Seemingly superfluous intrusion in the narrative
Purpose of Sacrifice	Test the commitment of the sacrificer	Test the commitment of God
The Role of God	Takes initiative in commanding human sacrifice; speaks directly to sacrificer	Silent in the initiation and performance of the sacrifice; sacrificer speaks directly to God
Identity of Sacrificer	Father of the promise, called out from his home	Son of a harlot, cast out of his home
Character of Sacrificer	Saintly patriarch Obedient to God Sacrificer agonizes over fate of the victim	Paganized deliverer-hero Independent of God Sacrificer grieves over his own loss
Identity of Victim	Isaac, divinely named offspring of sacrificer	Nameless offspring of sacrificer
Relationship of Victim to Sacrificer	"One and only child" Loved deeply by the father Accompanied by the father to the mountain of sacrifice	"One and only child" "Love" is absent Goes to the mountain alone, without the father
Gender of the Sacrifice	Male victim	Female victim
Response of Victim	Passive acceptance of fate	Energetic insistence on fate
Outcome of the Sacrifice	Interrupted by voice of God	Fulfilled because of God's silence
Significance of the Sacrifice	Confirmed the faith of the Sacrificer Confirmed the faithfulness and presence of God Assured the future of the Sacrificer and his victim	Confirmed the faithlessness of the Sacrificer Confirmed the silence and withdrawal of God Signaled the end of the Sacrificer and his victim

command in obedience and the result was angelic interference and the provision of a ram for a sacrifice. Yet, Jephthah created a vow and initiated this action and there is no divine intervention.

> The import of the Genesis narrative is not to be found in the specific events *per se*, but in the *significance* of the events. Abraham was shown that human dedication and devotion pleased Yahweh, but that human sacrifice was not pleasing to him: the substitution of an animal demonstrates Yahweh's preference. When he sacrifices his daughter, Jephthah's law- and covenant-breaking piety, based on ignorance, is implicitly disclaimed by Yahweh, who becomes silent and remains inactive during the remainder of the narrative.[839]

What should have been sacrificed was Jephthah's pride. However, as a subtle judgment, it was sacrificed along with his daughter. Rather than allowing him to immediately fulfill his vow, she postpones it for two months. In doing so,

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[839] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 95.

> She opts to spend her remaining days, not with the father who is obsessed with status and glory and violence, but with other young women who will be with her, who will griever her fate, and who in the end, remember her.[840]

Ironically, the one sacrificed is remembered with a cultic ceremony and the one who did the sacrificing is remembered for his crimes and without any pomp or circumstance.

In addition, there is an allusion between this event and the vow between Jacob and Laban.[841] O'Connell has noticed that both events connect with the location of Mizpah, the concern for daughters, an oath before *Elohim*, and a sacrifice.[842] Despite O'Connell's observations, this is not a true parallel. Jephthah made his vow at an undisclosed location, which is implied to be after he left Mizpah and *en route* to battle with the Ammonites. Jacob never made a vow with Laban; rather it was a covenantal oath. Whereas Jacob and Laban were concerned with their female posterity, there is no evidence that Jephthah shared that concern for his daughter. Ironically, Jephthah in his message to the king of Ammon used similar verbiage as Jacob who swore that *Elohim* of Abraham and the god of *(Nāḥôr)* Nahor, the god of their father judge between us.[843]

Even though there are these biblical parallels, the geographic location of the vow is likewise significant. The site at Mizpah is associated with the mustering of the people and as a cult center. However, as a paronomasic device its meaning when translated as "outlook" or "watchtower" serves an ironic function. In a place where Jephthah should have been on the look out and vigilantly watching he epitomizes blindness for not seeing the spiritual reality and the consequences of his vow.[844]

In the closing episode, as the anger of the Ephraimites burns against Jephthah, they threaten to burn down him and his house. The tragic irony is that his "house" (*i.e.* his daughter) has already been destroyed by fire. Exum sees "a veiled reference to the vow and its consequences" when Jephthah responds to the Ephraimites that he took his life into his hand when he saw that they would not save him.[845] This confrontation which parallels the one that Gideon had with the Ephraimites ended differently with the internecine battle and a great slaughter.

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[840] Gunn and Fewell, 117.

[841] Gen. 31:45-54.

[842] O'Connell, 183.

[843] נָחוֹר H. Gen. 31:53. Although the same word *Elohim* is used generically to represent the deity of the parties represented, the distinction is made between the Israelite *Elohim* and pagan deities.

[844] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 88.

[845] Exum, "The Tragic Vision and Biblical Narrative," 71. Jg. 12:3.

RHETORICAL DEVICES. The narrator uses the sections of direct discourse to facilitate the movement of action. Obviously, the dialogue consists of words; but moreover, there is the recognition of the *leitword* "word" that sets up the confrontations between characters. Ultimately, this becomes a fatal flaw as he places his "defective words above the word of God!"[846] From the outset, Jephthah is clearly a bargainer and a negotiator. The narrator shows Jephthah's shrewd skills in his negotiation with the Gileadite elders.

> By appealing conditionally to Yahweh, Jephthah decreases further the power of the elders while enhancing his own authority. What they have just offered, he proposes to earn on the battlefield, if the Lord so wills. Then, once the condition is fulfilled and the battle won, Jephthah alone will claim permanent power without reference to Yahweh. According to the words here, the deity who is useful in the bargaining process has no part in the aftermath of victory.[847]

This activity of using YHWH for his own motives is not surprising. Likewise, it is not surprising that in subsequent negotiations his success ratio diminishes. While, he was successful to negotiate his leadership position from the elders of Gilead, his diplomatic negotiations failed. Jobling sees this as "a verbal combat preliminary to the military combat."[848] The point could be made that Jephthah was not negotiating with the Ammonite king, but it was his messengers. Nonetheless, the narrator ascribes the words spoken as coming from Jephthah. The king rejects the message. From a covert position YHWH allowed this event to transpire. But, from the overt action of Jephthah, the king's response is not surprising considering the factual inaccuracies of the message.[849] Not only does Jephthah get the message wrong, he does not even respond to the Ammonite king's territorial claim.[850] This confusion and ambivalence directs the story to the next conflict in which Jephthah's words (his vow) creates a confrontation between him and his daughter. In addition, it creates a conflict between him and the reader. This unnecessary vow disrupts the flow of the story and begins the creation of antipathy for Jephthah because "he has spoken on his own; for neither Yahweh nor the people of Gilead require the vow."[851] The vow is illogical. The purpose of the warfare vow is ultimately to glorify

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[846] Gane, 94.

[847] Trible, *Texts of Terror*, 95.

[848] Jobling, *The Sense of Biblical Narrative II*, 128.

[849] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 89.

[850] Jobling, *The Sense of Biblical Narrative II*, 129.

[851] Trible, *Texts of Terror*, 97.

YHWH and offer to Him the spoils of victory, of which Jephthah does neither.[852] It is remarkable that the character who is known for his negotiating skills would fail to employ them to reverse his vow.

Then there is the pass-word episode in which 42,000 Ephraimites are killed. The hyperbolic number is for emphasis. The actual password may mean either "ear of corn" or "current of water." If the latter were used, then it connects with the action of the Ephraimites trying to cross the river, whereby the Gileadite would not have to say the word the Ephraimite would repeat; but could point to the river and ask the question, "What is this?" and have the password validated.[853]

> Here a single word, not unlike Jephthah's vow, becomes a matter of life or death. Just as his vow led to the destruction of his own family, here his words lead to the destruction of fellow Israelites.[854]

Should we be surprised that the words that are spoken combine verbal violence with physical violence? Words that could bring healing bring destruction. For the apparent master of words, "words fail Jephthah repeatedly. He, like his daughter, is the victim of words—his own words."[855] It is these words that bring contention at a multiplicity of levels: with his family, his tribe, another tribe, and an enemy nation.[856]

At this point in the narrative another *leitword* is used more frequently in this story than in the previous stories combined. The verb *(lāḥam)* which is translated as "fight" or "make war" occurs fifteen times.[857] Despite so much verbal confrontation it is apparent that warfare moved from the realm of words to the battlefield.

Another important *leitword* is the verb *('ābar)* "cross over" which occurs sixteen times.[858] Ironically, its first usage is in the context of serving the *Baals*. Thus, Israel crosses over theologically from Yahwistic worship to *Baalism*. It is a spatial referent showing primarily the movement of characters crossing over the Jordan River or other boundaries. The frequency of its usage and even the associated geographical ambiguity

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[852] W.L. Humphreys, "The Story of Jephthah and the Tragic Vision: A Response to J. Cheryl Exum," *Signs and Wonders: Biblical Texts in Literary Focus* (Ed.) J.C. Exum (*Semeia Studies*: Philadelphia, PA: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1989), 87.

[853] Wilcock, 122.

[854] Gunn and Fewell, 118.

[855] Exum, "On Judges 11," 136.

[856] Block, *NAC*, 382.

[857] H לָחַם. Jg. 10:9, 18; 11:4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 20, 25, 27, 32; 12:1, 3, and 4.

[858] H עָבַר. Jg. 10:8, 9; 11:17, 18, 19, 20, 29 (3x), 32; 12:1 (2x), 3, 5 (2x), and 6.

serve the narrator to show that "covenantal and hermeneutic boundaries are being thoroughly and continually transgressed."[859]

Through assonance the narrator uses the paronomasia of *(wayyir^{a}ṣû)* "shattered" and *(way^{e}rōṣ^{e}ṣû)* "crushed" to describe the extent of the Ammonite oppression.[860] It is not surprising that the narrator would use these verbs, because the actions of shattering and breaking are what Israel has in effect done to the covenant.

When Jephthah is introduced, the paronomasia surrounding his name is not immediately apparent. However, the prophetic significance is seen throughout the story that he is always opening his mouth.[861] This opacity is removed when Jephthah explains to his daughter that he has opened his mouth to make a vow. Alternately, it could be a hypocoristic form meaning "YHWH has opened."[862]

The narrator uses a pun to describe the relationship of the elders of Gilead to Jephthah.[863] At the literal level they "return" to Jephthah, although technically, it was Jephthah that was exiled from them. Then at the metaphoric level, the same word designates repentance and the change of heart that they have toward Jephthah, even though it is politically motivated.[864] It is ironic that they should seek his assistance when they are in *(ṣar)* "trouble."[865] This is a word which also can be translated as "enemy."

The language of Jephthah surprisingly is not his greatest asset, which would be expected of a negotiator. In his vow, he expresses his own insecurity and doubt of YHWH, despite having the Spirit of YHWH. The narrator characterizes this by using an emphatic infinitive construction *('im-nāṯôn)* "if You will *really* give."[866]

When Jephthah inappropriately blames his daughter for his misfortune a pun is used to describe how low he is forced to bow.[867] Jephthah continues to address his daughter by circumspectly referring to his vow with the phrase *(pāṣîṯî-p̄î 'el-YHWH)* "I

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[859] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 181.

[860] 𝕳 וַיִּרְעֲצוּ and וַיְרֹצְצוּ. Jg. 10:8. Casanowicz, 157.

[861] See the sections "Political Speech" and "Vow," footnote 414 in chapter three, pages 127.

[862] Block, *NAC*, 351.

[863] Jg. 11:8.

[864] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 53.

[865] 𝕳 צַר. Jg. 11:8. Block, *NAC*, 355.

[866] 𝕳 אִם־נָתוֹן. This is parsed as *Qal* Infinitive Absolute. Jg. 11:30. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 64.

[867] 𝕳 *(bitî hakrēa' hikra'tinî w^e'at^e hāyît^e b^e'ōkrāy)* בִּתִּי הַכְרֵעַ הִכְרַעְתִּנִי וְאַתְּ הָיִיתְ בְּעֹכְרָי. The pun is on the verbs *(kāra')* כָּרַע and *('ākar)* עָכַר. Jg. 11:35. Exum, "The Tragic Vision and Biblical Narrative," 75.

have opened my mouth to YHWH."[868] The surprising submissive reply to her father is one of near verbatim repetition that continues the alliteration and assonance with (pāṣîtā 'et-pîḵā 'el-YHWH) "You have opened your mouth to YHWH."[869] The ambiguity surrounding the vow and its fulfillment is part of the narrator's design to conform to:

> [T]he compositional principles of all father-daughter narratives in the Hebrew Bible: [whereby] a father is *never* shown to be the direct perpetrator of his daughter's demise. Rather, he is shown as a helpless victim of unforeseen circumstances, caught in the web of conflicting allegiances, and insurmountable constraints.[870]

The deed that is done is glossed over with euphemistic language. Wilcock suggests that even in the sacrifice, we should presume a compassionate humanity in Jephthah that he would have killed her as he would any other sacrifice and then placed her on the altar rather than the worst possible scenario of placing her live on the altar to endure an agonizing death by fire.[871] The narrator does not depart from his use of irony in this tragic setting. Through the etiological note that follows the daughter's mourning did nothing to change the situation and her father's fate is sealed.[872]

INTERPRETATION. Through this story, the narrator has brought us further down the spiral of ethics and morality. The question is whether this is the low point of the narrative or Israel will sink deeper in its depravity. The egotism of Jephthah suggests a microcosm of Israel that is more interested in itself than those around or YHWH and His covenant. As a character, this son of a harlot is an embodiment of "all that is wrong in spiritually harlotrous Israel."[873]

YHWH never ceases to be the Judge in any of the stories, although His presence is not always in the forefront of the event. Consequently, His divine judgments are experienced by the characters throughout the text. His judgment is felt implicitly by the absence of the stage of rest in this and future stories. This judgment also takes the form of "silent transcendence, if not a form of hostile transcendence" toward Israel.[874] Yet, YHWH is showing His peculiar judgment to Israel by silently answering their plea of doing what seems good to Him by giving Israel what it deserves as a fitting judgment.

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[868] **H** פָּצִיתִ־פִּי אֶל־יהוה. Jg. 11:35.

[869] **H** פָּצִיתָה אֶת־פִּיךָ אֶל־יהוה. Jg. 11:36. Webb, "The Theme of the Jephthah Story," 42.

[870] Fuchs, "Marginalization, Ambiguity, Silencing," 39.

[871] Wilcock, 116.

[872] Block, *NAC*, 375.

[873] Block, *NAC*, 386.

[874] Exum, "The Tragic Vision and Biblical Narrative," 79.

YHWH grants them the deliverer they have chosen, a man who will win a great victory for them over the Ammonites, but at high personal cost, and who, though capable of providing effective leadership against an external threat, will prove unable to forestall internecine warfare.[875]

The cyclical pattern continues to spiral downward. This story is full of dysfunctional characters in their familial relationships. Jephthah is not characterized as a positive father figure. No allegorical symbolism may be appropriated to see him as a picture of divinity and his daughter as the symbol of Israel. Rather, the roles are confused, whereas Jephthah represents Israel in his impetuousness and cultic impropriety making no allowance for future generations to follow YHWH. But the improper relationships also are sibling rivalries that escalate into intertribal rivalry. This hostility between the sons of Jacob fragments Israel and foreshadows the events of the epilogues. When Jephthah is the microcosmic representation of Israel, the story is more telling that the character knows about YHWH but doesn't really know YHWH. Jephthah and his daughter both speak of YHWH to others; "but except in the moment of the vow there is no attempt to seek the deity out by whatever means are at hand."[876] In fact, if a true knowledge of YHWH had existed, the pious response of Jephthah to his daughter would have been replaced by a penitence and supplication requesting a nullification of the vow. Or if he had known the *Torah* he could have released his daughter from the vow.[877] Hidden within the narrator's comments that Jephthah's daughter "knew no man" is more than a sexual nuance.[878] It sharply contrasts that she was not the only one who did not have intimacy, Israel itself did not have intimacy with YHWH and likewise the narrator could have said and "Israel knew not YHWH." Klein takes the thought in a different direction that Jephthah's daughter's unknowing is "a kind of ignorance."[879] This is a case in point that the characters did not know their deity.

The confrontational scenes of the story each point back to the prologue and evidence that these characters did not know YHWH or His ways. As such, the confrontations are purposeful acts of attempted divine manipulation.

(1) The Israelites act out a form of repentance in 10:10 and 10:15-16a, the sincerity of which YHWH, in 10:11-14, calls into question; (2) the elders of Gilead, rather than calling upon YHWH for rescue (10:18), defer to YHWH only when swearing an oath to seal a scheme of their own devising (11:10); [and] (3) Jephthah attempts to coerce

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[875] Ibid., 64.

[876] Humphreys, 92. Cf. Jg. 11:9, 21-24, 27, 35, 36; and 12:3.

[877] Lev. 27:1-8.

[878] Jg. 11:39.

[879] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 93.

YHWH, through a vow of human sacrifice, to turn the means of Gilead's deliverance into an opportunity for self-aggrandizement (11:30-31).[880]

This serves to underscore to the reader that the selfish motives of the characters characterize the impurity of their hearts and their relationship with YHWH. The land does not have rest after the Jephthah episode. In fact, one wonders if the ground is crying out against Israel because of the bloodshed, especially of Jephthah's daughter. There is no true salvation and certainly no peace (of soul) when the story ends. The story itself fulfills the historical, theological, and didactic functions of the narrator.

IBZAN/ELON/ABDON STORY

From all of the crossing over the River Jordan that has taken place with Jephthah (and Jair, also in the Transjordan), the narrator returns the narrative to the northern Cisjordan with the mention of three minor judges.[881]

IBZAN. The next minor judge was Ibzan who followed after Jephthah. Little is known about his judging career other than it was for seven years. Even so, there is no indication as to whether or not this was the last seven years of Ibzan's life. His age is not given, but from the textual clues he presumably would have been an elderly man at his death, if he had been monogamous in regard to the births of his sixty children. However, the narrator sheds no light on Ibzan's marital or extra-marital relationships. The most important factor in the story regards his progeny. There are thirty sons for whom he brought in wives for their marriages. Likewise, he has thirty daughters who he gave away as wives for marriage. This may have political significance by forming external alliances and forging dynastic strength.[882] Since the narrator only mentions daughters in connection with Jephthah and Ibzan, this serves to positively characterize Ibzan.[883]

ELON. The story of Elon is the briefest of the triad. Evidence suggests that he followed directly after Ibzan with Elon judging Israel for ten years. The syntax of the story suggests that at the conclusion of that period Elon died and was buried in his ancestral home. Nothing is said about his familial relationships or progeny. Yet, even in the brevity of this account, the narrator uses paronomasia to connect *('ēlôn)* Elon with the

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[880] O'Connell, 186-187.

[881] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 161.

[882] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 103.

[883] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 161.

geographic reference of his burial site *(bᵃʾayyālôn)* "in Aijalon."[884] This connection is important for Klein who sees this as "a link between covenantal and earthly ethics."[885] Elon's name means "oak" or "terebinth." Boling takes this meaning a step further.

> "Elon" is another hint of the administrative takeover of Yahwists of the old oracular shrines, many having a tree that was famous for the oracular activity which transpired there, e.g., Deborah in 4:5, Gideon in 6:11, [and] Abimelech in 9:6.[886]

Contra Boling, this is presuming too much into the story, if anything the connection should reflect a pagan idolatry associated with the terebinth tree.

ABDON. The final minor judge was Abdon. He judged Israel for eight years after Elon's judgeship. Abdon also was successfully procreative having forty sons. The same can not be said of his sons, as together they only produced thirty children (*i.e.* Abdon's thirty grandsons). The KJV mistranslates this as nephews. Once again, there is no indication of Abdon's age; but with the mention of grandchildren, certainly an elderly age is implied. The mention of the seventy offspring riding donkeys compares to the sons of Jair and intimates a type of dynasty as "a symbol of princely rank."[887] It may be presumed that Abdon's children and grandchildren were functionaries of the judge. The seventy sons and grandsons also parallel the seventy sons of Gideon. Since both were Ephraimites, the narrator repopulates Ephraim after the fratricide of Abimelech and the genocide of Jephthah at the Jordan River, thus giving "a new start for Ephraim."[888] The story closes with the death and burial notice of Abdon. But, in this the narrator interjects that the burial site, though in the land of Ephraim, was in the hill country of the Amalekites. This intrusion of information reinforces the first prologue and Israel's failure to properly occupy the land and dispossess the enemy. It also is a sign that there will be further conflict that ensues.[889]

INTERPRETATION. With Jephthah inserted into the middle of the notices of minor Judges, the narrator has created a sharp contrast. When compared with the others, Jephthah judged Israel for the least amount of years. He is the only one shown to kill

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[884] אֵילוֹן אֵ, and בְּאַיָּלוֹן. The paronomasia is clearer when the prepositional prefix is removed from the second substantive. Casanowicz, 125. Jg. 12:12.

[885] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 100.

[886] Boling, *AB*, 216.

[887] S. Feldman, "Biblical Motives and Sources," *JNES 22* (1963), 96.

[888] Hamlin, 122. Jg. 9:5; 12:6, and 14.

[889] One would expect a story that involves an Amalekite oppression to follow. Instead, the narrator turns his focus on the Philistine oppression, the most important enemy against Israel until the reign of David.

others. But, the greatest contrast is regarding progeny. Jair had thirty sons. Ibzan had thirty sons and thirty daughters. Abdon had forty sons and thirty grandsons. Nothing is said about whether Tola or Elon had children. Even so, when these minor judges are compared with Jephthah, the focus is upon having descendants and an inheritance that could be handed down to the next generation. Jephthah had been exiled from his inheritance by his half-brothers; but even in being brought back to be the head and chief of Gilead; Jephthah destroys his own seed through pedicide.

From a point of numerology, the insertion of the minor judges brings the total number of deliverers-judges to a composite twelve, possibly an allusion to the twelve tribes.[890] From a point of chronology, the first two minor judges served forty five years. The second set of three minor judges served twenty five years. The sheer numbers infer "the deteriorating situation."[891] From a point of geography, tribal designations are not important any more. Rather, the narrator emphasizes cities which may only obliquely refer to tribes. As such, there is the ambiguity of which Bethlehem does Ibzan come.

> These judges of family-clans or geographically named clans, or of cities without reference to clan, represent the weakening bond with Yahweh, the bond which makes Israel a unity.[892]

From a point of narratology, the two sets of minor judges notices give the reader breathing room after the heinous nature of the Abimelech and Jephthah stories, respectively. The stories do not have a plot or any conflicting action. They function aesthetically as a transition between stories. From a point of theology, the absence of deity suggests this is a microcosm of the macro-character Israel at this point in the downward spiral.

SAMSON STORY

The longest story in the Judges narrative is about Samson; that is if the Gideon/Abimelech stories are separated into two different units. In one sense it is the converse of Gideon and Abimelech in that the events that precede the story proper are about his birth, which focus upon his parents.

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[890] Beem, 162-163. To reach this number, only Deborah may be counted in the story that involves her, Barak, and Jael. But, she was the only one the narrator describes as having judged Israel. Further, this also requires not including Abimelech, who functioned more as an anti-judge.

[891] Hamlin, 122.

[892] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 103.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. The narrator continues his storytelling by using a main plot and multiple subplots. The main plot follows the standard paradigm by changing the names of the micro-protagonist and micro-antagonist to fit the story. O'Connell has identified the primary plot as "YHWH's deliverance of Israel from the Philistines through Samson."[893] In addition, he has observed three subplots relating to Samson's birth, his marital quest, and the Philistine plot against him.[894] There is scholarly consensus as to the beginning and ending of the story.[895]

ABSTRACT. As with the pattern previously established, there is no abstract of this story because it is expected to be seen as another paradigmatic example of the abstract presented in the second prologue.

ORIENTATION. The narrator orients the setting of the story primarily with geographical reference. There are thirteen different geopolitical settings; however they may all be placed along the coastal plain and the *Shephelah* in the tribal areas of Dan and Judah.[896] The narrator also uses several topographical references.[897] In the opening chapter, the womb of Manoah's wife becomes a significant location of action. In the concluding chapter of the story, although the majority of the action occurs in the Sorek Valley and Gaza, the narrator employs architectural settings of Delilah's home, the prison, the temple of *Dagon*, and the tomb of Manoah.

Temporal settings also are used. The total elapsed story time is in excess of twenty years. The narrator reports that Samson judged Israel for twenty years. Yet, there is no clue as to how old he was when he began to deliver Israel. Chronology is most in focus in chapter fourteen regarding the seven day marriage feast.

COMPLICATING ACTION. The narrator has presented the reader with a dilemma. YHWH has said at the beginning of the Jephthah story that He would deliver Israel no more; yet, the major judge paradigm has begun with Israel again doing evil in the sight of YHWH with Him delivering Israel into the hands of the Philistines. But, there is no

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[893] O'Connell, 204-213.

[894] Ibid., 205-212. His subplots are: Plot B – YHWH's provision of a son to the barren wife of Manoah; Plot C – Samson's quest for a Philistine wife from Timnah; and Plot D- Philistine plot to kill Samson in retaliation for his exploit at Gaza.

[895] Jg. 13:1 – 16:31.

[896] The geopolitical references are: Zorah, Mahaneh-dan, Eshtaol, Timnah, Ashkelon, Judah, Rock of Etam, Lehi, Ramath-Lehi, En-hakkore, Gaza, Hebron, and the valley of Sorek.

[897] The topographical references are: field, heaven, vineyards of Timnah, the groves, and the mountain.

Israelite cry, except perhaps the implied muffled cry of a barren woman desiring offspring. With no warning or other information, the theophanic messenger arrives in an annunciation type-scene, which simultaneously operates as a prologue to the main plot and a subplot. After receiving her oracle, Manoah's wife reports the event to her husband. His action of requesting the angel of YHWH to return again slightly complicates the subplot; however, it rather serves to develop the characterization of Samson's parents and to parallel the offering scene of Gideon. As Samson has been born, the first subplot concludes and the characterization of Samson begins by showing the divine action of YHWH blessing him and the Spirit of YHWH stirring him. Now that Samson was older, he went down to Timnah and saw a Philistine woman he desired to be his wife. This introduces the next subplot in Samson's quest for a Philistine wife. Whether Samson was aware of the divine purpose in his action is unknown; however the narrator reports that his parents did not know the divine purpose of this action and initially they complicate the main plot by standing in the way of YHWH's plan of deliverance. This would be expected of Manoah, since his wife did not confide in him that Samson was to begin to deliver Israel. Once this parental obstacle was overcome, the narrator briefly complicates the situation by introducing the lion, whom Samson resolutely kills and allows it to become the first Philistine trap. However, the carcass of the lion with the honey also becomes a trap for Samson in two ways. First, it begins the undoing of his *Nazirite* vow. Secondly, it begins a pattern of Samson opening his mouth with deceit in which he will later be deceived through his own words. The quest for his wife continues toward a potential resolution as story time works through the week long marriage feast. But, in this, Samson's weakness to the enticements of a woman is characterized which complicates the main plot action of him as a deliverer of Israel. Premarital strife and distrust become factors of Samson's betrayal by his Philistine bride in which ethnicity is stronger than her love for Samson. Her deceitful actions ironically are followed by the Spirit of YHWH coming mightily upon Samson and the murder of thirty men from Ashkelon in order for him to pay his bet for the Philistines solving his riddle. This partial resolution of the main plot causes an action that complicates the subplot and Samson's bride is given away to his best man. This works as a foil to the primary plot as Samson destroys flora and fauna through arson. The Philistine response ironically is not one of judgment against Samson for his criminal act; but rather one of ethnic judgment against the Philistine bride and her father whom the Philistines destroy by fire along with their

house as an act of capital punishment based on the principle of *ius talionis*.[898] If the event is viewed in the light of wisdom literature, then the Philistine who married Samson's wife would have not gone unpunished.[899] The subplot ends without resolution since the bride is dead, despite the fact nothing is said about her husband. But the Philistine response was judged as inappropriate by Samson who responded by avenging her death, rather than ruthlessly killing the Philistines with a great slaughter because of Yahwistic motivation. When Samson leaves there and goes to live in the cleft of the rock of Etam, this provokes a Philistine response of war and the fearful response of Judah. The plot should not be complicated at this point; however, 3000 men of Judah attempt to work against the divine will by binding Samson and turning him over to the Philistines. While their efforts only temporarily delay the main plot action it serves as a foil for the next subplot. Apparently, the men of Judah had no knowledge that Samson was a deliverer or if they did their fear motivated them more than the promise of deliverance. Again the Spirit of YHWH comes upon Samson and a thousand men are killed with the jawbone of a donkey. The plot is temporarily complicated by Samson's belief that he would die of thirst. However *Elohim* responds by providing him water at En-hakkore. The narrator stops the story by introducing the judgment formula stating that Samson had judged Israel for twenty years. No more deliverance is expected but rather a death notice. Essentially, that which follows is a prolonged death notice that provides symmetry with the prolonged birth notice. This introduces the Philistine plot to kill their enemy. Samson has sexual relations with a prostitute; but before the Philistines can capture him, he makes a mockery of the Gazites by stealing the doors of the city gate and taking them to Hebron. Samson's weakness for women is depicted again by his love for Delilah. But, unknown to Samson, the Philistines had set a trap and Delilah's love for money was greater than her love for him. This final subplot is complicated several times by Samson's own deceitfulness and lies by not revealing to his lover the secret of his strength. However, each enticing reply by Delilah is itself a complication to the main plot. Ultimately, Samson gives in to her enticement and rebuke and with his secret exposed the subplot reaches its climax and the main plot reaches its anticlimax with Samson's hair being shaved. As a result, the Spirit of YHWH left, he was captured by the Philistines, his eyes were gouged out, and he was bound and imprisoned to grind grain.

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[898] Crenshaw, "The Samson Saga," 483.

[899] Prov. 6:29.

EVALUATION. The narrator is generally inconspicuous. He does make internal evaluative remarks, such as to introduce Manoah's wife as one who was barren and had borne no children.[900] Further, he emphasizes through the speech of Manoah's wife to her husband the fact that she did not question the divine messenger as to his name or geographical heritage.[901] The narrator speaks again through Manoah's wife to emphasize the divine acceptance of the offering and the plan of YHWH regarding Samson.[902] The first obvious evaluative remark is when the narrator explains neither Manoah nor his wife knew that Samson's desire for a Philistine wife was of YHWH.[903] The theme of knowing or not knowing shows up again when the narrator reports that Samson's parents did not know about him killing a lion.[904] For emphatic purpose, the narrator disrupts the flow of the marriage feast to reinforce that after three days the answer to the riddle was still unknown.[905] The narrator also pauses the action to report the geographic etiologies of Ramath-Lehi and En-hakkore.[906] The strongest evaluative remark is the report that Samson did not know that YHWH had departed from him.[907]

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. The first subplot concludes with the birth of Samson. The second subplot is never resolved but reaches its climax with Samson abandoning his Timnite bride. When he returns to get her after some time, he finds that she was given in marriage to his best man. The subplot ends with the result of her being killed by fire by the Philistines. The third subplot ironically is never resolved to fully gratify the Philistines. While it is true they captured their enemy, blinded, and imprisoned him, they never killed him. He killed himself and many of the three thousand with him at the sacrifice to *Dagon*, their god.

The main plot is developed in such a manner that there are several partial resolutions. The first one occurs with thirty men killed in Ashkelon. It is followed by a great slaughter at what must be assumed as Timnah. Then, nearly one thousand men were killed at Lehi by the jawbone of a donkey. There has been a steady progression in the

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[900] Jg. 13:2.

[901] Jg. 13:6.

[902] Jg. 13:23.

[903] Jg. 14:4.

[904] Jg. 14:6.

[905] Jg. 14:14.

[906] Jg. 15:17, and 19.

[907] Jg. 16:20.

numerical value of the Philistine deaths. The story is anticlimactic with Samson being captured through the deceit of Delilah; yet, in the scene of his death, he killed more people than he had during his life. The theophanic message that Samson "shall begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines" showed that the deliverance would not be a complete deliverance as in the case of the former deliverer stories.[908]

CODA. The story concludes with Samson's brothers and all his father's household coming to Samson, gathering his body, and burying him in the tomb of his father. The narrator repeats himself stating Samson judged Israel for twenty years.

PLOTS. There is some debate as to the structural organization of the story. Blenkinsopp suggests a single plot that is thematically shaped around the *Nazirite* vow.[909] This is too narrow a focus to be plausible. Even his episodic structure does not support his theory.[910] Webb likewise focuses on the vow as an integral part of the story; yet, he perceives three movements of a bifurcated plot involving the promise of a son and a beginning of deliverance. Naturally, the story begins with the birth narrative. The remaining two movements are framed with Samson going to Timnah and Gaza, respectively and each concluding with the formulaic statement of him judging for twenty years.[911] Crenshaw makes the women in Samson's life the organizing principle. If the story is viewed in its own right, then Crenshaw should be considered especially as issues of love and sexuality are concerned.

> The conflict [is] between parental devotion and erotic attachment. Each episode fits neatly into such a view: the birth narrative lauds Samson's parents, who are soon to be replaced in their son's affection by three types of relationships, (1) one based on physical attraction; (2) one totally devoid of commitment; and (3) one grounded in love that is not reciprocated.[912]

But, the Samson story does not exist in a vacuum; rather it is a part of the Judges narrative and when viewed against the overall theme of the book, then Crenshaw's structure will not work. This is the place where O'Connell excels, because he does not deny other subplots at work, while giving primacy to the deliverance motif. Because the

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[908] Jg. 13:5.

[909] J. Blenkinsopp, "Structure and Style in Judges 13-16," 65.

[910] Ibid., 66-67. He only presents his structure for three of the four chapters, and does not include the ending of the story. 1) Samson went down to Timnah (14:1-4); 2) Samson went down to Timnah (14:5-9); 3) Samson went down to the woman (14:10-20); 4) The three hundred foxes (15:1-8a); 5) Three place "etilogues" (15:8b – 16:3); and 6) The woman in the valley of Sorek (16:4-21).

[911] Webb, "A Serious Reading of the Samson Story," 113.

[912] Crenshaw, "The Samson Saga," 503.

subplots are all elements of the main plot, the plots are examined by looking at the episodes of the story as delineated by Webb.

EPISODE ONE. The first episode is contained in chapter thirteen. The summary setting that orients the reader to the cyclical pattern of judges uses the biblical economy of words to describe the Israelite apostasy and its subsequent forty year Philistine oppression. The narrator then uses mixed anachronies to advance the plot and subplot. The kernel scene of the divine messenger appearing to Manoah's wife is an analeptic event that would have occurred at least halfway through the period of oppression. The scene is almost completely reported discourse. However, in the dialogue between the angel and Manoah's wife, only the angel is given voice. Likewise, when the event is repeated with near verbatim repetitive narration between Manoah's wife and Manoah, only the former is given voice. These are one-sided conversations and the words spoken do not belong to the micro-characters but to YHWH. The event that follows is stretch duration with the discourse slowing down the action of Manoah's prayer which results in the angel of YHWH returning to Manoah's wife in the field. She immediately responds by advising him of their guest. Manoah arises and follows his wife back to the field to meet the messenger. Proper dialogue ensues between Manoah and the angel; but Manoah is not driving the conversation as he thinks, rather it is the angel who is in control. There is no apparent conflict between the characters, although the angel is elusive with his answers and refuses to eat Manoah's food; but rather suggests a sacrifice to YHWH would be more appropriate. This stretch event continues with the offering being made, the angel disappearing, and the awareness of divinity having been in their presence. The episode concludes with a summary scene announcing the birth and naming of Samson, the growth of the child, and the stirring of him by the Spirit of YHWH.

EPISODE TWO. There is some disagreement as to the point in where the second episode should conclude. Despite the possibility of a redactional gloss, the judging formula present at the end of chapters fifteen and sixteen serves as a structural marker for closure.[913] Perhaps even more persuasive is the internal parallelism between episodes two and three, which is discussed later. All of the scenes are kernel events of which the narrator maintains story time order. The first scene involves Samson going down to Timnah seeing a Philistine woman and reporting back to his parents that he wanted them to get her for him as a bride. Naturally, the scene is causally related to what follows in

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[913] Jg. 15:20; and 16:31.

the second scene with Samson and his parents going as far as the vineyards of Timnah. There is some ambiguity in the scene because Samson encounters the lion; however, his parents are not witnesses of this event. Further, there is the question of why the parents only went as far as the vineyards and disappear from the scene when Samson went down to see the woman and then returns to his parents after the incident of eating the honey from the carcass of the lion. At first, many of these elements seem superfluous to the scene; yet, they are elements to foreshadow the next scene. Only at this point is there any evidence that Manoah ever meets his future daughter-in-law. It is presumed that the event would have occurred at least long enough after the lion slaying incident that the honey could be produced and that sufficient preparation could be made for the wedding feast. This third scene occurs on the first day of the feast. Whereas there was conflict between Samson and his parents regarding his choice of a bride in the first scene, the second scene has Samson prevail in his conflict over the lion, and now in the third scene he initiates a conflict with the wedding guests by proposing a riddle and wager. This episodic conflict is prolonged as the narrator focuses on the fourth day of the feast which is the fourth scene. This scene is most important because it shows the enticement motif and presents a foreshadowing of the burning scenes that follow. This scene involves a dialogue between the wedding guests and the bride, which is followed by a dialogue between the bride and bridegroom. The narrator chooses to prolong this scene by describing the bride's weeping before Samson until the seventh day when he revealed the secret of his riddle to her. Accordingly, Samson was betrayed by his bride and the secret was told to the wedding guests. But as a surprising intrusion, the Spirit of YHWH came upon Samson, who went to Ashkelon and killed thirty men. After paying the wedding guests their ill-gotten garments, the scene closes with Samson angrily returning to his father's house, while his bride was given away to another man. The fifth scene begins during the time of the wheat harvest when Samson desired to return to his bride and consummate the marriage. Only then does he discover that she has been given away by her father. Samson is not pleased with this or his bride's father's suggestion to take another daughter of his. The earlier foreshadowing of fire now blazes across the Philistine fields by three hundred foxes with torches tied to their tails as an example of Samson's judgment of his mistreatment. The scene prompts a reprisal by the Philistines who fulfill the foreshadowing of arson in which now the bride and her father and their home are burnt by fire. There is ambiguity regarding what happened to the bride's husband or to the younger sister of the bride. Samson did not respond well to the death of

his bride and ruthlessly slaughtered many Philistines. As he left that location to dwell in the clefts of the Rock of Etam, the sixth scene begins. Story time prevails with the Philistines camping in Judah and spread out in Lehi. This prompts the men of Judah to assume an antagonistic role of verbally engaging Samson regarding his past actions. Their intentions were by no means honorable but self-serving. Yet, Samson used this opportunity to deceive both the men of Judah and the Philistines into thinking that he was bound and under their control. But the other characters did not expect the Spirit of YHWH to come on the scene. There is ambiguity regarding what happened with the men of Judah once they delivered Samson into their hands; however, the Philistines suffered a miserable defeat by the jawbone of a donkey. The narrator prolongs the scene in order to present two etiologies of Ramath-Lehi commemorating the event and the one of En-hakkore where Samson prayed, but foreshadows his death. Whereas the conflict in the scene began with the Philistines and the men of Judah it transitioned to a more pronounced conflict between the men of Judah and the Philistines, which erupted into a violent act by Samson in his conflict with the Philistines. The episode closes with Samson in conflict with himself that he projects toward *Elohim*; however, because of miraculous intervention all conflicts are resolved.

EPISODE THREE. The final episode consists of the events in chapter sixteen. Only at the end of the story does the reader know that these kernel events occur at the conclusion of Samson's twenty years of judging Israel, despite the temporal notice at the end of chapter fifteen. Although the first scene involves Samson and a harlot from Gaza, she is only an agent of the plot. The real conflict is between Samson and the men of Gaza who want to kill him. It is ironic that after Samson's sexual activity and being surrounded by the local men, that he not only escaped unnoticed at midnight, but that he was able to deface public property and remove the doors of the city gate to a mountain opposite Hebron, a significant distance away. Whereas the men of Gaza had intentions of killing Samson, the lords of the Philistines were more interested in learning the secret of Samson's strength in order to overpower and afflict him. It is unknown how much time elapsed between Samson's escapades in scene one until scene two begins with the Philistines enticing Delilah with silver, so that she would entice and betray Samson. The next four scenes apparently occur at Delilah's home in which she interrogates Samson regarding his strength. In the first three occasions he lies to her; but in the final occasion he tells her the secret of his strength and betrays himself. The amount of time elapsed with each deception is unknown; but, sufficient time had elapsed that with her daily

pressing him, he finally gave in to her pleas. For the reader, there are potentially other times in which Delilah and Samson played this charade that the narrator does not report. The fifth scene is the climax. It is somewhat ambiguous and anachronous as to whether Delilah caused Samson to fall asleep on her lap. She leaves him to tell the Philistine lords the secret, and calls a man over to shave Samson's hair after she returns and places his head back in her lap. Otherwise, an entirely different scene occurs with Delilah alluring her prey into her lap on another occasion knowing that she had betrayed Samson's secret to her financial patrons. Most likely it was the latter scenario. Conflict was operating on several different levels: Delilah and the Philistine lords each wanting a resolution and their payment; Delilah and Samson, each trying to keep their deception going; and Samson with himself, and ultimately YHWH regarding telling the secret associated with the vow. This scene ends with YHWH departing Samson and the subsequent Philistine tortures and imprisonment. The final scene of the episode occurs at the temple of *Dagon*. The Philistines had gathered to offer sacrifice to their god and called for Samson to make sport for them. In the midst of this humiliation, the blinded Samson utters a prayer of vengeance to YHWH and is strengthened to destroy the pagan temple killing himself and thousands of Philistines. The story comes to a close with the summary of Samson's burial and the restatement of the twenty years he judged Israel.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. For the third time in the Judges narrative, the Philistines appear as an oppressive force.[914] The Angel of YHWH and the Spirit of YHWH figure prominently, as they have in earlier stories. Generally, most of the characters are new. This story has eleven individual characters.[915] In addition, there are eleven composite characters.[916] There were four divine characters.[917] Finally, there were five characters from the animal kingdom.[918]

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[914] The first time was in the Shamgar story and the second time in the Jephthah story.

[915] These characters include: Manoah, Manoah's wife, Samson, the woman of Timnah, Samson's companion (who evidentially married Samson's bride), the father of Samson's bride, the younger sister of Samson's bride, the harlot of Gaza, Delilah, the man who shaved Samson's hair, and the Philistine boy who was holding Samson's hand at the temple of *Dagon*.

[916] These characters include: sons of Israel, Philistines, family of the Danites, daughters of the Philistines, daughters of Israel, the thirty Philistine wedding companions at Timnah, the 3000 men of Judah, the men of Gaza, the lords of the Philistines, Samson's brothers, and Manoah's household.

[917] These characters include: YHWH, angel of YHWH, Spirit of YHWH, and *Dagon*.

[918] These characters include: young lion, swarm of bees, young goat, 300 foxes, and the dead donkey with his jawbone.

MANOAH. The next micro-character introduced is Manoah. He is from the family of Dan. There is some ambiguity in that the term "family" is used rather than "tribe." For Zakovitch, this is the narrator's way of marginalizing Manoah by denying him a genealogy and minimalizing his tribe as a family.[919] His name means "from rest," which ironically is something that Israel is not experiencing at this time of the story. When describing Manoah, the narrator uses terms of impersonality and distance. He never refers to his wife by name. Even in his conversation with the angel, he calls the angel "the man" and his wife "the woman."[920] Manoah is characterized as being obtuse and a fool. Strangely, he is the only one who is shown praying in this episode, but it is through terms of deference and calling his deity "*Adonai*." Even though his prayer is answered, the narrator has the angel come to Manoah's wife rather than to Manoah directly. Everything in the story places his wife as the protagonist and Manoah almost as an agent of the plot. Once Manoah can question the angel, the divine response is essentially to his wife, "Let the woman pay attention to all that I said." He is essentially ignored. He is ignored in that his wife is pregnant from the angel and not from him. In some respects, he is ignored by his wife and the angel because neither tells him the purpose of Samson's birth as a deliverer. This is shown by the question he asked the angel regarding Samson's life and vocation. The negative characterization of Manoah is furthered by the anomaly that Manoah follows after his wife, rather than the biblical pattern of him leading her.[921] The Jewish sages interpret this to mean that he was "guided by her words and her counsel."[922]

The language the narrator uses is ambiguous regarding Manoah's desire to prepare a young goat for his guest. This works well to characterize Manoah and to suggest that he did not know what he was doing and the angel had to gently rebuke him and instruct him in the manner of sacrifice and offering. The narrator makes this clear by his comment that Manoah did not know he was talking with the angel of YHWH. This is further illustrated by his unnecessary questioning of the angel. Only once the angel disappeared did the revelation come to Manoah. In his defense, he properly offered a sacrifice to YHWH that was accepted. However, the fear that he exhibited at the angel's

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[919] Y. Zakovitch, *The Life of Samson (Judges 13-16): A Critical-Literary Analysis* [Heb.] (Jerusalem, Israel: Magnes Press: Hebrew University, 1982), 23-24.

[920] Jg. 13:11.

[921] Brettler, *The Book of Judges*, 48.

[922] *Ber.* 61a.

disappearance, when he realized the nature of his guest whom he identified as *Elohim* is met with a rebuke from his wife, showing that Manoah did not know what he was talking about. This characteristic continued to be shown later in Manoah's life when Samson desired a Philistine bride. Manoah and his wife are given a single united voice that the narrator shows that though they had a knowledge of *Torah* regarding mixed marriage it is obvious that they did not know YHWH's will regarding Samson and the current situation. The character of Manoah creates some sympathy for his position of ignorance; but he also represents Israel in microcosm, which suggests antipathy.

MANOAH'S WIFE. The wife of Manoah is unnamed in the story. This would tend to marginalize her as a character. Yet, even though Manoah does have some significant dialogue in chapter thirteen, the focus of the chapter is on Manoah's wife and her barren womb. As a protagonist, she is an anomalous character in that she is unnamed and "described only in terms of her relationships to the men in her family."[923] Nonetheless, this anonymity has a rhetorical function "to emphasize her relationship with, and similarities to, the angel" of YHWH who also is unnamed.[924] As such, the story action moves quickly to an appearance by the angel of YHWH to this woman. Through the annunciation message we learn she is to assume a *Nazirite* status during her pregnancy, just as her son will throughout his life. From the semantics of the passage, there is every reason to believe that she was impregnated by the divine messenger. As such there is no mention that YHWH had closed her womb. The implication is she barren because Manoah is infertile.[925] She is not given a voice during the encounter with the angel. Only when she comes to her husband to announce this encounter does she speak. There is ambiguity as to whether she recognized the angel or not. But, what is apparent is that in her repeating the message to her husband, she uses verbatim repetition until the end. Then, she fails to tell her husband that the son will begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. In place of that information, she replaces it with her assessment that the son will be a *Nazirite* until the day of his death. Bal sees this speech-act as an event that ultimately condemns him by prophesying his death.[926] This is reminiscent of the Eve in the Garden of Eden enlarging the divine command, of which the result also was death.[927]

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[923] Reinhartz, 26-27.

[924] Ibid., 27.

[925] Brettler, *The Book of Judges*, 46.

[926] Bal, *Death & Dissymmetry*, 75.

[927] Crenshaw, "The Samson Saga," 476. Gen. 3:3.

The divine messenger returns to her another day while she was sitting in the field, as an answer to her husband's prayer. This time there is no dialogue between the two. Instead, she quickly runs to her husband to bring her husband to the angel. There is a slight negative connotation to the angel's remarks to Manoah regarding the need for his wife to pay attention to the divine message. This may be a rebuke for her changing of the message, considering it is given twice by the angel. This does not prohibit her from participating with her husband in the offering to YHWH. Her response, like her husband's is one of reverence falling on their faces to the ground. She astutely grasps the situation by remonstrating to Manoah that they were not going to die because they had a purpose to fulfill (at least she did as a pregnant woman). As expected, she gave birth to a son, and she named him Samson. After the birth and the announcement that Samson wanted to marry a Philistine, his mother disappears from the story. However, based on the end of the story, there is every reason to believe by inference that she had other children after Samson, since his brothers came to bury him after his death in Gaza.

ANGEL OF YHWH. With the arrival of the angel of YHWH on the scene, there is a problem. Why did he come? There is no indication in the story that Manoah or his wife had prayed for a child, although that would be expected. There is no reference of Israel crying out for help, which is a standard reason for his appearance. Neither is there any reference that he has been sent by YHWH. Is he a theophany? If so, then he seems to be acting contrary to the divine desire that YHWH said He would not deliver Israel anymore. If not, then this would suggest an angelic rebellion against the divine will by interfering in the affairs of man. There is much ambiguity regarding him. Manoah's wife calls him "a man of *Elohim*." However, she notes that he had the appearance of the "angel of *Elohim*." This makes us wonder whether she had ever seen divine beings before. Based on Manoah's conversation with his wife, he uses the same referent "man of *Elohim*." But it is at this point, that we learn through Manoah, that the angel had been sent by YHWH. Manoah's encounter is to refer to him as "the man who spoke to the woman."

YHWH. Within the story, the characters know the Israelite deity as *Elohim*. Only in the narration is He referred to as YHWH. The recurrent trait of Him selling Israel into the hands of an oppressor is the divine response for Israel doing evil again in his sight. In the prayer of Manoah, He is referred to in the deferential term of *Adonai*. Only when the angel of YHWH refuses to eat the food of Manoah, do Manoah and his wife hear the angel use the name "YHWH" in the suggestion of whom to offer a sacrifice. Despite this attestation and the miracle that followed through the angel of YHWH, Manoah knowing

the identity of the angel maintained his distance using the generic deity terminology, whereas his wife refers to YHWH by name in her response to Manoah.

The next action of YHWH is the narrator's report that He blessed the child Samson as he grew up. Throughout most of the story YHWH is in the background rather having the Spirit of YHWH working as His agent. The narrator reports that YHWH was seeking an occasion against the Philistines and YHWH divinely appropriated Samson's desire for the Philistine woman as an opportunity for judgment. When Samson is despairing of life because of thirst, in his prayer *Elohim* answers by performing a miracle providing water. YHWH does not appear again in the story until he departs from Samson, with only the narrator and the reader aware of this serious act. Yet, the divine departure was not so far away that He could not hear the final prayer of Samson. Samson refers to the deity as *Adonai YHWH* and *Elohim* in the same one verse petition. The narrator is careful in this story to only remotely imply divine action and never to associate YHWH with non-covenantal activity.

SPIRIT OF YHWH. The Spirit of YHWH appears more often in the Samson story than in any other segment of the Judges narrative. The first mention is that the Spirit began to impel Samson through the camp of Dan; however the nature of this movement was withheld from the reader. But through the unique verbal form *(lᵉpaᵃmô)* normally meaning "to thrust" or "to impel" when compared with its substantival meanings of "foot" or "anvil" give a clue to the divine possession.[928]

> Samson, then, is not a judge who is merely taken possession of by the spirit of the Lord but a man in whom it pounds, like the clapper of a bell, a man driven by inward energy in a series of pulsating motions, like the movements of violence, like sexuality itself.[929]

The next time the Spirit mightily rushed upon Samson so that he was able to kill a young lion and easily tear his flesh. Since Samson is the only deliverer figure where the Spirit appears more than once, the reader is faced with the ambiguity of whether the Spirit remained with Samson and periodically empowered him or rather there is an ellipsis and the Spirit left Samson after each miraculous feat only to return at critical junctures. It is ironic that in the divine assistance given Samson, the resultant actions of deaths would temporarily defile the deliverer. The Spirit returned again in the same manner mightily rushing upon Samson after the riddle had been answered. The implication is that the Spirit had empowered him to kill the thirty men of Ashkelon so he could steal the clothes

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[928] לְפַעֲמוֹ. The verb is parsed as *Qal* Infinitive Construct 3MS. *BDB*, 821-822. Jg. 13:25.

[929] R. Alter, "Samson Without Folklore," *Text and Tradition: The Hebrew Bible and Folklore* (Ed.) S. Niditch (*Semeia Studies:* Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 49.

of the dead men. The fourth and final mention of the Spirit occurred at Lehi, when the Spirit mightily came upon the bound deliverer, so that Samson was able to free himself from his bonds and to kill a thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey. The event that follows is Samson's thirst which was miraculously quenched. With the fulfillment of this miracle the narrator reports that when Samson drank his "spirit" returned. Perhaps as a subtle irony, it is Samson's spirit and not the Spirit of YHWH. In the scene where Samson is denuded of his strength, the narrator reports that YHWH had departed from Samson. The Spirit of YHWH is not mentioned, presumably because He had already departed. What would be expected is that in Samson's final moment at the temple of *Dagon*, that the Spirit of YHWH would return to Samson to empower him; but the narrator does not allow the Spirit to return and participate in this act of suicide and mass-homicide.

SAMSON. The protagonist of the story Samson is the product of a divine annunciation. He was the first born child of his mother, who had been barren. He was called as a *Nazirite* from the womb; however, this was imposed upon him and there is no evidence that he willingly submitted to this vow, as the story is filled with incidences of the broken vow. Gunn sees in Samson's activity a rebellion against this religious constriction "and as a human being, Samson chooses to be 'ordinary,' not 'separate' or 'dedicated.'"[930] Although the angel of YHWH pronounced this *Nazirite* status as from the womb, Samson's mother added to the divine word and intimated the status would be until his death. The divine call included that he would begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. However, there is no connection in the annunciation message that he would have extraordinary strength or that it would be associated with his uncut hair. Rather his strength is "because of his semi-divine father."[931] As a growing child, he had the blessing of YHWH. The narrator is ambiguous as to what he means when he says that the Spirit of YHWH began to impel him through the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol. Samson is characterized as been impetuously driven by carnal desire for women. He desires the woman from Timnah because he saw her and "she is right in my eyes."[932] He saw a prostitute in Gaza and had intercourse with her.[933] However, only with Delilah

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[930] D.M. Gunn, "Samson of Sorrows: An Isaianic Gloss on Judges 13-16," *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible,* (Ed.) D.N. Fewell (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 240.

[931] As discussed earlier, there is every reason to believe that Samson's father was not Manoah but the angel of YHWH. Brettler, *The Book of Judges,* 47.

[932] Jg. 14:3.

[933] Jg. 16:1.

does the narrator report that Samson loved her.[934] Unfortunately for Samson she did not love him. In the case of the first and last woman, he allowed other men to persuade them to entice him. The persistent weeping and needling of these women wore Samson down until he confided in them his secrets, which they both betrayed. Throughout the story Samson is always trying to safeguard his secrets but always ends up telling what he knows to those who are portrayed as not knowing. Ironically, it is only his parents who would naturally love him, that he deceives and never tells them his secret. The way that Samson acts in regard to his secrets allows the narrator to present him "as a man of supreme and fearless self-confidence."[935] Samson frequently uses enigmatic speech. His actions are usually motivated by rage or vengeance. His acts of warfare are personal vendettas rather than the leading of any Israelite army. He is characterized as living, judging, and dying alone. The man who deceives is deceived and betrayed by Philistine women, Philistine men, men of Judah, himself, and ultimately YHWH.

PHILISTINES. This is a composite antagonistic character. Unlike some of the other oppressors, the narrator does not characterize the nature of the oppression only that it lasted for forty years. The narrator reports that they were ruling over Israel. This was said again by the men of Judah. However, when regionalized cities of Philistines are considered the character becomes clearer. The Philistines of Timnah obviously were poor because a single garment of clothes should not cause impoverishment. Yet, a simple matter of clothing is more important to the men than human life as demonstrated by the threat of murder and arson.[936] The woman of Timnah betrothed to Samson tried to control the relationship from the start, although she was more concerned for herself than her husband. Further, she was afraid of her townspeople not knowing that Samson was strong enough to destroy any foe or threat. The Philistines are also depicted as not being honorable because the father of the bride gave the bride away to the wrong man. Further, the Philistines had no problem taking judgment into their own hands by killing the bride and her father. Never does a Philistine man get the upper hand over Samson, it is always the woman. That the Philistine lords viewed Samson as a threat is an understatement based on the enormity of the silver offered to Delilah to help in their plot to destroy Samson.

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[934] Jg. 16:4.

[935] Camp and Fontaine, 133.

[936] Jg. 14:15.

DELILAH. Perhaps one of the more famous women in the Hebrew bible is the character of Delilah. The reader has great antipathy for her. As a woman she is ruthless and willing to betray a man for money. She uses traits of enticement even in her straightforward request for information that will incapacitate Samson. She is the classic female spy who reports her espionage findings back to her principal. Ironically, she is more honest than Samson. She is perceptive enough to know that Samson has deceived her and told her lies. Further, she was tenacious and persistent in order to accomplish her task. Her actions incorporate her characterization.

> Delilah is presented as beautiful at the moment when Samson's falling in love with her is mentioned but as false, unreliable, and greedy when the transaction with the Philistines is concluded.[937]

Her dialogue is extremely repetitive, but this serves to show her single-minded purpose. After Samson has been captured and bound, the wealthy Delilah disappears from the story.

POINT OF VIEW. The evaluative point of view is used. The narrator is clearly telling the story as a reliable invisible observer. He allows Manoah, his wife, and the angel of YHWH to tell the story of the annunciation. As the events of Timnah unfold, except for the dialogue of Samson's desire for a Philistine woman and the riddle at the feast, the story is told through narration. However, in the subsequent chapter, dialogue drives the story with Samson responding to each different conflict, with the exception of the encounter at Lehi which is narrated with small insertions of dialogue. With the incident at Gaza, only the men of Gaza are given voice; however the actions of Samson essentially silence them. The incident with Delilah is a composite of narration and repetitive dialogue. In the final scene at the temple of *Dagon,* the narrator gives voice to the Philistines and to Samson, but it is clear that the narrator is directing the story.

LANGUAGE PLAY. The narrator is consistent with his pattern to employ a large variety of items in which he utilizes language play to tell the story.

TYPE-SCENE. The narrator uses many different type-scenes. The first is the annunciation type-scene, which has as its basis a "tripartite schema of initial barrenness, divine promise, and the birth of a son."[938] Although these three elements are present in the story, it is the deviation from the norm that invites analysis. Nowhere in the text does

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[937] M. Bal, *Lethal Love: Feminist Literary Readings of Biblical Love Stories* (ISBL: Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 39.

[938] R. Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read: The Case of the Bible's Annunciation Type-Scene," *Prooftexts 3* (1983), 120.

it say that Manoah or more specifically his wife prayed for a son.[939] This will find a later parallel with the *(Šûnammît)* Shunammite woman, when Elisha announced she would give birth to a son.[940] What is remarkable is the obtuseness of Manoah to accept and believe the report of his wife. Consequently, the plot is obstructed and the movement of the story is delayed by the need for the annunciation to be repeated for Manoah's verification.[941] Another significant deviation is that the divine messenger stressed the nature of the son's *Nazirite* status, but he never named the child. That was done by the woman and it was completely devoid of the elements of the naming formula. What also differs is that the mother participates with Samson in the vow "during her pregnancy, implying a close interdependence between the mother's actions and the future son's life."[942] Since the previous judges had large families it is plausible that the judge may have had more than one wife. But when Manoah is considered, the narrator implies that she was his only wife. As such, the element of a fertile but less loved co-wife does not exist in this story, unlike Leah with Rachel and *(Pᵊninnāh)* Peninnah with Hannah.[943]

A theophanic recognition type-scene is also interwoven into the annunciation account. It is ambiguous as to whether Manoah's wife recognized the angel of YHWH as she referred to him as "a man of *Elohim*" having an appearance like the angel of *Elohim*. Manoah uses the same terminology his wife had given him when he entreated YHWH for the angel to return. Without question Manoah did not recognize the divine element of his guest only that he was a man. The negative characterization of Manoah is further accomplished when Manoah only realizes the identity of the angel through "a grand pyrotechnic display on the altar, [with] the divine guest ascending in the flame to the heavens."[944] What is missing from this type-scene is the divine reassurance of peace, which the narrator transfers from YHWH to Manoah's wife.[945] The amalgamation of the two type-scenes into a single event also has elements of the divine hospitality type-scene. Unlike the event between YHWH, the angels and Abraham, the hospitality of Manoah is

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[939] Brettler, *The Book of Judges*, 45.

[940] ℍ שׁוּנַמִּית. 2 Kg. 4:8-17.

[941] O'Connell, 218.

[942] E. Fuchs, "The Literary Characterization of Mothers and Sexual Politics in the Hebrew Bible," *Semeia 46* (1989), 156.

[943] ℍ פְּנִנָּה. Gen. 29:31; and 1 Sam. 1:2. Alter, "How Convention Helps Us Read," 119.

[944] Ibid., 124.

[945] Amit, "Manoah Promptly Followed His Wife," 149.

rejected by the angel of YHWH which characterizes Abraham's uprightness and Manoah's maladroitness.[946] Crenshaw suggests that the angel's refusal to partake of a communal meal is an admonition against the disaster that will befall Israel when they have table fellowship with the enemy – the Philistines.[947]

Another type-scene is the "initiatory trial." The narrator presents Samson in a trial that has been created by the men of Judah who have bound Samson in order to turn him over to the Philistines.[948] Samson elicited a promise from the Judeans not to kill him. Yet, no one in the scene was ready for the Spirit of YHWH to come forth upon Samson. The victory over the Philistines with the jawbone of the donkey is anticlimactic because although one thousand men were killed, Samson successfully passed his trial, he did not deliver his people.

Alter describes the "danger in the desert and the discovery of a well or other source of sustenance" as a type-scene.[949] As such, the etiological story of En-hakkore reveals Samson's presumed danger that he is dying of thirst. YHWH responds by providing a source of water to sustain him. But, just as the previous type-scene leaves the reader with emptiness because of the brevity and nature of the scene, the discourse of Samson suggesting that he will "die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised" logically prepares for the final type-scene.

The last type-scene is the "testament of the dying hero." This perhaps is the most straightforward of type-scenes. Yet, even it is compromised in the Samson story. Since Samson does not have any children, there is no reference to inheritance or the patriarchal blessing prior to the death. Instead, there is at least an acknowledgement made to YHWH for Him to remember Samson and to strengthen him just this time.[950] But, the reason for the prayer is personal vengeance and not national deliverance. Although Samson did kill more Philistines in his dying event, it was not motivated by the right reason.

One would expect in the story of Samson's marriage to the woman of Timnah that there would be a betrothal scene. But, for whatever reason this type-scene has been

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[946] Fuchs, "The Literary Characterization of Mothers and Sexual Politics in the Hebrew Bible," 156. Gen. 18:1-15. A significant difference between the stories is that the meal received from Abraham preceded the annunciation type-scene. Also, Abraham recognized his guests without any need for divine manifestation.

[947] Crenshaw, "The Samson Saga," 477-478.

[948] Jg. 15:9-17.

[949] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 51.

[950] Jg. 16:28.

omitted with its constituent elements of there not being "a well," "a ritual of hospitality," or "betrothal negotiations."[951] Perhaps these elements were omitted because the narrator knew that Samson would never consummate the marriage.

INTERNAL PARALLELISM. There are two ways in which internal parallelism exists in the Samson story. The first is a chiastic parallelism whereby chapters thirteen and sixteen are elements A and A', respectively. Likewise, chapters fourteen and fifteen are the elements B and B'. Exum has noted that the internal chapters each have four episodes. The parallel items between the two chapters are reflected in Table 25.[952]

TABLE 25

PARALLELS IN THE EXPLOIT EPISODES

Parallel Elements	Chapters 14	Chapter 15
The first episode is built around a conversation between Samson and parent(s)	14:1-4	15:1-3
The second episode involves animals in order to display Samson's prowess	14:5-9	15:4-6
Third episode requires the events of the second episode as its basis[953]	14:7-9	15:6-8
The fourth episode has three main characters: Samson is the protagonist; Philistines are the antagonist; and a third party whom the Philistines draft to enable them to gain an advantage over Samson	14:10-20	15:9-19
Both chapters have sententious sayings	14:14, 18	15:16

As many scholars have noted, chapters thirteen and sixteen are the only chapters that deal with the *Nazirite* theme, resulting in a position that the stories are not unified because the theme is unaddressed in the other chapters. Likewise there is symmetry because the birth narrative naturally is offset by the death narrative. That allows chapters fourteen and fifteen to be structured based on Samson's exploits as well as the characteristic *leitmotif* of Samson either telling or not telling the other characters in the scene.

The second parallel structure is the symmetry of chapters fourteen and fifteen with chapter sixteen, which can be classified by its enticement motif. The parallel items are listed in Table 26.[954]

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[951] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 61.

[952] The table is adapted from Exum, "Aspects of Symmetry in the Samson Saga," 16-18; and Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 186.

[953] Whereas life is in the midst of death with the bees and the lion, death and violence are both characterized as retaliatory actions by Samson and the Philistines. See Exum, "Aspects of Symmetry and Balance in the Samson Saga," 17.

[954] The majority of these items listed are discussed by Exum, "The Theological Dimension of the Samson Saga," 34; and *idem*, "Aspects of Symmetry and Balance in the Samson Saga," 4-13.

TABLE 26

PARALLELS IN THE ENTICEMENT STORIES

Parallel Elements	Chapters 14-15	Chapter 16
Samson went down to (Timnah, Gaza)	14:1	16:1
Samson saw a woman (woman, harlot)	14:1	16:1
Samson is persuaded by a woman to reveal a secret	14:15-17	16:6-17
Samson is beleaguered by a whining woman	14:16-17	16:10-16
Samson is bound and turned over to the Philistines	15:12-13	16:21
Samson is bound with new ropes	15:13	16:11-12
Samson calls on YHWH and YHWH answers his prayer	15:18-19	16:28-30
The Philistines use a third party to capture Samson	15:10-13	16:5
Philistines are killed	14:19; 15:8, 15-16	16:30
The number 3000	15:11	16:27
Samson judged Israel twenty years	15:20	16:31

In each enticement story, Samson goes down to Philistine territory to a woman. The parallels also falter. With the first woman there was no intercourse, whereas there was with the prostitute. The sexual element is only implied with Delilah. Both women exhibit whining behavior in order to vex the soul of Samson; yet the betrayal of each secret is done directly with one woman and indirectly with the other one. In the first enticement episode the Spirit of YHWH is present; but in the latter episode YHWH departs from Samson. There is opposition in the climax of each section in that "Yahweh sustains a seeking Samson versus Yahweh abandons a self-sufficient Samson."[955]

In addition to the internal parallelism within the story itself, there are elements of parallelism with other stories in the Judges narrative. The recognition type-scene has already been noted; however, the actual scene of the offering is reminiscent of a similar scene with Gideon and the angel of YHWH. The connection is made because it also includes the meal offering and a sacrifice on a rock.[956] Gideon also shares commonality with Manoah since both required convincing signs.[957]

The *leitmotif* of fire also is at work. It is first seen in the flame of the fire at Manoah's altar and sacrifice to YHWH.[958] For Samson, it is metaphorically presented as his anger burning.[959] We already are aware of the men of Timnah promising and then later fulfilling their promise by burning the woman of Timnah and her father, and their

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[955] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 186.

[956] This may also be viewed as a borrowing of items to bring consistency between the accounts, since there is no mention of the two elements earlier in the offering scene. Brettler, *The Book of Judges*, 44. Jg. 6:18, 20; and 13:15-19.

[957] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 290.

[958] Jg. 13:20.

[959] Jg. 14:19.

house with fire.[960] Samson likewise uses torches to burn the Philistine field, vineyards, and orchards, as well as three hundred foxes.[961] But, that draws memory of Gideon's three hundred men who had torches in their hands.[962] Moving further back in the Judges narrative, there is the plural form of torches in naming Deborah's husband, Lappidoth.[963]

Samson not only used fire as a weapon, but he made use of nature and the jawbone of a donkey as a tool of murder.[964] Shamgar shares several parallels in this regard.[965] First is the similarity of the first syllable of their name. Second, both fought individually against the Philistines. In that fight, both transformed a single item as an instrument of war. Shamgar stuck down 600 men and Samson struck down 1000 men. Finally, this exploit of both of them is recorded in a victory song.[966]

The parallels also extend to Delilah and Jael.[967] Both women were foreigners. The word (yᵊtad) is translated as "pin" and "tent peg," of which both women used in their deception to defeat their enemy.[968] Both Samson and Sisera fell asleep. Samson slept on Delilah's lap; whereas Sisera fell asleep dead between Jael's legs. In both stories the actions take place in the private areas of Delilah's home and Jael's tent.

A parallel is present between Samson and Ehud. Both are involved in word-play and have a secret.[969] The significant difference is that Samson's secrets are his undoing and kill him; whereas Ehud's secret kills Eglon.[970]

The narrator has connected Samson with almost every major character in the Judges narrative. Most have some observable parallel. Yet, parallels may work by contrast also. In this case, the remaining major characters are important. Othniel is the paradigm of a man in a proper marital relationship within Israel.[971] Samson obviously is involved in improper external liaisons with the Philistines. Jephthah makes a foolish vow

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[960] Jg. 14:15; and 15:6.

[961] Jg. 15:4-5.

[962] Jg. 7:16, and 20.

[963] Jg. 4:4.

[964] Jg. 15:15-16.

[965] Jg. 3:31.

[966] Jg. 5:6; and 15:16.

[967] Jg. 4:21; 5:27; 16:13, and 19.

[968] יָתֵד.

[969] Jg. 3:19.

[970] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 128-129.

[971] Jg. 1:12-13.

but he keeps it.[972] In contrast, Samson is conceived as a *Nazirite* from the womb and only keeps his vow consistently in his prenatal condition. As an adult, he breaks the vow at three points.[973] Klein has noticed a contrastive polarity between Abimelech and Samson: "The Abimelech story is that of an anti-hero; Samson is a non-hero."[974] Even the minor judges serve to contrast with Samson. Jair, Ibzan, and Abdon are all known for their procreativity.[975] Yet, Samson is not even married, despite his attempt and has no offspring.

EXTERNAL PARALLELISM. There are several *leitmotifs* that extend outside of the book. They are listed based on the order they appear in the Samson story. The first parallel involves the theme of the barren wife. Since this has been discussed previously in the context of a type-scene, only the external parallels are mentioned. Other barren biblical characters in the narratives prior to Judges included the matriarchs Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel.[976] These instances involved a divine closing of the womb until YHWH's purposes might be fulfilled. In the subsequent narratives this theme is present with Hannah, the Shunammite woman, and with Elizabeth.[977]

Another *leitmotif* is the quest to learn the Deity's name. In the A.N.E., it was thought that to have the knowledge of the name meant that the person knew the nature and purpose of the other, since often there was a prophetic onomastic meaning.

> Knowledge of God's name implied a relationship of reciprocity. In time ritual use of special names for gods became a valuable means of safeguarding life. Thus the belief arose that knowledge of a deity's name bestowed power over that deity upon the lucky person. Accordingly, gods guarded their true identity lest their names be profaned and supplication become constant.[978]

Within the Samson story, the theophanic messenger withstood Manoah's inquiry by ambiguously replying that his name was wonderful, i.e. incomprehensible.[979] Prior to this story, a similar scene occurred with Jacob and Moses.[980] The difference being that Moses received the Tetragrammaton. But for Jacob and Manoah, there was implicitly a divine refusal to disclose the name; however, there was a textual clue in which both characters

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[972] Jg. 11:30-31, 35, and 39.

[973] Greenstein, "The Riddle of Samson," 240.

[974] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 131.

[975] Jg. 10:4; 12:9, and 14.

[976] Gen. 16:1; 25:21; and 30:31.

[977] 1 Sam. 1:2; 2 Kg. 4:14; and Luke 1:7.

[978] Crenshaw, *Samson*, 45.

[979] Jg. 13:17-18.

[980] Gen. 32:29; and Ex. 3:13-14.

were able to successfully discover the names: *(Pᵊnî'ēl)* "face of *Elohim*" and *(Peli'y)* "wonderful."[981]

As is expected with an epiphany, characteristically there is terror or fear experienced because of the theophany. The German scholar Rudolf Otto uses the phrase *"mysterium tremendum et fascinans"* to describe the experience.[982] In most cases, the theophany assuages the fear by the phrase "Fear not." In the Samson story, this calming of fear had to come resolutely from Manoah's wife to her husband, despite the fact that both of them were prostrate because of the experience. Just as Jacob and Moses had an experience regarding the quest for learning the name of deity, they also experienced some degree of dread. Later, Isaiah expressed terror for being a man of unclean lips in the presence of holiness.[983] This same sense is implied in Jeremiah protesting his call because he was a youth.[984] Ezekiel fell upon his face with his vision of YHWH.[985] Daniel was distressed over the visions he saw, ultimately falling on his face.[986] When the angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah and to Mary, both of them experienced great fear.[987] The shepherds of Bethlehem were fearful at the site of the angelic host proclaiming the birth of the Messiah.[988]

The *leitmotif* of a man before a woman's wiles and specifically the danger of the foreign woman are presented at length in the book of Proverbs.[989] Already, we have seen this theme presented in the episodes involving Jael, as well as the various women involved in the Samson saga. Later in the Hebrew bible, the theme is presented in a positive light in the way that Esther foils the insidious plans of *(Hāmān)* Haman.[990] The story of Judith tells how the heroine subdued and killed *(Hōlŏpernēs)* Holofernes.[991]

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[981] 𝕳 פְּנִיאֵל, and פֶּלִאי.

[982] R. Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*, (Tran.) J.W. Harvey, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1923), 12-41.

[983] Isa. 6:5.

[984] Jer. 1:7-8.

[985] Ezek. 1:28.

[986] Dan. 7:15, 28; and 8:17-18.

[987] Luke 1:13, and 30.

[988] Luke 2:10.

[989] Prov. 1-9.

[990] 𝕳 הָמָן. Est. 5:1 – 7:10.

[991] 𝕳 הֹלוֹפְרְנֵס. Judith 13:1-11. For a detailed discussion of Judith and parallels to her myth, see M. Stocker, *Judith: Sexual Warrior, Women and Power in Western Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

The loss of charisma is not a well used theme. In fact, it first appears with Samson. The *leitmotif* has four elements: a betrayal of the vocational calling, a divine withdrawal of the charisma associated with the calling, adverse situation to the one who has lost the charisma, and finally death by the enemy.[992] Whereas, this theme is presented almost in skeletal form with Samson, it resonates in the story of King Saul.[993]

One other *leitmotif* is the death wish of a hero. In most of the narratives, the character who desires death because of dire straits makes the request of deity, and then the deity persuades the character otherwise and the character lives. This is the case with Moses, Elijah, and Jonah.[994]

SYMBOLISM AND IRONY. Throughout the Judges narrative, the reader has come to expect some type of anomaly with the judge character which suggests some type of "weakness or a social disadvantage."[995] This has been present with Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, and Jephthah. Only Othniel stands as the paragon of what a judge should be. Now with the narrator beginning the Samson account with an epiphany and annunciation the expectation coupled with the presence of the Spirit of YHWH, suggest that "unlike the other judges, who begin disadvantaged, Samson begins with every advantage."[996] But, the irony is that Samson deteriorates into a character that disadvantages himself. Klein makes an appropriate connection by showing that with the annunciation of Hagar and the birth of her son Ishmael, "not all divinely-announced births are *intended* to produce just and worthy men."[997] As such, we are not at all surprised when the narrator reveals the strongman Samson "as essentially the weakest, weaker than any of his predecessor judges, for Samson is *subject*, a *slave* to physical passion – the lowest kind of subjugation."[998]

When the narrator describes the scene of the lion's carcass, he is using multiple symbolism. The manner in which the lion attacks Samson and he disposes of it is "a 'symbolic prelude' to Samson's exploits against Philistia."[999] When Samson returns and

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[992] Crenshaw, *Samson*, 48.

[993] 1 Sam. 15 – 31.

[994] Ex. 32:32; 1 Kg. 19:1-18; and Jon. 4:3-4.

[995] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 115.

[996] Ibid., 115.

[997] Ibid.. Gen. 16:7-12.

[998] Ibid., 118.

[999] M. Emmrich, "The Symbolism of the Lion and the Bees: Another Ironic Twist in the Samson Cycle," *JETS 44* (2001), 68-69. Jg. 14:5-6.

sees the dead carcass of the lion, the narrator uses the word *(^{a}dat)* to describe the gathering of bees.[1000] This deliberate word choice "always refers to a company of people, usually the Israelites as a faith community" is covert irony.[1001] Emmrich makes this connection and allows the bees and the lion to be metaphorical symbols of Israel and the land.

> Like bees in a carcass, Israel was to inhabit a country of idolaters, a country that became habitable for God's community only through the death of God's enemies.[1002]

This interpretation goes beyond legitimate boundaries in the immediate context of the Samson story. Rather, the allegorical approach should recognize that the bees (the house of Israel) are in an unnatural place – the carcass of a rotting unclean animal. Even though honey is being produced, Israel is where it doesn't belong – defiled – living in the midst of the Philistine culture.

The door posts of the Gaza city gate serve as a theological metaphor which is repeated as the pillars of the temple of *Dagon*. In both cases, these events symbolize the manner in which "Samson renders YHWH's enemies defenseless."[1003] There is an oblique parallel to this in Isaiah 45.[1004]

The narrator also employs the *leitmotifs* of life and death. But in doing so, he shows divine control over these elements which place YHWH in the ultimate role as judge. Through Samson's birth, "He brings life out of the death of a barren woman's womb."[1005] In connection with the epiphany and Manoah's recognition of the angel of YHWH, "Manoah expects death, but is granted life."[1006] This theme is also present in the two times that Samson prays. First, Samson is expecting that he will die of thirst; however, YHWH answers his prayer to live and he is given life in the place of death.[1007] At the end of the story, "he asks for death, and is given that."[1008]

RHETORICAL DEVICES. One convention that the narrator uses is the riddle. The enigmatic sayings function because of ambiguity and double *entendre*. The riddle allows the riddler to assume a position of authority in the scene vis-à-vis other characters,

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[1000] ‎עֵרָת H. Jg. 14:8.

[1001] Block, *NAC*, 429.

[1002] Emmrich, 70.

[1003] Gunn, "Samson of Sorrow," 242.

[1004] Isa. 45:1-2.

[1005] Webb, "A Serious Reading of the Samson Story," 119. Jg. 13:3, and 24.

[1006] Ibid. Jg. 13:22-23.

[1007] Jg. 15:18-19.

[1008] Ibid. Jg. 16:30.

irregardless of his primary character role.[1009] What is remarkable is that Samson presents his riddle as a statement and the Philistines reply with a question, thus reversing the normal order.[1010] The recent research of Yadin calls into question the meaning of *(ḥîdāh)* normally translated as riddle.[1011] He suggests that this usage is inconsistent with the remainder of the Hebrew bible and as such should be translated as "saying." He makes two cogent observations. First, the Philistine response that "'they could not state the saying' does not mean 'they could not solve the riddle' but indicates that they were unsuccessful in their search for a saying of their own."[1012] The answer required another enigmatic response. Second, the cultural context of the "saying" is not Israelite but rather Philistine.[1013] As such, Samson has successfully entered into a cross-cultural co-existence.

> In his interaction with the Philistines Samson is not a congenital enemy but – here as so often – a betrayed lover. He is enraged by the Philistines not because they dominate Israel politically – prior to the *ḥîdâ* episode there is no indication that Samson has anything but amicable feeling for his Philistine neighbors. He becomes their enemy because they refuse to recognize that he has bested them at their own game, that he has achieved a greater mastery of Philistine culture than they.[1014]

But did Samson actually have the mastery? The Philistines were able to secure enough information to answer Samson and use ambiguity that allows the double-fold answer that refers to the lion incident and the sexual nuances of the immediate setting of the wedding banquet.[1015] The ability of Samson to become enculturated and to use Philistine conventions in the context of their wedding feasts allows the narrator to communicate through the character the extent of how Israelite culture and Yahwism has been exchanged for that of the Canaanites, more specifically, the Philistines.

The narrator employs a number of *leitwords* in this story. The verbal root *(ngd)* "tell" appears twenty three times in its various forms.[1016] Kim has noticed within the wedding episode the word is used in a concentric symmetry and in the Delilah episode

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[1009] W.J. Pepicello and T.A. Green, *The Language of Riddles* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1984), 128.

[1010] Greenstein, "The Riddle of Samson," 242.

[1011] חִידָה. Jg. 14:18.

[1012] A. Yadin, "Samson's *Ḥîdâ*," *VT 52* (2002), 415.

[1013] Ibid., 415.

[1014] Ibid., 426.

[1015] Camp and Fontaine, 141.

[1016] נגד. Jg. 13:6, 10; 14:2, 6, 9, 12 (2x), 13, 14, 15, 16 (3x), 17 (2x), 19; 16:6, 10, 13, 15, 17, and 18 (2x).

with symmetrical parallelism.[1017] The repetitive use of the word specifically in chapters fourteen through sixteen "indicates that the motif of telling and not telling is central to the enticement stories."[1018] Ironically, the verbal root *(pth)* "entice" only appears twice in the story.[1019] In the larger context of the Judges narrative, this *leitmotif* of telling has been operating throughout the book. Israel has consistently been told what will happen to them and in the climax of the book; the riddle of the cyclical pattern has disintegrated with no opportunity for them to return to the end result of rest.

The next most frequent *leitword ('sr)* "bind" occurs fifteen times.[1020] This *leitword* was used in both the Lehi and Delilah episodes, with there being twice as many occurrences in the latter episode. Kim makes a connection between these episodes that whereas the Philistines were unable to bind Samson at Lehi they were able to bind him in the Delilah episode by exploiting his Achilles' heel with the power of love, which was more powerful than strength.[1021] Once again, the micro-character is the microcosm of Israel. This *leitmotif* of binding was described in the second prologue with the metaphor of a trap that Israel would be ensnared if they served, worshiped, and implicitly loved the Canaanite gods.

The narrator also uses the *leitword* verbal form of *(r'h)* "see" thirteen times.[1022] For Kim, this is important as a structural symmetrical device for Samson and the Philistines.

> [S]ymmetry is also built into the objects of the visual activities of both. For Samson they are women (animate; 3x) and the carcass of a lion (inanimate; 1x); for his enemies they are Samson (animate; 3x) and his power (inanimate; 1x).[1023]

Nevertheless, these similarities are not as important as the verb of perception that moves Samson through the story. To limit the analysis to only the saga of Samson and not to view the *leitword* in the context of the overall story which includes the birth episode with his parents deconstructs the meaning. Samson does make Philistine women the object of his visual activity, but this need not be considered negatively. The *leitword* is used in

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[1017] J. Kim, *The Structure of the Samson Cycle* (Kampen, the Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1993), 387-389.

[1018] Exum, "Aspects of Symmetry and Balance in the Samson Saga," 4-5.

[1019] ה פתה. Jg. 14:15; and 16:5.

[1020] ה אסר. Jg. 15:10, 12, 13 (3x); 16:5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 (2x), 12, 13, and 21.

[1021] Kim, *The Structure of the Samson Cycle*, 395.

[1022] ה ראה. Jg. 13:10, 19, 21, 22; 14:1, 2, 8, 11; 16:1, 5, 18, 24, and 27.

[1023] Ibid., 390.

chapter thirteen positively with Samson's parents seeing the divine messenger and their own assessment of *Elohim*. Samson is stirred by the Spirit of YHWH and even Samson's visual acuity of the Timnite woman is a fulfillment of the divine purpose to judge the Philistines. The problem is not with Samson seeing these women; but going past the divine boundaries in the sexual realm and thus perverting judgment.

Another *leitword* is the verbal forms of *('lh)* "go up," which is used nineteen times in the story.[1024] Its antonym *(yrd)* "go down" is used ten times.[1025] At times these two *leitwords* should be seen as a *leitmotif* whereby the "five times Samson goes down are balanced by the five times the Philistines go up."[1026] Two other *leitwords* appear having antonymic value. The verbal root *(bw')* "come in" is used fourteen times.[1027] Its antonym *(yṣ')* "go out" is used five times.[1028]

Within Samson's riddle there is paronomasia between the substantives *(mēhā'ōkēl)* "eater" and *(ma''kāl)* "something to eat."[1029] The response to that riddle was also one of assonance using homonymic paronomasia whereby the word for "lion" sounds like the word for "honey."[1030]

In the enigmatic speech of Samson after slaying the thousand men with the jawbone of the donkey, paronomasia is used. This has been discussed earlier.[1031] However, if the word is used euphemistically, the donkey may be a reference to Philistine women and Samson's use of them in his exploits.[1032]

The rhetorical device of paronomasia serves another purpose of validating that the annunciation episode and the subsequent episodes of Samson's life are a unified narrative. As an expression of this, Kim has noted the unity based on two words.

[1024] H עלה. Jg. 13:5, 16, 19, 20 (2x); 14:2, 19; 15:6, 9, 10 (2x), 13; 16:3, 5, 8, 17, and 18 (3x).

[1025] H ירד. Jg. 14:1, 5, 7, 10, 19; 15:8, 11, 12; 16:21, and 31.

[1026] This observation may serve structural purposes; however it does not contribute to the themes of the story, because the five instances of Samson going down (Jg. 14:1, 5, 7, 19; and 15:8) barely intersect with the five instances of the Philistines going up (Jg. 15:6, 9; 16:5, 8, and 18). Ibid., 392-393.

[1027] H בוא. Jg. 13:6 (2x), 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17; 14:5, 8; 15:1 (2x), 14; and 16:1.

[1028] H יצא. Jg. 13:14; 14:14 (2x); 15:19; and 16:20.

[1029] H מֵהָאֹכֵל and מַאֲכָל. Jg. 14:14. Casanowicz, 125. The feature of assonance with this verse has previously been cited. See Footnote 309, earlier in this chapter, on page 399.

[1030] S. Segert, "Paronomasia in the Samson narrative in Judges xiii-xvi," *VT 34* (1984), 456. Jg. 14:18.

[1031] See the section "Samson Narrative" earlier in this chapter, as well as footnote 311, page 399.

[1032] Segert, 456.

YHWH blessed *(brk)* Samson and his Spirit began *(ḥll)* to stir him. But Delilah allured him to sleep on her lap *(brk)* and, by shaving his hair, began *(ḥll)* to subdue him, thus causing YHWH to depart from him. Samson lost the divine *(brk)* while sleeping on the *(brk)* of Delilah. YHWH's *commencing* work of deliverance is temporally thwarted by Delilah's *commencing* work of subduing Samson. However, it cannot nullify Samson's life task to begin *(ḥll,* 13:5) the deliverance of Israel. Samson's hair began *(ḥll)* to grow again![1033]

Depending upon which definition is used, even the name Delilah may have been carefully employed by the narrator to show both the "languishing" nature of her prey with his "dangling hair." Geographically, her location described as the valley of Sorek, literally refers to the torrent of a *wadi*, which is reminiscent of the destructiveness associated with the River Kishon. But, because Sorek is a reference to wine, one of the prohibitions of the *Nazirite* status is brought into focus.

In a literal sense, however, the name is contrary to reason. The combination of flood bed and wine cultivation is impossible. Obviously, the flooding waters would wash away the vines. The impossibility symbolized by the area identified with Delilah is relevant to her relationship to Samson. Delilah represents an uncontrollable element of nature (torrent) and one of the *Nazirite* prohibitions (wine). These polarities cannot be reconciled. One aspect – either the torrent or the prohibition – must give way.[1034]

The death of Samson in itself is a sad ending for the story. The events at Ramath-Lehi prepare the reader for such an event. Samson has prophesied his death at the hands of the uncircumcised. But, before this can happen YHWH intervenes with the miracle of water. The NASB translates the result as "his strength returned and he revived."[1035] Yet, the Hebrew brings out the nuance with a more literal meaning *(wattāšāḇ rûḥô wayyeḥî)* "his spirit returned (repented) and he lived."[1036] This naturally points to the end of the story where there is a paradoxical word-play on death.[1037] This naturally points toward his burial which is in the tomb of his father between Zorah and Eshtaol. Samson's burial site outside of cities symbolizes his individuality and lack of community. Whereas his father was identified as being of Zorah, the same is not said of Samson. This also suggests toponymic paronomasia whereas Zorah means "one struck" and Eshtaol means "entreaty." The final epithet of Samson is one who is dead and buried because he has been struck down ironically connected to his entreaties to YHWH.

[1033] 𝔐 בְּרֶךְ and חלל. Kim, *The Structure of the Samson Cycle*, 414-415.

[1034] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 119-120.

[1035] Jg. 15:19.

[1036] 𝔐 וַתָּשָׁב רוּחוֹ וַיֶּחִי.

[1037] 𝔐 *(hammēṯîm 'ašer hēmîṯ b°môṯô)* הַמֵּתִים אֲשֶׁר הֵמִית בְּמוֹתוֹ. Literally, "the dead who he did to death in his death." Burney, 390-391. Jg. 16:30.

Repetition is skillfully used in order to heighten the tension of the story. This is seen in the three times Samson deceives Delilah about the how he will be rendered helpless.[1038] With Delilah's four time reply "The Philistines are upon you, Samson;" the reader is prepared for this to be fulfilled.[1039] It is not surprising that the narrator tells us on two occasions that Delilah had men waiting in the inner chamber to fulfill her ploy.[1040] The Philistines were not as certain that her plan would work, since Delilah had to send for the men once she had successfully learned the secret to Samson's strength. Delilah skillfully uses words to suit her purpose. Even though it takes her several attempts to succeed, there is a piercing judgment in her voice when Delilah rebukes Samson with the same words three times for mocking her.[1041] On two of those occasions the indictment squarely condemns him as a liar.[1042]

INTERPRETATION. Of all the deliverers with their stories, Samson "is the only judge who engages in multiple exploits."[1043] Other than Shamgar, he is the only one who fights the enemy without an army. His activity of praying is circumstance motivated much the same way in other stories Israel cried out to YHWH because of oppression. Despite the apparent religiosity of Samson's parents, this does not characterize him. Polzin notes, "he appears never to have had any concern for the interests of Israel, nor any knowledge of the role predicted for him by the angel of Yahweh." [1044] He is self-serving. Thus, it is not surprising that the angel would report that Samson would "begin to deliver Israel" rather than provide a complete deliverance like his predecessors. Because Manoah's wife did not report any information to her husband about Samson being a savior figure but instead substituted information about his death, "the dissonance of a single phrase subtly sets the scene for a powerful but spiritually dubious savior of Israel who will end up sowing as much destruction as salvation."[1045] But this judge was self-serving without any national leadership initiative.

> To say that Samson is an improbable and less than sympathetic figure is to understate the obvious. His physical courage and tribal integrity are beyond question. But his propensity

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[1038] Jg. 16:11, 13, and 17.

[1039] Jg. 16:9, 12, 14, and 20.

[1040] Jg. 16:9, and 12.

[1041] Jg. 16:10, 13, and 15.

[1042] Jg. 16:10, and 13.

[1043] Greenstein, "The Riddle of Samson," 248.

[1044] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 181.

[1045] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 101.

> to impulsive, egocentric and arbitrary actions renders him less an admirable human being
> [as] a leader around whom men may rally to struggle for justice, independence, and self-
> redemption.[1046]

It is not surprising that the men of Judah would turn Samson over to the Philistines, because the national interest is not being served.[1047]

The story is unique because it resembles a complete unit, despite the redactional arguments. There is a birth, life (marriage), and death narrative. Within the central section describing events during the twenty years of Samson's judging Israel; the narrator has incorporated many different rhetorical elements. One is the numerical theme with multiples of three. But more important is the collection of wisdom material: riddles, enigmatic speech, and rhetorical questions. Through this the narrator depicts with the *leitmotif* of knowledge vs. ignorance that the characters are not in control; but that YHWH is the one in control, as wisdom literature reveals.[1048]

Greenstein allegorizes the story making Samson not the deliverer judge of Israel but the one who epitomizes Israel and his *Nazirite* status represents the Israelite covenant, which has been cast aside.

> Samson/Israel had sinned with his/its eyes, finding greater attraction in Philistine/alien
> culture and religion than in the covenant of YHWH. When the Philistines finally
> humiliate Samson (Israel), he acknowledges that his fate is with YHWH. He therefore
> returns to the Lord's fold, throwing off the false gods of the enemy. The Samson story
> depicts the abandonment of the now abominable alien cult through the image of Samson
> collapsing the temple of the Philistine god.[1049]

But, the analogy does break down. It suggests that the only way to be free from the cycle is through death, rather than through a relationship with YWHH through repentance and obedience to the *Torah*. Unfortunately, Israel doesn't repent in this story. Unless something happens (which it does not in the Judges narrative) Samson remains a microcosm of Israel. YHWH is barely recognized by one generation (Manoah and his wife). The offspring lives a life based on his own hedonism and only invokes prayer when it is life threatening. The divine protection continues only "as long as they [Samson and Israel] do not neglect their [covenant] obligations entirely."[1050] But that is precisely what happens. The egocentricism of Samson is his fatal flaw. The man who chose to go after what he saw ironically ends up unable to see. His physical blindness symbolizes Israel in

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[1046] Vickery, 59.

[1047] Jg. 15:9-13.

[1048] R.E. Murphy, "Wisdom in the OT," *ABD 6* (1992), 920-931.

[1049] Greenstein, "The Riddle of Samson," 253.

[1050] Ibid., 252.

its spiritual blindness. Just as Samson "never understood the reason why Yahweh had so far delivered him from his enemies" translates back to the blindness of Israel.[1051] And for the reader who looks forward in the Hebrew bible, the binding and blinding of Samson is a foreshadowing of King Zedekiah and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians.[1052] The Jewish sages were able to make a causal connection with Samson's activities: "In Gaza he first went whoring, in Gaza he was a prisoner."[1053] It is peculiar that for someone who has thrown off the religious yoke of the *Nazirite* vow, Samson would invoke a religious posture choosing to pray to YHWH at the junctures of his life when he faced death.[1054] Deity disappears and despite a final prayer, only YHWH is avenged by the removal of His enemies. The narrator makes no negative characterization or judgments against the pagan cult of *Dagon*. This accomplishes two purposes. First, by its absence, it becomes a device to prepare the reader for the epilogues. Secondly, it serves to show the extent of the Canaanization of Israel. As the central body of deliverer stories end, it is ironic that Israel (through Samson) finds its rest in the tomb of its father.

The story of Samson functions for the reader as entertainment and didactic material. As the enemies of YHWH, the Philistines are ridiculed though the story "to show us the peril of being an enemy of Yahweh's people (even of his *sinful* people), for Yahweh makes fools of those who seek to ruin and crush his people."[1055] But, at the same time, the reader sees how Israel itself, as a people, and as an individual can become an enemy of YHWH through sin.

Israel did not have a *bona fide* deliverer in the character of Samson. Instead, they received the semi-divine offspring from a woman with a barren womb. Samson's mother's former state of barrenness in itself "carries with it the inevitable stigma of divine punishment."[1056] But, she did conceive a child in her epiphany experience with the angel of YHWH. That no one asked for Samson to be born and that no one prayed for deliverance from the Philistines is telling. In many ways, the arrival of Samson on the scene is a fitting divine judgment against Israel that has prepared the reader for the

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[1051] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 194.

[1052] K.F. Kravitz, "Divine Trophies of War in Assyria and Ancient Israel: Case Studies in Political Theology," unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, (Brandeis University, 1999), 162. 2 Kg. 25:7-9.

[1053] *Sota* 9b.

[1054] Crenshaw, *Samson*, 30-31.

[1055] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 180.

[1056] Crenshaw, "The Samson Saga," 473.

anarchy to come. Samson does not learn from his past mistakes and through his sexual encounters with the Philistines he does not "profit from repeated experiences."[1057] Samson is a dichotomous symbolic representation of Israel's sin and of divine deliverance. It is ironic that the character's perception tells the story.

> So as his compatriots (and his enemies, for that matter) look at Samson, they see in him the power of God at work for salvation; but as God looks at him, He sees in him the sin of Israel at work for destruction.[1058]

As the epilogues reveal, the characters have not learned from their predecessors.

EPILOGUE A

There is a relative consensus that the third major section of Judges begins with chapter seventeen and is composed of two distinct narratives. What is in dispute is the nomenclature of this section. The question of whether this part should be considered as an epilogue, appendix, conclusion, or denouement has been previously addressed.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. Just as the third section of Judges is composed of two narratives, the first epilogue is composed of two primary stories having an uncontested beginning at 17:1 and ending at 18:31. Amidst the forty four verses, the narrator has created a complex narrative structure with a primary plot and three secondary plots. O'Connell has identified four interwoven plots which are based on sinful and illegitimate responses to YHWH and the covenant. For him, the main plot is the execution of the curse against the thief who stole Micah's mother's silver. The subplots include: 1) the Levite's illegitimate quest for employment elsewhere than in the cult of YHWH; 2) the Danites' illegitimate quest for settlement elsewhere than in their tribal allotment; and 3) the Danites' illegitimate quest for a cult other than that of YHWH.[1059]

ABSTRACT. At first glance the opening verses of chapters seventeen and eighteen appear to have the kernel of an abstract with the introduction of the primary characters of Micah and the tribe of the Danites, respectively. Yet, those verses do not succinctly encompass the theme of the abstract. Rather, the recurring theme of the final section "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes" sets the tone that governs the narrative.[1060]

[1057] Vickery, 67.

[1058] Wilcock, 143.

[1059] O'Connell, 233-234.

[1060] Jg. 17:6.

ORIENTATION. The majority of the action is set within the hill country of Ephraim at the home of Micah. From this vantage point, the narrator mentions a series of geopolitical locations which are ancillary to the plot.[1061] The narrator also employs three architectural settings: the house of Micah, the house of gods, and the house of *Elohim*.[1062] No temporal information is given as to the time elapsed in the story, although the implication is that the two chapters likely transpired within the same year, although it is a speculative conjecture. Nonetheless, there is no connection chronologically with the preceding stories nor is there any way to place this story within the greater chronological context of the book.

COMPLICATING ACTION. Even with the narrator's use of multiple subplots, he remains faithful to establish a main plot that works itself throughout the story. However, there is a significant departure from the previous stories in that there is no glorification element of YHWH, where He is the central character that delivers Israel from some oppressive force through the agency of a micro-protagonist. In fact, the macro-character of Israel is likewise absent. The familiar cyclical formula has disappeared and is replaced by a series of illegitimate actions. The narrator, after establishing the setting and introducing his main character, allows the reader to over hear a conversation between Micah and his mother. As such, the reader realizes that he has missed the opening scene of the action and appears to perceive the resolution of the crisis. The narrator does not go into the details of Micah's mother's silver or why it was stolen by her son. What is also missing from the narrative is the actual curse that she uttered against the thief. The episode itself seems straightforward, yet, it is not. The mother pronounces a blessing over her son – the thief; but, she does not reverse the curse or cancel it. In effect, the curse (whatever it may be) is still operating in the life of Micah. But, instead of resolving the scene, the narrator complicates it by having a silversmith make a graven image and a molten image. There are some anomalies with this. Although all of the silver was dedicated to YHWH by Micah's mother, only two hundred pieces out of eleven hundred were used by the silversmith. What happened to the other nine hundred pieces that was dedicated? Further, the actions of Micah's mother are in direct violation of the *Torah* in that YHWH would never receive an offering in which silver was dedicated to Him for the

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[1061] These locations include: Bethlehem in Judah, Zorah, Eshtaol, Laish, Kirjath-Jearim, Mahaneh-dan, Beth-Rehob, Sidon, and Shiloh.

[1062] In the two religious settings, the words are almost identical, with the latter having the definite article. Nonetheless, the context dictates the meaning. Jg. 17:5; and 18:31.

purpose of idolatry. Finally, the narrator states that Micah made an ephod and household idols and consecrated one of his sons as his priest. All of this is in violation of the *Torah*. Even these *teraphim* appear to be in addition to that which the silversmith made with the stolen silver that had been returned to Micah's mother.

EVALUATION. The main plot is ambiguously open-ended. The narrator appears to close the story with an evaluation that appears in both its full and abbreviated formula that asserts that because of the monarchal leadership vacuum every man did what was right in his own eyes. But this only opens the door wider to further illustration of this evaluative remark and shows how the unseen and unheard curse of YHWH is acting through Micah and everyone he interacts with in their illegitimate actions which constitute the three subplots.

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. With the introduction of Micah's idolatrous shrine, his son is displaced as priest by an itinerant Levite who illegitimately acquiesces to be employed by Micah rather than to serve in a proper manner in the Yahwistic cult. The *status quo* is maintained in this idolatry even when five Danite spies are reunited with their Levitical friend. The narrator does not give any information of their previous liaison. However, in response to his counsel, the Danites spy out the northern land. Upon their return, the five men bring back a report indicating a viable conquest. Thus, the subplot of the Danites' illegitimate territorial conquest appears to have no complicating action. However, this action is temporarily suspended when the Danites complicate the subplot of the Levite's employment and the main plot regarding Micah. For the Levite, he receives a change of employment in a larger scale, which institutes the final subplot regarding an inappropriate cult in the Danite territory. For Micah, the thief, his things and property are stolen in a greater measure than what he initially stole from his mother. Of course the question remains as to whether his mother's curse follows the idols, although a divine curse does follow them. The household of Micah attempts to thwart this theft and kidnapping incident; however, logic and common sense prevails, and they abandon their attempt of intertribal conflict based on the brute force and number of Danites. The silver and the idols are relocated and maintain a prominent position in the story as Micah fades into obscurity. The Danites successfully conquer the new territory of Laish by annihilating its residents and settling the land.

CODA. The story ends with the initiation of the new Danite idolatrous cult in which Jonathan and his sons officiate as priests. In one sense the story ends because Micah's graven image is the focal point and there is no more narration. However, that the

narrator interjects that this priesthood remained until the day of the captivity of the land there is the sense that the story continues, although the narrator withholds that from the reader.

PLOT. As noted earlier, there is one main plot and three subplots. Even though the plots are more distinct and event driven than in the earlier stories, they are best examined based on their episodic presentation.

EPISODE ONE. The initial episode solely deals with the primary plot. This is composed of two scenes both of which are kernel events. The first scene is already in progress which introduces conflict between Micah and his mother, although his mother does not know that her conflict is with her son. The woman's silver had been stolen and she uttered a curse. The discourse of Micah suggests that the language of his mother's curse regarding the theft of the silver may have been the motivating reason for his returning what he had stolen. Micah's theft prompted the causation that resulted in the ensuing action of this first scene. However, whether Micah had a propensity toward cultic disloyalty and idolatry is not known, nor is it known whether the events of the first scene had a direct bearing on the second scene, although it is probable. The second scene does not contain any discourse, but it is narrated in such a way to develop the plot and to establish the cultic chaos that pervades the second and third episodes, with the initiation of Micah's house of gods.

EPISODE TWO. The second episode completes the remainder of chapter seventeen. It is at this point where the first subplot enters the picture. Although the setting does not change, Micah's mother is no longer mentioned. In her place is the Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, who is installed as an idolatrous priest. The episode itself is a single scene that follows the Levite from his home as he wanders northward. The journey is telescoped as if the journey had taken him straight from Bethlehem to the hill country of Ephraim, which is conceivable, considering the same journey occurs in the next epilogue by another Levite. The only conflict present in this episode is between the Levite and his setting, in that he is searching for a place to stay, and presumably find employment. Upon his meeting with Micah, the Levite is offered sojourning rights, wages, and employment as a priest. As earlier mentioned, there is some question regarding the language of Micah's mother's curse. Perhaps, the narrator gives a clue in Micah's words "Now I know that YHWH will prosper me, seeing I have a Levite as a priest."[1063] It is plausible

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[1063] Jg. 17:13.

that the curse limited prosperity and the attempt by Micah to reach YHWH in an unsatisfactory method is his attempt to circumvent his mother's curse.

EPISODE THREE. The final episode involves eight events which may be distinguished geographically. The first kernel event is a narrative summary that initiates the second subplot and gives the five Danite spies a reason to leave Zorah and Eshtaol in their northward quest for territory. The second event is a scene that causes the subplot to overlap with the existing subplot and main plot when the spies arrive in the hill country of Ephraim at the home of Micah. Ironically, Micah is conspicuously absent during the time the spies lodge at his home. Rather, the young Levite, whom the Danites knew and recognized by his voice, is the one who is at center stage. Both characters have dialogue and through this the Danites inquire of *Elohim* regarding their journey, and the Levite responds that it has the approval of YHWH.[1064] This scene naturally moves into a summary narration of the reconnaissance of Laish. Then, this is followed by the dialogue scene when the spies return to Zorah and Eshtaol reporting what they have found. The narrator does not give the impression that any time elapses from when the report of the spies is given until the first encampment at Kirjath-Jearim of the Danite migration represented in the summary narration. Since the narrator allowed the spies to meet the Levite in their trek, it is not surprising that the Danite migration would take a similar route. The event that follows at Micah's house is stretched in duration by the narrator. There is no encampment at this logical site; rather, it is a prolonged stop in the journey in order to glean *(sic)* what they desired, or literally lusted. The narrator only notes the willful kidnapping of the Levite and the theft of the cultic objects; yet, in this atmosphere the question remains unanswered whether these men helped themselves to anything else they found in Micah's home. The Danites move on with their ill-gotten booty which transitions into the next scene that prompts a response from Micah and the men of the houses near his. The dialogue appears to justify Micah although the brute force of the Danites causes him to relinquish his claim. The conflict is averted and the impoverished Micah returns to his home and disappears from the story. Nevertheless, the story does not end until the final summary narration that for story purposes perpetuates the illegitimate cult employment of the Levite at an illegitimate tribal settlement at Laish, through the initiation of an illegitimate cult.

[1064] This may be the implied interpretation as given in the NASB. However, it literally means "your way in which you are going is before YHWH," noting divine oversight without necessarily explicitly meaning divine sanction. Jg. 18:6.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. With the introduction of this story, every character, with the exception of YHWH is new to the book of Judges. The narrator introduces four individual characters.[1065] In addition, there are eight collective characters.[1066] YHWH is the only divine character. However, potentially the graven image, the molten image, and the ephod may remotely assume character roles as deities of worship.

MICAH. The first character introduced is Micah and he is identified by tribal geography rather than patrilineage. He is obviously an adult being named as "a man" and the fact that he had sons. Until the end of the story, he is the only one that the narrator chooses to name, causing his character to stand out. Yet, he is sullied because he enters the scene as a self-confessed thief. Webb suggests that Micah was "conscience-stricken" and that motivated him to return the silver he had stolen.[1067] Yet, that does not address the fact that Micah acknowledges that he had heard the curse his mother had spoken. Rather, Micah was motivated by the effect that the curse would have upon him. Apparently, Micah was deeply religious. This may even be implied in the paronomasia of his name. Certainly, it was evident in the fact that he had a house of gods and he had consecrated one of his sons as a priest. Nonetheless, he recognized the legitimacy of having a Levite in a sacrosanct role and immediately secured the young man for these duties. Micah was wealthy enough to pay the Levite an annual salary and provide for his daily upkeep. Micah must have also been powerful enough to develop a confederacy with his neighbors, as the men of those houses accompanied him to battle against the Danites. What is ironic is that in all of the changing of hands of silver, the personal fortune and wealth of Micah is stolen despite his confident, but albeit mistaken confession that YHWH would prosper him because of the Levite.

MICAH'S MOTHER. The mother of Micah only appears in the first scene. She remains unnamed; however, she is given voice by the narrator through discourse. The first thing we learn about this woman is that she had a large amount of silver, it had been stolen from her, and she declared a curse against the thief. But, when she is given voice, she responds to her repentant son with words of blessing in the name of YHWH. What is

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[1065] The individual characters include: Micah, Micah's mother, the silversmith, and the Levite, who is later identified as Jonathan.

[1066] The collective characters include: Micah's sons, the family of Judah, the tribe of the Danites, the five spies from Dan, the men of Laish, the Sidonians, the six hundred man army from Dan, and the men of Micah's house.

[1067] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 183.

absent is there are not any words of reproach toward her son.[1068] The woman appears to be most honorable in her response to Micah and to YHWH, but at last her own words betray her when she announces the purpose for which the silver had been dedicated was to make a graven image and molten image. In her zeal to dedicate all of the silver to YHWH, there is a mystery as to what happened to the nine hundred pieces of silver, which by her own vow belonged to YHWH. Micah may have been the בית אב head; however, the force of his mother's words (to curse and to bless) suggests she had significant influence as the matriarch. Even so, the narrator allows her to only function as an agent of the plot.

LEVITE. The narrator describes this type character as a young man. In addition, the lineage information is withheld until the end of the story, when the reader learns that the Levite is Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses.[1069] But for the purpose of the story, he is viewed as an itinerant from Bethlehem in search of a place to sojourn. The text seems contradictory in that the Levite is described as from the family of Judah. This can be reconciled by accepting that as a Levite living in the tribal allotment of Judah, that he was in a sense adopted by Judah, considering that the Levites had no inheritance in the land. The reason for him moving from Bethlehem is not given, although it is implied that it fits the story and the need for the plot for him to arrive in the Ephraimite territory. The Levite knew of YHWH as he refers to the deity by this name, even though the Danites referred to the deity as *Elohim*. There is no evidence that the Levite prayed to YHWH or that he offered inappropriate sacrifices, although the latter is implied by the fact of him officiating at a profane cultic site. Webb has noted through the language of the text that the Levite may in fact be motivated by money by his response to the Danites that Micah hired him, although the text states Micah filled his hand, an idiom for consecration.[1070] Perhaps the ten pieces of silver and the suit of clothing per year were only appealing when the Levite was looking for a place to stay; but now with an implied better offer from the Danites, his response reveals his inner motivation.

DANITE SPIES. The five spies are a composite character. None of the men are named in the story. However, the narrator does describe them as valiant men, which is

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[1068] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 183.

[1069] This reading chooses to correct the intentional scribal perversion of the text.

[1070] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 184-185.

the same word used to describe Gideon.[1071] The spies function as an agent of the plot. Their activities are quite predictable and actually honorable. They are sent out and accomplish the task given to them. They bring back a positive report and in the midst of their journey seek guidance from *Elohim*. However, they may also be viewed negatively in the fact that upon their return to Micah's house they reported the existence of the idols to their kinsmen, and as a result of their action compounded Micah's sin and promoted cultic idolatry among their tribe. Nonetheless, the nature of the Danites is seen in their response to Micah after stealing his idols. The narrator describes them as ("*nāšîm mārê nepeš*) "short-tempered men" which may be attributed to the fact that they had no land possession and they were "about to live the life of fugitives or outlaws because of economic or political difficulties."[1072]

CHARACTERIZATION. The narrator does not provide a positive characterization of anyone in this story. At best, he appears neutral with the Levite and the Danites; nonetheless, there is antipathy by the reader for each of the characters. This works well for the story because it underscores the moral chaos and anarchy of the period. The reader is able to judge the period negatively from the standpoint that the characters through their traits and actions portrayed in the plot have an antithetical conclusion to what is expected.

> Micah, who practices hospitality and provides lodging to the five able men from Dan, is punished; the Levite, who drives a hard bargain and abandons values of loyalty and gratitude, ends up benefiting; while the Danites, who plunder others, end up victorious and achieving their goals.[1073]

POINT OF VIEW. The narrator's voice is heard through this story. He is very close to the story and at times withholds information from the reader. He has done this by not providing the scene of the theft of Micah's mother's silver as well as the details of the curse she uttered. Further, the narrator withholds until the end of the story the full identity of the Levite. In chapter seventeen, he adopts the view point of Micah. He never allows us to fully enter Micah's inner feelings regarding his self-confession of the theft; but, he comes slightly closer by showing Micah's desire for prosperity in the discourse assigned to him. Nonetheless, the narrator overtly manifests into the story commenting about those days in which there was no king and every man was doing what was right in his own eyes. The same is true regarding the geographical note about Mahaneh-dan and

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[1071] H (*"nāšîm b⁾nê-ḥayil*) בְּנֵי־חַיִל אֲנָשִׁים; "men, sons of valor." Jg. 6:12; 18:2.

[1072] H אֲנָשִׁים מָרֵי נֶפֶשׁ. Jg. 18:25. F.A. Spina, "The Dan Story Historically Reconsidered," *JSOT 4* (1977), 65-66.

[1073] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 333.

the etiology of the Danite cultic site. Regarding the inability of the men of Laish to defend themselves, the narrator is more covert in his description of them and their lifestyle. In chapter eighteen, the narrator alternates between the points of view of the Levite and the Danite spies, dominating the position of the spies. With the possible exception of the formulaic statement about men doing what was right in his own eye, the narrator does not pass any judgment statements, although one might be expected regarding the issues of theft and idolatry. Nonetheless, he does express "an undercurrent of mild contempt" toward the characters of the story.[1074] While appearing to be aloof, it is through his allusions and explicit statements that this period of anarchy is negatively characterized. This is accomplished through the phenomena of:

> [T]he setting up of private shrines with their cultic devices; itinerant priests without any livelihood, who are forced to hire themselves out to all and sundry; [and] tribes lacking in territory.[1075]

LANGUAGE PLAY. Within the first epilogue, the narrator does not employ his use of type-scenes; although he does continue to make internal and external parallels. His language play also extends to irony and rhetorical devices.

INTERNAL PARALLELISM. The story parallels the first prologue and the conquest narrative; however, it is an inverted parallel in which the narrator uses satire. Although the theme of land conquest is renewed in this story, the circumstances are different in that there is only the semblance of divine approval and it is in an area which was not part of Dan's tribal allotment. Instead, this is not a conquest *per se* but a retreat, despite their show of force and power.

> They are not advancing into the heart of the land to claim their inheritance as Israel was, but withdrawing in the face of Canaanite pressure to a substitute holding on the perimeter (18.1; cf. 1.34). They are having to make do in a situation where Yahweh no longer drives out the Canaanites from before Israel, as anticipated in the judgment speech of 2.20-21. Encouraged by the made-to-order oracle given them by Micah's Levite (v. 6) – we know how mercenary he is! – the spies of Judges 18 travel on until they discover a town in the remote north which is isolated, unsuspecting, and unfortified (v. 7), the very antithesis of the cities 'great and fortified up to heaven' referred to in Deut. 1.28.[1076]

In addition, there are two other internal parallels to the spies. One is the reference to them being valiant which parallels the description of Gideon. The other is that they come from the area of Zorah and Eshtaol, which is the same area that Samson came from.[1077] The other internal parallel is regarding the silver. In both this account and the

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[1074] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 201.

[1075] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 327.

[1076] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 186.

[1077] Jg. 13:25; and 18:2.

episode of Delilah and the Philistine lords the sum of eleven hundred pieces of silver is used. The difference is Micah stole it from his mother; whereas Delilah received it as a business transaction for betraying Samson. But, there is the connection of betrayal because "Micah betrays the trust of [the] blood-tie, of the mother-son kinship."[1078]

Nonetheless, parallelism is present within the story itself between Micah and the Danites. Amit has noticed an analogic system between these two characters, whereby the parallel actions of the Danites reinforces their negative characterization because of the similarities to the acts of Micah. This is presented in Table 27.[1079]

TABLE 27

ANALOGY OF MICAH AND THE TRIBE OF DAN

Story of Micah	Story of the Tribe of Dan
Opening describing the cult in Micah's shrine (17:5)	Conclusion mentioning the cult in the city of Dan (18:30-31)
Micah stole (17:2)	Danites plundered (18:17, 18, 20, 24, and 31)
The stolen money served Micah's shrine (17:4)	The stolen objects served in the shrine at Dan (18:31)
Micah persuaded the Levite to serve in his shrine (17:10-12)	The Danites persuaded the Levite to serve in their shrine (18:19-20)
Micah is convinced of the righteousness of his way (17:13)	The Danites justify their acts by their being embittered (18:23, and 25)
The shrine of Micah is destroyed by the Danites (18:24 and 26-27)	The Danite shrine is destroyed following the captivity of the land (18:30)

Silver is not the only inanimate object that has a parallel. The graven image was present in the story of Ehud, as objects of *Molech* worship.[1080] In addition, the reader has previously seen the ephod in the Gideon story.[1081]

EXTERNAL PARALLELISM. The story of the spies being sent out parallels the accounts of the twelve spies sent out by Moses into Canaan and the two spies sent out by Joshua into Jericho.[1082] But there are distinct differences in both situations.[1083] Moses

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[1078] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 143.

[1079] The table is an adaptation of Amit's systematization. See her *The Book of Judges*, 334-335.

[1080] Jg. 3:19, and 26.

[1081] Jg. 8:27.

[1082] Num. 13 – 14; Dt. 1:22-40; and Josh. 2:1-24.

[1083] Malamat holds to a slightly different position that Judges 18 is a narrative typology based on the spy accounts of Numbers and Deuteronomy, based on ten items: 1) Direct association with Moses or his descendants; 2) Dispatch of spies selected from among the tribal notables, and gathering of intelligence prior to the military campaign; 3) The spies' report and attitude; 4) The misgivings of the people in reaction to the spies' report; 5) The ethnic character of the campaign, specifically mentioning the non-combatants and cattle accompanying the warriors; 6) The particular number of armed warriors; 7) Oracular consultation by a Levitical priest; 8) Procurement of cult objects while on the move, and their eventual deposition at the final destination of the campaign; 9) Permanence of priesthood secured by a third-generation priest; and 10) Renaming of places conquered and settled by the Israelites. See his "The Danite Migration and the Pan-Israelite Exodus – Conquest: A Biblical Narrative Pattern," 2.

sent one spy per tribe as a representative. Thus, the collective twelve represented the sons of Israel. In the same way, the two unnamed spies sent out by Joshua represented all of the tribes. But, in this situation, the five men represented only one tribe in a non-ordained conquest. Also significantly different is that the twelve spies brought back two reports; whereas the five spies brought back a unanimous report. Likewise, the spies to Jericho report on a walled and fortified city and imply faith and trust in YHWH; whereas the spies to Laish report on a defenseless city that would imply easy prey rather than trust in YHWH.

When Micah requests that the Levite be a father to him, the narrator may possibly have been alluding to the episode between Pharaoh and Joseph when the same type language was used.[1084]

One way parallelism exists is antithetical parallelism in the *Torah*. In this case, it shows explicit covenantal aberration, as seen in Table 28.[1085]

TABLE 28

CULTIC ANTITHESIS TO THE TORAH

Antithetic Theme	Dt. 12:1 – 13:1	Jg. 17:1 – 18:31
Cult sites on hills	to be destroyed (12:2)	constructed (17:1, 5)
Idols	to be cut down (12:3)	manufactured (17:4-5)
Ideal of a central shrine	repeatedly endorsed (12:4-7, 11, 13-14, 17-18, and 26-27)	repeatedly ignored (17:2-5, 13; and 18:31)
What is right ... in own eyes	prohibited (12:8)	practiced (17:6)
Popular support of Levites	at central shrine (12:12, and 18-19)	at private shrine (17:7-13; 18:19-20, and 30)
Inheritance not yet settled	Israel excused (12:9-10)	Micah (settled) / Danites (unsettled) unexcused (17:1; and 18:1)
YHWH to let live in safety	future Israel (12:10)	not Dan but Laish (18:7, 10, 27)
YHWH to extend territory	future Israel (12:20)	not Dan but Laish (18:7, 10, 28)

Rather than adhere to the prescription of Deuteronomy 12, the actions of Micah place him under the first of a series of divine curses pronounced on Mount Gerizim.[1086]

In addition, there is a remote numerical parallel. Moses refers to 600,000 people in the wilderness, where the number could be taken as six hundred clans.[1087] Even so, the six hundred Danites would only constitute a remnant of Israel.[1088] One should not attempt to make much of this parallel.

[1084] Gen. 45:8. Alter, *Genesis*, 268.

[1085] This table is an adaptation of the presentation made by O'Connell, 239-240.

[1086] Dt. 27:15.

[1087] Ex. 12:37; and Num. 11:21.

[1088] Jg. 18:16.

SYMBOLISM AND IRONY. The whole issue regarding the silver is itself ironic. An amoral item such as silver affects everyone it touches: whether for greed, for power, or idolatry. Polzin suggests that there is a degree of retributive action in that the abomination that began through Micah's theft is ultimately applied to the Danites, "who do not call upon the name of Yahweh in the story, come to possess the 'god' which Micah the Yahwist should not have rightfully made or possessed."[1089]

In the biblical economy of words, it is ironic that the narrator would use terms of kinship with ambivalence and a sense of superfluity. This is done in the imagery of fathers and sons. It could conceivably be argued that this even extends back to the mother-son relationship because of the manner in which both Micah and his mother treat one another. These filial relations are presented as only self-serving rather than for mutual benefit. When it serves Micah's purposes, he consecrates one of his sons to fulfill the pagan priestly role. Yet, just as quickly as he honors his son *(sic)* he dishonors him by removing him from that position and replacing him with a vagabond Levite.[1090] But, to add insult to injury, he makes him "as one of his sons."[1091] However, the contrast comes in the fact that he was hired to be a father and a priest to Micah.[1092] There is the element of role reversal or simple schizophrenia on the part of Micah who makes meaningless statements. What is the Levite? Is he a son or a father to Micah? The lines of authority are blurred and blood-ties are not strong. The ideal reader recognizes that Micah's appointment of his son as a priest is a violation of the *Torah*; but the irony is "once he had the opportunity to act in the way desired by God and to appoint a Levite without too great [an] investment, he expected a reward and recompense."[1093] Of course this irony is multiplied because of the pagan nature of the cult site in which the Levite serves; and yet, Micah still expects divine prospering.

The way the narrator uses irony borders on being a farce. The theophoric nature of Micah's name in its full form calls remembrance of YHWH-the- Incomparable. But what makes this ironic is that there is a construct relationship with the words "house of Micah," which equates this cultic shrine as "the house of YHWH-the-Incomparable."[1094] It is

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[1089] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 198.

[1090] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 148.

[1091] Jg. 17:11.

[1092] Jg. 17:10.

[1093] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 328.

[1094] Jg. 17:4, 5, 8; 18:3, 18, and 22.

tragic that Micah, who is motivated by the Fear of YHWH to return the stolen silver, uses that silver to create idols, and then transforms his home into a pagan sanctuary, so that "the power of idolatry consists in the strange fact that God's people regarded idolatry as a legitimate expression of their worship of Yahweh."[1095]

It is also ironic that in the prologue the Danites are unable to dispossess the Amorites and in effect the Amorites dispossess the Danites from their tribal inheritance. But the Danites do dispossess those who were never to be dispossessed. In fact, through the spies, the tribe begins "their dispossession of Micah as guests *within* his house, and then complete it by *forceably entering* that house" and taking his cultic items.[1096] As a microcosm of Israel, the Danites dispossess their own kin. But, this is not surprising because Micah has acted in the same way with his mother. And in this way, both tribes and individuals become a personification of Israel. The irony is carried a step further when the origin of the Danite shrine is juxtaposed against its ending.

> Micah stole; and Dan stole from Micah. Most fitting! The sanctuary of Dan had its origins in a double theft. What else can come out of it except curse and ruin?[1097]

RHETORICAL DEVICES. When the Danite spies came into the home of Micah, the narrator states *(wayyāsûrû šām)* "and they turned aside there."[1098] The semantics of the phrase creates a word play that characterizes the spies as having turned aside "from their path to go to the Levite, [in which] the language foreshadows departure from an ethical 'way of life.'"[1099]

As earlier mentioned, there is some ambiguity regarding the Levite's oracular response to the Danite spies. This becomes a purposeful obfuscation of the truth, because the Levite may imply divine consent suggested by a word play in which the semantic meaning of the word *(nōḵaḥ)* may "mean that the Danites' mission is either 'agreeable' or 'disagreeable' to Yahweh" depending upon how the Danites choose to interpret the meaning.[1100] Klein notes that this discourse has a multi-layered irony.

> [T]he Danites (who are leaving Yahwist-designated territory) ask a Levite priest (who has left his Levitical city and the first alien city of his own choice) to inquire of the household

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[1095] M.K. Wilson, "'As You Like It': The Idolatry of Micah and the Danites (Judges 17-18)," *RTR* 54 (1995), 81.

[1096] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 199.

[1097] Davis, Such A Great Salvation, 203.

[1098] ‏וַיָּסֻרוּ שָׁם‎ H. Jg. 18:3. The verb is parsed as *Qal* Imperfect 3MP with a *Waw* Consecutive.

[1099] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 154.

[1100] ‏נֹכַח‎ H. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 198.

gods made of stolen silver to determine if the 'way', *derek*, they are going is in accordance with God's will.[1101]

It is not surprising that the word *(hā'areṣ)* "land" is a *leitword* in chapter eighteen, where it is used ten times.[1102] Dan is trying to appropriate land by its own might. This allows the narrator to create irony at two distinct points. First, there is the symbolism of the Exodus event. However, what is distinctively absent is any Sinai type experience. Thus, it is unlike the previous tribal conquest.

> [I]t is an Exodus journey without Sinai, a land conquest without covenant. Instead of Sinai, there is Micah's house with its idols and idolatrous priest. Instead of covenant there is ruthless land-grabbing from a peaceful people, blessed by the priest and his idols, and based on the principle that "might makes right."[1103]

Second, and perhaps even more profound is the fact that the Danite cult site with Micah's idols became the precursor for Jeroboam's golden calf cult. The result of which became the downfall of the northern kingdom of Israel "and Dan became the door [of the land] for the invading Assyrian forces."[1104]

Already, the protestation of Micah to the Danites has been discussed. However, when it is seen in connection with the comments of the narrator, the reader is able to observe how repetition serves a rhetorical function. In three instances, the man-made nature of the cult objects is mentioned which serves as a theological polemic against the Danite shrine.[1105] Yet, the theological polemic may be observed based on the assertions by Micah and the Danites that they are the recipients of divine favor. Nonetheless, this is a misplaced confidence, in which the narrator does not support their beliefs by refusing to connect YHWH with their aberrant behavior.[1106] Amit goes a step further by suggesting that in addition to the open polemic against the Danite cult, there is a hidden polemic against the cult at Bethel.[1107]

The narrator generally follows a pattern in his list of the cultic paraphernalia. However, when the items are stolen from Micah's house, the narrator employs the device of anastrophe.[1108] Normally, a different ordering of the list would not appear important;

[1101] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 155.

[1102] הָאָרֶץ. Jg. 18:2 (2x), 7, 9 (2x), 10 (2x), 14, 17, and 30.

[1103] Hamlin, 154.

[1104] Ibid. 2 Kg. 17:16; Jer. 4:15; and 8:16.

[1105] Jg. 18:24, 27, and 31.

[1106] Satterthwaite, "'No King in Israel,'" 80.

[1107] Amit, "Hidden polemic in the conquest of Dan," 12-17.

[1108] Jg. 18:20.

however, as a rhetorical device it subtly shows how the whole religious structure is completely out of order.

INTERPRETATION. Through this story, the narrator has returned to the two principal themes of the prologues. The first prologue provides a natural parallel to the Danite land conquest. Yet, the story becomes one that should have never been told had the tribe of Dan occupied the land of their possession. The beginning of chapter eighteen is problematic unless the story predates the period of the Judges and is in the era of Joshua. The reality is that a tribal inheritance had been given to Dan; however, they had failed to dispossess the Canaanites and in forsaking their covenantal obligation they relegate themselves to live in a land on the fringes of the Israelite possession. By their actions, the Danites are negatively characterized and whereas they are the weaker party before the Amorites, their spiritual weakness is exemplified in the bully-type tactics perpetrated against Micah and the citizens of Laish.[1109]

The obvious connection to the prologues is that of covenant disloyalty through the various cult symbols and practices by Micah, the Levite, and the Danites. But, it also encompasses the theme of infidelity to YHWH. One would hope that the story with its sinful beginning would introduce a character motivated by repentance; however, that element is not present. Rather, the act of Micah is not "recognition of wrong-doing, but only as motivated by fear of the punishment in wake of the curse."[1110] This is a time when Micah personifies Israel. The absurdity of the whole situation, especially when Micah confronts the Danites, allows the narrator to use overt sarcasm with Micah's discourse, "My god(s) which I have made you have taken."[1111] For the reader this becomes a point of judgment.

> Any faithful Yahweh-worshiper would find Micah's cry both tragic and ludicrous. A god who can be made is surely a contradiction in terms; and a god who cannot avoid being pilfered must be a non-god indeed (cf. 6:31)! Thus the narrator artlessly permits Micah himself to emphasize the insanity of the whole affair.[1112]

In this story, there are a number of things which are absent: a divinely appointed leader, an adherence to the *Torah*, and YHWH.[1113] Earlier in chapter three, the *Torah*

[1109] O'Connell, 241.

[1110] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 324.

[1111] Jg. 18:24.

[1112] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 204.

[1113] It is possible to argue that the Levite constituted a divinely appointed leader, especially if Israel were in a position of *Torah* observance. However, from the standpoint of the example of a judge or a king, then the point of there being no leader would remain valid.

violations were discussed.[1114] Yet, it is worth reviewing the fact that there could be no atonement for any of the actions of Micah or his mother. Although Micah stole the silver and returned it, he failed to return it with the required 20% extra penalty. In addition, there is no evidence that he presented any type of guilt offering before a priest.[1115] The mother invoked oaths of cursing and consecration. There is no evidence that she presented herself before a priest to undo her idle words. Likewise, the silver she consecrated to YHWH never reached Him. She kept back the larger portion and the smaller portion was made into an idol. Each of their actions, not to mention those of the Levite and the Danites exemplify a people making improper judgments and by these actions presume to have a covenant relationship with YHWH, rather than accept that they are being cut-off from the covenant.

This is not the only story in which YHWH is absent. But, the divine absence serves a rhetorical purpose of distancing deity from the anarchy and sin of Israel. Even so, the name of deity is used by Micah and the Levite and generically by the Danite spies. But this does not constitute divine presence. The divine assertion by Micah that because of his actions with the Levite, YHWH would be obligated to prosper him is confident presumption. But, the Danites follow the same pattern and assume that with a Levite at the helm of their cultic shrine, this practice will continue in perpetuity. A claim that the narrator interjects does not happen. Through these stories, a theme emerges that goes past the ideas of cyclical patterns and questions of land conquest and covenant loyalty.

> It is, above all, a story about the false confidence men have that they know God in such a way that they can manipulate him by cultic and institutional means, and so secure their own futures.[1116]

For the reader it is obvious that the character responses reveal that they in fact do not know YHWH or His covenant. There is no judge in this story. Klein suggests that "the reader is forced to experience the events, to weigh them" because he has become the judge.[1117]

EPILOGUE B

The final story compiles three smaller stories causally related to each other.[1118]

[1114] See the sections "Decalogue Violations" and "Other *Torah* Violations," pages 303-308.

[1115] Lev. 6:1-7.

[1116] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 187.

[1117] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 146-147.

[1118] Webb suggests that there are four episodes. In his discussion of the story he divides our second episode into preparation for war and the actual war. See his *The Book of Judges*, 187-188.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. There is general agreement regarding the points of demarcation of the beginning and ending of this story. The disagreement comes with the question of how this story relates structurally to the remainder of the book.

ABSTRACT. Similar to the previous epilogue, the narrator has chosen stories that involve a Levite who comes to the hill country of Ephraim. The first verse of chapter nineteen orients the episode rather than summarizes it. Even so, this only characterizes this chapter rather than the entire second epilogue. In parallel fashion with the Micah-Levite-Danite story, the narrator uses his evaluative "no-king" formula to serve as an abstract for the epilogue. The abbreviated form begins the story and its full form closes it as an *inclusio*. As such, the reader may expect that another series of events will occur involving the Levite, which will equally be a perversion of what is right in YHWH's eyes, but right in the eyes of every man.

ORIENTATION. The initial action is set within the hill country of Ephraim at the home of the Levite. However, because of the inappropriate harlotry of his *pîleges* and her return to her father's house in Bethlehem in Judah, the majority of the first episode takes place at that home. From there, the action moves into Gibeah and occurs first at the open square of the city and then at the home of the Ephraimite old man. The episode closes with the Levite returning back to his home. This naturally moves the story into the second episode where all of the tribes of Israel have assembled at Mizpah. Once it is decided to confront the sons of *Belial*, the men of Benjamin rally to the aid of their tribal degenerates, with the warriors of Benjamin assembling in Gibeah. Although no military movement is described, the militia of Israel moves from Mizpah to Bethel to inquire of *Elohim* regarding the battle. Immediately thereafter, the Israelites encamp near Gibeah. From this point the battle occurs over three days. On the final day of battle, the Benjaminites are smitten and those who escape are scattered as far as the rock of Rimmon, where they hide for four months. The final episode commences back at Bethel in a corporate time of weeping and sacrifice. During this assembly, they discover that no one from Jabesh-Gilead participated in the battle; therefore it is decided to take the battle to them killing everyone except for the virgin girls. These girls are brought to Shiloh as brides for the men of Benjamin who are hiding at the rock of Rimmon. Yet, once it is discovered that there are not enough women to go around, another plan is devised to kidnap the dancing daughters of Shiloh for the remaining single men of Benjamin.

The majority of the settings that the narrator makes reference to are geopolitical.[1119] Yet, that does not refrain some of the action from occurring in a topographical setting.[1120] The remaining action occurs in the architectural spatial setting.[1121]

COMPLICATING ACTION. The initial plot is about the recovery of the Levite's *pîleges*. The narrator begins by explaining the situation between the two of them and setting the stage for him to recover her. There is no indication why he waited for four months to reach her or how he knew that she had returned to her father's house. In one sense, O'Connell's assessment that the five days the Levite spends in Bethlehem is a prolongation of the plot's development; however, it is likewise a complicating action that causes the Levite to become exasperated with his host and leave on the journey home too late in the day.[1122] Although it might escape the notice of the reader on the first reading, the complicating action of the plot serves as an exposition for the second plot regarding the execution of justice against Benjamin. The Levite, having refused the fifth evening of hospitality from his father-in-law; likewise refuses the potential hospitality of the Jebusites. It is surprising that the men of Gibeah would refuse him hospitality, which complicates the plot requiring the old man from Ephraim to offer him hospitality. The complication is that ironically the Levite receives inhospitality from the old man and the sons of *Belial* in Gibeah. The first plot dissolves with the Levite returning home with his *pîleges*.

EVALUATION. The narrator begins the story with a degree of ambivalence since the reader does not know the reason for the *pîleges* leaving the Levite nor does he know why four months elapsed before he went to retrieve her. Nonetheless, the narrator is clear that the reason for the journey is to bring her back home. The narrator passes judgment on the men of Gibeah by his remarks that no one took them into their home to spend the night. That the statement is repeated twice underscores this reality. He likewise, through contrast appears to cast disdain on the men of the place that they are Benjaminites as opposed to the old Ephraimite man. Through the old man, the narrator assumes his voice

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[1119] These geopolitical settings include: the hill country of Ephraim, Bethlehem in Judah, the tribal allotment of Benjamin, the entirety of Israel (Dan to Beersheba), the land of Egypt, Jebus (Jerusalem), Gibeah, Ramah, Bethel, Shechem, Mizpah, the land of Gilead, Baal-Tamar, Maareh-Geba, the Rock of Rimmon, Jabesh-Gilead, Shiloh, Shechem, and Lebonah.

[1120] The topographical settings include: the open square of Gibeah, the field outside Gibeah, and the area of battle in Gibeah.

[1121] The architectural settings include: the father of the *pîleges'* house, the house of the Ephraimite old man, the doorway of that house, the Levite's house, and the cult site of Bethel.

[1122] O'Connell, 244.

and twice repeats the evaluation that the homosexual desires of the sons of *Belial* is an act of folly. One of the strongest evaluations in the first episode is the Israelite response to the dismembered *pîlegeš* that "Nothing like this has ever happened or been seen from the day when the sons of Israel came up from the land of Egypt to this day."[1123] The narrator evaluates the sexual abuse of the *pîlegeš* as wickedness. However, there is some ambiguity here regarding whether the wickedness refers to the homosexual advances, the rape of the woman, the treatment of the Levite, the actions of the Levite or the old man, or the death and dismemberment of the woman. Although the narrator does not lean too heavily into the story, he does refrain from comments that the testimony of the Levite is contrary to the actions that took place in Gibeah. Yet, through the voice of the Levite, the narrator further vilifies the event with descriptive terms of it being a "lewd and disgraceful act."[1124] Moreover, Benjamin is judged by the assembled Israelites and that judgment will involve not only this act, but they will be punished "for all the disgraceful acts they have committed in Israel."[1125]

RESULT OR RESOLUTION. The harlotry of the *pîlegeš* required the Levite to go and recover her. The insensitivity of her father in prolonging the Levite's return home and the Levite's stubbornness contributed to them arriving in Gibeah late at night, requiring lodging, rather than completing their journey home in one day. The sexual abuse by the sons of *Belial* from Gibeah of the Levite's *pîlegeš* and the complicity of the old man from Ephraim contributed to the death of the woman and the Levite's loss. The story could have ended there, but the response of the Levite of cutting the *pîlegeš* into twelve pieces and sending her throughout the country created a problem that had to be addressed by premonarchic Israel.

For the first time since the prologue stories, the nation gathers together (less the tribe of Benjamin). The Levite tells his embellished and inaccurate version of the story to the assembled Israelites and sets forth his desire of executing justice. Although the Levite was in error, Israel responded appropriately by seeking out the perpetrators of the crime and allowing the tribe of Benjamin to deliver the evil men of Gibeah for their punishment. The Benjaminite refusal complicates the plot and makes the larger tribe an accessory to the crime, thus guilty and deserving judgment as well. The non-compliance by Benjamin

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[1123] Jg. 19:30.

[1124] Jg. 20:6.

[1125] Jg. 20:10.

prompted an appropriate response from Israel to seek YHWH in this regard. Nevertheless, divine justice is being meted out and none of the characters know that YHWH is leading everyone to battle in a three day siege without promising any victory until the final day. YHWH complicates the plot by not giving victory but allowing judgment to fall on Israel through Benjamin. Only after Israelite penitent acts does YHWH promise deliverance and intimates judgment against Benjamin.

With the near annihilation of the tribe of Benjamin, the story could conceivably end here. Yet, the narrator allows six hundred men to escape and by telling the reader that they remained at the Rock of Rimmon for four months gives the same temporal period that began the story with the Levite and prepares the reader for what will happen when the men return. At the opening of chapter twenty one the narrator divulges the content of an oath that had been sworn in Mizpah. Now the reader is able to grasp the severity of the rash oath. If there are no women remaining from the tribe of Benjamin, the other tribes are prohibited from giving their daughters to Benjamin as wives under threat of a curse, and the *Torah* prohibits taking Canaanite women as wives, then the natural result would be the extinction of a tribe. The problem is what to do about the need to repopulate Benjamin in light of the oath. But, it almost seems as if the narrator skirts the issue by introducing another oath taken at Mizpah regarding non-participation in the assembly of YHWH. The reader learns that this vow is an attempt to deal with the near annihilation of a tribe and partially resolves that problem by the near annihilation of the city of Jabesh-Gilead, because its men did not come up to the assembly of YHWH. The four hundred virgin women were spared and given to the men of Benjamin. The second plot is resolved when the six hundred men are rejoined with Israel. However, simple math suggests that there are more men than there are virgins. This complicates the story and a plan is made by the elders of Israel to allow the two hundred men to kidnap their prospective bride at the annual festival at Shiloh.

CODA. The story and the book ends by everyone returning to their homes in their tribal allotment. But, the narrator is not content until he completes his *inclusio* and evaluative statement for the epilogues and the book with his "no-king" formula.

PLOT. The story telling method of the narrator is not as complex in this epilogue as it has been in the other hero stories. In essence, there is no main plot; but rather three distinct plots each built upon the events surrounding the earlier plot. Every thing is built on a cause and effect relationship. The plots and episodes are almost identical and when one plot-episode dissolves the next one begins, which closely follows the chapter

divisions. Thematically, the plots and episodes may be summarized as to how the actions and sin of one individual creates a domino effect that literally affects the entirety of Israel.

EPISODE ONE. The first episode may be temporally and geographically divided into its six kernel events. It begins with a summary narration of the *pilegeš'* flight to Bethlehem. This prompts the narrative summary of the Levite pursuing his *pilegeš* and spending the first three days receiving the hospitality offered by his father-in-law. The first scenic event occurs on the fourth day, when the offering of hospitality is received albeit reluctantly because the Levite desires to return home. Conflict is beginning to form between the two men as is apparent in their discourse. The narrator uses repetition to frame the fifth day which is also scenic. The fourth and fifth days are almost parallel; however, the Levite rejects the final offer of hospitality and leaves on his journey. This moves the action to the penultimate scene that involves the discourse between the Levite and his servant regarding staying in Jebus, of which the suggestion is rejected, and the party travels until they reach the open square of Gibeah waiting until they are received by the old man. The scene involves discourse also between the Levite and the old man. It is somewhat unnerving that in the incident of the sons of *Belial* that there is discourse between them and the old man but neither the Levite nor his *pilegeš* become involved in the discussion, even though they both are affected by whatever resolution is decided. The final event that takes place on the sixth day is a summary narration of the Levite confronting his abused *pilegeš*, their trip home, and his dissection and mutilation of her.

EPISODE TWO. The events of the first episode leave the reader in shock. The response of the assembled Israelites to their viewing a part of the woman is expected in the first summary event. This kernel scene almost expects a merismic reassembling of the body parts as the event is told before the nation in the scene that follows at Mizpah. The event is dialogue driven. This is followed by a confrontation scene in which the Israelites implore the Benjaminites to hand over the guilty men. As with the earlier events, even more so, it is contingent on the previous action. The action is followed by three more scenes, each depicting a day of siege of the internecine battle. The first two days are brief in their presentation, primarily related by narration with an insert of discourse to highlight the event. But, the third day of siege is lengthy and repetitious expressing the apparent Israelite defeat which has been camouflaged by an ambush attack that results in the Benjaminite defeat. In addition to repetitive narration, the narrator also uses geography to move the action and census lists to validate his story.

EPISODE THREE. The final episode begins with the awareness that six hundred Benjaminites are in hiding and the Israelites are assembled in Bethel. There is inner conflict between the Israelites recognizing the full extent of what their actions have caused. Even in their plea before YHWH, He treats their question rhetorically by not answering what is obvious. The night passes and upon the next day, the Israelites are at the same location making their sacrifices and considering the dilemma before them they have helped to create. This is a chapter of idle words that have significant impact. Once again a question is posed and by examining their earlier vow, now reported by the narrator the second scene has its action moved from the discovery that no one in Jabesh-Gilead has been present at Mizpah to the sending of twelve thousand men to destroy the town and its inhabitants, except for the virgin girls. From there, the reader is presented with summary narration that reunites the remaining Benjaminites with Israel and presents two-thirds of the Benjaminite men with wives from the virgins of Jabesh-Gilead. Benjamin does not have a voice in this matter. Instead, the elders speak and pass their own judgment and create a potentially volatile situation amongst the inhabitants of Shiloh regarding the virgin daughters of that town. The final scene occurs at some time later in the year at the annual festival in Shiloh. The reader is prepared for the scene and knows what will happen. It is all premeditated and even the discourse provided has been prearranged based on the probability of confrontation by the men of Shiloh when their virgins are kidnapped. The men and virgins of Shiloh are silenced by the narrator. As he closes the scene with everyone returning home, the reader essentially is silenced, but glad that the whole immoral tale is concluded.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. This story contains a host of new characters. As with the prologue, Israel is presented as a confederation. YHWH is conspicuously absent from this epilogue despite the times when Israel petitions Him. There are eight individual characters.[1126] In addition, there are eleven collective characters.[1127] The only divine character is YHWH, who also is called by the name *Elohim.* It is notable that only character named in the story besides YHWH is Phinehas, the high priest.

[1126] The individual characters are: the Levite, his *pilegeš,* her father, the Levite's servant, an old man, the old man's virgin daughter, and Phinehas.

[1127] The collective characters are: the sons of Israel, the sons of Benjamin, the sons of Belial, the Israelite army, the Benjaminite army, the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, the four hundred virgins of Jabesh-Gilead, the elders of the congregation, the daughters of Shiloh, and the fathers and brothers of the daughters of Shiloh.

LEVITE. The central figure for the first half of the story is an unnamed Levite. Having just read a story about another Levite, the reader is intrigued that there are geographic connections between the two; but, the parallels end there. Unlike the earlier story, this Levite is not a thief and he is not itinerating looking for a place to live. The narrator describes him as sojourning in a remote part of the hill country of Ephraim which intimates that he is not attached to a Levitical city. Beyond the tribal reference, there is no mention of patrilineage and the narrator completely withholds his name rather than delaying it for emphasis. There is reason to believe that the Levite had accumulated some wealth as he had obtained a *pîlegeš* from Bethlehem in Judah, he had a male servant that traveled with him, and at least two donkeys. At first, the reader has sympathy and even empathy for this character. After all, he was not the one guilty of harlotry. It was he, who arose and went to Bethlehem to speak to her heart and bring her home. But, antipathy begins to form when the reader realizes that he delayed that journey for four months. In addition, he succumbed to the urging and pleading of his father-in-law rather than stand his ground and leave to return home at the appointed time on the morning of the fourth day. Finally, when the journey home has commenced, the Levite has an indignant tone in his voice toward his servant, when he suggests that they turn aside and spend the night in Jebus. Through this the narrator gives a glimpse that the Levite might be a harsh task master as he pushes his weary travelers on to the point that he has decided is a stopping ground. After their travel brings them to Gibeah, the narrator provides discourse that implies the Levite is feeling sorry for himself and judgmental of the men of Gibeah because he has not been given hospitality despite the reality that he was not an invited guest to the city. For whatever reason, the sons of *Belial* decided they wanted to have homosexual intercourse with the Levite. As evil as it is for the men to make this move toward him, disgust rises in the reader because the Levite himself never speaks out against their lust for him. Nor when his *pîlegeš* is given to them for a gang rape does he speak out. This is a man insensitive to those around him and only interested in his own needs, which perhaps gives a clue to why his *pîlegeš* left him in the first place. Antipathy reaches a crescendo when he cuts his *pîlegeš* into twelve pieces and sends her body parts throughout the country. The reader can only hope that she is already dead when he takes the knife to her.

The Levite is a man who has been violated and victimized. His *pîlegeš* left him and played the harlot. His father-in-law detains him. His servant makes suggestions the

Levite regards as inappropriate. The men of Gibeah refuse him hospitality. The sons of *Belial* want him sexually. The old man seizes the Levite's *pîlegeš* and gives her to be raped. The *pîlegeš* does not speak to the Levite the next morning. At this point, the Levite turns the tables and no longer chooses to be violated, but to be the one who violates. He begins by dismembering the *pîlegeš* by violating her (hopefully dead) body. He violates Israel by profaning the tribes with her dismembered flesh. Finally, he violates assembled Israel by lying to them about the intentions of the men of Gibeah. While it is true that these men surrounded the house because of him, it was not to kill him but to have intercourse. He implies that the men of Gibeah are fully responsible for the death of the *pîlegeš*. Nonetheless, he fails to tell them the part that the old man played and his own failure to speak up or to protect her. After this, the Levite cries out for their counsel and ultimately for justice. The narrator essentially gives his counsel by silencing the Levite and causing him to disappear from the story even though his actions continue to be felt.

PÎLEGEŠ. The unnamed *pîlegeš* of the Levite is essentially an agent of the plot. However, it is her actions that cause the story to spiral downward with the intensity of a tornado that wreaks havoc wherever it goes. She is introduced in relation to the Levite who "took her for himself from Bethlehem in Judah."[1128] Whether she was his only *pîlegeš*, or there was another one, or even a wife, the narrator does not reveal that information. But, what is known is that she "played the harlot against him" and that she returned back "to her father's house." [1129] The narrator silences her by not giving her any dialogue. Thus, in that marginalized state she is already characterized as *femme-déjà-morte*.[1130] It is strange that there are no words of discourse between the two, despite the narrative comment that the Levite spoke "to her heart to bring her back."[1131] There is no indication of any inner life of this *pîlegeš*. Whether she willingly returned with the Levite on his trek home or she protested, it is not known. She is always precariously in the background much the same way temptation and sin is hiding in the shadows waiting to attack its prey. There is no verbal response or cry or shout by the *pîlegeš* when she is to

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[1128] Jg. 19:1.

[1129] Jg. 19:2.

[1130] In addition to this classification meaning "a woman already dead," P. Kamuf quoting from J.J. Rousseau's *Confession* also refers to the Levite's *pîlegeš* as *la femme sans voix* "the woman without a voice." See her "Author of a Crime," *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, (Ed.) A. Brenner (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 204.

[1131] Jg. 19:3.

be given away by the old man to the sons of *Belial*, even though the narrator reports that the old man gave them permission to ravish her sexually. Perhaps, this was not a problem to her, in that she had previously left the Levite for the purpose of her own sexual desires. This could in fact be a way of her getting back at the Levite by someone else other than him having access to her body. She was raped and abused by the men; but, still there is no cry for help. The narrator is purposely ambiguous about the events of the next morning. The woman was alive enough to crawl to the threshold of the door where the Levite was staying. However, she either could not or would not answer his imperative command. Whether she died at the threshold, sprawled out over the donkey on the return home, or at the Levite's home before or at the time of her dismemberment is unknown. Ironically, her naked body is now on public display for all of the tribes of Israel. In her feminist rendering, Trible concludes that the display of this woman shows how she is the least of the characters presented.

> Appearing at the beginning and close of a story that rapes her, she is alone in a world of men. Neither the other characters nor the narrator recognizes her humanity. She is property, object, tool, and literary device. Without name, speech, or power, she has no friends to aid her in life or mourn her in death. Passing her back and forth among themselves, the men of Israel have obliterated her totally.[1132]

It is difficult for the reader to even be sympathetic with this character; because after all she violated *Torah* in her harlotry, in her leaving her husband, in her unresponsiveness to him, and in her lack of crying out either before, during, or after her rape. Through the actions of the Levite by flaying her into twelve pieces, he essentially sent her sin throughout the land and contaminated Israel. Even in her death, the *pîlegeš* is affecting those around her. And death is what follows in the rest of Judges.

FATHER OF THE PÎLEGEŠ. The Levite's father-in-law is unnamed, but the narrator makes him a type-character rather than agent of the plot. Not much would be known about this character if it were not for the actions describing him and his discourse. He lived in Bethlehem in Judah and had a daughter who became the Levite's *pîlegeš*. When his daughter returned to him, they stayed together for four months. The narrator describes that the man was glad to see the Levite, so there is apparently no conflict or problem between the two relationally. The narrator characterizes him as a lavish host. But in this role, he retards the action by prolonging the story by his continual insistence that the Levite and his party remain with him for another day. This lasted for five days and four nights. The father serves as a foil for the old man to contrast each other as a host.

[1132] Trible, *Texts of Terror*, 80-81.

Generally, the reader has sympathy for the father; however, there is a point in which a degree of antipathy emerges because he will not "cut the apron strings" and allow the Levite to leave with the *pîlegeš*.

SERVANT. The narrator enjoys using many characters for his story. The servant is another example of an agent of the plot. He is briefly mentioned as accompanying the Levite in his trek toward Bethlehem. Although he is present during that five day stay, he is conveniently out of the picture. Only on the return journey does he appear again. At this time, he is given dialogue. The servant no doubt weary from the journey and aware of the setting sun suggests lodging in Jebus as they approach it. The plea itself is impassioned with deferential terms of entreaty. The reader has the impression this is not the first request the servant has made which has gone unfulfilled. The narrator in this scene does not describe the servant in relation to the Levite, but to his master, which speaks more to the character of the Levite than the servant. In this scene, the servant brings out through the dialogue more of the character of the Levite.

OLD MAN. The old man is also an unnamed character which despite the relatively few verses he appears in, he is a full-fledged character due to his unexpected behavior. The ideal reader immediately recognizes there is a problem. It is not because he was working in the field until evening time. That in itself is an admirable quality. It is the realization that he is a tribal alien. The old man is not where he belongs. Why is a man from the hill country of Ephraim sojourning outside of his tribal inheritance in the land of Benjamin? As has earlier been addressed, the old man was technically out of line by offering hospitality, because that is the responsibility of the tribe of Benjamin. Even so, the old man serves his guests by washing their feet, taking care of their animals, welcoming the travelers into his home, and providing them with food and drink. The narrator reports that when the sons of *Belial* came to them, that the old man owned the house where he lived. This is not language of sojourning but of permanence outside his tribal area. It is even intimated in the discourse between him and the men that he knew them and gently rebuked their intended behavior. However, the reader is shocked to learn that the host willfully offers his virgin daughter and the *pîlegeš* for them to ravage and to do what was good in their eyes. He was concerned for the Levite, but not for his daughter or the *pîlegeš*. Whether it was his intention to abuse his daughter is not fully known, because the old man did not seize her, but only the *pîlegeš* and gave her to the men to sexually abuse. It is dreadfully silent in the text after this event. There is no mention of

making merry or any other activity. There is no mention of the old man the next morning. He has essentially disappeared from the scene leaving the reader with antipathy for him.

SONS OF BELIAL. Like the *pîlegeš*, this collective character is an agent of the plot. They were men of Gibeah, from the tribe of Benjamin. Most of their character comes from the way they are described. They surround the house of the old man and pound on his door. They were observant enough to notice that he had offered hospitality to the Levite and his entourage; however, they were not hospitable enough to have made the offer themselves. Their specific intent was to have a homosexual liaison with the Levite. The men refused to listen to the old man's protestations regarding this activity and when the *pîlegeš* was thrown out before them by the old man, they took advantage of the situation by raping and abusing her, finally letting her go at the approach of dawn. The reader has nothing but antipathy for this character.

SONS OF BENJAMIN. As a tribe, Benjamin has been absent from the Judges story since the time of Ehud, where it was characterized as being left-handed warriors. Now the tribe is seen in microcosm through the men of Gibeah. Through the grapevine the word of the events in Gibeah and the assembling of the other tribes in Mizpah reaches Benjamin. The Israelites rebuke Benjamin for allowing wickedness to occur in their tribal territory and for failing to administer intra-tribal justice. Benjamin refuses to listen to the Israelites and rejects the demand to turn over the guilty men from Gibeah. The narrator implies that all of the men of Benjamin turned out for battle. There are 26,000 men who draw the sword. In addition, there are the seven hundred left-handed men from Gibeah who have expertise with the sling-shot. The narrator depicts Benjamin as the victor in the first two days of battle with them suffering minimal losses but inflicting high mortality upon Israel. It is interesting that the narrator prefers to use the term "sons of Benjamin" rather than the term "tribe." The filial connection is developed at the end of the second day of battle when the high priest inquires of YHWH and refers to Benjamin as "the sons of my brother Benjamin."[1133] On the third day, Benjamin is characterized as being confident in battle despite their unawareness of an Israelite ambush which essentially decimated their tribe, leaving only six hundred men. It is ironic that Benjamin is only given discourse on the third day and when they speak it is in presumptuous error. This sub-group could almost be classified as a collective character. They manage to survive three days of

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[1133] Jg. 20:28.

battle; yet, when they recognize defeat, they flee to the Rock of Rimmon to hide in safety for four months. In their fugitive status, they never speak or offer repentance or reconciliation. All of the action on their behalf is because of Israel, which marginalizes the tribe rhetorically just as Israel had done militarily. It is ironic that Benjamin is completely silent and the six hundred men assume the vassal role of the conquered. Because of Israel, the six hundred men are presented with virgin women: four hundred from Jabesh-Gilead and two hundred from Shiloh of whom they had to kidnap and capture themselves. Throughout the entire story, the reader only engenders antipathy for Benjamin and even its six hundred survivors.

SONS OF ISRAEL. As a macro-character, the sons of Israel have been absent from the stories for some time. The narrator introduces them as a micro-character scattered throughout the land of Israel when they observe the dismembered *pîlegeš*. The sight of her body evoked an immediate negative response from each Israelite who saw it. But more than make a statement about an unorthodox original event it also evoked the need to make a response. It is ironic that it took this dismemberment to cause the tribes to come together to YHWH as "one man." [1134] Israel knew that wickedness is involved and hears the testimony (*albeit* corrupt) of the Levite. In their holy rage and apparent sense of holiness before YHWH, they only hear one side of the story and make their judgment and sentence without ever hearing the testimony of the accused. To the credit of the sons of Israel, they are united in their action and they desire to remove wickedness from Israel. However, the unasked question is whether they had made any personal effort to remove wickedness from themselves. Even their inquiry before *Elohim* at Bethel is telling. They only ask who shall first go to battle, as in the prologue. Because of the parallel, the reader sees this as an act of presumption in which they assume that deity will deliver Benjamin into their hands. However, Israel is mistaken. The first incident involves possession of the land and battle against non-Israelites which is divinely sanctioned. But this incident involves internal justice against a tribe of Israel and although the sons of Israel gather at Mizpah, there is no indication that they inquire of YHWH. In fact, the narrator suppresses information that Israel does all the speaking by making rash oaths. Through presumption and the oaths over one-tenth of the Israelite fighting force is killed, whereas Israel kills over 25,000 men of Benjamin and annihilates the town of Jabesh-Gilead. To the credit of Israel and only after 40,000 men had been killed, the sons of Israel come before YHWH

[1134] Jg. 20:1.

at Bethel with acts of contrition and worship. It is at this point that victory is assured; but as is witnessed the following day, the victory is bittersweet because through their penitent actions they recognize that the tribe of Benjamin is at the point of extinction. But to the discredit of the sons of Israel and their elders, there was no repentance regarding the oaths made or any attempt to reverse them. As such, Jabesh-Gilead met the sword of Israel with only the virgins spared. In addition, the wisdom *(sic)* of the elders shows that everyone does what is right in his own eyes, by kidnapping the daughters of Shiloh and forcing them to become wives to the surviving Benjaminite men.

VIRGINS OF JABESH-GILEAD. This collective group of four hundred women had their lives spared because they had not had sexual relations. How this was determined is unknown. But, for all the remaining inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead they were killed by the twelve-thousand man Israelite army because the men of the city failed to come up to Mizpah. The women were described as being young and virgins. As spared captives, they were brought to the camp at Shiloh. Once the men of Benjamin returned to Shiloh, the virgins were given to the Benjaminites as wives. These women are marginalized because they are not given any voice throughout the story and they are only agents of the plot.

DAUGHTERS OF SHILOH. The narrator also uses another collective group of women who also serve as agents of the plot. Unlike the other virgins, these women were not spared captives who had lost their family through genocide. Instead, these were young women who came to dance at the annual festival in Shiloh. Knowing that they would be there to worship, the elders of the congregation conspired against them and their families by an act of premeditated kidnapping, as a way of controverting the rash oath. The narrator does not say how many of these women were there; yet, it is implied that at least two hundred were present because that is how many single Benjaminite men were hiding in the vineyards waiting to seize their brides. The men stole away the dancing daughters of Shiloh and both them and their male relatives were silenced by the narrator.

POINT OF VIEW. The narrator is giving his evaluative point of view throughout the story. By introducing the first episode with the description of the Levite's *pîlegeš* playing the harlot he ironically suggests an element of justice in her fate.[1135] The narrator is not opposed to manifest his presence overtly in the story. He does so by commenting that Jebus is Jerusalem.[1136] Likewise, he also maintains times of being covert in his

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[1135] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 188.

[1136] Jg. 19:10.

manifestations such as when he describes the activity of the rapists in Gibeah.[1137] Again, he interrupts the story to simultaneously report that Benjamin heard about Israel going up to Mizpah, even though all of the focus is on Israel and their army.[1138] In telling the story, he is not challenged by his characters. In fact, he allows the Levite to report the events of the outrage at Gibeah differently than what had been narrated knowing full well that the reader can discern the accuracy of the narration and the inaccuracy associated with the Levite. But what the narrator does not do is tell us whether the *pîlegeš* was dead or alive when she met the knife of the Levite, and in some ways this is the most outrageous event because the point of view is obscured.[1139] Within the battle narrative, the narrator briefly stops the action in order to comment on the presence of the Ark of the Covenant before resuming the story.[1140] Because he does stop the action, we are also prepared for his shifts in points of view. Within one verse he juxtaposes the perception of YHWH and Israel.[1141] Then, later, while maintaining the Israelite point of view, he moves from the overt action of the army to the covert action of the ambush in waiting.[1142] This continual changing of the point of view and deliberate slowing down the narrative during the battle sequences is an effective device causing the reader "to dwell upon the appalling spectacle of retribution coming upon the Benjaminites."[1143] At the end of the story, the evaluative comment that the remaining men of Benjamin (and their wives) returned home to their inheritance implies that the narrator has great concern about Israel's perversion because of the *Torah* violations that prohibited the rebuilding of the towns destroyed in war.[1144]

> Thus, the whole of chs. 19-21 portrays a situation involving national abandonment of YHWH's standards of justice for the sake of one tribe. Hence, whatever sense of covenant justice the remaining tribes of Israel may have learned from the ruins in Benjamin evaporates with the rebuilding of their cities (cf. Deut. 13:12; 17:13; 19:20; 21:21).[1145]

LANGUAGE PLAY. In the concluding story the narrator continues to use language through parallelism, symbols, irony, and word play to support his plot movement.

[1137] Jg. 19:25.

[1138] Jg. 20:3.

[1139] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 200.

[1140] Jg. 20:27.

[1141] Jg. 20:35.

[1142] Jg. 20:36-46.

[1143] Satterthwaite, "No King in Israel," 81.

[1144] Dt. 13:13-19.

[1145] O'Connell, 263.

TYPE-SCENE. The reader is prepared for a type scene regarding the barrenness of the Levite's wife upon learning that there is a *pîlegeš*. But, there is no such type scene. In fact, the reader is left to wonder why there is a *pîlegeš* and not a primary wife. Klein conjectures that the Levite could not afford the bridal price of marriage and compromised to have a *pîlegeš*.[1146] Even so, the reader expects progeny from this union and there is none. Rather the *pîlegeš* plays the harlot and there is no evidence that she ever bears children. There is even more conjecture on the reason for her leaving being based on the *Torah* that the Levite accused her of not being a virgin, thus she returned to her father.[1147] Although this is plausible, the narrator does not make any allusion to this text, rather he remains silent regarding the reason for her departure from the Levite.

INTERNAL PARALLELISM. The narrator creates parallelism within the context of the story as well as the text of Judges. Within the story, there is a parallel between the rape of the *pîlegeš* and the rapes of the daughters of Shiloh. For Webb, this is consummate irony whereby the actions of the elders parallel the action of the old man and the women and the men they are related to in the story literally have no say in the matter.[1148]

TABLE 29
PARALLELS BETWEEN THE RAPE VICTIMS

Parallels in the Stories	*Pîlegeš*	Daughters of Shiloh
The victims are daughters	19:2	21:21-22
The perpetrators are from the tribe of Benjamin	19:16, 22, 25	21:23
The victims are given over by someone old[1149]	19:24-25	21:16-22
The rape is connected with a battle[1150]	20:12-48	21:10-12
The victims are silent	--	--
The men related to the women are silent	--	--

Within the text of Judges certain of the parallels are part of a chiastic structure, as previously addressed. Judges 1 includes the divine inquiry of who should go up first of

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[1146] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 162-163.

[1147] Jones-Warsaw, 174. Dt. 22:13-21.

[1148] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 196. Webb views the whole episode as a chiasm.
  A The rape of the concubine
   B Holy war against Benjamin
    X Problem: The Oath – Benjamin threatened with extinction
   B' 'Holy' war against Jabesh-Gilead
  A' The rape of the daughters of Shiloh

[1149] This is seen better in the Hebrew text where the same word is used in its singular and plural construct forms reflecting *(zāqēn)* זְקַן "the old man" and *(ziqnê)* זִקְנֵי "the elders."

[1150] The battle against Benjamin follows the rape of the *pîlegeš*, whereas the battle against Jabesh-Gilead precedes the rape of the daughters of Shiloh.

which the response was Judah.[1151] The site of Jebus figures prominently as a city in the tribal allotment of Benjamin, because of their inability to conquer the inhabitants.[1152] At Bochim, Israel is assembled, weeping, and making sacrificial offerings.[1153] The connection is even more realistic if Bochim is an etiological synonym for Bethel. The next parallel is that after the Bochim event Israel returned to his inheritance in the same manner that the sons of Israel returned to their tribal inheritance following the feast gathering at Shiloh.[1154] The Levite and Samson also share some points of commonality. After a crisis in their marital relationship, both of the women returned to their father's home.[1155] Also, both men returned to take possession of their respective woman, after some time had elapsed.[1156] Finally, in both stories the women die as an indirect result of the actions of their husband.[1157]

There also exist parallels between the two epilogues. The first and most obvious is that both stories involve a Levite. Next, there is the geography and trek taken. In the first epilogue the Levite begins in Bethlehem in Judah and travels to the hill country of Ephraim and later on further north in the new tribal area of Dan. In the second epilogue, the Levite begins in the hill country of Ephraim, travels to Bethlehem in Judah, then on to Gibeah and back to the hill country of Ephraim. Another parallel regards hospitality and in both instances hospitality was abused.[1158] The fourth parallel is that both accounts contain a military group of six hundred men who are alienated from their tribal inheritance.[1159] Finally, each of the epilogues includes a reference to Shiloh as a point of condemnation for the tribe or nation.[1160]

EXTERNAL PARALLELISM. The prominent point of parallelism is the external parallel with Genesis 19. Block uses the nomenclature of "echo narrative technique."[1161]

[1151] Jg. 1:1-2; and 20:18.

[1152] Jg. 1:21; and 19:11-12.

[1153] Jg. 2:1-5; 20:23, 26; and 21:2-4.

[1154] Jg. 2:6; and 21:24.

[1155] Gane, 123. Jg. 15:1-2; and Jg. 19:2.

[1156] Jg. 15:2; and Jg. 19:3.

[1157] Jg. 15:6; and Jg. 19:27-29.

[1158] Klein, The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges, 145.

[1159] O'Connell, 264. Jg. 18:11, 16, 17, 25; 20:47; 21:7, 12, 14, 16-17, and 23.

[1160] Ibid., 265. Jg. 18:31; 21:12, 19, and 21.

[1161] D.I. Block, "Echo Narrative Technique in Hebrew Literature: A Study in Judges 19," *WTJ 52* (1990), 325.

Most scholars chronologically accept that the Judges story is fashioned after the Genesis story; however, Niditch makes a case for chronological priority of Judges as the text that was used for the Sodom story.[1162] In either case, parallels do exist. Burney has cited numerous examples of verbal coincidence between the stories.[1163] Rather than present them as he has verse by verse which shows the points of convergence and divergence, the text is presented showing the same phraseology between Genesis 19 and Judges 19 with an ellipsis at points of difference.

> ...when the men of the city ... surrounded the house ... Bring forth ... that we may know ... And ... went forth unto them and said ... No, my brothers, do not act wickedly, I pray you. Behold, ... daughter(s) ... let me, pray, bring them forth ... you ... and do to them that which is good in your sight ... to ... man/men do not a thing ... as ... have entered into my ....

From this rendering, it is easy to insert the necessary words to complete either story. The characters in the story have their parallels also. Lot corresponds with the old man, as both were sojourners in a foreign city. Although numerically different; the two angels correspond with the Levite, both having religious function and a guest of their host and rescued from the city gate. The men of Sodom surrounded the house as did the men of Gibeah. Both sets of men wanted a homosexual liaison with the visitors to the city. Whereas Lot offered his two daughters for heterosexual activity to the men, the old man offered his daughter and the Levite's *pîlegeš* for heterosexual activity. At this point, the stories become dissimilar.[1164] In Sodom there was no sexual activity as the angels prevented it; whereas in Gibeah the *pîlegeš* was raped and no one attempted to prevent it. Moreover, Sodom was destroyed completely whereas we are uncertain if all of the men of Gibeah were destroyed, as they may be represented in the six hundred Benjaminites who were spared. The text at hand does not answer this question; however, when seen in the light of 1 Samuel, there is every indication that a number of those survivors were the men from Gibeah. It is ironic that:

> [T]he Benjaminites, whose name means "son of the right hand," should have been the ones to produce so many left-handers. This left-handed dexterity was preserved within the genes of the six hundred that survived the battle (chap. 21) and transmitted to the next

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[1162] Niditch, "The 'Sodomite' Theme in Judges 19-20," 376-378.

[1163] Burney, 444.

[1164] For a further discussion on the points of dissimilarity see Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 169-170. Klein makes an astute observation that in the Genesis story the Sodomites accuse Lot of not allowing his guests to "judge" themselves whether they wanted to have homosexual relations, although the angels did make a judgment based on the miracle of blindness. However, the old man never gave the Levite that opportunity to judge in the situation and usurped his authority.

generation, as evidenced by Saul's ambidextrous kinsmen in the list of David's band of troops (1 Chr. 12:2).[1165]

But, there is one allusion that may be missed. Immediately prior to the Sodom event, Abraham is interceding for the city and in his impassioned plea he requests mercy from "The Judge of all the earth."[1166] Although there is no plea, or even mention of deity in the Gibeah incident, there is the important similarity that recognizes YHWH is the only true judge in Judges.

In addition to the Sodom story, there is a potential parallel allusion with Genesis 22 and the *Akeidah* story. It is true that the characters bear some resemblance; but it is remote at best. The similarities are the donkey, the servant, the sacrificer, and the sacrifice. But there is no divine command, no willingness on the part of the woman (who is his *pîlegeš*, not his son), nor is there a substitute sacrifice. The most significant parallel is the rare word *(hamma"ªkeleṭ)* "knife" which is used in both passages.[1167] It is remarkable that there are references to Jerusalem, both journeys began in the morning, and there are some similar word plays in the anti-climactic statements of the event.[1168] But to make this a borrowing of the text to discredit Gibeah and ultimately Saul, because YHWH did not intervene as He did in Genesis 22 and to build upon the similarities of Genesis 19 is to stretch the ideological application.

Even having said that, it is clear that Judges 19 is filled with parallels to the story of Saul which in itself may be an indication of an anti-Saul polemic.[1169] The obvious similarities begin with Saul being from the tribe of Benjamin and from the town of Gibeah.[1170] The cities of Ramah, Mizpah, and Jabesh-Gilead are significant in the Saul story.[1171] Brettler building on these allusions and the obvious allusion to Genesis 19 makes the polemic analogy that "the sins of the people of Gibeah, namely Saul, are

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[1165] Block, *NAC*, 557.

[1166] Gen. 18:25.

[1167] הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת. The word includes the definite article. Gen. 22:6, 10; and Jg. 19:29. J. Unterman, "The Literary Influence of 'The Binding of Isaac' (Genesis 22) on 'The Outrage at Gibeah (Judges 19)," *HAR 4* (1980), 161-162.

[1168] Unterman, 162-164. His case for comparing Isaac with the woman is tenuous. He states that both were a helpless innocent. The woman may have been at the point of her death, but her harlotrous actions certainly do not abrogate her.

[1169] Y. Amit, *Hidden Polemics in Biblical Narrative, (BibIntS 25*: Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 2000), 178-184.

[1170] 1 Sam. 9:1; and 10:26.

[1171] 1 Sam. 1:1; 11:1; 28:3; and 31:11-13.

heinous, and the house of Saul deserves the fate of Sodom."[1172] Whether the epilogue is an anti-Saul polemic is outside the scope of this thesis; however, the judgment motif makes it relevant. From a different ideological approach, the stories with their parallels to Genesis 19 and 1 Samuel 11 may be more of a pro-monarchic polemic, because the first story shows an inversion of societal norms with the latter showing "the way a disaster is prevented by a newly chosen king and the way a disaster is avenged by an irresponsible, callous, and self-absorbed man who lives at a time in which there is no king in Israel."[1173]

One scholar has gone so far as to note that the parallels in this story not only extend to Genesis 19 but also to Genesis 24, suggesting that this epilogue story is a conflation of the two stories in Genesis.[1174] Although all three stories contain the hospitality motif and the word *(tālan)* "spend the night" is present, the parallels end there and the contrasts begin.[1175] Genesis 24 is about Abraham's servant seeking a bride for Isaac; but in Judges 19, the Levite is seeking after his *pileges* who has run away. Yet, if one looks at the divergences in the characters, then the Genesis story serves as a foil to negatively characterize the Levite. There are three primary variations.

> 1. In Genesis, Rebekah is consulted about the time of departure; the unnamed woman in Judges is not consulted. 2. In Genesis, Abraham's servant refuses the extended offer of celebration, whereas the Levite feasts for five days. 3. In the Genesis account, all parties prosper, and Abraham's son is granted a prudent wife. In Judges, however, the delay results in brutal gang rape and mutilation of the unnamed woman, the near destruction of an entire tribe in internecine warfare, and kidnap and forced mass marriage.[1176]

Because the Israelite warriors killed everyone in Jabesh-Gilead except the virgins, the ideal reader is able to see the parallel with Numbers 31.[1177] Already in the battle narrative of Judges 20 we are confronted with Phinehas as the high priest; which possibly suggests that the second epilogue occurred early in the premonarchic period, since his father was high priest at the end of the wilderness period. In the *Torah*, Israel fights against Midian killing all of the men; however, they keep the women and booty. Moses rebuked the army and then the remaining women were killed only saving the virgins.

[1172] Brettler, *The Book of Judges*, 89.

[1173] Lasine, 37.

[1174] D. Penchansky, "Staying the Night: Intertextuality in Genesis and Judges," *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible,* (Ed.) D.N. Fewell (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 79.

[1175] תָּלֶן. This is parsed as *Qal* Jussive 2MS from the root *(lûn)* לין.

[1176] Penchansky, 80.

[1177] Num. 31:1-18.

SYMBOLISM AND IRONY. The butchering of the *pîlegeš* and distribution of the parts of her body throughout the nation is a symbolic act. The act served the purpose of mustering the nation for assembly and response. Similarly, Saul performed the same symbolic act; however he used a yoke of oxen rather than a woman.[1178] Because of the parallels it is suggested that the narrator borrowed from the 1 Samuel text to serve his literary purpose.[1179] Niditch suggests that "the dead woman's divided body is a radical symbolization of Israel's 'body politics,' the divisions in Israel.[1180] It is ironic that the *pîlegeš* is the antithesis to Achsah. Where Achsah spoke using body language to communicate while living, it is only through death that the *pîlegeš* speaks, and then it is literally through body language that the whole nation hears the message.[1181] Even more ironic is the fact that she is not speaking, but the Levite is speaking through her body.

The story is full of irony. It is remarkable that the *pîlegeš* is the reason that the Levite is in Bethlehem and his whole purpose of being there is to speak to her heart in order to bring her home. Yet, the narrator never records any discourse between the couple. Instead, all of the discourse has been between her father and her husband. Trible describes this as "a visit to engage male hearts" whereby the Levite has abandoned his purpose in order "to enjoy hospitality and competition with another man" causing the *pîlegeš* to suffer through neglect.[1182]

Because of the exaggerated hospitality the Levite has received in Bethlehem it is contrasted with the limited and improper hospitality in Gibeah. The Levite rebuffed his servant for suggesting staying in Jebus, because it was a town of foreigners. That in itself is a subtle rebuke by the narrator because had the Benjaminites done their job properly in the prologue conquest, this problem would not have occurred. In the Levite's wisdom *(sic)* he chooses to stay in the land of Benjamin, rather than in foreign territory. The reader is left to wonder whether he would have fared better with the Jebusites than he did with the Benjaminites.

[1178] 1 Sam. 11:7.

[1179] Brettler, *The Book of Judges*, 86. *Contra* Brettler, it is plausible that the Saul story is a borrowing from Judges, especially when oral tradition is considered.

[1180] Niditch, "The 'Sodomite' Theme in Judges 19-20," 371.

[1181] M. Bal, "The Rape of Narrative and the Narrative of Rape: Speech Acts and Body Language in Judges," *Literature and the Body: Essays on Populations and Persons*, (Ed.) E. Scarry (*EINS 12*: Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 18.

[1182] Trible, *Texts of Terror*, 69.

One of the reasons for the Levite and his party to come inside a home would have been to protect them from animal predators that would have been seeking prey during the night. How ironic that in their avoidance of the animal predators they were met by human predators![1183] In fact, the sons of *Belial* preyed upon the very social structure of Israel in which their specific intent of homosexual rape "threatens proper family-concepts and the extension of that family, the greater community of Israel."[1184]

The old man from Ephraim is the point from which the pendulum swings. The narrator captures this idea through his discourse. In an attempt to appease the sons of *Belial*, the old man identifies himself with them by calling them "my brothers." The men demand the Levite for sodomy; but the old man responds to them with two negative prohibitions. While that appears honorable, he uses an emphatic particle that counterbalances the whole event with an alternative arrangement, suggesting two women as objects of heterosexual indulgence followed by a chiastic set of two positive imperatives to be exercised by the men. For Trible, the old man is a mediator providing each man what he wants so that "no male is violated."[1185]

The language of the text also reflects irony regarding the *pîlegeš*, whereby the rape event changes her status and relationship to the Levite. Prior to the incident she is a *pîlegeš* and he is her husband. However, after the event, she is a "woman" and he is her master, implying that she has become his slave.[1186]

Webb has noted that the narrator uses dramatic irony in the second episode. The national gathering of Israel at Mizpah is brought about by the outrage at Gibeah. The convenor of the assembly is the Levite, not a prophet, judge, or king. It was not at the direction of YHWH, but because of his personal circumstances.

> [W]e, the readers, know more about both the convenor and the matter in hand than the members of the assembly do. To us the Levite's systematic dismemberment of the concubine – all very businesslike – is an extension of the cool callousness he displayed toward her at Gibeah; to those who receive the pieces and the accompanying summons it is an act of holy zeal. They are galvanized into action and come out 'as one man, from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead!' (20.1). That is, the call of this Levite elicits a response which far surpasses anything achieved by the saviour-judges raised up by Yahweh.[1187]

[1183] Gane, 123.

[1184] Niditch, "The 'Sodomite' Theme in Judges 19-20," 369.

[1185] Trible, *Texts of Terror*, 74.

[1186] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 170.

[1187] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 190.

It is ironic that no one wants to accept any culpability for their actions. Following the internecine war, Israel cries out in radical repentance; however, in its threefold repetition of the name "Israel" in its petition to YHWH "implies that the matter in hand is ultimately His responsibility."[1188] Divine silence to this rhetorical question is deafening.

The narrator uses ambivalence and irony together when chapter twenty is viewed against chapter twenty-one. At the outset, Israel is bound and determined to completely destroy and eradicate Benjamin. This obsession even has them seeking divine guidance to pursue their compulsion, even at the painful cost of the loss of many of their own lives. Yet, when the battle is over this same Israel is "as urgent to preserve Benjamin as they were rabid to destroy him, resorting to injustice to maintain their own consistency."[1189]

RHETORICAL DEVICES. The story begins with a potential word play on the geographic location of the Levite sojourning (bᵊyarkᵊtê har-'eprayim) in the remote part of the hill country of Ephraim.[1190] The roots of both words are suggestive of fertility, whether agriculturally or biologically. The implicit irony is "the Levite lives on the far side of the hills, remote from the heights of Ephraim [fruitfulness]" and as such there is no indication of progeny in the story.[1191] When the agricultural fruitfulness is considered then the economic standing of the Levite who lives in a tent is contrasted with his father-in-law who lives in a home in a place meaning "the house of bread."[1192] As such this works to negatively characterize the Levite.

The narrator has no difficulty in marginalizing his characters. This is done throughout the story by way of anonymity. However, the Levite's servant and the pîlegeš are essentially ignored by the old man from Ephraim. This is missed in the English versions because the second person subjective pronoun is the same whether singular or plural. The old man gives his greeting to the group as (šālôm lāḵ) "Peace to you!"[1193] However, only in the text does it become plain that the vocative address is in the singular form, thus marginalizing the others and preparing the reader for further marginalization. Ironically, what follows is that the old man takes "him" into his house, as if the others did

[1188] Ibid., 195. Jg. 21:3.

[1189] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 226.

[1190] 𝕳 בְּיַרְכְּתֵי הַר־אֶפְרָיִם. Jg. 19:1.

[1191] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 161.

[1192] M. Bal, "Dealing/With/Women: Daughters in the Book of Judges," *The Book and the Text: The Bible and Literary Theory*, (Ed.) R.M. Schwartz (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, Inc., 1990), 29.

[1193] 𝕳 שָׁלוֹם לָךְ. Jg. 19:20.

not exist. This suggests that protection and hospitality that comes with the invitation into the home is completely androgenic as there will be no protection or hospitality for the woman.[1194]

There is an interesting word play that occurs with this incident. Before entering the home of the old man, a specific denominative verb is used as a *hapax legomenon* when *(wayyābāwl)* "they give provender" to the donkeys.[1195] Although not proper English, literally "they *fodder* the donkeys. This sets up the pun because the men who come to the door are the sons of *Belial* making the comparison between them and donkeys because of the similar words in their root forms.

The word choice the narrator uses to describe the sons of *Belial*, pounding the door of the old man to gain access to the Levite loses its force when translated into English. The NEB captures it best among the English translations with "hurling themselves against the door." However, the participle *(miṯdapqîm)* suggests that the men were beating violently against the door.[1196]

One of the devices the narrator uses is incremental repetition. This is present in the battle narrative in the inquiry to YHWH and His response. What is hidden from the characters is that this will be a holy war in which YHWH chastises all of the tribes of Israel. Already, it has been noted that Israel was in presumption assuming YHWH's approval and victory. The pattern of Judah going first to battle has been seen in the prologue. Webb suggests that Judah was chosen to lead the battle as a judgment against the tribe since the *pîlegeš,* herself was from that tribe.[1197]

There are many different literary devices used in the story. The first verses of chapter twenty validate this. The narrator uses the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" as a merism of the totality of Israel. Yet, at the same time, he uses hyperbole to express that it was "all" of the sons of Israel. However, in the next verse there is a noteworthy *hapax locutio* in the phrase *(biqhal 'am hā'ᵉlōhîm)* "in the assembly of the people of God."[1198] Perhaps that it is only used once in the Hebrew bible testifies to the fact that other biblical

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[1194] Block, *NAC*, 532.

[1195] ℍ וַיְּבוּל. This is parsed as *Qal* Imperfect 3MS from the unused root *(bālal)* [בְּלַל]. The verbal form is defective as reflected in *BHS* and the corrected *qêre* form deletes the unpointed *waw*. *BDB*, 117; and Burney, 467.

[1196] ℍ מִתְדַּפְּקִים. This is parsed as *Hithpael* masculine plural participle from the root *(dāpaq)* דָּפַק. Jg. 19:22. Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 212.

[1197] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 193.

[1198] ℍ בְּקְהַל עַם הָאֱלֹהִים. Jg. 20:2. Block, *NAC*, 551.

writers did not want their texts to be associated with the events that brought about this gathering or the events that resulted from it.

A significant rhetorical device is the anonymity of the characters. In a book that is full of characters, it is ironic that this epilogue story is replete with anonymous characters, with the exception of Phinehas, who is only an agent of the plot. An anonymous character is a departure from the norm, especially in the biblical narratives where much emphasis is placed on naming. Therefore, when the narrator chooses to tell a story in which essentially every character is anonymous, this is making a statement that "symbolizes and epitomizes the gradual, downward spiraling disintegration and dehumanization that is occurring increasingly throughout the narrative."[1199] Hudson describes five basic functions of anonymous characters within the Hebrew text, of which two are applicable to this story.[1200] When the character is anonymous it functions to universalize the story. As such, when anonymity is joined with the "no-king" formula it implies that "*every individual within Israel was dangerous because every individual was doing right in his or her own eyes.*"[1201] The other function is that anonymity deconstructs naming, meaning, and identity. This has a significant bearing on the story because "anonymity is the failure of the speech-act *par excellence* – the deliberate refusal to speak the name is to deny the person as subject and human."[1202] As a result, the narrator is able to portray a dehumanized society and radical social anarchy as a conclusion to the story.

INTERPRETATION. It does appear as if there is a tribal confederacy and the cultic and military elements of premonarchic Israel are working for the first time since the prologues. Amit suggests that the epilogue is an editorial digression to show how the tribal frameworks have been idealized and functioning properly with the only deviation being the tribe of Benjamin.[1203] But, this denies the sociological reality of the story. The men of Benjamin were not the only social deviants. Judah is represented by the *pîlegeš* who played the harlot, as well as her father who was insensitive to the Levite. Levi is represented by the Levite who in his stubbornness did not maintain his convictions regarding the journey, created a situation to cause his *pîlegeš* to leave him, was hostile

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[1199] Hudson, 49.

[1200] The first three include: 1) they play a minor role in the *fabula*; 2) they focus or quicken the plot; and 3) they focus and highlight other characters. Ibid., 59.

[1201] Ibid., 60.

[1202] Ibid., 61-62.

[1203] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 337-339.

toward his servant, disrespected the body of his *pîlegeš*, and lied to the assembly of Israel. Furthermore, he was disobedient to the *Torah* because he failed to stone the *pîlegeš* for her infidelity.[1204] Ephraim is represented by the old man who was sojourning outside his tribal allotment, violated the norms of hospitality, and disrespected his own daughter, the *pîlegeš*, and the Levite, as well as seizing the *pîlegeš* by giving her to the men of Gibeah and instructing them to sexually abuse her. Gad is represented by the men of Jabesh-Gilead who failed to come to the assembly at Mizpah. Then the remainder of Israel is implicated by the rash vows made at that assembly. Thus, with this in mind, even though the tribes were functioning together and the elders did exercise some leadership, it should not be taken as the cultic ideal in the face of immorality and covenant aberration. However, Amit suggests that the incident at Gibeah itself was the deviation from the norm and the story itself is a polemic that praises the "functioning of the community, the direct connection with God, and the longing for moral purity."[1205] That might be a possibility if the epilogue is an attachment to the end of the book; but because there is coherence with the rest of the book, the general context suggests that these types of immoral incidents were the norm for premonarchic Israel rather than the exception to the rule.

In this epilogue, all of the characters are agents of the plot so that the narrator can make his ideological evaluations of the moral chaos of the era. The characters only exist as long as they serve the story. Webb has made an interesting analysis of the characters in light of how they exist for the purpose of critique, as reflected in Table 30.[1206]

TABLE 30

CHARACTERS AS A CRITIQUE IN EPILOGUE B

Character	Critique
Levite	Of the assembly as an institution
Old Man of Gibeah	Of Israelite hospitality
Rapists of Gibeah (sons of *Belial*)	Of social morality
Elders of the Congregation of Israel	Of justice

Through this analysis, Webb is able to show how

Israel's hospitality, warfare, justice, and politics were all debased because of the moral blindness and/or perversity of its citizens (including Levites and elders) and the consequent malfunctioning of its institutions. Yahweh's displeasure, and his sovereignty, find expression in the chastisement he brings to bear on the whole community.[1207]

[1204] Dt. 22:21.

[1205] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 341.

[1206] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 196-197. The table is an adaptation from Webb's critique.

[1207] Ibid., 197.

The depravity of Israel is clear in the events of this story. Despite YHWH not figuring prominently as a character in the story, the narrator is required to bring Him forward so that the sin of the nation is put in check. The narrator imposes his theology on the story so that the battle narrative which hinges on the outrage at Gibeah is seen within the context of divine judgment. He makes it clear that "YHWH struck down Benjamin before Israel." But, the judgment against Benjamin is more severe when seen in theological terms.

> Israel has access to divine guidance through the high priest. Theologically speaking, Israel has a means of grace. Yahweh directs them through His appointed servant, the high priest. Benjamin – and we must view Benjamin in light of this contrast – has none of this. No ark, no priest, no direction from Yahweh, no word from heaven, no light in turmoil. In this Benjamin already stands under judgment, for what judgment can be worse than having no counsel from God, no access to His presence, no way through divine silence?[1208]

The story is more than a theme of moral anarchy. It is a theological and ethical treatise that hopefully for the reader has didactic value.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES STORY

The book of Judges is a story in itself. All of the stories thus far are part and parcel of the overall. A view of YHWH and Israel is incomplete if only one or two stories are examined. Rather, each story must be viewed in the context of the book. When that is done, the reader has a more comprehensive view of the two macro-characters. Only then, do the events which transpire make sense. There is a distinct movement through the prologues to the main body of stories to the epilogues.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. The narrative structure of the book has been discussed at length in the earlier section on Rhetorical Criticism. Nonetheless, it composes three distinct sections of a double prologue, a series of deliverer stories (consisting of both the major and minor judge paradigms), and a double epilogue. The story is set spatially to occur in the land of Israel and to give the appearance that at some point in time every area of the land throughout all of the tribal allotments has some representation. Because the chronology of the story is convoluted, there are areas of temporal ambiguity; yet, the narrator has divided the story into three periods. The first and second periods occur in the prologue and refer to the time of Joshua toward the end of his life and the other one is the immediate period that followed his death. However, those two periods serve as a foil for the third period which is the setting of the book which are the generations that follow that

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[1208] Jg. 20:35. Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 222.

did not know YHWH nor the work He had done for Israel. While, the temporal framework of the epilogues is an anachrony to the discourse time, this is important only for diachronic analysis. But, in the synchronic thought, the analepse serves the narrator to group the two events of the epilogues thematically with each epilogue functioning as a case-in-point of the conclusion he desires the reader to reach.

Much has been said about the formulaic statements of the book. The major judge paradigm has its formulae, as does the minor judge paradigm, and even the epilogues have their abbreviated formula. This works to structure the book and to show plot movement and give continuity to what would appear to be disjointed pericopes that actually do cohere. Through the formulaic statements the narrative repetition prepares the reader for the action through the micro-characters, who alternately take protagonistic and antagonistic positions.

Nonetheless, there is an element which redaction critics see as the hand of the Deuteronomist. In this, there is a micro-structure that thematically represents YHWH but also the evaluative point of view of the narrator. But, before we look at this element, it is necessary to consider the theme of the book. Block is convinced that the story is about the Canaanization of Israel. He makes his conclusion in regard to the outrage in Gibeah by looking back at where Israel began at the time of Joshua's death and then making the analogy of the events of Sodom and Gomorrah.

> Whereas the travelers had thought they had come home to the safety of their countrymen [men of Gibeah], they have actually arrived in Sodom. The nation has come full circle. The Canaanization of Israelite society is complete. When the Israelites look in a mirror, what they see is a nation which, even if ethnically distinct from the natives, is indistinguishable from them with regard to morality, ethics, and social values. They have sunk to the level of those whom they were to destroy and on whom the judgment of God hangs.[1209]

In fact, the case he makes for this position is well supported and persuasive; however, this is an anthropocentric view that makes Israel to be the chief character in the story. Now it is true, that when the micro-characters are personifications of the macro-character, the sheer number of references seem to validate this. But this falls short because it places deity in a subordinate role whereby His responses are always conditioned by the action or inaction of Israel. This is an inversion of the narrator's purpose. Others would rather make the story to be a polemic. For (older) historical critics it is a case for the emergence of Israel and the establishment of an amphictyonic society. For feminist critics, it is an androgynous subversion of women through the patriarchal society that has abdicated its

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[1209] Block, "Echo Narrative Technique in Hebrew Literature," 336.

role of godly male leadership. For ideological critics, this is a pro-monarchic polemic. This of course bifurcates into its positive and negative positions. It is positive for a Davidic dynasty that shows the virtue of a king from the tribe of Judah. It is negative for a Saulide dynasty that emerges from the tribe of Benjamin. It is true that the story is about Israelite humanity; but to maintain a myopic focus is to keep Israel as the subject rather than the object. Rather, Israel is subordinate to deity and YHWH is the subject of the book. The ambiguity that the reader experiences is part of the narrator's creation that brings the question home to the ideal reader of whether he will allow YHWH to be his *Elohim* or he will follow the way of the character Israel and try to usurp authority and subvert divine pre-eminence. Taken from a theocentric position, the theme is about YHWH and the way that He judges Israel as its leader.

From the outset, the narrator sets ideals of land conquest, removal of the Canaanites, and adherence to the covenant, all of which are contingent upon a relationship between YHWH and Israel. Even the ideal of leadership and family are contributed to the reader through the story of Othniel and Achsah. Since the narrator is not an idealist; but a pragmatist, it is only natural that these ideals complicate the action and introduce conflict between YHWH and Israel. With the complication, the story is defined in terms of events that constitute a cyclical pattern. But the pattern deteriorates and it spirals out of control until the pattern disappears establishing the anarchy of the conclusion. The beauty of the ending is that there is no ending. The story dissolves without being resolved through the *inclusio* that is formed by the "no-king" formula. Theocentricism has devolved to egocentricism. Israel has run the gamut from having YHWH as God, to having other gods, to polytheistic and syncretistic worship that includes YHWH and the Canaanite gods, to a humanistic deification whereby Israel dictates its own cult status and functions as if it alone is God. But, this is a reality that Israel does not recognize. As a character, Israel has forgotten that it is under divine scrutiny and in the midst of a test. The Canaanites have been left in the land purposefully to determine whether Israel would obey the commandments of YHWH. Israel miserably fails the test, as individuals, households, clans, tribes, and as a nation. It is not surprising that Israel's excessive reliance on its systems of belief "results in the dissolution of the systems themselves."[1210]

[1210] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 211.

There is a micro-structure in the story, which might be overlooked if the focus remains anthropocentric. Although, there is indirect divine action throughout the book, the three prophetic passages with the denunciatory messages reveal direct divine action.[1211] As such, Israel is not directing the plot action; it becomes the agent of YHWH in the hands of the narrator. As a subtle irony to the leadership situation, the judges were not able to bring about change and repentance, although they were able to maintain the *status quo* after their deliverance event. However, once the judge died, Israel returned to its sin as a dog returns to its vomit. But, through the three prophetic passages, with the divine messages spoken does Israel respond *albeit* only temporarily. The first prophetic message occurs at Bochim. It serves as a bridge between the two prologues to indict Israel in its *Torah* violation regarding the religious cult and the land. Through the stern words of the angel of YHWH, the sons of Israel weep and offer sacrifices. Yet, the narrator is cleverly ambiguous regarding the language of repentance leaving the reader to question the sincerity of Israel's tears. Were they weeping for the consequences of their actions and how they would affect them? Or were they weeping because of the prostitution of their relationship with YHWH?

Although the angel of YHWH never appears again in the story with a prophetic message of this nature, this does not limit YHWH in communicating with His people. The telescopic view of the period allows much time to elapse and unless the readers is paying close attention, he does not realize that approximately 213 years of story time have elapsed between the time of the prophetic message by the angel of YHWH at Bochim and the message that comes by the prophet during the Midianite oppression.[1212] The message from the anonymous prophet has the same general theme and wording that accentuates the supremacy of YHWH and the infidelity of Israel. The denunciation is sharp and severe. The narrator moves from a position of ambiguity to ambivalence by silencing Israel and giving the character no response, either verbally or demonstratively through narration. If the chronology is consistent, another century elapses before the third and

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[1211] Jg. 2:1-5; 6:7-10; and 10:10-16.

[1212] This is based on the assumption that there is chronological integrity in the story from the point of the prologue up until the Gideon story. This also presupposes that the Bochim incident occurred prior to the Othniel story. The 213 years is derived from the years of oppression (8, 18, 20, and 7) by Mesopotamia, Moab, Canaan, and Midian; and the years of rest (40, 80, and 40) after the deliverance events by Othniel, Ehud, and Deborah. For the detailed discussion of this, see the section "Chronology" in chapter three, pages 328-332.

final prophetic message before the deliverance by Jephthah.[1213] Finally, it appears as if Israel has come to a point of genuine repentance. However, there is no divine or human messenger with a message. Instead, YHWH Himself is the bearer of the message and unwilling to come to the aid of Israel. YHWH confronts Israel with the fact that He has delivered them seven times and their response has been seven harlotries. By the narrator making this distinction, he is expressing that "this is the most extreme case of behavior 'worse than the fathers.'"[1214] These responses are outlined in Table 31.[1215]

TABLE 31

THE SEVEN HARLOTRIES AND DELIVERANCES

Seven Harlotries of Israel	Seven Deliverances by YHWH
They served the *Baalim*	He delivered them from the Egyptians
They served the *Ashtaroth*	He delivered them from the Amorites
They served the gods of Syria	He delivered them from the sons of Ammon
They served the gods of Sidon	He delivered them from the Philistines
They served the gods of Moab	He delivered them from the Sidonians
They served the gods of the sons of Ammon	He delivered them from the Amalekites
They served the gods of the Philistines	He delivered them from the Maonites

When YHWH personally confronts Israel, only then is Israel in a place of penitence; however, it appears that where sin has abounded and grace has been present, now the time of grace has expired. And from that point through the remaining events of the book YHWH is silent and obscurely absent.

PLOT. The plot essentially has one episode, which is the main body of judge pericopes; because the prologue functions as an introduction and the epilogue functions as a conclusion, though not necessarily a resolution.[1216] Does any one judge episode fulfill a microcosmic function for the book plot? A case may be made for Othniel in that this is the ideal paradigm. His character is not sullied, he is empowered by the Spirit of YHWH, and he completes his task. Even though the skeletal nature of the paradigm is borrowed by the other judge events, the ideal is far from the reality portrayed. Another possibility is Gideon. Structurally, the event is at the chiastic center and the parallels, which we have earlier discussed, are persuasive. This event is a turning point in the story because it

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[1213] The story time allows for a 21 year period of oppression (3 by Abimelech and 18 by the Ammonites) as well as a 85 year period of judging (40 by Gideon, 23 by Tola, and 22 by Jair).

[1214] Hamlin, 110.

[1215] The list is given as it is presented in the text of Jg. 10:6 and 10:11-12. As such this does not imply that the specific deliverance is related to the specific idolatry as listed.

[1216] Alternatively, when the story is considered ethnographically, three plots are present: 1) the taming of the wild; 2) the optimization of the natural world; and 3) the existence of nature for human exploitation. For this interpretation, see Scham, 62-64.

introduces the internal conflict whereby Israel becomes the antagonistic oppressor against itself. A better possibility is Jephthah.[1217] Certainly there are the elements of the "calamitous vow" and its implication of death, the silence and ambivalence of deity, estrangement, and oppression.[1218] Yet, it does contain the climactic point of the overall story. It is ironic that the pronounced revelation that YHWH is Judge would be made outside the borders of Israel and outside the hearing of the Israelites.

To force one of the judge events to become a microcosm of the whole story is to force upon the text an improper rubric. The narrator makes his plot design known from the prologue. This is a quest – a journey of holiness. The ideal reader knows the quest of the Exodus and the Conquest of Israel from the *Hexateuch*. Now the question comes: "Will Israel pass YHWH's test?" The narrator fashions the story to answer that question.

INTRODUCTION. The double introduction prepares us for the question. The first introduction shows the limited success of Judah and the wretched failure of the other tribes in land conquest. This, together with the cultic infidelity the narrator shows in the second introduction justifies deity in establishing a test. Already, through the opening chapters, the reader is aware that this generation of Israelites does not have a stellar track record whereas the generation in the time of Joshua is the foil. Then again, because there was some tribal success in land conquest, there is a genuine possibility that Israel may pass the divine test.

THE JUDGE. With the awareness of the test, the action starts through the individual stories either indicting or acquitting Israel in regard to the test. Only the narrator knows the extent of the corpus of material he had to choose from in order to tell his story. What we have are the events that he selected. By deduction, the reader is able to understand that each event "focuses on a different aspect of the role of the deliverer."[1219] All of the details of each event are superfluous to the overall story, because to have them would detract from the message of the story, which is to focus on *The* Judge of Israel. The same is true regarding the need for detailed characterization of the micro-characters. The narrator selects certain stories with the similar formulaic framework "without developing the individuality of the characters, who nevertheless constantly re-appear in the mind of the reader."[1220] Through a purposeful failing to fully develop the micro-characters, the

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[1217] Gunn and Fewell, 120.

[1218] R. Alter, *The World of Biblical Literature* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 60.

[1219] Block, "Echo Narrative Technique in Hebrew Literature," 338.

[1220] P.J. Nel, "Character in the book of Judges," *OTE 8* (1995), 191.

narrator by default is subverting them to highlight the supremacy of YHWH as the chief character. This prepares the reader to see elements of His character in the judges that He raises up as His representatives that function as agents of the plot.

> But is not that precisely the goal that the narrator seeks to achieve; no human hero directs history and is able to break the chain of circular time. That is why the hope of a future king is already juxtaposed with a portrayal of the bleakest failure of a king.[1221]

This naturally points toward this present thesis of the peculiar divine judgment upon the people of YHWH. The question is whether Nel means a Davidic monarchy or a divine kingship to alter the circularity into a unidirectional plot. The ideal reader knows that the human monarchy as an institution was not an answer to the problem. Both Moses and Samuel prophesied about it. The later historical books validate it. The eschatological ramifications of the Messianic monarchy remain to be seen.[1222]

The narrator immediately begins the context of the story by indicting Israel with what becomes an all too familiar set of formulaic statements. The sons of Israel did evil in the sight of YHWH. They forgot YHWH their *Elohim*. They served the foreign gods. The response is one of divine anger that causes Israel to be sold into the hands of a foreign oppressor. As reflected in Table 32, Israel has failed the test at least seven times through idolatrous harlotry. The cyclical structure that is told in the Othniel deliverance event implies Israelite compliance with the *Torah* and a limited time whereby they passed the divine test, that is until Othniel died. For the macro-plot, the oppressors are not really that important. They function as divine agents of judgment when Israel turns away from the *Torah* and then simultaneously function as the impetus that draws them back to YHWH. What is clear to the ideal reader is this is not a story about Othniel and Cushan-Rishathaim. This is a story about YHWH and His sovereign orchestration that makes Him supreme over the doubly-wicked darkness of the foreign potentate who can only exercise oppression and dominion within the limitations imposed upon Him by divine sanction. It is YHWH whose anger burns against Israel. It is YHWH who sells Israel to the foreign nation. It is to YHWH that Israel turns to and hears the cry of Israel. It is YHWH who raises up a deliverer. It is the Spirit of YHWH that comes upon the first judge (and subsequently three others).

[1221] Ibid., 202-203.

[1222] This statement by no means implies a question of divine Messianic rule or of the legitimacy of the Kingdom of God in the Millennial Reign of Messiah. It connotes that from the point of observable data this can not be evaluated scientifically before the event occurs. Nonetheless, the concept of a future fulfillment of a divine-judge in the person of Messiah is anticipated.

The same event replays itself when Othniel dies and Israel returns back to their sinful ways. The only major difference is there is a change of micro-characters and setting. YHWH strengthens Eglon the king of Moab against Israel. He allows Israel to serve the Moabites for eighteen years. He hears the cries of Israel and raises up Ehud as a deliverer. YHWH is somewhat absent in this event after Ehud comes forward, which may be taken as a divine rebuke because of the unorthodox means and methods he uses to deliver Israel. Concurrently during this time Shamgar kills six hundred Philistines; however, there is no mention of deity in the brief account.

Now with the pattern firmly established, the reader is not surprised that when Ehud dies the cycle repeats itself in a different venue with new characters. YHWH is at the forefront and sells Israel into the hands of Jabin the king of Canaan. For once, He did not have to raise up a judge for Israel when they cried out to Him, because He already had Deborah in place judging the nation. Unlike before, YHWH is credited with this victory in the holy war against the Canaanites; but, He is suspiciously absent in the murder of Sisera, just as he was regarding the murder of Eglon.

As the Israelite victory is recounted in the Song of Deborah, the final strophe underscores that everyone is named and characterized in relation to YHWH – His enemy or those who love Him. After forty years elapse, Israel crosses the boundary again from protagonist to antagonist and enters the classification of those who are His enemy. Upon mention of Israel doing evil in the sight of YHWH, the narrator allows no action to intervene before YHWH delivers Israel into the hand of Midian, virtually standing aloof as the Midianites impoverish Israel. He hears the cry of Israel and changes His response by sending a prophet with a denunciating message before sending the angel of YHWH to confirm the calling of Gideon as a deliverer. The narrator uses language that expresses that YHWH looks upon Gideon, commissions him, and promises that He will be with him. Despite the Midianite oppression because Israel is failing the divine test, a ray of hope shines on the scene through Gideon. There is an expression of sacrificial worship that is accepted by deity. YHWH assuages the fear of Gideon with the familiar negative imperative, "Fear not!" It is ironic that Gideon would build an altar and name it YHWH-*Shalom*, and once the period of his judgeship concludes there would never be another period of peace. But, the reader does not know this. Following the erecting of the altar, YHWH speaks to Gideon and commands him to raze the altar to *Baal*. It actually appears as if Israel is passing the divine test. The pagan worship is destroyed and a series of divine signs follow; however, this brief revival is short-lived because the revivalist is

responsible for mutating the paradigm by being the first appointed leader to begin genocide against Israel and to institute cultic idolatry. Now that the chosen leadership has assumed an antagonistic role of covenant infidelity, the reader though subtly prepared is aghast to learn that the formulaic cycle is suspended to describe the despotic dynasty of Abimelech. He has multiplied his father's sins. The reader is reminded of the first brothers (Cain and Abel) and hears the eerie cries of multiplied fratricidal blood calling out from the ground in judgment. The profaned earth requires a judgment that YHWH brings forth through the unanticipated use of an evil spirit, so that sinner turns against sinner and fulfills the prophetic curse of Jotham. The narrator is careful not to associate YHWH with this chapter of murder, so he generically refers to the actions of *Elohim* rendering the wickedness deserved upon Abimelech and the men of Shechem.

Deity is curiously absent from the minor judge events of Tola and Jair. However, that absence stands in stark contrast to the final prophetic denunciation in which YHWH reminds Israel of its seven harlotries and his seven deliverances. Thus, it is not surprising that YHWH would reject the cries for His aid and He states He will deliver them no more. In fact, though there are elements of deliverance, it is never a complete deliverance. There is no element of peace or rest. There are no more legitimate honorable leaders. There is a profound divine detachment from Israel and when there is discourse, deity is distant and aloof. Just as the narrator allows the ironic appellation of a divine altar to appear in the Gideon event, he creates a similar situation in the Jephthah event. Through the ambassadorial message to the unnamed king of the sons of Ammon, the emissaries with Jephthah's words identify YHWH as Judge. The irony is that this profound revelation was made outside the borders of Israel. Does Israel even know that YHWH is Judge and that He is judging them at this moment in regard to the divine test? Jephthah loosely opens his mouth and makes statements that result in pedicide and tribal genocide, in which deity remains silent. This is followed by three more minor judges with no evidence of divine involvement.

Although there is reference to deity and the presence of the angel of YHWH, the Samson event is a sad ending to the series of deliverances. This is profound because although Israel did evil again in the sight of YHWH and He delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years, there never is any deliverance. Even the miraculous birth of Samson and the prophetic message surrounding the annunciation suggests only the beginning of deliverance without any completion. The only one delivered from the Philistines is Samson and that is only because of an act of suicide at the end of his failed

life. YHWH has judged Israel by giving Israel a judge like itself, who personifies an unrestrained life of sin and failure of the divine test.

CONCLUSION. With the dissolution of the major and minor judge paradigms, Israelite society is a disappointing malfunction of a people who have a covenant with YHWH. The double epilogue is essentially devoid of the principal character. "The absence of the Lord from the closing chapters contrasts with his prominence in the opening chapters."[1223] The micro-characters make reference to Him, but it is an empty relationship at best. Instead of the "house of God" there are "house(s) of gods." Instead of the divinely sanctioned and functioning Levitical priesthood there are itinerant Levites who operate outside the cult and perform pagan functions misrepresenting YHWH to those around them and to the reader. Deity is called upon and inquiry is made; but there is no response. But, when there is a response, there is such divine displeasure with Israel that the message is one of defeat and death, even though the message is hidden from the characters. The story ends with more death and rape. Deity is vilified by the Israelite accusation that He is responsible for all that has happened.

YHWH is bound by His word. Unlike the micro-characters who make foolish utterances, when YHWH speaks He performs His word. Israel in disobedience to *Torah* and following the ways of their fathers in *Torah* adherence prompted YHWH to institute the divine test to prove Israel. Although at times Israel moved forward it is usually matched by them taking two steps backwards for every one forward. YHWH did prove Israel. If there is one thing they learned – it was war. Sadly enough, they not only learned war against the oppressive enemies; also they learned war against their family, their clans, their tribes, and their nation. But even in this, YHWH is resolutely the Judge and exercising His judgment over the events. However, Israel botches their futile attempts to keep the way of YHWH and obey His commandments. It is ironic that the narrator never mentions again the divine test. He stands aloof to whether Israel passes or fails the test. He presents his events to the narratee and he alone is left to judge Israel in this regard. What is missing in this divine test is an expected cause and effect conditional statement. The narrator does not report "if you pass the test, then ...; but, if you fail the test, then ...." Passing the divine test in itself is the ultimate reward, whereas failing the test is an ultimate judgment and punishment of further alienation from the covenant, the *Torah*, and YHWH.

[1223] Wilcock, 151.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION. When the book is viewed as the story, then there are only two full-fledged characters: YHWH and Israel. Then as agents of the plot oppressors manifest through different ethnic groups. The remaining character is a collective category of other gods, which became a snare to Israel.

YHWH. The pre-eminent character is YHWH. The narrator has chosen to portray Him both directly and indirectly. Many observations have already been made regarding Him as a character, so these will not be restated.[1224] Directly He has been noted when there is direct discourse assigned to Him. At times this serves the function of being instructive and at other times as an indictment against the antagonist, whether that is Israel or a foreign oppressor. Throughout the story, the narrator has elevated the characterization of YHWH over and against the micro-antagonist in "a satirization of foreign rulers."[1225] But the satire does not stop with showing YHWH as the divine king against the human foreign kings. The narrator likewise juxtaposes the impotence of the foreign gods over and against YHWH. In the Ehud event, after Ehud escapes from the palace of Eglon, he passes by the Moabite idols. Literally, their gods stand erect and can do nothing that hinders Ehud in his task of rallying the army; just as *Chemosh* was unable to counter the secret message from *Elohim* that Ehud pointedly delivered to Eglon. The Canaanite god *Baal* is impotent to contend against Gideon when its altar is razed and the grove destroyed. Likewise, the Ammonite god *Molech* is unable to possess Israelite territory or to withstand an attack by Jephthah. The Philistine god *Dagon* did not deliver Samson into their hands. They erroneously equate this action with their god, when it occurred because Samson violated his Nazirite status and YHWH departed from him. Despite the blasphemous worship of *Dagon*, their god was unable to stop the calamity that would befall its temple and worshippers at Samson's death feat. And it is ironic that the idols of Micah had no power to maintain their cultic primacy; but could be relocated and dispossessed to new territory. The power that Micah trusted in vanished when the idols no longer in his position could not defend him or themselves against being kidnapped by the Danites.

There is also an indirect characterization. This occurs through the human judges that YHWH raises up on His behalf. This does not imply that the judge is a representation of YHWH; rather it implies that the judge may have a specific trait that points toward

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[1224] The character of YHWH has previously been addressed in the individual stories as reflected on the following pages: 430, 508, 439, 451, 465, 485, 511-512, and 541.

[1225] O'Connell, 266.

YHWH, even when there are other actions and traits that are anomalous to the divine character. The name Othniel means the "force of *Elohim*." This suggests a judge empowered by deity with an ability to deliver and to successfully complete the task at hand. Ehud is significant in him being left-handed, although the literal meaning we have already discussed means being bound in his right hand. This implies that YHWH is able to overcome any handicap. Although He Himself is not handicapped, He is able to overcome the handicap that Israel presents Him in its infidelity. Since the average warrior used his right hand to wield the sword, the action of Ehud mirrors the ambidexterity of YHWH to do the unexpected. "Ehud is left-handed but the strong right arm" of YHWH is working through him.[1226] Just as Shamgar was not overcome by large numbers and was able to use those resources around Him, YHWH is never overwhelmed by anyone or anything and He is able to avail to Himself of His creation. The names of Barak and Deborah may imply elements of divine judgment. YHWH is able to act decisively just as lightning flashes through the sky, being a reference to Barak. Then, the reference to Deborah is to the bee, which may involve the sweet by-product of honey or the fearful aspect of swarming wasps attacking that which provokes them.[1227] Gideon, the least in his family and poorest in his tribe is recognized as a hero and requested to become a king. This analogy has distinct messianic implication. But, from this point, the analogies are antithetical. Abimelech usurps the position of kingship; whereas YHWH sits enthroned in the heavens as king, and is referred to by Yeshua as "my Father." Jephthah is of harlotrous birth, outcast from society, opening his mouth speaking rashly; however, YHWH is the pre-eminence of Israelite society (at least in theory, though not always in the story world), affected by Israelite harlotry and casting off; but always opening His mouth and speaking truth consistent with the *Torah*. Whereas Jephthah is the "valiant warrior;" it is YHWH who is the "mighty man of war." Samson surrounded by the miraculous, physically strong and morally weak, who becomes overcome and blind is an antithesis to YHWH who is the source of the miraculous, expressing omnipotence and the ability to see even into the inner recesses of the heart of man.

This indirect characterization may be carried one step further. The narrator allows YHWH to choose the deliverer He desires. These are regular people, who are seen with their character flaws. This is important because it implies from a divine point of view "a

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[1226] Gros Louis, 161.

[1227] Ackerman, 47.

conviction of the worth of every kind of human gift and human characteristic, a vast democracy of spirit, once this weak and worthless cast is transformed by God's spirit."[1228]

Yet, the reader also is forced with the dilemma that YHWH does not always maintain the role of the protagonist; but spends much time as the antagonist of Israel. Depending upon the perception of the reader, even the divine test can be viewed negatively as a test that Israel cannot possibly succeed. Since the *Torah* is the basis for each accusation, Moses himself might stand in accusation of YHWH because his words about leadership were heeded only once and not perpetually. Judges thus begins and the congregation of YHWH is as sheep without a shepherd.[1229]

> It is quite apparent from the conspicuous absence of a replacement for Joshua (cf. Judg. 1:1) that if anyone is to be held responsible for the waywardness of the ignorant new generation, it must be Yahweh. He alone might have bridged the gap between those who saw the exodus and those who did not.[1230]

If accusation must be made, it is presumptuous to blame YHWH, rather than to assess culpability with Joshua who failed to follow the pattern of Moses by providing for a successor whom YHWH had indicated and anointed.

ISRAEL. The narrator characterizes Israel as having spiritual amnesia. With systematic repetition, Israel forgets its past story history and does not appear to learn any lessons from the earlier events. The narrator makes a narrative analogy at the outset which compares the generation at Joshua's death with the prior generation at Moses's death. However, the ideal reader is able to make the further analogy to Joseph's death, and more specifically to the Pharaoh who arose who did not know Joseph.[1231] Israel is in this position throughout the story. They did not know YHWH, His ways, or His works. There is no sense of obligation to YHWH nor do they live in light of the exodus event. This creates a predicament in which YHWH is forced to instruct a forgetful and unaware Israel just as He had to do several generations earlier with Pharaoh.

> The new generation has brought the covenant relationship full circle. If Yahweh wishes to continue his affiliation with this nation he will have to re-educate them in much the same manner that he educated their forefathers in the exodus from Egypt. The narrator's allusive equation points the way to the only solution to the problem of the generation gap: a new exodus. Paradoxically, Israel must take the roles of both the Pharaoh and Israel in this new course of instruction.[1232]

[1228] Gros Louis, 161.

[1229] Num. 27:15-17.

[1230] Eslinger, 69.

[1231] Ex. 1:8.

[1232] Eslinger, 71.

Accordingly, the ideal reader recognizes that the instruction is not profitable for the learner and the lesson (at least temporarily) is learned by a later generation in the reverse exodus events – Assyrian, Babylonian, and Roman exilic periods. But, the instruction is vital to attempt to arrest the downward spiral of activity of a people who play the harlot. By describing Israel in this way, the narrator characterizes it as immature, opportunistic, lacking faith in YHWH, lacking confidence, and lacking morals.[1233]

The narrative artistry of Judges allows the narrator to use his micro-characters to personify character traits of the macro-characters of both YHWH and Israel. The human judges in their protagonistic role point toward YHWH; whereas in their antagonistic role they point toward Israel. Since the deliverers are Israelite, this personification of the nation as a whole is to be expected.

> There may be an escalated parallelism between the characterization of Samson and that of the tribes of Israel in that, just as Samson repeatedly neglects his Nazirite obligations to YHWH by engaging in impure acts and relations with foreign women, so the tribes of Israel in general (e.g., Judah [15:11-13] ... and Dan, in particular (cf. Judg. 18), prove to be negligent of their obligations to YHWH as an elect people by engaging in cultically disloyal acts and by neglecting to the expel foreigners from the land."[1234]

As Samson is microcosmically the personification of Israel, there are four central themes that the event magnifies, as reflected in Table 32.[1235]

TABLE 32

PARALLELS BETWEEN SAMSON AND ISRAEL

Samson	Israel
Samson, at his conception, is separated to YHWH as a *Nazirite*. (13:5, 7; and 16:7)	Israel's special status as a nation separated to YHWH.
Samson's going away from YHWH in willful violation of his *Nazirite* status. (14:5-6, 8-10; and 16:19)	Israel's going after other gods in willful violation of this special status.
Samson at the temple of *Dagon* in Gaza with the Philistines implying that *Dagon* had delivered Samson into their hands; however, *Dagon* was unable to thwart YHWH in the destruction of its temple. (16:23-30)	The implied contest between YHWH and these other gods.
Samson presuming to be able to break the bonds of the Philistines as in previous times, but not aware that YHWH had departed from him. (16:9, 12, 14, 20, and 28)	The freedom of YHWH's activity over against Israel's presumption that it knows Him and can use Him, as required, to secure its own future.

Since the Samson event focuses on an individual operating for his own interests without regard for others, he best symbolizes Israel. Nevertheless, he is not the only judge

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[1233] Gros Louis, 144.

[1234] O'Connell, 223.

[1235] The table is an adaptation of the themes presented by Webb. See his, *The Book of Judges*, 179.

who personifies Israel. Both Barak and Gideon exhibited fear that had nationalistic impact. Gideon creates other objects of worship, which is seen in the multiplicity of spiritual harlotry of the period. Gideon and Jephthah are responsible for intertribal conflict. By implication, the six minor judges with their absence of deity characterizes the period in which Israel does not have YHWH at the center of its life. Most of the applications are negative. However, Ehud was resourceful. Othniel and Deborah represent the relatively few times that Israel adhered to the covenant.

OPPRESSORS. The oppressors are primarily the foreign nations whom YHWH raised up to test Israel and to judge it for its disobedience. They included the Philistines, Canaanites, Sidonians, Hivites, Amorites, Egyptians, Edomites, Ammonites, Amalekites, Midianites, and Maonites. There is no real characterization of these nations other than they are the agents of deity. If that is not bad enough, Israel oppressed itself. There is the tribal animosity between Ephraim and the clan of Gilead; Dan and the family of Micah; the clan of Gilead against the men of Sukkot and Penuel; the men of Shechem against the family of Gideon; Judah against the judge Samson; Israel against the tribe of Benjamin; and Israel against the men of Jabesh-Gilead.

OTHER GODS. In the divine indictment, as reflected in Table 32, there are seven harlotries mentioned. Other gods did appear as agents of the plot. They included: the gods of Canaan (*Baal* and *Ashtarte*), the god of Edom (*Chemosh*), the god of Ammon (*Molech*), the god of Philistia (*Dagon*), and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Sidon. And on top of that, Israel (through Gideon and Micah) created its own idolatrous images of worship.

NAMING. There is a tremendous amount of characters in the story when all of the agents of the plot are considered. As is typical in biblical narrative, many of the agents are not named by the narrator. However, when the characters assume more dominant roles and there is anonymity this becomes a rhetorical device. The reader is prepared for characters that are named with patronymic and tribal designations. However, that is not what the narrator offers. Most characters that are named violate the presumed convention by either including an element or mutating it by referring to geography rather than tribe or clan. But, the narrator consistently introduces characters through anonymity. Where the named characters appear regularly at the beginning of the story, the named characters gradually disappear, until the reader reaches the epilogue and there are virtually no named characters.

> Judges, then projects the utter namelessness of the individual cut off from the tradition of the covenant. It suggests that worldly values of power and wealth ironically isolate man from his world and that ethical values give man a name, a place in time and in space, a world.[1236]

This suggests that through the lack of naming, the narrator is marginalizing the characters and with the stroke of the pen cutting them off from the covenant, just as the actions of the characters justify them being cut off from Israel because of *Torah* violations. Characters that are anonymous in the story world are in essence without family, relationship and tribe. Although that reality might exist by implication, the fact there is no genealogical referent equates them as being outside the boundaries of Israel, and thus without access to the covenant.

Because the discourse time of the epilogues is anachronous to the story time historically, the reader might miss the point that the epilogues and prologues could easily be reversed. The epilogues may end the story of Judges; however, they in essence by the priestly clues in the story reveal that this is a time that is only one generation away from Joshua and already through the anonymity and anarchic situation the nation has digressed so quickly from the *Torah* and from YHWH, when the previous generation had been faithful. There is irony in the anonymity of the epilogues, because there is an obscure naming.

> It is the naming of the results of the absence of God – the death of God within that society. With the absence of the Deity so comes the loss of identity. Human existence and identity are uniquely tied to the identity and existence of YHWH in this narrator's ideology.[1237]

POINT OF VIEW. Throughout the story, the narrator maintains the divine point of view. He clearly is telling the story, but it as though even when the point of view momentarily shifts for discourse purposes, the narrator is speaking through the character in order to validate and glorify YHWH as the Judge and primary character. It is not often that he allows the reader to have access to the divine inner life. However, when he does, the reader sees the emotions of YHWH that judge Israel in anger for its apostasy or the merciful motivation that is moved by the cries of an oppressed Israel. The way the narrator uses point of view, he creates a situation whereby his reader cannot be detached from the story; but, is forced to identify with YHWH in realistic empathy; while at the same time fluctuating between degrees of empathy, sympathy, and antipathy with Israel.

[1236] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 142-143.

[1237] Hudson, 65.

LANGUAGE PLAY. The story is rich with symbolism, irony, parallelism, puns, satire, and numerous types of rhetorical devices. However, since these items have been dealt with in the individual stories of the book, they will not be addressed again.

The cyclical pattern in the book is a type-scene. It follows the general plot of someone doing wrong, being punished, repenting, receiving help, and the balance of equilibrium is restored. Through the type-scene, YHWH is the parental/authority figure and Israel is the prodigal. Overarching this type-scene is the abiding love that YHWH has for Israel, whereby the fallible beloved son is restored and directed by the infallible and loving deity.[1238]

Nonetheless, there is a potential external parallel between the judges and the later kings. Steeped in the view that the book is a polemic about the monarchy, Shammai suggests that the author is using pseudonyms for the judges and they represented founders of monarchal dynasties. These parallels are listed in Table 33 where the kings are represented by their throne names and the judges by their personal, family, or battle names.[1239]

TABLE 33

PSEUDONYMS OF JUDGES

Date	Throne Name	Other Names
Before 1000 B.C.E.	Eli	Saul
ca. 1000 B.C.E.	David	Othniel
ca. 925 B.C.E.	Jeroboam	Gideon
ca. 925 B.C.E.	Abimelech	Nadab
ca. 900 B.C.E.	Baasha	Tola, Barak
ca. 875 B.C.E.	Omri	Jair
ca. 840 B.C.E.	Jehu	Jephthah
ca. 750 B.C.E.	Menahem	Ibzan
ca. 740 B.C.E.	Pekah	Elon
ca. 730 B.C.E.	Hosea	Abdon

His hypothesis does share a number of coincidences, but because not all of the major judges are included it is highly unlikely that this was intended by the author.

INTERPRETATION. The story of Judges functions within literature essentially in all six of the main categories: historical, theological, doxological, didactic, aesthetic, and entertainment. The ideal reader is aware that the structure of the book is historically inverted with the epilogues occurring prior to the deliverances and the prologues functioning as an introductory conclusion. So, the reader is not surprised when the

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[1238] Gros Louis, 145-146.

[1239] This table is adapted from Feldman, 9.

chiasmic parallels of the epilogues and prologues conclude the book with an ironic inversion, that multiplies the Othniel and Achsah event six hundred times over.

> That story, a narrative of a promised bride won by a hero in a Yahweh battle, gave assurance of fertility in the people and the land. The events developed with respect between the generations: the father of the bride was asked for land and water, and he was generous to the betrothed couple. The closing tale is a reversal of that pledge. Instead of fertility, there is murder of the men, women, and children of a city; instead of a betrothal, there is kidnap and rape. The book has reversed its initial premises: it has taken a full turn.[1240]

As those events frame the story and show the unravelling of Israelite cultic society, the ideal reader hears the refrains of Joshua's death and the "no-king" formula echo as the story approaches the climax in the non-deliverance event of Abimelech. The setting of that event is Shechem, a town full of historical allusions. Immediately before his death, Joshua gathers Israel at Shechem before *Elohim*. There they are commanded to fear YHWH and serve him in sincerity and truth.[1241] How ironic that in the same place Abimelech would establish his kingdom and Jotham would echo that same phrase from Mount Gerizim. One expects that Jotham would have been across the valley prophesying from Mount Ebal. But, that is the irony. In the very place where an earlier generation swore in the presence of YHWH, and an even earlier generation proclaimed blessings and curses, Israel is confronted from the mountain of blessing with a choice, metaphorically presented in the parable, to embrace YHWH and the blessing. That a generation would arise and depart from the ways of YHWH after the events repeat themselves shows that by the center of the book the story coheres. This is a generation that did not know YHWH or His ways. There is no king in Israel because the Abimelech kingship is illegitimate and not recognized by YHWH or all of the tribes. Finally, every man is already doing what is right in his own eyes, and the story has not even reached its climax, despite the fact that the spiritual mettle of Israel is rapidly descending.

The structure of the story uses formulaic statements and paradigms. There is a sense of movement from one cycle to another because of this. This occurs as the reader moves from judge to judge to judge. The same is experienced whenever the structural segments are altered to prophet to prophet to prophet or angel to angel to angel. The major judge paradigm moves the basic plot forward. However, since the narrator has failed to include any element of the major judge paradigm with the three minor judges it affects the overall narrative.

[1240] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 190.

[1241] The phrase only appears in Josh. 24:14 and Jg. 9:16. Wilcock, 93.

It seems that the narrative is on the point of losing its way and that the story of Yahweh's struggle to reclaim Israel from apostasy and dissolution is going to peter out into a mere chronicle of the careers of judges who were so undistinguished that scarcely anything about them could be recalled – a chronicle of trivialities.[1242]

The major judge paradigm does reappear after the first listing of minor judges only to be interrupted again. However, this disruption of the paradigm by introducing another paradigm calls for an examination of the judges. Since these paradigms have been examined already the discussion will not be repeated again.[1243] But it is worthwhile to examine the judges in regard to how they are named and their orientation, which is reflected in Table 34.[1244] The general impression the reader has with the story is that the judges represent all of the tribes. However, only after a close examination does it appear that the narrator is not as interested in naming the judge in relation to a tribe as historians are. As such, only four of the judges are actually named in regard to their tribe and by deduction it can be observed that Othniel is from the tribe of Judah.

TABLE 34

THE MAJOR AND MINOR JUDGES

	Citation		Orientation	
Judge	Tribe	Clan	Israel	Individual
Othniel	(Judah)	--	✓	--
Shamgar	--	--	✓	--
Ehud	Benjamin	--	✓	--
Deborah	Issachar	--	✓	--
Gideon	--	Abiezrite	✓	✓
Abimelech	--	--	--	--
Tola	Issachar	--	--	--
Jair	--	Gilead	--	✓
Jephthah	--	Gilead	✓	✓
Ibzan	--	Bethlehem	--	✓
Elon	Zebulon	--	--	✓
Abdon	--	Pirathon	--	✓
Samson	--	"Dan"	--	✓

Consequently what dominates the story is not tribal designation but smaller societal elements. Even Samson is named as belonging to the family of Dan, which may be a negative characterization of the tribe, rather than calling Dan a tribe. This may seem insignificant; but, the narrator is creating a pattern of tribal disintegration.

The focus of the minor-judge paradigm contributes significantly to the impetus of the entire book. The early narratives of the book of Judges advance the concept of Israel as a people composed of tribes and focus on the spiritual rewards of Yahwist belief. Tribal designations, on the one hand, and success in the cause of Israel, on the other, may be

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[1242] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 162.

[1243] See the section "Internal Design of Judges," in Rhetorical Criticism, pages 372-376.

[1244] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 106.

Semantics and word choice at this point is critical for understanding. Frequently in theological scholarship, the terms "story," "narrative," and "text" are used interchangeably as synonyms. However, much effort has been made thus far to avoid this error, as well as the error of confusing the inner story terms of "event," "scene," and "episode." For our purposes, the narrative is the central element of the text. The narrative is composed of a *narrator* who tells a *story* to a *narratee*. As the story has already been addressed, we turn our attention to the narrator and narratee.

NARRATOR

The narrator of this story prefers to use third person narration. He is not hidden from the story. Although he is often covert in his evaluative comments there are numerous instances, which we have previously mentioned where he is overt. But, who is the narrator? He is not a character in the story. He is not a silent and limited observer. He is endowed with omniscience being able to distantly evaluate and over hear words spoken in public and private, while also being able to know the inner thoughts and motives of the characters. While probably, he himself an Israelite, he possesses knowledge of the *Torah*, YHWH, and the ramifications of a *Torah* observant life that his characters do not possess. There is a startling contrast in what the narrator knows and what Israel does not know. He clearly presents himself as one in the know compared to Manoah and his wife who have limited knowledge.[1248] Is the narrator a real Israelite?

> The narrator is always a creation of the implied author who endows the narrator with characteristics and abilities and uses this fictive entity to bring about the artistic effect of the narrative.[1249]

By narrative design, the narrator is not a real person; however, the knowledge the implied author gives to him suggest that the implied reader would regard him as a reliable Israelite narrator.

> The biblical narrator, quite unlike the Prophet, divests himself of a personal history and the marks of individual identity in order to assume for the scope of his narrative a godlike comprehensiveness of knowledge that can encompass even God Himself. It is a dizzying epistemological trick done with narrative mirrors: despite anthropomorphism, the whole spectrum of biblical thought presupposes an absolute cleavage between man and God; man cannot become God and God (in contrast to later Christian developments) does not become man; and yet the self-effacing figures who narrate the biblical tales, by a tacit convention in which no attention is paid to their limited human status, can adopt the all-knowing, unfailing perspective of God.[1250]

[1248] Polzin, 184.

[1249] Keegan, 99.

[1250] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 157.

The narrator is sparse with his judgmental statements. But, when they do occur, the narrator uses them with force. There is nothing left to conjecture regarding the end of the Abimelech story.[1251] The death of Abimelech is not circumstantial or happen stance. It is causally related to the curse spoken by Jotham, as is its fulfillment. Ideologically, the narrator makes it "clear that natural political and military events have a deeper significance and embody divine justice."[1252] Equally powerful, although made indirectly through a character, the narrator uses the direct speech of the Levite regarding the reason for the mutilation of the *pîlegeš*. In doing this, he is able to judge this event and the actions of its characters as one of lewdness and folly.[1253] Through his attitude, he presents narratorial judgment toward the characters and their actions. The narrator amplifies his criticism against Israel following Gideon's death by describing the character's activity as "playing the harlot."[1254] Using similar sexual imagery, he describes the rapists of Gibeah as "base" and their actions as "abusive."[1255] The narrator conveys his attitude to the narratee while also engendering antipathy in the reader toward the character. However, his momentary repulsion subsides so by the end of the story, he is "intent upon intensifying the doubt and confusion in Israel with which he began his story in Judges 1."[1256]

The narrator is well versed in Israelite geography. It is more than the tribal references and the merismic statement of "Dan to Beersheba." Etiological notices are important to him, in order to orient the story to the narratee.[1257]

The narrator has observed Israelite history. He has seen the Northern Kingdom of Israel go into exile. This is evident by his comment that the cultic Danite site and that priesthood remained "until the captivity of the land."[1258] The "no-king" formula of the epilogues suggests,

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[1251] Jg. 9:56-57.

[1252] Bar-Efrat, 26.

[1253] Jg. 20:6.

[1254] Jg. 8:33.

[1255] Jg. 19:22, and 25.

[1256] Polzin, 202.

[1257] These are discussed in the section, "Etiology," pages 116-117.

[1258] Jg. 18:30. This would date his comment after 722 B.C.E. However, this is accepting the current text without the emendation of the phrase to "captivity of the ark" which would date this within the time of Samuel.

> The narrator speaks as one who has seen kingship come and go, as judgeship had come and gone, and recognizes that both, in their time, had a role to play in Yahweh's administration of Israel.[1259]

One of the significant phrases that he uses is "to this day" which becomes an important reminder for the narratee that the event described in the story relates to the period of the narrator and narratee. An example of this is the presence of the Jebusites living among the Benjaminites in Jerusalem.[1260] Likewise, a modification of the idiom is "in those days." This being present as an idiom in the key formula in the epilogues serves as a contrast to the setting of the story and that of the narrator and his narratee.[1261] This is of ideological importance because the narrator sets the distinction that becomes an evaluative comment for his narratee.

The implied author has created a narrator that possesses omniscience and omnipresence. The actions of the characters do not surprise him. Even the evaluative remarks are well within the realm of what he expects of the characters within this premonarchic setting. The implied author withholds nothing in the story from him. Rather, the narrator is the one who chooses what information he will disclose and what he will withhold. These godlike traits supply him with an undeniable reliability with which the narratee can receive the story.

NARRATEE

The natural counterpart to the narrator is the narratee – the one to whom the story is narrated by the narrator. It is a misnomer to think that the narrator is speaking to either the implied reader or the real reader. Of these two reader categories neither are within the realm of the narrative world nor are foreign entities to the narrator. Consequently, the narratee is the recipient of the narration. In the same manner that the implied author has created the narrator, he has also created the narratee. Consequently, he is "totally defined by the work."[1262]

Who is the narratee and how does he function in the narrative? The implied author has not created him as a zero-degree narratee who is oblivious to the context of the stories the narrator tells him. In some sense, the narratee is rather well informed with a high

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[1259] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 202.

[1260] Jg. 1:21. The same can be said for the presence of the Hittites in the northern reaches of the country. Jg. 1:26.

[1261] Bar-Efrat, 25.

[1262] Keegan, 101.

degree of competency granted him by the implied author. It is not necessary for the narrator to explain concepts and ideas. The *Torah* is not foreign to the narratee. Neither is the covenant between YHWH and Israel. The same can be said for the cultic Levitical institution. The ritual of sacrifice is not described. Only banally does the narrator allude to some of the elements of sacrifice because he knows that his narratee is familiar with this realm of the Israelite cult. This in itself suggests by implication that the narratee is an imaginary Israelite or at least someone well versed in the *Torah*. The narratorial use of ambiguity, word play, and irony is evidence of a high degree of competence that the narratee possesses to understand the story. With all that the narratee is told, he is not capable enough to draw conclusions and make application of the story; but, there again, that is not his function – that belongs to the implied reader.

So what does the narrator emphasize to the narratee? He focuses on that which is evaluative in the story world. It is geography, etiology, theology, and history. The narratee is not a paedagogue sitting in a *yeshiva* learning facts. He already has a grasp of geography. Only at certain points does the narrator interject a phrase that orients a location. Often it is an obscure site. This occurred with the identification of Mahaneh-dan.[1263] Because it is not his position to make theological application of the story to his world, the narrator does occasionally provide that ability to the narratee. An example of this, as already stated is with the death of Abimelech. So the full impact of the story is not missed by the narratee, the narrator connects the event to Jotham's prophecy. It is ironic that the narrator tells the narratee the etiological origin of the annual four day women's holiday commemorating Jephthah's daughter; however, the elements about this mysterious holiday which the narratee presumably knew is obscure to the real reader.[1264] Does the repetitive pattern of the narrator imply incompetence on the part of the narratee? The second prologue establishes the cyclical pattern which dominates the central part of the narrative. It is a framework that functions rhetorically as *memoria* for the narrator and plot anticipation for the narratee. Moreover, with the plot design established from the outset, the narratee is well informed of the narratorial intention because the abstract summarizes his historical expectation of the story. Likewise, the narratee understands that the story is not about judges. It is about YHWH who judges Israel. The pattern is

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[1263] Jg. 18:12. The same is true regarding the identification of the border of the Amorites in the uninhabited wilderness area of the "Scorpion Pass." Jg. 1:36.

[1264] Jg. 11:40. This same obscurity is shared in the *shibboleth* incident. The narratee possesses the knowledge of the correct phonetic pronunciation of the password which remains an enigma to scholars and real readers alike. Jg. 12:6.

presented repetitively of divine juridical activity so when the narrator finally identifies YHWH as the Judge of Israel, he is not surprised but prepared for a revelation that is *déjà vu*.

Consequently, not all of the statements that the narrator makes should cast a negative light upon the narratee. Frequently, the particle *kî* is used.[1265] The way it is used is for explanation and helping the narratee to understand the characters of the story. The "knowing-not knowing" motif is one that the narrator uses to show that he knows something and by design, the narratee knows this information, which the characters themselves do not know. Such is the case with Manoah not knowing that his guest is the angel of YHWH.[1266]

It is not often that the narratee comes to the center stage in the narrative. Ironically, this happens not in prosaic form but in the poetry of the Song of Deborah. The narrator reveals through Deborah that the kings and rulers must listen to the song.[1267] At this point, and for this story, the narratee is the vanquished Canaanites who must endure "a figurative post-battle rendezvous" hymn.[1268]

The Text of Judges

In the hierarchy of this critical discipline, the next level of concentricity involves the text. The text is the *narrative* that the *implied author* writes for the *implied reader*. To some degree, these literary textual components belong within the realm of Reader-Response Criticism; however, because they do have a bearing upon narrative critical analysis, it is important to examine them. Nevertheless, the brevity of these comments implies its peripheral nature within the discipline which confines the remarks within the scope of Narrative Criticism.

IMPLIED AUTHOR

The implied author is the fictive creation of the real author becoming "the author that emerges through the story ... known to us through what the narrator says."[1269] As such, the implied author is the one who is responsible for the narrative and sets the limits

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[1265] For examples of how the particle is used in Judges, see the section "Particles," pages 377-385.

[1266] Jg. 13:15-16.

[1267] Jg. 5:3.

[1268] Hauser, "Judges 5," 28.

[1269] Bar-Efrat, 14.

and characterization of the narrator and the narratee. Since the narrator is the creation of the implied author, he is distinct from the narrator, although he may assert himself through the narrator. One of the things that we can discern about the implied author is the way in which he endows the narrator. Since he has created a narrator that possesses nearly full omniscience, being able to perceive through time and space, earth and heaven, humanity and deity, the implied author has a strong inclination to YHWH and His divine attributes. This becomes important for theology, because the implied author through the narrative represents the real YHWH of whom he has only partially characterized and depicted in the story by his narrator. Further, since the competence of the narrator is without question, there is the natural implication that suggests the implied author is equally competent, if not more so.

The implied author uses the narrator to create a credible link for the implied reader. The most obvious example of this is through etiological references and the reality of those references in the life of the narratee.

> By referring to the present the narrator impairs the immediacy of the narrative and the audience's ability to become immersed in the world thus created; on the other hand, however, the narrator furnishes proof of the story which the people in the audience can verify for themselves.[1270]

The implied author is not interested in the narrative remaining in a fictionalized historical role. This is why he causes the narrator to break frame from the story and make etilogical references. This points toward the direction that he is writing for the implied reader. Narrative that does not result in the implied reader internalizing it and making personal application constitutes a failure on the part of the implied author. The implied author is concerned with a glorification of YHWH in the midst of tumultuous times that he is expressing to the implied reader. Their time is different from that of the narrative; however Israelite historiography is related to all that precedes it. One era cannot be divorced from another. However, the implied author in characterizing his theme focuses on the premonarchic period and shows to his reader how YHWH is always glorified and Israel will benefit from divine judgment either as its subject or its object. This is vital for the implied reader who is expected to respond to what he reads. This does not deny that overt and hidden polemic is within the narrative. The implied author has peripheral ideological messages. However, those messages about leadership, society, and history function in the same way as the narrator used sub-plots. The sub-plots throughout the

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[1270] Ibid., 25.

narrative are important; however they are never permitted to subvert the meaning of the primary plot. Likewise, the secondary ideological polemics are not permitted to undermine the primacy of the theme of the glorification of YHWH, the Judge irregardless of Israelite response to theocratic rule.

THE NARRATIVE

The definition applied to the narrative is that it is the story that is told by the narrator to the narratee. As such, it exists within the larger context of it being that which the implied author writes for the implied reader. While we have examined the three constituent parts, there are some aspects of the narrative that deserve brief mention. Biblical narrative has three generic aspects: it is cognitive, historical, and foundational.[1271] While applying the thoughts of postcritical narratology to biblical literature, Gerhart modifies the third aspect so that the foundation of the narrative is implicitly oriented theologically.

NARRATIVE IS COGNITIVE. By definition, cognition implies knowledge and perception. In this vein, the narrative is that which the implied reader can perceive and know through what the implied author has written. This is significant because it establishes the precursor for the implied reader to judge the narrative and make his application.

NARRATIVE IS HISTORICAL. The historical nature of narrative can be viewed two ways. First, the narrative itself has a history. This of course is a part of redaction criticism that follows the text through its various stages of editing after it has been written by the real author. The second way is to view the narrative as being about history, whether fictionalized or realistic. In a theological narrative, historicity is that element that places the story within the context of Israelite existence and examines the connection it has to present and future reality. This also presupposes that the reader cannot remain neutral to the narrative and comes to it with "prejudgments and foremeanings."[1272] This would be expected of the implied reader, especially as he responds to the text. Since the historical nature of the text of Judges has been addressed earlier, it will not be reiterated.[1273]

[1271] M. Gerhart, "The Restoration of Biblical Narrative," *Narrative Research on the Hebrew Bible; Semeia 46* (1989), 15.

[1272] Gerhart, 19.

[1273] See the section "Historiography of Judges," pages 283-335.

NARRATIVE IS FOUNDATIONAL. The foundation upon which the narrative is built is theology. The same could be said for any book of the bible. In Jewish thought, Judges is not merely an extension of the *Torah*; but part of the *Torah* because in the most generic definition this embodies all of the Hebrew bible. With that in mind, the book is a source of teaching for which application of that teaching is anticipated by the disciple. The teaching of the book is derived from the fact that "narrative generates meaning."[1274] From a pluralistic vantage that incorporates the three major monotheistic faiths, Tracy suggests that the religious tradition mediates for the worshiper an explicit theological reflection whenever the narrative is engaged.

> Yet throughout the Christian tradition these scriptures will serve as finally normative: as that set of inspirations, controls and correctives upon all later expressions, all later classical texts, persons, images, symbols, doctrines, events that claim appropriateness to the classic witnesses to that event.[1275]

He makes no distinction between the scriptures each faith embraces nor does he distinguish between the implied reader and the real reader. However, there is the expectation that the meaning derived from the text results in theological reflection that causes some (hopefully appropriate) response in the individual reader.

There can be a response because the meaning instantiates the world the real author means and shapes it for application. Therefore the text is "a proposition in the form of judgment."[1276] How ironic that a book that displays the peculiar judgment of YHWH in and of itself is a judgment that the reader makes himself. As the theological nature of the text has been discussed throughout the thesis it will not be reiterated.[1277]

IMPLIED READER

As we would expect, the implied reader is a fictive creation of the real author. He is the counterpart of the implied author who creates the text for him to read. As an imaginary *character*, he embodies "that set of values that is capable of bringing this work to its aesthetic completion."[1278] Since Reader-Response critics use a different set of inter-disciplinary vocabulary the same concept may be discussed but named differently causing

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[1274] Gerhart, 21.

[1275] D. Tracy, The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1981), 249.

[1276] R.P. Scharlemann, "The Theological Text," *Text and Textuality: Semeia 40* (1987), 11.

[1277] See the section "Theological and Ethical Issues," pages 335-342. Even so, theological application is made throughout the entirety of thesis.

[1278] Keegan, 101.

confusion. Therefore, the term "intended reader" also refers to the implied reader. Because he is "silently and invisibly present" throughout every part of the narrative, he is in a unique position to comprehend the whole narrative and adopt the response the implied author expects.[1279]

This naturally begs the question: What does the implied author expect of the implied reader? How should the implied reader respond to the narrative? In order to answer these questions, the narratorial expectation is examined based on the three major divisions of the story.

PROLOGUES. The first prologue is about land conquest and removal of the Canaanites and their influence from the land of Israel. The implied reader is faced with a potential dilemma. First, this reading requires that he examine the political geography of the nation and ascertain whether the tribes have occupied the land of their inheritance and whether there are any people that need to be dispossesed. This of course is the easy part. Now if that investigation has revealed any failure of territorial occupation, how should the ideal reader respond? Does he undertake a one-man vendetta against the enemies of YHWH? After all, that example has been portrayed explicitly by Shamgar and Samson and potentially by Othniel. Does he assume a prophetic role that is modelled by Jotham that presents the information he has learned with the appropriate application and leaves the response to his hearers? Or does he fulfill a priestly role, like Hilkiah did to King Josiah, and purposely present what he has found to the leadership of Israel?[1280] The latter is the best of the three options. It would be expected that the implied reader would express identificational repentance for the sin of partial land possession, seek YHWH as to his personal response of disseminating this information and to which societal levels. The problem becomes more acute if there are Canaanites living nearby to the implied reader's home within his tribal inheritance. Because the implied author does not assert need for a continued conquest by default no response is expected; yet, for the conscientious and *Torah* observant reader a demographic canvass and responsive penitence would be the minimal response, of which the latter would parallel the event at Bochim.

The second prologue turns the attention of the implied reader to the theme of covenantal disobedience by contrasting the generations of Israel during the period of the

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[1279] Kingsbury, 38.

[1280] 2 Chron. 34:14-15.

judges with that of the period of Joshua. Whereas the first prologue calls for an external inspection, the second prologue calls for an internal inspection. The implied reader is expected to make a personal inventory of his cultic relationship with YHWH. Is he serving idols? Has he forsaken YHWH? Has he provoked YHWH to anger? Does he find himself in a position whereby YHWH has sold him and his fellows into the hands of an enemy? Is he in the cycle represented? These questions of introspection naturally expect a response. But, not the response portrayed in the narrative, because the implied reader understands that response did not solve the problem but only perpetuated the cyclical activity. This requires a genuine repentance marked with actions of faith. The implied reader would not only repent with signs of contrition as he would on the Day of Atonement; but also offer appropriate sacrifices as prescribed within the Levitical code. A renewal of *Torah* adherence would require the razing of altars and a return to the central sanctuary to meet with YHWH on His appointed feast days.

JUDGES STORIES. Because the major judges stories generally re-*present* the same cycle as outlined in the second prologue, the implied reader is thus reminded of the seriousness of repentance and turning back to YHWH in fidelity from a theocentric perspective. The idea of an oppressor is one that YHWH establishes and endows with power for the purpose of returning Israel back to Himself. Therefore, the implied reader is not concerned with the name of the oppressor; but with the reality that it can come externally or internally. Externally, it can come as Cushan-Rishathaim did from Mesopotamia. Internally, it can come from the Canaanites within the land. Likewise, it can also come from Israel itself. The implied reader recognizes that YHWH is able to use external and internal forces to capture the attention of Israel. Therefore, with that in mind, the implied reader would examine his own life as to whether there are external or internal forces at work whereby YHWH may be trying to get his attention to bring about change. Because the Othniel story is so brief, the implied reader can see the established pattern and judge himself as to where not only he exists within that paradigm; but where the nation exists as well.

The individual pericopes also have points at which a response may come. The implied reader is not expected to forge, conceal, and wield a sword before his enemies as Ehud did; however, he would be responsive enough to pursue a personal initiative that prepares him for the eventuality of being divinely used in any circumstance. Likewise, he recognizes that the disappearance of YHWH in the story is caused by divine disapproval of acts of deceit, and thus would avoid deception in his life.

The story of Deborah/Barak/Jael suggests a response as well. First, the implied reader notices that Deborah was judging Israel at the time. She was not raised up for the particular problem, she was already in place. This would prompt the implied reader to examine his current setting as to whether there are any divinely ordained leaders in which the judgment and understanding of YHWH might be obtained. The interchange between Deborah and Barak also serves as a point of introspection. Since Barak had been summoned by the prophetess and was given a divine message and he refused to accept it unless his conditions were met, the implied reader would examine his own circumstances as to whether he had received any divine directives. From this, he would be able to judge His own commitment to YHWH as to whether he accepted the message and acted upon it, he rejected it, or he mediated the position as Barak did with his own stipulations. Secondly, the Song of Deborah elicits mimicry at the least, whereby the implied reader will intone this song as his offering of praise commemorating the historical event. But, at its fullest expression, the implied author through creative muse might compose extemporaneously his own offering of praise that recounts divine activity in his life. Finally, as the song ends, the implied reader would see the dichotomous position of either being an enemy of YHWH or one who loves Him. As such his introspection would result in personal judgment of which position he is in and challenge him to either move into the position of one who loves YHWH or more firmly root that love.

The Gideon pericope affects the implied reader. He is impacted by the fear of the leader who fails to explicitly trust YHWH and the divine message. For the reader, he is forced to evaluate his own character and examine whether or not fear is operating in his life. But, even more importantly, to examine whether or not he is responding in the same manner as Gideon by ignoring the prophetic call of YHWH and persistently requesting signs to satisfy his doubts and unbelief. Nevertheless, the positive actions of Gideon will result in the examination of whether traditions or forms of idolatry have encroached upon the implied reader's covenant relationship. Furthermore, if this has occurred, he will respond in like manner by removing and destroying that which interferes with his relationship and can destroy him. However, the negative actions of this character also have ramifications. Although the implied reader is not pursuing after enemy leaders, he may have interpersonal relationships and ties with other nearby villages. This calls for a societal evaluation of those relationships as to whether YHWH is the center of them or they are held for personal means and gratification. The implied reader is forced to alter his relationships and his responses in those relationships to those that fulfill the *Torah* and

not his personal whims. On the negative side, the creation of the ephod by Gideon results in a self examination of any way in which the implied reader has taken personal advantage of YHWH's intervention in his life and created an idolatrous object that needs to be removed. The reading of this event together with the Abimelech pericope would result in a serious self-examination of ways in which the life of the implied reader is spilling over into his children and those in his sphere of influence. The reader may even make the later parallel of what the needless prayer of Hezekiah caused that allowed him to live longer and thus conceive Manasseh, one of the more wicked kings of Israel.[1281]

The implied reader cannot escape from the concept of interpersonal relationships. Progeny becomes the essence of the notices about Tola and Jair. In this, the reader is forced to examine whether he is living up to his role of being fruitful, multiplying, and extending the Israelite community of his tribe. But, with the Jephthah pericope, he is forced again to evaluate his relationships with his parents, his siblings, and his children. This has further implication when it is applied to the whole of the Israelite community. In this light, the comparison is inter-tribal relations that extend laterally as well as toward their progeny and their ancestry. Yet, one of the key issues is that with the revelation of YHWH as Judge, the implied reader accepts and adopts this revelation and willingly chooses to judge himself through acts of mercy and grace rather than to suffer the anger and justice required. The last part of the periocope would result in the implied reader examining any vows he has uttered. This would result in a fulfillment of those vows or the awareness they needed to be annulled and removed through the Levitical system. As such, he would communicate this to his daughters and wife and urge them to celebrate the annual feast remembering Jephthah's daughter.

The Samson pericope continues this societal introspection. The implied reader examines his marital relationship. Is he faithful to his wife? Is he guilty of adultery? Or is there prostitution involved? Is he honest in his dealings with other people? Has he misused divine grace and enablement, gifting and talent, for his own personal gain? Each of these areas brings the implied reader back to a point of chastity and *Torah* observance.

EPILOGUES. The reader has seen the cyclical pattern disintegrate. He has been challenged by moral anomalies and thus is not surprised at the moral abyss the story falls into with the first epilogue. Having been faced with these same issues in the second prologue and throughout the stories of the judges there does not need to be any change in

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[1281] 2 Kg. 20:1-6; and 21:1.

the implied reader's life regarding proper worship. However, if any issues have come up where he has been confronted regarding theft, lying, and anger; then, these issues are addressed.

Finally, he comes to the second epilogue. He is able to see Israel come full circle and reach a point of inter-tribal unity. However, it is a unity based on half-truths and an improper summons by an unscrupulous Levite. This is a unity that causes not only a dissolution of the plot but also of the society with a tremendous loss of life that shows the fragility of a society in which YHWH is not its center. Once again, the reader recognizes the absence of deity except where He comes to pass judgment. The conclusion of the narrative that sends the tribes to their tents and tribal inheritance without theocentricity but egocentricity forces the implied reader to make a final introspective judgment. This begs the question, "Whose voice am I listening to?" Irregardless of whether there is a king in Israel, the readers faces the question of his own egocentrism and whether he is doing that which is right in his own eyes. He must acknowledge whether his assembly with Israel is a righteous gathering. Is that which he hears being spoken (as in the case of the Levite) consistent with the truth? Is this based on incontrovertable evidence, as required by the *Torah*? Is he willing to be caught up in the mob mentality or stand as a lone voice against unrighteousness, but responding in a manner that is appropriate? Is he wise enough to keep his mouth closed and not utter foolish vows that will have later disastrous ramifications?

For the implied reader, Judges is not merely a story. It is a living breathing narrative in which he interacts with it. He is not provided with every thing the implied author knows. There are gaps in the narrative and many unanswered questions. But, he is competent enough to resequentialize the story and to see the epilogues as a conclusion; but also to see that they belong at the beginning chronologically. Because so much is not said, the implied reader must fill in the gaps, round out the characters, and define the culture in order to comprehend its full meaning. From what he is told and understands, plus the gaps he has filled in; it has such a significant impact upon him that he is transformed by the narrative. The narrative reaches its fulfillment in the implied reader who has been changed. His life, his motives, his actions are all dictated by the *Torah*. YHWH is at the center of his life. The individual polemics of the narrative do not cause the implied reader to join a political ideological movement that supports Davidic monarchy or rejects Saulide monarchy. He is firmly aware that the central macro-character YHWH has transcended the narrative and has become his Judge. There is a

personal theocracy in which the implied reader has assumed the position that Israel has abdicated. The reader has embraced the Yahwistic nature and judgment which had permeated the story world and has saturated his world and reality.

Judges in the Real World

There is one more outward concentric level. The text of Judges does not exist in a vaccum. It exists within the real world. It is a real document that has a *real author* and a *real reader*. Whereas the other inner components of the text may or may not be historicized fiction with characters that are literary creations of the real author, we are now confronted by reality. Judges was written by somebody who intended that someone (most likely many people) read his text.

REAL AUTHOR

The real author existed outside the world of the text and independent from it. The time span of the stories told within the text does not permit the real author to live within the totality of the period. However, that does not discount that he was not influenced by the period and that had a bearing on his authorial purpose for the book. Nor does this imply that the real author had control of every word of the text, as there is sufficient evidence for oral sources and redaction.[1282]

> The assumption of 'authorship' does not rule out the possibility of additions and later editing, still less does it deny the possibility of identifying sources; it simply takes as a principle that one should begin by looking for the maximum rather than the minimum unity of plan.[1283]

In order to identify properly the real author, the reader must question why he wrote the text. What is the purpose of the text? Gros Louis strongly implies that because humanity faces choices which may be paradoxical and the resolution of those paradoxes may be found with deity, that the author is urging Israel "to return to their God [and] to stop playing the harlot."[1284] Block suggests that it is time to stop viewing Judges as a political treatise for the monarchy. Instead, because of the deterioration of Israelite society as the result of Canaanization, whereby YHWH and His institutions have been abandoned, this is "a prophetic call for renewal and recommitment to the covenant God; it

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[1282] These issues have been dealt with at length in chapter three. See the discussions on "Source Criticism," pages 87-114; "Form Criticism," pages 114-145; and "Redaction Criticism," pages 145-184.

[1283] Lilley, 95.

[1284] Gros Louis, 162.

is a reminder of the continuation of YHWH's gracious saving acts in Israel's history."[1285] But that does not go far enough to incorporate historiography and theology and provide a response for the reader. This is where Lilley is helpful.

> We have seen that the general theme of the book is one of increasing failure and depression; this implies that there was originally, in the author's view, an ideal and even a measure of attainment. We may also observe that the story has a sequel, and would certainly never have been written if the light of Israel had been extinguished under the Philistine- Ammonite bushel.[1286]

This perspective makes the author more than a reliable historian, but a pragmatic theologian that intends on his reader inculturating the text and taking the necessary cultic steps to safeguard the covenant relationship with YHWH and attain the Yahwistic ideal vouchsafed in the *Torah*. Although basing his premise upon a post-exilic redaction, Dumbrell maintains that the authorial purpose begins with the preservation of Israel *in spite* of itself. The continual divine interventions characterizes that this is the key to Israel's future success.

> The pattern of direct divine intervention, with theocratic leadership, upon Israel's well-being had always hung, had been never so really demonstrated as it had been in the age of the Judges.[1287]

The reader is able to grasp this and make personal application as to his own personal acceptance of theocratic rule.

One final comment about the real author is important. In the exercise of identifying and distinguishing him from the implied author, it is a common fallacy to equate the two as identical. A geometric analogy refutes this fallacious argument. A square is always a rectangle; but a rectangle is not always a square. By the same reasoning, the implied author is always the real author; but the real author is not always the implied author. The real author has chosen to divest himself and part of his personality and ideology in the implied author. However, all that the real author is does not constitute the fulness of the implied author. As the issues surrounding the identity of the author and the date of the writing have been addressed previously, they will not be reiterated.[1288]

[1285] Block, "The Period of the Judges," 52.

[1286] Lilley, 102.

[1287] Dumbrell, 31.

[1288] See the section "Composition" pages 87-114.

THE TEXT

In this pyramidal structure, the text is the paramount literary creation within the real word that is composed of a narrative, implied author, and implied reader. It may also be defined as "a written work in contrast to an oral presentation...which is not itself a commentary upon another text."[1289] This lends itself to commentary in which the real reader himself may alter the intended meaning by assigning his own interpretive meaning to the text. In Reader-Response criticism this changes the text in such a way that "reading is not the writing of a new text but the rewriting of the written text."[1290] Although this cannot be avoided, the Narrative critic is more interested in what the real author has written, with the intended authorial purpose, than with how the real reader changes the meaning.

Biblical scholars without intending to function in this way have become Reader-Response critics. This is because of presuppositions that are brought to the text. Part of this relates to the debate of whether hermeneutics should be diachronic or synchronic. Van Seters is one that approaches the text as a document of history. Gottwald sees the text as a sociological document. Alter sees it as literature. But, there must be some point where the text is not pigeon-holed into these exclusionary realms but is allowed to function multi-disciplinarily. At some length, we have examined the text of Judges from a narrative critical viewpoint; however, Judges is more than narrative. To make it only literature and unable to fulfill its other functions is to misread the text.[1291]

The text is very much a document that has a life of its own and that is partially because of the real reader. But even so, there are a couple of ways that the text adopted different (although possibly intended) roles by the real author. Within the Jephthah episode, the female characters are provided with their own annual holiday. For the real reader that adopts the position of the characters and the implied reader, he/she will embrace this four day holiday. Consequently, the whole of the text continues and the real reader becomes intimately related to the text.

[1289] Scharlemann, 7.

[1290] Ibid., 8.

[1291] R.P. Carroll, "The Hebrew Bible as Literature – A Misprision?" *Studia Theologica 47* (1993), 89. Of course part of his thesis is that in order to properly read the bible as literature requires a reading that is a Hebrew reading rather than an English translation of the Hebrew text.

In an ironic turn of events, the silenced and living *pîlegeš* from Bethlehem becomes vocalized and immortalized in her death. The unnamed woman in her dismembered state functions as a text.

> Not only is this woman the object of the body-language of rape, a language that bespeaks her death; her body is also subsequently used *as* language by the very man who exposes her to the violence when he sends her flesh off as a message.[1292]

The pieces of the body of the *pîlegeš* may not have been engraved with alphabetic characters; however, they embody a message that has far more impact upon the story world than did any prophetic utterance or actionby a judge. Even the remembrance of this body-language speaks loudly today of an event and a text that need not be repeated.

REAL READER

Who is the real reader of Judges? By definition, it is anyone who picks up the book and reads it, thus becoming the interlocutor. However, is someone in the twenty-first century that real reader that the real author had in mind? This is one area, which requires a philosophical approach, and even the hypothesis put forth would be subjective. As such, it is beyond the scope of this examination, and belongs properly within the realm of Reader-Response Criticism.

The real reader may be the intended reader and/or the ideal reader. At least for one generation in the mind of the real author, the concept need not be mutually exclusive. The real reader is faced with a choice: assuming the role presupposed by the text or not accepting that role. The latter by implication does not mean a rejection of that role *per se*, but non-acceptance of it for that particular real reader.

For the reader who accepts the role, he becomes an implied reader. This implies that he becomes "a slave of the text, becoming a slave of the ideology in the text."[1293] All that we have said about the implied reader applies to him.

The reader who does not accept the role of the implied reader is equally legitimate. Certainly it would not be expected that a non-Christian would readily assume the theological demands of the bible, although the familiar "knowing-not knowing" motif is at work. The ones who "know" are more susceptible to appropriate the role whereas the ones who "do not know" are more likely to reject the role. Nevertheless, being a Christian does not automatically presume acceptance of the role. This is predicated not only by a

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[1292] M. Bal, "A Body of Writing: Judges 19," *A Feminist Companion to Judges,* (Ed.) A. Brenner (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 223.

[1293] Keegan, 97.

competent reading of the text but also it is conditioned by personal cognition, history, and theology. Just as Israel is presented with choices and a free will to choose the real reader has that same free will to choose.

Finally, we come to the concept of the ideal reader. This is the real person whom the real author envisioned as receiving his text. This person need not be an Israelite; however, he would be one that embraces the tenets of faith espoused not only in the text but in the greater corpus of the Hebrew bible. Further, he would be competent to understand the biblical allusions and metaphors. The context of faith presupposes an implicit value system that adopts a monotheistic relationship with adherence to the *Torah*. Does this alienate Christians from being an ideal reader? It does not for those whose "New Testament" faith is grounded in the Hebrew bible and accepts that the event at Calvary did not nullify the *Torah* but brings it to its fulfillment in *Yeshua*.

The ideal reader may be from any century provided that he not only identifies with the text but incarnates the text within his cultural existence. The distinction does not change for the twenty-first century. As such, the ideal reader with a cultural identification and understanding of the biblical cultural is the one "who actualizes the text, utilizing the competencies defined by the text by the ideal reader."[1294] Ideally, this is the position YHWH expects of His followers – an obedient faith within the realm of knowing Him. Within the context of Judges, that means to know Him as Judge and to experience His judging action not only in the textual realm but in the real world of the ideal reader.

[1294] Keegan, 105.

CHAPTER 5

EXEGESIS OF SELECTED PASSAGES IN JUDGES

The Key Words

An examination of the Hebrew text of Judges reveals 9885 words.[1] Of those words, one would expect to find a recurrence of *leitwords* throughout the book that would give it a sense of unity. There are thirty different words which have a frequency of twenty times or greater. However, this excludes particles, conjunctions, and pronouns. In order to distinguish the more important leading words, two different tables are included, with the first one concentrating on those words which are not proper names or geographical references. Table 35 shows the frequency of the Hebrew word as it appears in Judges, as well as the number of occurrences it has in the *Torah,* Former Prophets, and in the whole of the Hebrew bible.[2]

TABLE 35
WORDS OCCURRING FREQUENTLY IN JUDGES

Hebrew	Transliteration	English	Judges	*Torah*	Former Prophets	Hebrew Bible
בן	*bn*	son	195	1291	1119	4373
יד	*yd*	hand	92	382	368	1634
נתן	*ntn*	give	69	627	420	1916
אב	*'b*	father	59	395	318	1173
עיר	*'yr*	city	57	172	408	1084
פן	*pn*	face	46	626	481	2126
מת	*mt*	die	38	325	307	893
קרא	*qr'*	call	28	182	175	664
עתה	*'th*	now	24	84	164	433
שמע	*šm'*	hear	22	233	240	1059
ידע	*yd'*	know	21	159	168	919
ישע	*yš'*	save	21	6	56	184
שפט	*špṭ*	judge	21	27	50	188
אם	*'m*	mother	20	63	68	220

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[1] F.I. Andersen and A.D. Forbes, (Eds.), *The Vocabulary of the Old Testament* (Rome, Italy: Editrice Pontifico Istituto Biblia, 1989), 24. This reflects the total number of words in the Judges text rather than the total number of different words used in the text.

[2] Ibid., 262-470. The numbers represent any occurrence of the root, whether singular or plural for the nouns and in any verbal form.

The most frequently used word "son" occupies nearly two percent of the text.[3] As the chart shows, the leading words that one would expect to find in Judges based on the thematic progression of Israel during the premonarchic period are either small in frequency or are not even in the text.[4] In addition to these words, there are other *leitwords* which are divine names, personal names, tribal names, national names, and geographic location names. All of these proper nouns with occurrences in excess of twenty times in the text are listed in Table 36.[5]

TABLE 36
PROPER NOUNS OCCURRING FREQUENTLY IN JUDGES

Hebrew	Transliteration	English	Judges	*Torah*	Former Prophets	Hebrew Bible
יִשְׂרָאֵל	*Yiśrā'ēl*	Israel	185	581	974	2496
יהוה	*YHWH*	YHWH	170	1795	1397	6795
אֱלֹהִים	*ᵉlōhîm*	God	77	852	527	2982
בִּנְיָמִן	*Binyāmin*	Benjamin	47	31	87	179
אֲבִימֶלֶךְ	*ᵃbîmelek*	Abimelech	40	24	41	67
גִּדְעוֹן	*Gid'ôn*	Gideon	39	0	39	39
שִׁמְשׁוֹן	*Šimšôn*	Samson	34	0	34	34
פְּלִשְׁתִּים	*Pᵉlištîm*	Philistines	33	10	224	292
מִדְיָן	*Midyān*	Midian	31	26	33	67
גִּלְעָד	*Gil'ād*	Gilead	29	22	61	113
אֶפְרַיִם	*ᵉprayim*	Ephraim	28	26	57	180
יִפְתָּח	*Yiptāḥ*	Jephthah	28	0	29	29
שְׁכֶם	*Šᵉkem*	Shechem	27	20	38	66
עַמּוֹן	*'ammôn*	Ammon	26	10	60	114
נִבְעָה	*Gibᵉ'āh*	Gibeah	24	0	42	49
מִיכָיְהוּ	*Mîkāyᵉhû*	Micah	21	0	21	31

The Judges narrative also includes phrases as *leitmotifs*. Many of these phrases are formulaic statements which help to structure the book. Nonetheless, these repetitive formulas do not appear with great frequency. In that the formulaic phases have been previously discussed, our examination will look at other recurring phrases.[6] In each case,

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[3] The actual amount is 1.97268%.

[4] Other important words which occur infrequently are: (*šbṭ*) שבט "tribe" 15 times; (*z'q*) זעק "cry out" 7 times; (*nṣl*) נצל "deliver" 6 times; (*mšpt*) משפח "judgment" 3 times; (*ḥṭ'*) חטא "sin" 3 times; (*nḥm*) נחם "repent" 3 times; and (*ṣ'q*) צעק "cry out" 2 times. The word "pray" does not appear in the text.

[5] In the case of the personal names of Abimelech and Micah, the additional references outside of Judges refer to different people who had the same name.

[6] See Table 1: "Formulaic Statements in Judges," in chapter three, page 99.

the recurrent phrases are either tribal or national designations.[7] The one exception is the use of the divine name LORD God of Israel.[8]

The Anthropocentric Cycle in Judges

A review of the comments on Judges presents relative agreement to the presence of a cycle throughout the book and most of the pericopes. The departure comes with various outlines and naming schemes for the composite parts. One involves description of the cycle with the themes of apostasy, subjugation, appeal, raising up a savior, defeat of the oppressor, and peace.[9] The various suggestions include a four or five part cycle, as outlined in Table 37. The historical consensus has been based on an anthropocentric approach which makes humanity the focus of divine action which is further explored. Nevertheless, this examination would be incomplete without exploring the divine action as a theocentric focus.

TABLE 37

SUGGESTED FRAMEWORK FOR CYCLE IN JUDGES

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Rebellion[10]	Retribution	Repentance	Rescue	
Sin[11]	Sorrow	Supplication	Salvation	
Apostasy[12]	Oppression	Repentance	Deliverance	
Sin[13]	Judgment	Repentance	Deliverance	
Israel's Apostasy[14]	YHWH's Punishment	YHWH's Mercy	Israel's Apostasy	
Apostasy[15]	Servitude	Supplication	Salvation	

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[7] These recurring phrases include: *(bᵉnê Yiśrā'ēl)* בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל "sons of Israel" 60 times; *(bᵉnê-'ammôn)* בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן "sons of Ammon" 27 times; *(bᵉnê Binyāmin)* בְּנֵי בִנְיָמִן "sons of Benjamin" 19 times; and *(bᵉnê-Dān)* בְּנֵי־דָן "sons of Dan" 8 times.

[8] ℻ *(YHWH 'elōhê Yiśrā'ēl)* יהוה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. This phrase occurs 7 times.

[9] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 128.

[10] Wilcock, 11.

[11] Schultz, 107.

[12] West, 222.

[13] Kent, 84.

[14] Mullen, 191. In that his framework is the same at stages one and four, would imply a three stage formula; however, it would appear that based on his article, that stage four is a typographical error and should read as Israel's Salvation.

[15] Cundall, *TOTC 7*, 24-25.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Defection[16]	Oppression	Prayer	Deliverance	
Evildoing[17]	Punishment	Outcry	Deliverance	
Apostasy[18]	Servitude	Distress	Prayer	Deliverance
Apostasy[19]	Divine Anger	Repentance	Deliverance	Period of Rest
Sin	Servitude	Supplication	Salvation	Silence

This cyclical form and structure is not unique to the redacted text of Judges; but also was utilized by redactors of the texts about the divided kingdom.

> The outlining of the course of one period (= cycle) on the basis of a five-stage model – sin, punishment, crying out, deliverance, peace – was known to the Deuteronomistic school. According to this multi-staged pattern, the reign of Jehoahaz son of Jehu king of Israel was structured: Stage I: 'He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD...'; Stage II: "And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and He gave them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Syria..."; Stage III: "Then Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened to him..."; Stage IV: "Therefore the Lord gave Israel a savior..."; Stage V: "and the people of Israel dwelt in their homes as formerly" (2 Kgs 13:2-5). But whereas in Kings this method of description is rarely used, and therefore cannot be viewed as constituting a formative model, its use in Judges as a repeated pattern indicates that the author sought to stress the element of repetition.[20]

In addition, the cyclical formula is present in epigraphic inscriptions by Esarhaddon regarding the downfall of Babylon. Most significant is the divine role: divine alienation, devastation, divine reconciliation, and reconstruction.[21]

A cycle may be discerned by noting repetitive motifs used by the author in which the judge is the focal point to which the various stages are subjected. Traditional exegesis normally follows the pattern of examining, *e.g.* the Gideon cycle or Samson cycle and the stages of that cycle. Then, comparison and contrast is made between the cycles of one judge to another. It is my hypothesis that in this regard, exegesis views the central character as the subject; whereas the reality is the judge is the object and YHWH is the subject who is subjecting the elements of the cycle as they relate to Israel making the judge only an element, *albeit* an important element of the cycle. Therefore, this examination of Judges is viewed through the action of YHWH and His response in each of the five elemental stages within the various cycles.

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[16] G.W. Trompf, "Notions of Historical recurrence in Classic Hebrew Historiography," *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament*, (Ed.) J.A. Emerton (*VT Supp. 30:* Leiden, the Netherlands, 1979), 219-220.

[17] Sternberg, 271. Of all the models, his is the one that uses words from the text.

[18] Ridall, 108.

[19] Robertson, 92.

[20] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 36.

[21] J.A. Brinkman, "Through a Glass Darkly: Esarhaddon's Retrospects on the Downfall of Babylon," *JAOS 103* (1983), 40-42.

<u>Stage of Sin</u>

The basis for judgment predicates betrayal of covenant. The entrance of YHWH through human vassals and governments is a disciplinary matter to correct His people because of sin. In order to examine the necessity for punitive discipline in the life of Israel requires an examination of their infractions of the *Torah*.

Judges 3:7-11

From the outset of the main body of hero narratives, the narrator classifies that what the sons of Israel did was evil in the sight of YHWH. Then, he identifies that evil as forgetting YHWH their *Elohim* and serving the *Baals* and *Asheroth*.

Judges 3:12-30

After the forty years of peace, this second cyclical period is introduced with an emphasis on a deepening national depravity.[22] The usage of *(way'yōsipû)* in 3:12 is translated as "again" *NASB* and "continued" *AB*. Yet, the verb used literally means "to add." Since it is in the *Hiphil* stem with the *Waw* consecutive imperfect tense this repetitive theme is well served by "do again."[23] Barnabas Lindars would refute this usage holding:

> It refers to a relapse into idolatrous worship after the death of the previous judge, resulting in loss of control over religious practice, which was the duty of rulers according to the ideas of the ancient world.[24]

H.C. Hoeksema views the increased and empowered sin as being so great that it would require eighteen years of chastisement in order for them to learn their lesson. He characterizes their sin as not turning from the service of *Baalim* and *Ashteroth*, making friends with the surrounding nations, and giving their daughters in marriage, to what he terms "the nations of the kingdom of darkness."[25]

Judges 3:31

The Shamgar story does not make any reference to Israel's sin.

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[22] Enns, 46.

[23] וַיֹּסִפוּ. *BDB*, 414-415.

[24] Lindars, *Judges 1-5*, 101, 137.

[25] H.C. Hoeksema, *Era of the Judges* (Grandville, MI: Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches, 1981), 67ff.

Judges 4:1 – 5:31

Following Ehud's death, the generation that followed is characterized as doing evil again in the sight of YHWH. No specific infractions of the *Torah* are recorded. The only thing remotely connected is the phrase "new gods were chosen" in the Song of Deborah.[26] However, it is apparent that this verse is corrupt, because this follows after Deborah's rise. The emended translation removes this confusion.[27]

Judges 6:1 – 8:28

As the next cycle begins, it is not connected to the death of a previous deliverer only after a formulaic forty year period has elapsed in which the land was undisturbed. The same phrase is used stating that Israel did what was evil in the sight of YHWH. Only later in the narrative is there a contextual clue to this evil when the prophet reminds Israel that they have not listened to YHWH's voice. The implication is that they had feared the gods of the Amorites instead. But, as the narrative progresses, it is apparent that the household of Joash had erected an altar to *Baal* and surrounded it with *Asherah*. These are the reported infractions of the *Torah* that lead to a divine response of subjugation. However, unlike the previous stories, the activities of the judge in his deliverance and following introduce sin out of its normal context. Examples of this include Gideon's refusal to believe YHWH's word, taking his own initiative outside of the divine will, the assault and murder on his own people, and the establishing of an oracular ephod. The evil of Israel had permeated society, in that even in their deliverance there is great tribal animosity. The Ephraimites contend vigorously against Gideon. The men of Succoth and Penuel refuse simple hospitality to Gideon and his delivering army. Then of course, through the action of Gideon, the ephod becomes a snare to his household.

Judges 8:29 – 9:57

The narrative about Abimelech naturally follows the story of Gideon; yet, the constituent elements that make up the plot direction as in the earlier stories are absent.[28]

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[26] Jg. 5:8.

[27] See the sections "Confusion of Letters" and "Transposition of Letters" in Appendix 1, "Listing of Textual Errors in Judges by Alteration," pages 697, 703; and Appendix 4, "Translation of Emended Verses in Judges," page 734.

[28] On the other hand, Amit includes an Abimelech cycle with the others. However, her organizing principle is not a four or five stage cycle; but a cycle that is based on the motifs of signs and leadership. See her, *The Book of Judges*, 100-113, and 222.

Nonetheless, as a parenthesis it describes the sin prior to Tola. In a return to the second prologue, Israel is once again guilty of playing the harlot with the *Baals*. Now they have made *Baal-berith* their god and do not remember YHWH their *Elohim* and His acts of deliverance for them.

The narrator does not come out and call these evil acts of Abimelech as sin, although his activity is in violation of the *Torah*. The infractions included: usurping a throne without being raised up by YHWH, murder of his half-brothers, violence, murder of his followers, arson, destruction of the land, and pride. Those who followed Abimelech were guilty of treachery, robbery, idolatry, cursing, treason, anger, deceit, and lying. Since the Abimelech story is antithetical to the hero stories, it is not surprising that the narrator uses different phraseology rather than the standard formulaic statements. Thus, the narrator evaluates Abimelech and his actions at his death as wickedness.

Judges 10:1-5

In the summary notice of these two minor judges, the narrator does not mention the stage of sin or any type of sinful activity. The absence of it from this story should not be construed that there was no sin during this forty-five year period; rather, it was not an organizing principle for the insertion of these transitional stories.

Judges 10:6 – 12:7

The inappropriate actions of Israel had been cast in generic terms of "doing evil" or "serving the *Baals*." In the time preceding Jephthah, the apostasy had become severe enough that the narrator not only included both of the general indictments in the story; but, he specified the idolatrous worship of five different ethnic deities.[29] All of these were outside the geopolitical boundary of Israel to the north, east, and west. Returning to familiar language, the narrator concludes his indictment by stating Israel "forsook YHWH and did not serve Him." Israel cognizantly identifies its apostate behavior as sin.[30]

Judges 12:8-15

Since the narrator returns us to the minor judges, certain expectations of major judge formulaic statements vanish. As expected, there is no indication that Israel did evil

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[29] Jg. 10:6.

[30] Jg. 10:10.

in the sight of YHWH. But, that does not mean that sin was not operating in Israel, only that the narrator had a different focal point in the minor judge stories. Little is known about Ibzan. However, what is known points toward violation of the *Torah*.[31] There was no sin in being fruitful and multiplying.[32] He was successfully procreative with sixty children. However, the word *(haḥûṣ)* "outside" implies non-Israelites and returns us to the closing verse of the prologues.[33] It is the intermarriage with foreigners who provoked Israel to sin. This foreign element foreshadows the story with Samson. There is no mention of sinful activity regarding Elon or Abdon.

Judges 13:1 – 16:31

As the narrator turns to the final deliverer story, he banally presents the apostasy formulaic statement that Israel again did evil in the sight of YHWH. The brevity of this verse is felt with a sense of divine disgust that Israel has returned to its sinful ways and the narrator is not even going to spill ink to address it. Samson is indeed a microcosm of Israel. The sin of the country has reached such epic proportions that Samson does not shun or avoid the Philistines but violates the *Torah* command and willingly chooses to intermarry with them and even more remarkable YHWH allows it.

Stage of Subjugation

Judges 3:7-11

The Mesopotamian oppression of eight years should be placed in the late thirteenth century BCE.[34] The terse narrative provides no other information about the subjugation other than the leader of the country was King Cushan-rishathaim and the Israelites were forced to serve him. The oppression was divinely permitted since YHWH had sold Israel into the hands of Cushan-rishathaim.

Judges 3:12-30

The eighteen year oppressive reign of Eglon over Israel began about 1319 BCE, approximately five years before Pharaoh Harmhab of Egypt died.[35] The elderly state of

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[31] Dt. 7:3.

[32] Gen. 1:28; 9:1, and 7.

[33] הַחוּץ ל. Jg. 3:6.

[34] Malamat, "Cushan Rishathaim and the Decline of the Near East around 1200 B.C.," 21.

[35] Garstang, 269.

the pharaoh and absence of his conquest records in Palestine and Syria at this time would suggest his apparent lack of active interest in the area would provide a vacuum of power for the entry of Moabite conquest.[36] A predisposed ancient enmity existed with this eastern coalition of Moab, Ammon, formerly Ben-Ammi *(Ben-'ammi)*, and Amalek.[37]

These enemies against Israel have familial ties. Moab and Ammon were brothers born out of the judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah.[38] Due to the incestuous breeding of drunken Lot with his two fearful daughters these nations existed and multiplied to the east of Israel.[39] Lot and Abram *('abrām)* shared a heritage with Terah, making these enemies distant cousins.[40] With Lot and Abraham previously being separated because of strife between their herdsmen, the lifestyle Lot's daughters learned and morality observed in Sodom and Gomorrah make their descendants historical extensions of this destroyed culture.[41]

The third partner in this brotherly alliance was Amalek. The question exists as to which descendants of Amalek this may have been. A possible candidate would be the progeny of Amalek as the grandson of Esau, which would make these Amalekites a clan of Edomites who inhabited the area south of Moab.[42] The problem is another people group with the same name existed prior to Esau's birth during the pre-covenantal time of Abram.[43] Regardless of which people they may have been, the Midianite prophet Balaam announced to a prior Moabite king, Balak that Amalek was the first of the nations.[44]

The three nation confederacy would have constituted a problem for premonarchic Israel. One such problem would have been a reminder of the wilderness wanderings in which each nation had been encountered individually. Amalek was the first military battle

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[36] Ibid.

[37] 𐤄 בֶּן־עַמִּי.

[38] Gen. 19:1-29.

[39] Gen. 19:30-38. Y. Aharoni and M. Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 42, and 52.

[40] 𐤄 אַבְרָם. See Gen. 11:27-32. Interestingly enough, had Abram been completely obedient to his calling in Gen. 12:1, Lot would not have been part of his immigration and the resulting stories of Lot would not have occurred and the enemy would not be one of lineage.

[41] Jordan, 58. The Sodomic culture from which Moab emerged is further typified in gluttonous Eglon as the king when comparing it to Zeph. 2:8-10 and the equating of Moab with Sodom. Gen. 13:1-13.

[42] Gen. 36:10-19.

[43] Gen. 14:7. Should this be the forefathers of the Amalekites in Judges 3, they would have a common denominator with Lot's daughters. Ultimately this links his descendants through them based on the common experiences of the Dead Sea culture and the conquest and capture narrative of the four kings against five kings in Genesis 14.

[44] Num. 24:20.

with Israel in the wilderness in Rephidim *(R³p̂îdim)*, occurring in their first month of departure from Egypt.[45] The fierceness of the battle could be underscored by the statement, "The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation."[46] Another problem was the memory of when Israel encountered Edom at the end of the wilderness era. Although there was no war between the two nations, Israel witnessed the might and strength of Edom's fighting power with their refusal to allow Israel to pass through Edomite territory.[47] The third problem would be the remembrance of the historical account of taking possession of the Amorites of the Transjordan up to the border of the Ammonites. If the Masoretic Text is correct, the word *('az)* explains the Israelites were unable to penetrate the border because it was "strong" KJV or "fortified" NIV.[48] This gives Israel a vivid picture of the Ammonite army poised for battle like its brother Edom.

Divine action is seen in 3:12b showing YHWH strengthened Eglon. The *Piel* form of *(wayḥaz³zēq)* intensifies the verb meaning "make strong."[49] Providence allowed Moab to become strong by divine permission rather than by positive agency.

> The course of God's providence often favors the designs of his enemies, and they take advantage of it, while the effect, in Scripture style, is attributed to God himself; but it is only as we should say that God delivered a vessel, with all on board, into the hands of a pirate because he caused the wind to blow in a particular direction, of which the pirate took advantage, and captured the vessel.... Moab had no quarrel but his own ambition; but God meant by the ambition of the one party, to punish the ambition of the other; his justice can make one sin the executioner of another, while neither shall look for any measure from him but judgment.[50]

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[45] ℍ רְפִידִם. Ex. 17:8-16.

[46] See Ex. 17:16. The Deuteronomist calls Israel to remember this event in Dt. 25:17-19. See Jordan, 58, where he states that Amalek's attack strategy was more than picking off the stragglers at the rear of the march, but rather a poking of fun at their circumcision by castrating every man killed.

[47] Num. 20:14-21. The phrase לִקְרָאתוֹ בְּעַם כָּבֵד וּבְיָד חֲזָקָה *(liqrā'tô b³'am kābēd ûb³yād h°zāqāh)* connotes the warfare motif using the phrase "he came out against him with weighty people and with a strong hand."

[48] ℍ עַז.Num. 21:24. The word used is adjectival with a meaning of strong, mighty, or fierce according to *BDB*, 738. Yet, the critical apparatus in *BHS*, 252, reflects the LXX used a different codex than the MT without identifying which one. The usage of יַעְזֵר *(Ya'zēr)* as a geographic reference is found in NASB and MB. Much liberty is taken in TLB paraphrase of "the rugged terrain."

[49] ℍ וַיְחַזֵּק. *BDB*, 304-305. It further suggests that the meaning could involve growing stout, rigid, or hard, with the idea of perversity.

[50] Bush, 33.

Bush further attributes YHWH to be the subject of the ambiguous subjective pronoun in 3:13, rather than Eglon, who would be the object of YHWH in this endeavor.[51]

Judges 3:31

The Shamgar story does not make any reference to a specific subjugation by the enemy, although the reader might deduce that the story involved a Philistine oppression when the story is seen in light of a divine rhetorical question.[52]

Judges 4:1 – 5:31

In the prose account of this story, the narrator is not interested in reporting the details surrounding Israel's subjugation. He succinctly states matter-of-factly that YHWH had sold Israel into the hand of Jabin, the king of Canaan. This kingdom is not to be understood as comprising the whole region of Canaan, but Hazor, one of the northern Canaanite city-states. The only other information gleaned is that Jabin had a military commander named Sisera, and the twenty year oppression he enforced was severe. The city where Sisera lived, Harosheth-hagoyim, when properly translated as "plantation of the Gentiles" or alternatively, "plantation of the nations" suggests a well defined Canaanite occupation of the land.

It is not until the Song is presented that the details of the oppression are known. This subjugation may be characterized as a time of economic strangulation, plunder, and rape.[53] Economically, Israel was limited in its travel along the trade routes and required to take back roads.[54] It may be deduced that since the kings were unable to plunder Israel monetarily as a result of the battle with Barak, that they had been previously plundering Israel.[55] A similar deduction may be made from the inner thoughts of Sisera's mother that it was common practice for the soldiers on raids to sexually violate the Israelite women.[56]

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[51] Ibid. He bases this interpretation on the context of 3:12 which identifies YHWH strengthening Eglon.

[52] Jg. 10:11.

[53] Hamlin, 81-82.

[54] Jg. 5:7.

[55] Jg. 5:19.

[56] Jg. 5:30.

Judges 6:1 – 8:28

Whereas in previous stories, the oppressor is briefly mentioned with little exposition, the narrator changes his pattern. Again, the evil of Israel prompts YHWH to give Israel into the hands of an oppressor. This time it is Midian for seven years. During the premonarchic period, Midian exercised control over the north-south King's Highway trade route and the incursions into the Jezreel Valley would give them virtual control over the east-west trade routes to the Mediterranean.[57] The co-regency of Zebah and Zalmunna are not integral to the oppression, as their identities are withheld until the time of their capture. Yet, the narrator has chosen to portray this subjugation by the nomadic people of Midian, who are also joined by the Amalekites and Qedemites. "The punishment is affected by the desert nature of the punishing nation."[58] The ability of Midian to subdue Israel is reflected in the Israelite retreat into hiding places like frightened animals. The metaphoric language of locusts describes the devastation that Israel experienced agriculturally. Consequently, after the land had been raped, the livestock would be stolen. The effect on Israelite livelihood was experienced in such a manner that they are described as being "brought very low because of Midian." However, for the reader, Midian is simply an agent of divinity and the real cause of Israel's humbling resulted in YHWH's response to Israelite evil. The narrator does not contain the expanded subjugation narrative; but allows it to permeate even the stage of deliverance. In the epiphany scene with Gideon, besides the hiding position of the hero, the perception of Gideon is revealed to show the effect of judgment that has divine origin. Divine judgment has taken the perceived form of YHWH's apparent absence from Israelite life, which includes a dearth of miracles, and divine abandonment.

Judges 8:29 – 9:57

That the Abimelech story stands in the center of the narrative calls attention to itself in the manner that it departs from the traditional cyclical motif. But whereas, the element of sin is apparent in the story, the same is true of subjugation, although it is not a subjugation that was initiated by YHWH, although not explicitly prohibited by Him either. For the first time proper, there is an internal Israelite oppression against Israel. Small vignettes of this through Gideon with Succoth and Penuel acted as seeds which

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[57] Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh*, 431-432.

[58] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 248.

have brought forth a full harvest in Abimelech. Since Israel had turned back to sin even during the lifetime of Gideon, it is not surprising that this breaking of the cyclical pattern has allowed Abimelech to become king and assert oppression over Shechem and its tributaries. Even though the formula associated with giving Israel over to an oppressor is not present in the text, the narrative phraseology attributing apostasy to Israel immediately after Gideon's death implies divine consent to this oppression as a form of His judgment, even in the absence of His name.

Judges 10:1-5

Since the Tola and Jair stories are not organized by the same multi-stage cycle as the major judge stories, as there was no mention of sin, likewise there is no mention of subjugation. When the Tola story is connected to Abimelech, the internal oppression that Abimelech forced upon the people serves as a back drop of subjugation.

Judges 10:6 – 12:7

Israelite sin translates causally into a response of divine anger which prompts another period of oppression. However, in the Jephthah cycle the paradigm is altered as YHWH sells Israel into the hands of two enemies: the Philistines and the Ammonites. The effect or length of the Philistine subjugation of Israel is not included in the story. The narrator chooses to focus on the Transjordanian neighbor. The pronominal reference of Jg. 10:8 is ambiguous as to whether the narrator means both the Philistines and the Ammonites, or only the latter. What is clear is the oppression is characterized in terms of Israel being "shattered" and "crushed" for a period of eighteen years. The second word is a *dislegomena* and refers back to its first usage in the *Torah* "recalling the consequences of covenant violation, that 'you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.'"[59] The Ammonite subjugation initially began in the Amorite territory in Gilead and they moved westward into the tribal territories of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim.[60]

Judges 12:8-15

The minor judge paradigm does not make allowance for the stage of subjugation. Likewise, the narrator does not report any foreign incursions into Israel or any type of

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[59] Dt. 28:33. Hamlin, 111.

[60] Jg. 10:9.

violence or oppression during the time of Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. The narrative does not give any clues as to whether there were any enemies raised up against Israel during this period.

Judges 13:1 – 16:31

The major judge paradigm returns with the Samson story. As such, the evil response of Israel is met by a divine response of subjugation. This time it is the Philistines who oppress Israel for forty years. This is the longest oppression period in the Judges narrative. In addition, the Philistines have appeared before. Once with Shamgar and also during the time of the Jephthah cycle. YHWH does not strengthen the Philistines against Israel, although He did give Israel into their hands. What is also significant is that in this stage of oppression, there is no clear central leader. Later in the story, the lords of the Philistines, most likely the rulers of each state of the Pentapolis appear, but they are unnamed.

The nature of the oppression is ambiguous. The Philistines are rulers over Israel, but the text is oblique in its meaning. The only representative oppressive elements reported are those against Samson once he has begun to judge. Ironically, despite having several forays, the oppression presented is psychological and sexual through Philistine women. Samson is the only one whom the author reports implicitly as being the subject of Philistine aggression and that is the events that happened when he was captured, tortured, and imprisoned. It is difficult to assess the chronological setting of this story, although it appears to be toward the end of the Judges era and approaching the start of the era of Eli, the prophet.

Stage of Supplication

The element of supplication should be intimately connected to repentance which would make the divine response of deliverance naturally follow. However, Judges does not present repentance as a *leitword* in its stages of cyclicity. Although this stage of the cycle has an androcentric origin, human theological concerns do not need to be imposed for this stage to begin. Theologically, for Israel to repent and for YHWH to respond is idealistic that man would have the appropriate response to divinity. However, the narrative shows that in the spiritual climate of the premonarchic era the characters did not illicit proper responses. What will be seen in the various pericopes is that Israel cried out in supplication and YHWH responded because of His compassion and mercy even when

Israel did not show signs of contrition in their supplication. This pattern of mourning in anguish whereby divine response follows is not unique to Judges. The internal strife in the patriarchal home of Abraham between Sarah and *(Hāgār)* Hagar is a case in point.[61] There is no repentance or remorse in this relationship which has engendered so much strife between their sons Isaac and Ishmael. What is important in the biblical narrative is that YHWH heard the cries of Ishmael and of Hagar and responded. Although the text is silent, Abraham may not have been silent in his mourning. The prophet Isaiah captures this principle whereby YHWH makes certain promises through His Anointed.

> To comfort all who mourn,
> To grant those who mourn in Zion,
> Giving them a garland instead of ashes,
> The oil of gladness instead of mourning,
> The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting.[62]

Judges 3:7-11

As with most of the stories, the narrator is straightforward and states that the sons of Israel cried to YHWH.[63] No other information is given regarding their supplication.

Judges 3:12-30

Like the paradigm, the same supplication formula is used.[64] Because of the formula used that ends the Ehud cycle, Polzin concludes that the period of peace that Israel experienced because of Ehud's deliverance is "not to be construed as dependent upon any supposed repentance of Israel, but solely upon the length of Ehud's life."[65]

Judges 3:31

The Shamgar story likewise does not implicitly state that Israel cried out to YHWH, just as it doesn't mention sin or oppression. However, as in the case of oppression, one might infer from the context of a later discourse between YHWH and Israel that as with the normative pattern of the book, the Philistine deliverance spoken of would refer to Shamgar, since the Samson story has not been introduced.[66] Consequently,

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[61] הָגָר. Cf. Gen. 21:8-21.

[62] Isa. 61:2b-3b.

[63] Jg. 3:9.

[64] Jg. 3:15.

[65] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 161. Jg. 4:1.

[66] Jg. 10:11.

in that context where Israel is seen crying out again, the inference is that someone cried out in order to bring Shamgar on the scene, although the narrator does not choose to report that as part of the story.

Judges 4:1 – 5:31

The narrator simply states that Israel cried to YHWH implying that the content of those cries related to the nine hundred Canaanite iron chariots and the severity of their oppression.

Judges 6:1 – 8:28

Because of the Midianite oppression, the narrator graphically describes the extent of the subjugation by allowing the phrase "the sons of Israel cried to YHWH" to be placed in the narrative twice. It is presented in a chiasmus with the cries attributed because of Midian and their actions.

Judges 8:29 – 9:57

Ironically, since YHWH did not officially raise up Abimelech to oppress Israel because of their sin, there is no Israelite cry for help. Israel could have cried out to YHWH to remove Abimelech, but it did not. The only cry is the fable of Jotham in which YHWH answers this prophetic denunciation three years later.

Judges 10:1-5

Because the narrator does not report any oppressive force in the Tola and Jair stories, there is no need for Israel to cry to YHWH for help. Even though there is no reference to sin, it does not mean that sin was not present. The same can be said for supplication. Even though the narrator does not report this activity does not mean there was no need for Israel to make supplication to YHWH.

Judges 10:6 – 12:7

The only expression of repentance comes in the Jephthah story.[67] Previously, Israel had wept at Bochim. Often it cried out to YHWH for help. However, only at this point does Israel acknowledge its sin. First, this is marked by admission of guilt "We

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[67] Exum, "The Tragic Vision and Biblical Narrative," 63.

have sinned against You, for indeed, we have forsaken our *Elohim* and served the *Baals*."[68] Then in the second impassioned appeal, the narrator has Israel repeat its guilty plea, thus characterizing the severity of the sin.[69] The divine response is to interrupt Israel anticipating the appeal and rejecting it before it can be made.[70] The petition for mercy recognizes that YHWH will judge the matter justly. But, the plea does not stop with words. Finally, Israel responds with actions of repentance by removing the foreign deities and serving YHWH.[71]

Repentance also obliquely appears in the second episode. Jephthah has been exiled and estranged from his patriarchal household. Rather than the traditional interpretation that the elders of Gilead *(šabnû)* "returned" to Jephthah, the verb should be interpreted metaphorically.[72] Webb notes that these men "adopt the language of repentance" through their deferential speech reflecting an attitude change regarding Jephthah.[73]

Judges 12:8-15

Because there is no evidence of Israel being under subjugation during the second period of minor judges, there is no need for the narrator to report any acts of supplication. Nonetheless, the absence of deity from the stories may suggest that in the twenty five years without oppression YHWH was conspicuously absent from Israelite life and worship.

Judges 13:1 – 16:31

The element of national supplication does not exist in the Samson cycle. Perhaps the extent to which Israel had fallen in sin was so far that supplication was not a possibility. Davis suggests that Israel had "grown so used to bondage they don't even

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[68] Jg. 10:10.

[69] Jg. 10:15.

[70] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 45.

[71] Jg. 10:16.

[72] שָׁבְנוּ. Jg. 11:8.

[73] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 53.

have sense to call out for relief."[74] Then again, there may have been the remembrance of YHWH's claim that He would never deliver Israel again.[75]

Supplication does exist in the Samson cycle. Manoah prays to YHWH that the "man of *Elohim*" would return and repeat the annunciation message. Samson likewise prays. He prays twice to YHWH in situations where he is facing death. In each case YHWH answers the prayer. But, Samson prayed for his own egotistical self with no mention of Israel. Perhaps, had Israel cried out to YHWH, there might have been a different ending to the story.

Stage of Salvation

Judges 3:7-11

The banality of the Othniel story does not give any details past the paradigm structure other than when he went out to war YHWH gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over the king. Whether the comment "he judged Israel" applies to anything other than the warfare act is unknown.

Judges 3:12-30

The crux of the story is the manner in which salvation came to Israel. This occurs on three different levels. The first level is the premeditated plan of Ehud of fashioning a sword, concealing it, using deceit to gain access to Eglon in a private audience and using both rhetoric and anatomy to execute his plan. With the leader assassinated, Ehud marshals the sons of Israel to bring salvation to his countrymen on the second level through a successful battle against the Moabite men. As both of these elements have been addressed at length previously, the judgment element is not discussed again. However, it is in the third area that salvation begins because it creates a casual link to the regicide of Eglon.

The narrator uses an economy of words and as such narrative comments are more than descriptive, they are clues to the plot structure. This is the case regarding the idols at Gilgal, when Ehud *(šāb)* "turned" from the idols.[76] He affected a characteristic repentance and resolve regarding those idols, literally a turning from the idols, *i.e.*, the

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[74] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 160.

[75] Jg. 10:13.

[76] שׇׁ בׅ. Jg. 3:18.

Canaanite way, and a turning toward YHWH, a necessary element in order for YHWH to provide salvation. After Eglon had been killed, Ehud approaches the idols one more time on his way to rallying the troops. Most have translated the verb *('ābar)* as "he passed" or "he crossed over" the idols making it a temporal geographic reference.[77] However, when examined in a Deuteronomic context, the verb is better translated as "he transgressed" or "he broke" the idols.[78] His faith is now matched with commensurate works and the ensuing battle is a *fait accompli*.

Judges 3:31

Of the five main elements of examination, it is only the fourth element that is clearly evident in the Shamgar story. This man also saved Israel, with the focus being on the word "also," thus connecting Shamgar with the other deliverers. The story is concise although a bit terse. The salvation comes when Shamgar strikes down six hundred men with an ox-goad. The event is difficult to place within the Judges chronology, but since he is mentioned alongside Jael and in the context of following Ehud, this event in the story occurs as presented after the Moabite oppression and before the Canaanite oppression. This places it at some point before 1150 BCE, which is accepted as the date of Barak's victory over Sisera's forces.[79]

Judges 4:1 – 5:31

As with most of the stories, the emphasis is placed on the salvation event. Unlike the other narratives, the question exists as to who saved Israel. Was it Deborah, Barak, or Jael? The narrator does not say. No one was raised up as a deliverer. It is true that Deborah was already judging Israel; but, at no point does the text state that she or the other two saved Israel.

> This phenomenon motivates him [the reader] to examine the partial degree of participation of the human heroes, leading him to the conclusion that the true savior is God, and that it is He who pulls the strings activating the historical heroes of human existence.[80]

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[77] עָבַר H. Jg. 3:26.

[78] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 160. Dt. 17:12; Josh. 23:16; Jg. 2:20; and 2 Kg. 18:12.

[79] van Selms, 297.

[80] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 199.

This is substantiated by the narrator reporting that *"Elohim* subdued on that day Jabin, the king of Canaan before the sons of Israel."[81]

The complexity of this story contributes to the riddle of who is the deliverer, causing the reader to focus on the macro-character. In this manner, the reader hears YHWH speaking through the prophetic word of Deborah, so that Barak is summoned and a tribal militia is mustered. There is no question that YHWH is orchestrating all of the events. He commands through Deborah. He explains that He will draw out Sisera and his army to the appointed battle site and give him into Barak's hand. Although, the plot becomes complicated, Sisera is given into Barak's hand through the agency of Jael. YHWH is still at work and the prophecies of Deborah though appearing to conflict are fulfilled precisely.

The salvation event occurs in a single day. The forces of Israel led by Barak and accompanied by Deborah are gathered at Mount Tabor. Sisera's forces relocate from Harosheth-hagoyim to the Kishon River. Although it is speculation, one wonders whether the reconnaissance report told to Sisera that ignores the prophetess of YHWH contributes to the battle that Sisera had ignored the divine element. Yet, Deborah represented YHWH faithfully in her declaration to Barak that YHWH had gone before him, and that this was the day in which YHWH had given Sisera into Barak's hands. The battle at the Kishon River allowed the river to join the fighting as well as the stars from heaven, indicating this was heavenly initiated and not of earthly origin. In hyperbolic fashion, and ambiguity the question remains whether the smiting of the Canaanite army with the edge of the sword was solely accomplished by YHWH before Barak arrived or that He brought them into confrontation with Israel's army.[82] In order to fulfill the prophecy, Sisera was allowed to escape and he met his death at the hands of Jael, a non-Israelite. The death of Sisera is not ascribed to YHWH and most likely because of the deceptiveness involved. However, one enemy remained and that was King Jabin. He was subdued by *Elohim* and destroyed by the sons of Israel.

YHWH is presented near and afar. His nearness is shown through prophetic utterances and his own warfare involvement. His distance is shown in his silence and absence in scenes that controvert his character. His judgments are precise and fulfilled with immediacy.

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[81] Jg. 4:23.

[82] Ibid., 209.

Judges 6:1 – 8:28

In a change to the normal paradigm, following Israel's cry to YHWH because of the Midianite oppression, YHWH did not immediately raise up a deliverer. In this instance he sends a prophet who rebukes Israel for their sin. He is followed by the angel of YHWH coming to Gideon. The normal formula is not used; however, that Gideon is commissioned to deliver Israel from the hand of Midian becomes an expansion of the formula.[83] The story is prolonged rather than allowing the deliverer to quickly execute his mission. Gideon requires verification from YHWH through various signs and tests. But, as a prophetic action, Gideon must remove the idolatrous influence from his own encampment. As this is accomplished, he enters the ranks of Othniel and Ehud, being clothed by the Spirit of YHWH. But different than his predecessors, even though he has erected a Yahwistic altar, he questions YHWH's plan and through his own initiative strengthens his own hands with a substantial army. Gideon is unaware that YHWH is able to bring deliverance by Himself. Only in the reduction of his army and the battle plan with *shofars*, torches, and pitchers do they all witness the salvation of YHWH when He sets the sword of one Midianite against another throughout their camp. The salvific work of YHWH is tainted by Gideon's actions. Heretofore, the *leitword* "save" or "deliver" has been used six times by the narrator and "in every case the same point is made either directly or implicitly: it is Yahweh, not Gideon or the Israelites themselves, who saves Israel."[84] As such, not only does Gideon not save Israel he does not judge Israel either. Instead, the judge who receives the most from YHWH alters the paradigm by his actions and ultimately becomes the judge "who does most harm to Israel" with his values that conflict with YHWH.[85] Thus, it is not surprising that YHWH disappears from the story as Gideon relies on human strength in which he judges the men of Ephraim, Succoth, Penuel, the kings of Midian, his army, and his own family.

Judges 8:29 – 9:57

Ironically, in this story of Abimelech, salvation is far from the characters. There is no divine deliverer *per se*. However, there is an evil spirit that antithetically fulfills the role through actions that deconstruct the characters in the story with the antagonists

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[83] Ibid., 251.

[84] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 152. Jg. 6:14, 15, 36, 37; 7:2, and 7.

[85] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 68-69.

killing one another, which is finally attributed to *Elohim* as a repayment for earlier evil action by Abimelech and the men of Shechem. No one judged Israel; but Abimelech did ruthlessly rule it. No one was raised up as a deliverer; but, an anonymous woman from Thebez from the roof top heights of a tower affected deliverance by her act of crushing Abimelech's skull with an upper millstone.

Judges 10:1-5

For the first time in the Tola and Jair story, the minor judge paradigm overlaps with the major judge paradigm, with both paradigms sharing the element of salvation. The narrator reports that Tola arose to save Israel. Grammatically, this stage is reflected with an infinitive *(lᵉhôšîaʿ)* rather than as a verb.[86] As such, there is the question of whether YHWH caused Tola to rise to this position. Instead, of the traditional phraseology, the narrator states that Tola judged Israel. There are parallels with the Jair story. Although both judges arose, there is an ellipsis of the infinitive with Jair, although the form implies he also arose to save Israel. He also is described as having judged Israel rather than delivering Israel. Although not explicit, salvation is implied in the summary notices.

Judges 10:6 – 12:7

There is a real question as to what type of salvation that Israel actually experienced in the Jephthah cycle. The major judge paradigm only loosely connects the elements of the story and the typical formulaic statements are becoming less frequent. In the stern divine rebuke, YHWH sarcastically tells Israel to let the gods they have chosen deliver them in their time of distress.[87] Although Israel did not turn immediately back to the pagan gods, through the divine response, the narrator leaves the reader a clue that it is not going to be YHWH who chooses the deliverer, but rather He will leave the people to their own devices. As such, the elders of Gilead approached their estranged kinsman Jephthah, who through shrewd negotiations accepted their offer to be both a military and civil leader. In one aspect, salvation came to Jephthah in his reinvestiture into the community at a place of leadership. The bargaining skills that aided Jephthah in his rise to power proved to be ineffective in the political disputation with the Ammonite king.

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[86] 𝔐 לְהוֹשִׁיעַ. Jg. 10:1

[87] Jg. 10:14.

Nevertheless, the dialogue of Jephthah's messengers recounting historical victories attributed to YHWH set the stage for a deliverance event. This expectation is confirmed by the presence of the Spirit of YHWH coming upon Jephthah. There is no reticence to go to battle requiring signs as with Gideon. Instead, a conditional vow is made imploring divine assistance. Apparently, Jephthah did not recognize that the divine Spirit was an earthly manifestation of deity. At this point, whether victory is credited to the Spirit, to YHWH, the vow, or a combination of these three is moot since victory did occur. Israel experienced deliverance through Jephthah against the Ammonites, who suffered a great slaughter. What remained of the Ammonites was subdued by Israel. The narrative does not give any indication of elapsed time from the point of Jephthah taking the leadership role and the subjugation of the Ammonites; however, the implication is that his deliverance was quick once it was set in motion.

Judges 12:8-15

There is no evidence in the Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon stories that the major paradigm was at work. Consequently, there is no mention of any deliverance activity during the period only peaceful activity during the time they each judged Israel.

Judges 13:1 – 16:31

There is a real question as to whether there was a stage of deliverance in the Samson cycle. The typical elements associated with a deliverer are missing from the story. Samson was never raised up. Of course, that point could be argued because there was an annunciation and divine impregnation of Samson's mother. Yet, of all the deliverers, Samson is the one who has a recurrent visitation by the Spirit of YHWH. But, this might also suggest he went through periods where there was not divine empowerment as the Spirit had departed and it was necessary for the Spirit to return prior to specific feats of strength. Amit suggests that Samson had redemptive powers because of his *Nazirite* status, the stirring by the Spirit, the repetitive Spirit's mighty coming, and his two prayers.[88] Even so, there is no act of deliverance. Samson only performs feats of strength and killing sprees. It is remarkable that he could tear a young lion roaring toward him as if it were a young goat. It is also remarkable that Samson could reach into the carcass of the lion that has a swarm of bees and implicitly not be stung when he pulled the

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[88] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 276-280.

honey out of the carcass with his hand. Then there is the time that in his anger he killed thirty men in Ashkelon. But his extraordinary feats did not stop there. It is amazing that he would be able to catch three hundred foxes and tie them tail to tail with a torch without himself being injured and still have the animals run into the field.[89] Then he killed ruthlessly another large number of Philistines with a great slaughter. But if that were not impressive enough, the narrator reports that he killed a thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey. Samson refers to this act as YHWH having given a great deliverance by the hand of His servant.[90] However, the context of the monologue shows that Samson did not have a proper view of reality. The Spirit of YHWH may have been there, but was this truly YHWH's handiwork, since He is absent from the story until Samson calls upon Him after the killing spree? Nonetheless, the saga does begin with the narrator reporting that YHWH was seeking an occasion against the Philistines.[91] Samson's last feat of freedom was to uproot the doors and posts of the Gaza city gate and remove them to a mountain near Hebron. It is ironic that in this event, Samson only shames his enemy and misses an opportunity to kill any Philistines.[92] Perhaps, in this missed opportunity lies a narrative clue that there will be no more deliverance feats by the deliverer.

In each of the three deceptions to Delilah, Samson broke through the temporary bindings and withstood the Philistines trying to capture him. The narrator is silent as to whether there was any real confrontation or loss of life during these three events. With Samson's strength discovered and him having been shaved he was unable to perform any other feats until his hair began to grow again. In the last feat of his life, as a prisoner, Samson did not trust in any magical power in his hair. Instead he called out to God in prayer and performed the greatest feat by destroying the temple of *Dagon* and killing more Philistines in his death than he had in his life.[93] Unfortunately, there is never any indication that Israel ever had reprieve from the Philistines during the time of Samson.

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[89] Margalith, "Samson's foxes," 225.

[90] Jg. 15:18.

[91] Jg. 14:4.

[92] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 282.

[93] Frazer, *Folklore in the Old Testament*, 272-274.

Stage of Shalom

The final stage is peace. Unfortunately, the narrator refrains from using the primary word *(šālôm)* peace to describe this stage.[94] Instead, the verb used in formulaic statement *(wattišqōṭ)* describes rest or quiet.[95] The use of this word gives an indication that this stage is temporary and not an element of the ultimate divine plan. "*Shalom* carries the sense of power to live, protection against the forces of death and destruction, and divine favor in all undertakings."[96] In one sense, Israel does experience *shalom* in that there is a period of freedom from the cessation of warfare or hostility. That the word *shalom* is not used formulaically allows the narrator to portray a period in which idealized peace is not realized because of Israel's sin and the Messianic deliverer has not arisen to judge Israel.[97]

Judges 3:7-11

The first deliverance by Othniel results in the land having rest for forty years.

Judges 3:12-30

The second deliverance, by Ehud restores peace to the land, with it being undisturbed for eighty years.

Judges 3:31

The author does not associate any period of peace with Shamgar.

Judges 4:1 – 5:31

Using the same formulaic language as with Othniel and Ehud, after the Canaanite oppression, the land of Israel was undisturbed for forty years.

Judges 6:1 – 8:28

At the center point of the narrative, after the deliverance through Gideon, the land once again was undisturbed for forty years. A central symbol of peace is the altar that

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[94] H שׁלוֹם. The word is used elsewhere in Jg. 4:17; 6:23, 24; 8:9; 11:31; 18:6; 19:20; 20:26; and 21:4.

[95] H וַתִּשְׁקֹט. It is parsed as *Qal* Imperative 3FS, with a *Waw* consecutive.

[96] Hamlin, 94. Num. 6:24-26.

[97] Isa. 2:4; 9:7; and 11:6-9.

Gideon erected that he named YHWH is peace. But, the altar serves as an ironic foil for future activities that literally removes peace from the remainder of the narrative.

> The builder of this altar makes war upon Yahweh's people and leads them from Yahweh, from *šālôm* under Yahweh to worship of human constructs, implicitly the opposite of *šālôm*.[98]

Judges 8:29 – 16:31

Once Gideon has died, the narrative not only introduces an antithetical character of Abimelech, but the whole cyclical structure is altered with future judges. For whatever reason, Amit sees in the story of Samson "the cyclical wheel of sin, punishment, crying out and delivery is broken."[99] Although it is true that the cyclical motif is not used in the epilogues, the motif begins to deteriorate as does the nature of Israelite fidelity and character of the judges, once Abimelech rises to power. Even what follows is a different pattern of minor judges, Jephthah, more minor judges, and Samson.[100] Never again in the hero narratives does the stage of *shalom* occur. As a result, the narrator implies "that Israel in her ongoing apostasy has forfeited God's rest even though there is yet a semblance of normalcy in that certain leaders still manage to judge."[101]

At this point, there is a new stage that is emerging which is one of internal tribal Israelite oppression. Gideon had opened Pandora's Box and unleashed the seed of internecine war with his actions against the men of Succoth and Penuel. Then, this *leitmotif* is carried past reasonable boundaries by his son Abimelech. Abimelech begins his reign by killing his half-brothers. The fratricide at the level of the family is then raised to the clan level, when Abimelech's reign of terror murders the Shechemites and the people of the tower of Shechem.[102] Only by his own death are the people of Thebez spared their life. The intertribal disputes disappear in the Tola and Jair stories. But, once again, the *leitmotif* appears with Jephthah. He may have brought deliverance to Israel by subduing the Ammonites, but through the sword of his mouth he pierced his daughter and removed peace from the household.[103] Just as Abimelech inflicted violence at the

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[98] Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, 68.

[99] Amit, *The Book of Judges*, 296.

[100] As this has already been addressed, no comment is made on the debate of whether Jephthah should be included as a minor judge or a major judge.

[101] Hamlin, 157.

[102] Jg. 9:34-49.

[103] Jg. 11:30-39.

household level so did Jephthah. But, the parallel continues because Jephthah when confronted by the angry men of Ephraim does not bring peace to this confrontation. Instead, he fights against them and an internecine battle occurs at the Jordan River resulting in the loss of 42,000 Ephraimite lives.

When the minor judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon appear it is as if the destructive spiral is temporarily frozen in action for twenty five years. There is no mention of peace, but likewise there is no mention of internal or external oppression. But, the action resumes with Samson; however, peace and rest are elusive. They are not even implied in the Samson story. The closest reference to rest is the meaning of Manoah's name, but that might as well be a sarcastic paronomasia because there was no rest. The final words of Samson "Let me die" sadly end his life with him being buried in his father's tomb. He finally has rest, but Israel does not.

The Theocentric Cycle in Judges

If Hebrew is to be viewed as a verbal language, then it stands to reason that grammatically the action would garner more attention than the direct object.[104] The traditional Hellenistic view often applies Greek language methodology on Hebrew texts. Judges is an example of this based on the exegetical approach that examines the anthropocentric approach, whereby humanity often is in the grammatical role of the direct object. Perhaps, the emphasis should be shifted grammatically to the verbal element of the divine subject.

The theocentric focus places YHWH in the position of judge. As earlier addressed, it should be remembered that the text identifies Him as a judge, whereas the human representatives are never given this designation. Block recognized this approach and noted the author's emphasis is

> [P]laced on YHWH's response to Israel's apostasy and the cyclic pattern of his initial anger, his delivering them into the hands of the enemy, his sensitivity to their cry for help, and his appointment of a savior-judge.[105]

The author has covertly hidden a picture of YHWH and His relationship to Israel in the introductory vignette regarding Caleb. This is much more than a story about a fatherly character and the betrothal of his daughter Achsah to the first and only unsullied judge in the book. Two distinct themes emerge from a simple story. First, the androcentric and gynocentric perspectives require a marital merger.

> Caleb and Othniel are thinking about conquering land, but Achsah has a concern of her own: settling down on the land and making a living. Settlement is just as important as conquest.[106]

The two gender perspectives are both needed to properly fulfill the covenant directive, and this marital union illustrates this. But, a second theme is also apparent. It pictures metaphorically the marriage of YHWH with His people. This image is later challenged by Israel playing the harlot with the Canaanite gods. However, as a thematic ideal, that when the behavior of Israel is wedded with the judgment of YHWH and the endeavors of Israel is linked to His power, "there Israel becomes the bride of her LORD, and things

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[104] This is based on the assertion that Hebrew is a verbal language whereby the verbs play the more significant role in contrast to Greek as a nominative language whereby the nouns and participles have the greater emphasis.

[105] Block, "The Period of the Judges," 46.

[106] Gane, 17-18.

begin to be as they ought."[107] With this vignette as a guiding theme for the book it is important to note that the theocentric design creates a similar but different pattern of response, as reflected in Figure 88.[108] Consequently, His judgment is examined based on the four stages of His anger, delivering Israel into the hands of the enemy, sensitivity to the cry of help, and the appointment of a savior-judge.

FIGURE 88

ANTHROPOCENTRIC AND THEOCENTRIC PATTERNS

The Pattern of Israel's Experience during the Premonarchic Period	The Pattern of Yahweh's Reaction during the Premonarchic Period

Apostasy	Anger
Deliverance Oppression	Deliverance Punishment
Groaning	Change of Mind
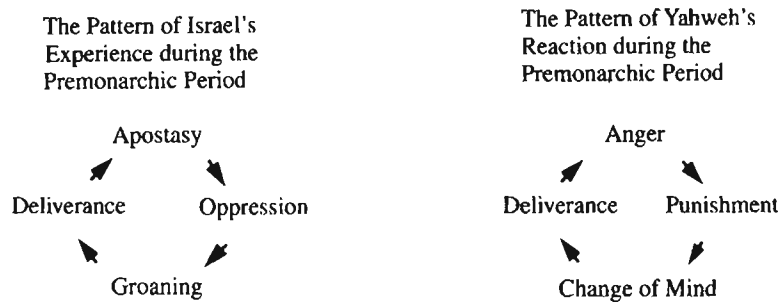
Stage of His Initial Anger

The spiritual condition of Israel is elucidated in Prologue-B. Israelite apostasy initiates a cause and effect relationship with YHWH becoming angry. His anger is described as *('ap).*[109] The narrator presents in parallelism the manner in which divine anger is expressed with its commensurate consequences (fig. 89).[110] The type of depredation to which Israel became subjected is presented (A-a and A-b) and then paralleled (A-a' and A-b') to reveal their powerlessness to resist divine anger which the author elaborates through the subsequent verse (A-b'-α, β, γ, and γ').[111] Even with the fiery imagery of YHWH's anger, the narrator presents this judgmental response as an initial action. Thus, YHWH's initial anger is a form of judgment; but, the divine nature is not one of continual anger; but of longsuffering mercy and love that essentially directs the pattern of judgment.

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[107] Wilcock, 24.

[108] The diagram comes from Block, *NAC*, 135.

[109] אַף אֱ. Jg. 2:14, and 20.

[110] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 109. The general design of these verses is adhered; however, modifications have been made at two points. First, the second level sigla of Jg. 2:14 are presented by him as first level and do not include the initial phrase (section A). The third level structure he presents as second level (a-b-c-d-e) and does not schematically present it connected to (A-b') although he connects it thematically in his narrative.

[111] Ibid., 109.

FIGURE 89

PARALLEL STRUCTURE OF DIVINE ANGER

A   And the anger of YHWH was hot against Israel (2:14a)
   a   He gave them into the hand of plunderers (2:14b)
      b   and they plundered them (2:14c)
  a'   and He sold them into the hand of their enemies round about (2:14d)
      b'   and they could no longer stand before their enemies. (2:14e)
        α   Whenever they marched out (2:15a)
          β   the hand of YHWH was against them for evil (2:15b)
            γ   as YHWH had warned (2:15c)
            γ'   and as YHWH had sworn to them (2:15d)
      b"   and they were in dire straits (2:15e)

Prologues

The author has presented in the double-prologue a methodology of divine judgment characterized by three different levels. The first judgment is a military directive which also embodies divine enabling to accomplish the directive of removing the Canaanites from the land.[112] The second judgment is causally related to the first. So, at Bochim a legal accusation is made with indisputable corroborating testimony.[113] The narrator leaves both the reader and Israel in a state of suspense because the sentence is not given, at least not until the third judgment. This opens the door to speculation of whether the weeping at Bochim will be enough to arrest the execution of the sentence. But when the third judgment appears, YHWH's anger has been enraged not so much because of the failure to accomplish His first directive, but because it was not followed the Israelites cut covenant with those Canaanites who should have been removed from the land. This divine anger produces a royal decree, which is Israel's legal and binding sentence.[114] The judgment is indeed just and fair because YHWH works the elements of His directive into the sentence. Since Israel did not remove the Canaanites and possess the land, they will be required to experience the land with the Canaanites and their detrimental influence and because the narrator shows us that Israel wanted to co-exist with the Canaanites, YHWH gives them what they desire. But only when Israel comes to term that their desires were inappropriate, which He teaches them through delivering them into the hands of the enemy which is what they deserve, does He give them what they need which is His mercy and deliverance. The prologue is helpful in that through three initial judgments, the

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[112] Jg. 1:2.

[113] Jg. 2:2.

[114] Jg. 2:20-22; and Wilcock, 26, 30.

divine pattern is presented which will be implemented in the following narratives as the stages of divine action are categorized.

Hero Narratives

The Othniel narrative mentions that the anger of YHWH was kindled against Israel.[115] However, the narrator does not describe that anger. In the subsequent Ehud narrative, the narrator only implies divine anger, which may be deduced from the action of strengthening Eglon against Israel. Likewise, there is no mention of divine anger in the stories of Shamgar, Deborah/Barak/Jael, or Gideon. At the onset of the Gideon story, the prophet expresses divine displeasure, but the tenor of his voice does not disclose whether anger was present.[116]

The mention of Tola and Jair pass before the reader and the Jephthah narrative is prefaced by the anger of YHWH burning against Israel.[117] The narrator does not mention divine anger again with the Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and Samson stories.

Epilogues

The epilogues are devoid of this divine character trait.

Stage of His Delivering into the Hands of the Enemy

Hebrew biblical narrative is known for its terse economy of words. The brevity to which the narrator reports divine action of initial anger should not be equated with the response being inconsequential. Divine anger is more than humanity can bear. If no man can stand in His presence (when on good terms); how much more so when He burns with anger because of sinful man! The tender mercies of YHWH come in His judgment because wrath is tempered by a human referent. The full extent of divine wrath is escaped. Even in the cruelty of man, nothing can approximate His fearful wrath. Israel deserves justice but the judgment of YHWH is merciful grace. Initial anger subsides and YHWH delivers Israel into the hands of their enemy. Should the enemy that He allows overstep their boundary of executing divine justice, the sovereignty and righteousness of YHWH is the basis for intervention.

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[115] Jg. 3:8.

[116] Jg. 6:8-10.

[117] Jg. 10:7.

Prologues

Within the first prologue, the motif of delivering Israel into the hands of the enemy is oblique and may not be noticed on the first reading. However, looking at it once again following a full reading of the text, the reader notices that non-Israelite people groups and nations are living within the promised territory of conquest. These included the Canaanites and their city-states of Bezek, Hebron, Debir, Hormah, Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron, Beth-Shean, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, Megiddo, Gezer, Kitron, Nahalol, Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, Rehob, Beth-shemesh, Beth-anath, as well as holdings in the hill country, and the Negev; the Perizzites; the Jebusites of Jerusalem; the Hittites of Luz; and the Amorites in Mount Heres, Aijalon, and Shaalbim. There is the historical question of whether this first chapter should be placed within the Joshua generation. If this is the case, then the existence of these city-states are outside the scope of YHWH using these nations and people who were dispossessed in the early tribal conquest. Nonetheless, the narrator places the story after the death of Joshua. But in either case of being during or after the Joshua generation, those city-states and peoples who were not dispossessed are utilized by YHWH in His test of Israel and His delivering over Israel to them is implied. Consequently of the listing of cities given, only Bezek, Hebron, Debir, and Hormah could be removed.[118]

The summary of the plot of Judges is told in the second prologue. From this, the reader learns as stated previously in Figure 89, that the divine action following His anger was characterized by giving them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them and by selling them into the hands of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies.[119] From the narrative, the impression is that YHWH was both aloof and involved in the enemy subjugation. As the theme of oppression was previously addressed, only a comment will suffice. Generally, YHWH allowed the enemy to act as His agent doing His dirty work and keeping His hands clean; however, as the prologue implies YHWH becomes the enemy of Israel in that wherever Israel went, the hand of YHWH was against them for evil. So, by allowing the nations to remain that Joshua did not dispossess, the plot is oriented for Israel to be delivered to the various nations for divine judgment.

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[118] By using the term "during the Joshua generation" it would necessarily imply that it was during the time of the generation that outlived Joshua.

[119] See Figure 89 "Parallel Structure of Divine Anger," page 670. Jg. 2:14.

Hero Narratives

In the Othniel story, the narrator relates that YHWH sold Israel into the hands of Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia.[120] The evil of the generation in the Ehud story prompted YHWH to strengthen the hands of Eglon, king of Moab. Although there is no direct agency, providence did allow for Eglon to amass military might with a Moabite-Ammonite-Amalekite confederacy. This strengthening allowed the Moabite king to possess the city of palms and to exact tribute from Israel for eighteen years. In the Shamgar story, there is no indication that Israel had been delivered into the hands of the Philistines. However, in the Deborah/Barak/Jael story, YHWH clearly sold Israel into the hand of Jabin, king of Hazor, who with his 900 iron chariots oppressed Israel severely for twenty years.[121] The narrator slightly alters the formula and gives Israel into the hands of Midian for a period of seven years in the Gideon story. YHWH allowed the hand of Midian to prevail against Israel during this time. In fact, this nomadic oppressor was characterized as an innumerable host of locusts that would devastate the land and steal their livestock. The Abimelech story is closely connected to Gideon, even though it departs from the cyclical pattern. Abimelech usurped a monarchal role. The absence of YHWH in the story to this event implies it was permissible to fulfill the role of judgment, thus allowing Israel to deliver itself over to its own internal oppression because of the spiritual harlotry. The familiar phraseology of Israel's apostasy appears, but the formula of YHWH delivering Israel into the hand of an enemy is implied. Since the narrator does not mention any oppressive force in the stories of Tola and Jair, obviously there is no report of Israel being delivered into the hands of the enemy. However, in the ambiguity of the statement that Tola arose to save Israel, there is the question of who Tola was saving Israel from. This could have been an unreported divinely raised up enemy or it could be another internal salvation, where through his judging he saved Israel from itself. In the Jephthah cycle, YHWH responds again to Israelite apostasy by selling Israel into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites. The circumstances surrounding the Philistine oppression that ensued is ambiguous; however, the Ammonite oppression would continue for eighteen years.

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[120] Jg. 3:8.

[121] Jg. 4:2-3.

There is no narrative evidence that there was any oppressive force against Israel during the time of Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. As such, this stage of divine activity is not applicable during these three stories.

In the final deliverance story, YHWH again gives the people up to Philistines as an oppressor. This time it is for forty years.

Epilogues

The familiar narrative pattern has disintegrated once the reader reaches the double epilogue. It mirrors the disintegration of Israelite covenantal society and its obedience to YHWH. There are no enemy nations represented in the final five chapters of the book. Instead, YHWH has indirectly judged them by handing them over to another enemy – the taskmaster of sin. Sin abounds in these stories and has such deep rooted control that families would turn against themselves, whether at the nuclear family level or at the tribal level. Normally, the initial anger of YHWH would precede Him handing Israel over to their enemy. In the first epilogue, it is ironic that the tribal factions of Dan in their anger would violate Micah and threaten warfare. In the second epilogue, the misdirected anger of a Levite is part of a chain of events in which YHWH is indirectly involved. The Levite, angry with his circumstances and unwilling to accept his culpable responsibility shifts that anger until it foments with the tribes. Divine anger is not pictured, but His direction of sanctioning the intertribal warfare prejudices the account. He knew what would happen and still judged Judah, Benjamin, and the others demanding of them the ultimate price – death.

Stage of His Sensitivity to the Cry of Help

To quote the familiar passage from Romans 6 and not complete the verse does not give a proper theocentric view. In fact, He is a loving deity. "But, the gift of YHWH is eternal life in Messiah *Yeshua* our *Adonai.*"[122] Whether it is Pauline or Johannine theology or the words of the *Torah*, the love of YHWH is indisputable. One need only know John 3:16 to understand this truth. YHWH our *Elohim* by His nature desires reconciliation. It is humanity and sin that creates that enmity with deity. Yet, it is the atoning propitiatory work of *Yeshua* that has made the way. The very divine nature is one that by our standards is anthropopathically involved with man. If He knows about the

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[122] Rom. 6:23.

sparrow that falls to the ground and cares for it, how much more will the Heavens open wide for Him to see, hear, and vicariously experience the groanings of His people who under the yoke of sin cry out to Him!

Prologues

The book of Judges opens with Israel assembled after the death of their leader and inquiring of YHWH regarding who should go up first to fight against the Canaanites. In essence, this is a cry of help. YHWH is sensitive to their need, which incidentally is in line with His covenantal will. So, He responds immediately with an answer with the familiar *Übergabeformel*.

As the second chapter begins, Israel is reassembled at Bochim. Following their denunciation by the angel of YHWH, the people lifted up their voices and wept. According to the story reported by the narrator, this is the only time in which an Israelite cry is made in which YHWH does not respond immediately. In fact, the text is silent to His response to their weeping and sacrifices.

Later in the second prologue, when the inner life of Israel is told, the narrator expresses that YHWH was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them. Thus, the onus is upon divine sensitivity to the situation Israel is embroiled and to its feelings rather than to the content and genuineness of any repentance in their cry for help.

Hero Narratives

Although the narrator does not go into a lot of detail, it is apparent that YHWH is sensitive to the cry of Israel. He hears and immediately responds to the cry of the sons of Israel during their Mesopotamian oppression.[123] The exact phrase is repeated during the Moabite oppression.[124] Just as there is no evidence of divine anger or of delivering Israel to an enemy in the Shamgar story, neither is their evidence of an Israelite cry for help regarding the Philistines. The narrator returns to the same phrase he used earlier to describe the plea of help uttered during the Canaanite oppression.[125] The only significant

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[123] Jg. 3:9.

[124] Jg. 3:15.

[125] Jg. 4:3.

difference it is appended with the reason for their crying being related to a severe twenty year oppression most likely enforced by those driving the 900 iron chariots.

Although the same formula is used for Israel crying to YHWH in the Gideon story, there is a marked departure because YHWH does not respond to that action by raising up a deliverer.[126] Instead, He sends a prophet that indicts Israel and does nothing to remove their oppression.[127] YHWH is sensitive to Israel's cry, but for the first time in the story responds differently than what Israel anticipated.

> The effect of the prophet's speech is to caution us against drawing any simple equation between calling upon Yahweh and repentance...and to make it clear that the appeal is not a device by which Israel can automatically secure its future. To call upon Yahweh is to invoke a relationship, but this relationship...[is one which Israel] has not fulfilled.[128]

It can not be said that YHWH was not sensitive to Israel's situation during the time of Abimelech. He had obviously heard the prophetic fable of Jotham, but it was not for three years before he responded, which marks a difference also in the immediacy of response that had previously been observed.

When the narrator presents Tola and Jair, he has aborted his use of the previous major judge paradigm. As such, there is no mention of the first three elements of the stages of the theocentric cyclical paradigm. But, this is not to imply that there were no Israelite pleas made to YHWH or that YHWH was insensitive to Israel during this time. Rather this was not an element the narrator desired to highlight in these transitional stories.

How does one adequately measure divine sensitivity? The Jephthah story brings this question into focus. If sensitivity means that YHWH hears the cries of Israel, then certainly He is sensitive to Israel and their great distress in the Jephthah cycle.[129] But, the narrative paradigm is altered and the actions of YHWH are contrary to what the reader expects, although not theologically contrary to what Israel deserves. YHWH responds to Israel by describing past deliverance events as His response to Israelite cries to Him in times of their oppression. In fact, the divine statement "Yet, you have forsaken Me and served other gods; therefore I will deliver you no more" appears to be completely insensitive to their situation.[130] In fact, the next statement telling them to return to their

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[126] Jg. 6:6-7.

[127] Jg. 6:8-10.

[128] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 145.

[129] Jg. 10:9-12.

[130] Jg. 10:13.

pagan gods is one of ridicule. The tenor of the dialogue is harsh and lacking compassion. The response of Israel was one of repentance. The narrator describes YHWH's inner life stating "His soul was short with the misery of Israel."[131] Rather than read into the story, Polzin attaches value to the verb recognizing YHWH's actions as one of weary annoyed impatience with Israel and its pleas.[132] Alternatively, it also means "that YHWH grew impatient with those who were troubling Israel."[133] The question is whether the story is being viewed on its own, thus the second interpretation, or in the greater context of the book of Judges, the first interpretation. To simply move to the next stage of the story without understanding the divine judgment is to miss the point.

> Yahweh's words in [10:]12b-13c clearly imply that the putting away of foreign gods is part of the routine with which he has become all too familiar from previous experience. His complaint is not that Israel has failed in the past to back up its cry by putting away its other gods, but rather that on each previous occasion, after deliverance has been granted, Israel has abandoned him for these gods again.[134]

Nonetheless, divine sensitivity is implied in the story based on the events that transpire. As with Israel, it should be noted that "our hope does not rest in the sincerity of our repentance [although important] but in the intensity of Yahweh's compassion."[135] The question remains as to whether Israel will experience His sensitivity through positive or negative judgments.

In the stories of the minor judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, since there is no mention of Israel ever being oppressed during there twenty five year consecutive judgeships, by default there is no mention of any Israelite cries to YHWH. In fact, deity is absent from the story altogether. Because Ibzan followed after Jephthah and Israel made an impassioned plea prior to Jephthah's six year judging period it may be inferred that the sensitivity to the misery of Israel extended into this era.

There is no plea for help by Israel in the Samson story despite a forty year Philistine oppression. Only when Samson was in dire straits did he twice call upon YHWH for help, but as has been discussed earlier, it was for personal reasons rather than national interests. Even with the downward spiral of events in the Judges narrative, especially after Samson has been blinded, imprisoned, and denuded of strength, there is a ray of hope. Perhaps, even unnoticed, *albeit* short, Samson's hair began to grow, and with

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[131] Jg. 10:16.

[132] Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 177.

[133] Gunn and Fewell, 113.

[134] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 46.

[135] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 136.

that the reader has an expectation of further action.[136] Crenshaw has noted, "the recovery of Samson's lost honor is in no way related to the regrowth of hair, but stems from divine interference in the course of human events."[137] The situation is desperate and no one cries out to YHWH. But through the simplicity of Samson's hair growing again, divine sensitivity to the situation is implicitly felt, even if it only results in a temporary regional respite.

Epilogues

The situation during the epilogues does not appear as if YHWH is interested in Israel. It appears to be a mirrored response because Israel was not interested in serving their deity; but doing what was right in their own eyes. The Danites did seek to know if their plans would be prosperous. However, they were asking this of *Elohim* through a priest who was acting outside of the appropriate cultic realm. It is doubtful that the priestly response came from YHWH, but from the priest himself. After all, the desire of the Danites to possess land was noble; but not outside their prescribed tribal allotment. In the second epilogue, assembled Israel was seeking YHWH again, but it is questionable whether their motives were truly pure of wanting to remove the "sin in the camp." The power of sin was the master and the tribes were reaping what they had sown. As their worship and response became appropriate YHWH was sensitive to their cry of help. Ironically, instead of being grateful for His help and responding to their cries, Israel blamed YHWH for the near annihilation of Benjamin. It is telling that while they were concerned for the 600 male Benjaminites in hiding, there was no remorse or concern for the devastation that was throughout Judah.

Stage of His Appointment of a Savior-Judge

The last stage of the theocentric cycle involved the appointment of a deliverer figure. The narrator does not fully disclose the contents of Israel's prayers for help. Only once did he let Israel admit they had sinned. But, in the discourse given, there is never any assertion that they asked YHWH for a judge or deliverer. Nevertheless, the wisdom of YHWH was to give Israel what they requested – deliverance. Israel was interested in deliverance. The divine response was to raise up a deliverer, who would deliver them

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[136] Jg. 16:22.

[137] Crenshaw, "The Samson Saga," 501-502.

from the hands of the enemy they had been given over to by YHWH because of their sin. How ironic that the real deliverance they needed was from sin. But that is not something that Israel requested in its cries and supplications.

Prologues

The narrator begins the book by giving a temporal setting after the death of Joshua. For the ideal reader, the beginning is a transition from the previous book of Joshua, where he was the central savior-deliverer figure, just as Moses had been in the *Torah*. In the first chapter, the narrator presents tribal conquests and the composite tribes, especially in the case of Judah, appears to function in the place of a singular deliverer. This might be presumed from the notice of the congregational gathering when YHWH appoints Judah to go up first against the Canaanites and that the land had been given into his hand.[138] Individual Israelites only appear in the persons of Caleb, Othniel, and Achsah. Because the narrator presents the vignette of Othniel possessing the land of Debir, the concept of an individual deliverer is preserved, although the question of qualifications and manner of choice are not addressed.[139]

In the second chapter, the word "judge" is first used. These individuals are described as being raise up by YHWH and they would function to deliver Israel from the hands of those who plundered them.[140] The raising up of a judge meant that YHWH was with the judge and delivered Israel from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge.[141] The appointment naturally ceased with the death of the judge.

Hero Narratives

The Othniel narrative established the paradigm for the judge. This action of raising up Othniel is causally related to the Israelite cry to YHWH. But instead of using the substantive "judge" the narrator describes Othniel as a "deliverer" who "delivers" Israel.[142] A distinctive evidence of this divine appointment is the Spirit of YHWH came

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[138] Jg. 1:2.

[139] Jg. 1:12-13.

[140] Jg. 2:16.

[141] Jg. 2:18.

[142] Jg. 3:9.

upon him, and Othniel "judged" Israel.[143] There is no evidence for him requesting to be chosen; rather, it serves to suggest divine election.

Then, after the Moabite oppression, YHWH raised up Ehud to deliver Israel.[144] Unlike the paradigm, Ehud is not described as having the Spirit of YHWH upon him or having judged Israel. At some later time, Shamgar comes on the scene. He is described as saving Israel, but there is no divine appointment of him.[145] It appears that the paradigm is not being followed. Then, the narrator confronts the reader with a conundrum of three characters who have a role in the deliverance of Israel from Sisera and Jabin. As before, neither Deborah, Barak, nor Jael are described as having been raised up by YHWH and empowered by the Spirit of YHWH. The prophetess Deborah was judging Israel at that time; however, nothing is known about her rise to office.[146] Although the text does not use the word "deliverer" in the context of Barak, when acknowledged that he was divinely summoned by YHWH's word, the implication is that Deborah judged Israel and Barak delivered Israel.[147] On the other hand, Jael is ascribed honor and blessedness for her contribution; but YHWH is never mentioned in connection with Jael or her dubious actions.[148]

Following the cries of Israel because of the Midianite oppression, the narrator shows that despite the set paradigm, nothing should be assumed regarding the deity, as He is free to act according to His will. This is seen by YHWH sending a prophet first and only after that a deliverer. The appointment of another deliverer must be seen in the light of the message of the prophet: YHWH is the deliverer and Israel has disobeyed Him.[149] This message is clear to the ideal reader; however, it is doubtful that the micro-characters in the story understand the message. YHWH sends another representative and this time it is the angel of YHWH directly to Gideon in his hiding place. As earlier addressed, the appointment event is a type-scene that parallels the call of Moses, which is a subtle reminder of the *Torah*, which Israel is disobeying. Although no miraculous signs were given to Gideon to demonstrate before his oppressor, as was Moses, nevertheless, signs

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[143] Jg. 3:10.

[144] Jg. 3:15.

[145] Jg. 3:31.

[146] Jg. 4:4.

[147] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 134. Jg. 4:6-7.

[148] Jg. 4:9; and 5:24.

[149] Jg. 6:8-10.

were given to Gideon to validate the experience. The theophanic discourse shows that Gideon has been divinely chosen and will deliver Israel from the hand of Midian.[150] But before this appointment came into effect, the activity of removing the altar to *Baal* and erecting an altar to YHWH was necessary. As such, at least a day or so later, as Gideon began to deliver Israel, his appointment was confirmed by the Spirit of YHWH coming upon him.

The Abimelech story is a blight in the narrative. In no way may Abimelech be construed as a deliverer or a judge. He represents the antithesis of this role. From a theocentric perspective, YHWH did not elevate him to a leadership role as king; rather it was the leaders of Shechem. It may be inferred that His permissive will allowed this to occur; however, it should be seen in the context of Abimelech as an oppressive force rather than a deliverer. The narrator does not use these terms; but there are two candidates that fulfilled a deliverance role in the story. The first is the evil spirit.[151] This demonic element was sent by *Elohim* for the purpose of advancing the story through treacherous characters in order to lay blood guiltiness upon Abimelech for the incident of fratricide. Yet, the unnamed woman of Thebez is the true deliverer.[152] The evil spirit assisted the narrator in moving Abimelech to the tower of Thebez. The woman and the upper millstone were all in the right place at the right time to produce the fatal wounding of Abimelech. Her action resulted in the men of Israel returning to their places and the fulfillment of Jotham's fable through which *Elohim* repaid the wickedness of Abimelech.[153] In essence the inference is that she was raised up for such a time as this.[154]

The narrative resumes with the mention of the minor judges Tola and Jair.[155] The narrator states that Tola arose to save Israel; however the manner in which he arose or who appointed him is ambiguous. The summary note does not explain who he delivered Israel from only that he judged Israel for twenty three years. The story about Jair is even more oblique. He judged Israel for twenty two years; however, there is no mention as to him delivering Israel or how he came to be a judge. The absence of the divine name from these two stories brings into question whether the Israelite deity appointed them to this position.

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[150] Jg. 6:14.

[151] Jg. 9:23-24.

[152] Jg. 9:53.

[153] Jg. 9:55-56.

[154] Est. 4:14.

[155] Jg. 10:1-5.

The opacity of the Jephthah story calls into question divine participation. YHWH had forcefully said "I will deliver you no more."[156] There is no divine appointment type-scene only a modification of it through human invention by the elders of Gilead. These elders initiate the call and the people of Gilead make Jephthah their head and chief at a ceremony before YHWH at Mizpah.[157] Even so, the absence of divine dialogue suggests only passive involvement at best. This may be another situation of divine permissibility rather than sovereignty. The leadership terms also are strange. The people do not select Jephthah to be a deliverer or a judge. Divine action does not enter the story until the Spirit of YHWH comes upon Jephthah; but even in this and the subsequent scenes there is a deafening divine silence. Only in his death notice is Jephthah recorded as having judged Israel for six years; but it never says who appointed him as judge.[158]

When the narrative makes a transition to the remaining minor judges, we have a similar parallel to the earlier minor judges. Ibzan judged Israel for seven years. After him, Elon judged Israel for ten years. After him, Abdon judged Israel for eight years. Throughout this twenty five year period of successive judges there is no mention of deity or of how they assumed the role as judges. Only by the reference in the second prologue may we infer that they were raised up by YHWH.[159]

In the Samson story, by implication, YHWH is directly involved in the establishing of a deliverer through the epiphany and annunciation. However, the divine message that Samson would only *begin* to deliver Israel suggests the cycle has failed and YHWH's involvement is half-hearted because "the deity has begun to recognize the futility of the exercise" in this cycle.[160] Even though YHWH was seeking an occasion against the Philistines, Samson rejected moral and ethical considerations as his violent guerrilla warfare fulfilled his personal vendetta based on carnal desires.

> [Samson's] exercise of violence and revenge through this campaign does not achieve its ultimate purpose. It does not reestablish authority or renew the vitality of the nation. Rather it seems to perpetuate a seemingly endless cycle of violence and counter-violence.[161]

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[156] Jg. 10:13.

[157] Jg. 11:5-11.

[158] Jg. 12:7.

[159] Jg. 2:16. However, the verse refers to raising up judges to deliver Israel from those who plundered them; whereas there is no evidence that there were any oppressors in the time of the second set of minor judges, this verse may not apply.

[160] Bowman and Swanson, 62.

[161] Ibid., 65.

Ultimately, there is no deliverance for Israel. For twenty years, Israel has a judge but it does not experience deliverance. Whereas the theocentric paradigm has appointed a deliverer, there has been such a permutation of the pattern that the deliverer is transformed into a quasi-oppressor that constitutes a paradigmatic cycle of violence, which has already been seen in Gideon, Abimelech, and Jephthah.

Epilogues

The narrator opens and closes the epilogues with the familiar formulaic statement that there was no king in the land. During the time of these two pericopes, neither was there a judge or deliverer in the land. The Israelite response of doing what was right in its eyes was obviously not what was right in the eyes of YHWH. Accordingly, there is a profound absence of any deliverers in the epilogues.

A Complementary Approach

As has been demonstrated above, neither an anthropocentric nor theocentric cyclical approach adequately reflects the text of Judges. Instead, a complementary approach requires the integration of the human and divine designs.

In both the anthropocentric and theocentric approaches there is no question that the ultimate design is that Israel experience peace: an absence of warfare and completeness of soul (i.e. free of sin). From time to time, the land was undisturbed and had rest; but the scripture never says the people had peace. It is ironic that the land might have rest and be undisturbed; but the ones who should be experiencing rest never did.[162] "This rest is an opportunity that can be enjoyed only in ongoing fidelity to Yahweh."[163] But the rest was temporary. Neither peace nor covenantal relationship appear to be the motivation of Israel; rather a hell-bent desire to live a life of sin.

> The divine response is seen and supposedly presented as the just response called forth by the terms of the covenantal framework within which all behavior must be judged. The gracious pardon that completes each phase does not materially change the deteriorating course; the former only allows the latter to continue in the same direction. That God's grace does not call forth a directional change in Israel's history shows that the nation's sin is the mainspring powering the movement.[164]

By the time the reader reaches the epilogues, the narrator no longer focuses on the cyclical pattern either anthropocentrically or theocentrically. In fact, it appears with the cultic and moral chaos of the period that no longer focuses on external enemies that this may have been from a different historical period. Yet, the principle of divine judgment is still at work. There is no corporate deliverer or tribal leader. There is individual and personal leadership of each one-man kingdom. The individual Israelite is now his own judge. The pattern of subjugation is still at work. Now the individual is subjugated by his own action and by himself. The cultic idolatry and immoral activity has risen to such a level that it is superfluous for the narrator to interject to the reader the formulaic statement that Israel did evil in the eyes of YHWH. It is overt and obvious requiring no narratorial evaluation. However, the narrator does evaluate the situation with the "no king" formula and contrasts the earlier evil in the eyes of YHWH with doing what is right in their own eyes.

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[162] 1 Tim. 2:2.

[163] Davis, *Such A Great Salvation*, 54.

[164] Eslinger, 64.

In Judges 1-16 idolatry is seen as that which is evil in God's eyes' in Judges 17-21 as that which is right in the eyes of the Israelites. In other words, while Yahweh views idolatry as objectionable the Israelites see it as an acceptable practice.[165]

With the Israelites' having turned to their own devices, it is not surprising in the cry of Micah to the sons of Dan that there is no relief. Micah can not turn to his own idols; but, he does not even turn to YHWH for relief. It is an empty cry that does not elicit his desired result. Instead, Micah must return home empty handed and no doubt empty-spirited. This is a tragic irony that for Micah he has no place to turn for help and aid. Yet, this could have been an opportunity for divine judgment against Micah and his covenantal aberrations.

[B]y Deuteronomic standards his idolatry called for the death penalty. The Danites threatened to kill him and in so doing could have inadvertently served as the divine agents of judgment. But since they are pragmatists, not driven by any theological convictions, when the threat has achieved its purpose, they go on their way.[166]

From a narrative critical view, the design of the book of Judges shows a pattern of cause and effect. The repeated defection of the people is not the impetus for keeping the cyclical pattern going. In fact, the events of the book do not move in a cycle, although they may appear to move that way, rather they move "in a steadily declining spiral."[167] That apparent reality *(sic)* may serve an ideological design for the Israelite *Sitz im Leben*; but, the historiographical reality is that the narratives are not presented chronologically and the events of the ending are ironically one of the low points in the cultic life of premonarchic Israel. The re-telling of history by the Deuteronomist may suggest that these patterns and cycles existed. There is no pragmatic principle of cyclical action and response; but a creative illustration of cultic infidelity. The redaction of the prologue upon the stories of deliverance is eisegetical manipulation. For the redactors, their misunderstanding of YHWH underscores the very point of doing what is right in your own eyes. It is inappropriate to equate the Israelite response as one of repentance followed by deliverance. While this option is available for the people of YHWH, it is not part of the narrative or historical plot of the era. This is a dramatic story about YHWH using various forms of judgment in the life of Israel to draw Israel back to Himself.

Israel is chosen by God but too weak to live up to its calling. This conflict between choice and weakness creates the dramatic tension of the unfolding narrative. Yahweh is angry at Israel's apostasy but cares too much for it to let it disintegrate or be destroyed. The motif of calling upon Yahweh is handled in such a way as to preclude any simple connection between repentance and deliverance. In the face of Israel's persistent apostasy Yahweh

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[165] Wilson, "As You Like It," 76.

[166] Block, *NAC*, 509.

[167] Wilcock, 91.

does not so much dispense rewards and punishments as oscillate between punishment and mercy.[168]

The thought of an anthropocentric paradigm is an ideological construct that encourages rebellion and apostasy. While trying to redeem the concept by making it theocentric, the elements of that paradigm characterize YHWH inappropriately as a wrathful deity who expresses His anger, chastises the wicked, hears the cry for help, sends a deliverer; but, He Himself is aloof and uninvolved in a societal intercourse with His people. If all of the elements of both the anthropocentric and theocentric paradigms were consistently present in each of the stories, then there would be sufficient basis for proposing a complementary approach. Nevertheless, exegesis reveals that the formulaic statements are simply formulae and not the divine will. The judgment of YHWH upon His people must be formulated on some other basis than the cyclical model.

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[168] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 209.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

One of the problems that face the twenty-first century biblical critic is which methodology will be employed. Should the trend of synchronic study obligate the critic to follow the masses and ignore diachronic possibilities? As this research has demonstrated, the numerous historical and new critical paradigms each have a contribution to make toward the biblical text. The idea of one critical method having supremacy over the others is shallow scholarship. Yet, at the same time, had this research only endeavored to employ one critical model, although more focused in one stream of criticism, other important observations about the Judges text would have gone unnoticed and unaddressed.

It is true that an examination looking at most of the diachronic and synchronic possibilities is a tedious process for the researcher and for the reader of the research. There exists an inherent value with each of the models; however, in order to keep the thesis more manageable and focused a complementary approach that addresses only the needs of the various models as necessary should be considered. The academic endeavor of a doctoral thesis is Aristotelian and forms the basis for a rhetorical critical approach. For Aristotle, his two-fold rhetoric introduced the statement of the case or the thesis problem and then set out to present the proof to validate or invalidate the case.

This thesis began with the problem of identifying the peculiar judgment on God's people. This was further restricted by allowing the Book of Judges to provide the rubric for the examination. From the outset, a principle of causality is imposed upon both deity and humanity together in a symbiotic relationship. In addition, there is the presupposition that Judges is about a cyclical pattern of judgment which is the divine *modus operandi*. The syllogism suggests that the immutable Israelite deity operates by the same paradigm with His elect today. Thus, the cyclical pattern in Judges is actively in force and certain types of divine responses can be predicted based on the response of His elect, dependent upon the place they are within the cyclical paradigm. This further suggests that this archetype is the organizing principle for premonarchic Israel and the book of Judges. This

is a fallacious proposition because it imposes an anthropocentric formulation upon deity making the paradigmatic protocol an inscribed stone tablet to which deity must adhere.

Does the book of Judges prove that deity operates based upon this conception? Which of the hermeneutical possibilities will best accommodate the hypothesis? They all have value; but some critical systems are preferred over others. The older schemes of Source, Form, and Tradition criticism, while useful for background information, were not practical for specifics that relate to the hypothesis. Social-scientific methods that relate to archaeology, iconography, epigraphy, anthropology, and sociology were more helpful. However, these critical disciplines serve more to corroborate the historiography of the period and authenticate the hypothesis as a secondary witness. The disciplines that were most helpful are those that require a close reading of the text. Redaction, Rhetorical, and Narrative criticisms served this purpose the best. Although various reader-response theories informed the reading of the text, the intrinsic predisposition naturally subverts the text in favor of the reader; therefore these methodologies were not utilized. Even so, the marks of ideological, feminist, and structuralist theologians were felt.

Within Judges, the *leitwords* presented do not necessarily support the thesis suggested of the paradigm. At the same time, investigation revealed that other anticipated words did not function as *leitwords* because of their limited frequency in the text. The cyclical pattern present in the second Prologue and in the main body of stories reported maintained the traditional approach of an anthropocentric focus. Theological scholarship has preferred to make man the object of God's action; whereas the divine action may not be acknowledged in the same way the central character of Judges is overlooked because of His divine conspicuous invisibility. Yet, the theocentric cyclical emphasis has not gone completely unnoticed and the ultimate judging is shown when the theocentric view shows divinity action as paramount rather than the object acted upon. As the cycle was examined from both an anthropocentric and theocentric perspective, certain things became clear. Primarily, neither paradigmatic perspective captures the theme of the book nor encompasses divine activity. The cyclical pattern theory is not the organizing principle of the book or of divine activity.

Summary of Conclusions

Naturally, that brings me to summarize some of the conclusions which were reached in the course of the various diachronic and synchronic examinations. Most important are those conclusions about deity and about His people.

About God

God is actively involved in the life of His people. By His prerogative, He has chosen Israel. With that election, He has informed them that He is to be their *Elohim* in stark contrast to the gods of the nations surrounding them. He was not calling them to monotheism; but only to monolatry. The purpose for that calling is for intimacy and relationship in a *Torah* observant lifestyle. The early generation of Israelites were not that far removed from the Wilderness experience; yet, after Joshua and the elders died, it became clear that the people did not know YHWH or the great works that He had done.

The steadfast commitment that YHWH has to Israel is bound in the disclosure of His name. He is YHWH, the *Elohim* of your fathers, the *Elohim* of Abraham, the *Elohim* of Isaac, and the *Elohim* of Jacob (Israel). The book of Judges is not about a set premeditated plan. The narrative artistry of the book with its irony and ambiguity tell us more about YHWH than it does about premonarchic Israel. YHWH desires to be known. He wants Israel to be a light to the nations, so that others might be brought into the universal family. The patterns of divine action have a semblance of order and expectation; but it is more of an expression that the people of God truly do not know Him. There is no understandable rhyme or reason to the choices made of human deliverers. The common thread matches the Pauline theology of YHWH choosing the weak to show Himself strong. The choices He made were a part of His judgment. His judgments were peculiar.

Israel could not comprehend why YHWH acted the way He did. Neither did they understand His bizarre methodology by doing the unexpected. In a sense, YHWH was showing Israel how much (literally, how little) they knew of Him. Divine providence chose contrary paths to express judgment. The peculiarity of His judgment is not defined in the forms that judgment takes; but, rather in the singular motivation that prompts His action. YHWH has chosen a people for Himself. What YHWH desires is that those whom He has chosen, will willingly choose Him for themselves.

Covenant love does not create a barrier that prohibits YHWH from judging His people when they express aberrant behavior. Rather, it is the divine-human connecting point that tempers the judgment. At no time does deity create a situation that imposes a

required human response; yet, He does create situations whereby His people may respond to His direction without violating their will. YHWH is the ultimate judge and thus it is not surprising that the only substantival use of the term "judge" is in regard to deity and not some human representative or other intermediary.

The methodology of this divine Judge is peculiar because while He is overseeing the entire judicial process, His presence and activity in the life of Israel views is as an initiator of juridical action. This requires others to fulfill His intent. Nonetheless, Israel as the object of His judgment becomes ultimately its own judge. Divine omniscience and omnipotence is at work to aid Israel to judge itself against the *Torah* and the covenantal standard. While YHWH is indeed the suzerain of His covenant with Israel, the divine Judge reduces the barrier and causes Israel to indirectly and directly become its own judge under the ever watchful divine eye.

About the People of God

Judges is not about the people of YHWH. They are the objects of divine judgment. Their action or inaction does have a bearing on the Yahwistic response. They have a divinely chosen role. This does not imply racial superiority; but a divine plan that they are holy as a people set apart unto YHWH, His plans, purpose, and will. They did not initiate their election. Premonarchic Israel was born into that relationship by virtue of ancestry. With that election comes the covenant and the responsibilities and privileges of the *Torah*.

The hermeneutical approach through diachronic methodologies provides us with a manner in which to examine the way the author has taken oral traditions and other source material that are crafted into strands that are later redacted and present us with our current text. The historical literary approach to understanding the text is not adequate in and of itself for exegesis. The events that the author portrays do not exist outside of the cult of Israel and its culture. Thus, the anthropological and sociological elements must be considered to present more of the historical reality. Archaeology can be most helpful at this point, because unlike the selected history which has undergone redaction and editing, the material remains of archaeology constitute an external and independent witness possessing "the advantage of not having been deliberately selected and preserved."[1]

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[1] Dever, "Unresolved Issues in the Early History of Israel," 200.

Premonarchic Israel was a fractional tribal society. The Aaronic priesthood is conspicuously absent from the affairs of Israel.[2] Shiloh functioned as a religious center from the days of Joshua until the time of Eli.[3] There was no king in Israel and likewise there was no political capital. Furthermore, the matters of justice and war either were undertaken from a tribal structure or more likely from the בית אב, with the exception of the internecine war with Benjamin. The idea of an amphictyony is more a sociological molding of the text and time than it was a reality from the fragmented society. Even the geography of the land suggests this fragmentation and tribal separateness.

> The Galilean tribes were separated from their fellows by Canaanite holdings in Esdraelon. Between eastern and western tribes lay the deep Jordan rift. And in the central highlands themselves, where communication is hindered by innumerable lateral valleys, the terrain was such as to abet the formation of little cantons, each with its local customs, traditions, and dialect.[4]

The society was primarily agrarian. Israel should be viewed rather from its smaller social units rather than as a corporate entity.

> The most important social unit was the father's house, but it is important to recall that this designation was applicable to a variety of groups, and it would be a precarious undertaking indeed to point out the one which was of signal importance to the life of the average Israelite. However, as far as the daily life of the Israelite was concerned, his family must have been of decisive importance, whether or not it was a nuclear or extended on. All families will have been economically independent, just as they must also be able to decide for themselves with respect to the marital alliances the family decided to form.[5]

The typical בית אב was agricultural in nature. In some instances, the בית אב was pastoral. The importance of the larger subdivisions of society is relevant "whenever the self-sufficiency of the *bēth-'āv* was threatened, [thus] the *mishpāḥah* stood by to offer relief."[6]

Nonetheless, the covenantal impropriety of Israel resulted in YHWH raising up oppressive nations to discipline Israel. As great as the repentant cry of Israel, the mercy and grace of YHWH was greater, in that a deliverer was raised up.

> Each of these saviours was unique, and each of them emerged in his own way to rescue his people from their enemies in the critical circumstances of the time. Whether his activity rose out of a spontaneous impulse to serve the immediate needs of his close environment, or his historical consciousness made him identify himself with the interests

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[2] Robertson, 93.

[3] Josh. 18:1; and 1 Sam. 1:3.

[4] Bright, 170.

[5] Lemche, *Early Israel*, 269.

[6] Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh*, 292.

of his people, the charismatic saviour represented by his deeds the embryonic leadership
of the Israelite state in formation.[7]

These deliverers and judges were renowned local figures; yet, "there is no information which suggests that any judge managed to establish a dynasty, or that the narratives refer to a succession of pan-Israelite rulers."[8]

The premonarchic period described in Judges should not be seen as a polemic for a Judean monarchy.[9] Rather, it should be viewed as a "prophetic work lamenting the Canaanization of Israelite society."[10] The societal conditions of covenantal adherence and violation created an environment for the cycles of activity which resulted in oppression and the need for deliverance and ultimately became signs through which YHWH would communicate with Israel. The sociological structure does not adequately answer the questions of warfare deliverance, even through a holy war. Neither a בית אב nor a משפחה were adequate in themselves to muster an army. The military needs required "a considerable number of regional family associations to band together in order to muster a sufficiently large body of warriors to be effective under conditions of warfare in Canaan."[11] Despite attempts to force a theology on the Song of Deborah, the tribal nature of Israel was not a Yahwistic confederacy.

The archeological, iconographical, and epigraphical remains support a historical Judges period and corroborate the presence of the elements of the judgment cycle.

> The transition from the Late Bronze period to the Early Iron Age – one clearly observable in the archaeological and anthropological/social record – is to be associated not with the emergence of Israel no matter the model by which that is explained, but with the oppressions of Israel by hostile forces and the reaction to those by tribal alliances.[12]

The Deuteronomistic historian has redacted the elements of divine judgment. The covenant stands as the basis of Deuteronomy. The subsequent works of Joshua-Judges identify how Israel responds to Deuteronomy. Thus Judges with its self-contained episodes, most of which cannot be related with precision to any external event becomes

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[7] Weisman, "Charismatic Leaders in the Era of the Judges," 410-411.

[8] Lemche, *Early Israel,* 275.

[9] This is *contra* Brettler, "The Book of Judges," 416.

[10] D.I. Block, "Deborah among the Judges: The Perspective of the Hebrew Historian," *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in Its Near Eastern Context,* (Eds.) A.R. Millard, J.K. Hoffmeier, and D.W. Baker (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 231.

[11] Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh,* 332.

[12] E.H. Merrill, "The Late Bronze/Early Iron Age Transition and the Emergence of Israel," *BSac 152* (1995), 160.

the history of how Israel failed in the conquest of the land which was initiated by Joshua and this failure makes Israel culpable for its situation.

Premonarchic Israel had a free will. They exercised this will to their detriment continually, as the narrative indicts them. The more time that elapsed, the more Israel by its actions revealed their intimate knowledge of YHWH. As natural descendants of Adam, they had access to the knowledge of good and evil. Although the famous tree in the Garden of Eden is not visible in the narratives of Judges, the seed of its fruit continued to bear after its own kind. Israel willfully made choices and often their true knowledge of the One who is Good, was sacrificed for the perceived knowledge of good. There is no evidence in the text that Israel knew about the elements of a cyclical paradigm. They knew that YHWH had punished them, but, did they understand the full import of why He did? Israel had a poor knowledge of YHWH, because their actions attest to it. Israel did not come to their unique God in repentance. They came with sorrow; but it was not a Godly sorrow that works repentance. Israel experienced a measure of the divine wrath and expressions of His mercy. Judges is not about the people of God who peculiarly receive His judgment in response for their apostasy. Nor is about genuine repentance and remorse over sin. It is a story of a distinct people who are disjointed and as lifeless as the pieces of the dismembered concubine scattered throughout the land. It is not a story that has as its purpose to show rebellion or the greatness of their God in His providential and wise ways in dealing with them. Those are ancillary to the main plot action. It is the sad story of a people who have lost intimacy with the One True God. How ironic that Samson could epitomize Israel and not even know that YHWH had departed from him (them).

Implications

So what are the implications of this? This type of holistic hermeneutical method takes into account all aspects that contribute to the meaning of the text in an effort to understand the microcosmic elements in light of the macrocosmic whole. In the end, it is the overall meaning of Judges as it pertains to the peculiar judgment of YHWH. Even though the minutia of intended meanings by the real author of Judges might not be grasped, the primary focal point of the divine Judge judging His people is obvious. Because the text is theological, the meaning does not remain a historiography but imports a historiosophical demand upon the ideal reader that requires him to embrace the macro-character Israel identifying with it. Logically, the ideal reader noticing the judgment *leitmotif* would being to draw parallels and question whether divine judgment is active in his life.

The people of YHWH are much broader than what it was in Iron Age Canaan. Modern Israel finds itself in a similar situation and has as a nation walked down the corporate path of hedonism. Monolatry is not a problem for the Israeli; but strict *Torah* observant faith is. For those who are grafted into Israel through the work of *Yeshua*, the parallels also exist.

It is not the divine design for His people to live in a circular existence going from rebellion to judgment to crying out to deliverance. Even this idea is foreign to deity. Repentance does not carry the notion of circularity. It is a change of direction. YHWH is calling His people to come to Him – to know Him and to be known by Him. For us to presuppose that we know the ways of the divine is ludicrous. Judges teaches us that His ways are beyond searching out. Divine judgment may come in many forms. It may be to draw us back to obedience. It may be as a disciplinary act to correct behavior. It may be to deliver us from evil. But, just as the individuals used by YHWH to effect His judgment for His good and for His people are not the focus, neither are His peculiar ways. The implication of Judges is that His judgment is motivated then and now for His people to know Him. Paradigms and cycles are not the methodology, just a form of peculiar judgment to effect His plan. For the ideal reader, Judges becomes an instrument to measure his own personal relationship with YHWH. Thus, divine judgment is presently at work causing the reader to judge Himself in light of the biblical record.

I AM YHWH. I AM HOLY! Therefore, you be holy too!

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

LISTING OF TEXTUAL ERRORS IN JUDGES BY ALTERATION

Confusion of Letters

Reference	**BHS Text**	**Alternate Emendation**

Confusion of בּ for כֹ

	לִבִּי לְחוֹקְקֵי	לְכוּ לְחוֹקְקֵי
5:9[1]	My heart is to the commanders	Come, you commanders
	וְשָׂרַי בְּיִשָּׂשכָר	וְשָׂרֶיךָ יִשָּׂשכָר
5:15[2]	And the princes in Issachar	And your princes, Issachar

Confusion of בּ for מ

	בִּימֵי יָעֵל	מִימֵי עֹלָם
5:6[3]	in the days of Jael	from the days of old
	בְּיָדָם	מִיָדָם
7:8[4]	in their hand	from their hand

Confusion of ד for בּ

	ישְׁבֵי עַל־מִדִין	יָשִׁבוּ עַל־לֵב
5:10[5]	you that sit in judgment	let them recall it to mind

[1] The laborious textual work by Burney, with his compendium of emendation possibilities by other scholars serves as the basis of this examination of the scribal errors. He bases his Hebrew upon the 𝔐. However, at certain points there are some differences between the text he has used and that found in *BHS*, which is the preferred text. The methodology employed is to present the Hebrew in the form of the 𝔐 and then based on an alternate emendation. In both cases, the Hebrew is translated in the body of the appendix and it is transliterated in the footnote. In certain instances, there is more than one textual error in a word or phrase. The focus of the error is based upon its categorization, whereas the other error is addressed in another category. At certain points, the errors involve unnecessary insertion (which is noted by the sigla [ ]) and is dealt with in Appendix 2. Likewise, there are other errors that involve unnecessary deletion (which is noted by the sigla < >) and is dealt with in Appendix 3. The translation reflects the accepted Anglicized form of proper nouns; however, the Hebraicized forms are transliterated in the Emended Translation in Appendix 4. 𝔐 *(libî lᵉḥôqᵉqê).* 𝔈 *(lᵉkû lᵉḥôqᵉqê).* Cf. Burney, 122.

[2] 𝔐 *(wᵉśārâ bᵉyiśśāśkār).* This nominative form has a strange transliteration due to the defective pointing missing above the second *(ś)* *ṿ*. 𝔈 *(wᵉśāreykā Yiśśāśkār).* Cf. Burney, 136.

[3] 𝔐 *(bîmê Yāʿēl).* 𝔈 *(mîmê ʿōlām).* Cf. Burney, 114.

[4] 𝔐 *(bᵉyādām).* 𝔈 *(miyādām).* Cf. Burney, 212.

[5] 𝔐 *(yōšᵉbê ʾal-midin).* 𝔈 *(yāšibû ʾal-lēb).* Cf. Burney, 123.

	תִּדְרְכִי נַפְשִׁי עֹז	תְּבָרְכִי נַפְשִׁי עֹז ‹יהוה›
5:21[6]	my soul, you tread down strength	Bless thou, my soul, the might ‹of YHWH›
20:45[7]	עַד־גִּדְעֹם	עַד־גֶּבַע
	unto Gidom	as far as Geba

Confusion of ד for מ

	הֶחֱרִיד	הֶחֱרִים
8:12[8]	he discomfited	he devoted to destruction

Confusion of ד for ר

	וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְצִדִּים	וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְצָרִים
2:3[9]	and they shall be to you as sides	but they shall be adversaries to you
5:8[10]	יִבְחַר אֱלֹהִים חֲדָשִׁים	חָסְרוּ לָהֶם חָרָשִׁים
	they chose new gods	armorers had they none
7:24[11]	אֶת־הַמַּיִם עַד בֵּית בָּרָה וְאֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן	אֶת־מַעְבְּרוֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן
	the waters unto Beth-Barah and the Jordan [river]	The fords of the Jordan [river]
18:7[12]	עִם־אָדָם	עִם־אֲרָם
	with mankind	with Aram
18:28[13]	עִם־אָדָם	עִם־אֲרָם
	with mankind	with Aram

Confusion of ה for ב

	הַשׁוֹפָרוֹת	בַּשּׁוֹפָרוֹת
7:22[14]	the rams' horns	in the rams' horns

Confusion of ה for י

	כִּי־הִגִּיד לָהּ	כִּי־הִגִּיד לִי
16:18[15]	that he has told her	that he has told me

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[6] 𝕸 (tidrᵊkî napšî ʿōz). 𝕰 (tᵊbārᵊkî napšî ʿōz YHWH). Cf. Burney, 148-149.

[7] 𝕸 (ʾad-Gidʿōm). 𝕰 (ʾad-Gebaʿ). Cf. Burney, 486.

[8] 𝕸 (heḥᵉrîd). 𝕰 (heḥᵉrîm). Cf. Burney, 231.

[9] 𝕸 (wᵊhāyû lākem lᵊṣidîm). 𝕰 (wᵊhāyû lākem lᵊṣārîm). Cf. Burney, 39. KJV gives a rendering of the *BHS* as "and they shall be as [thorns] in your sides," where the word "thorns" must be supplied to make sense. In the emendation, the *(w)* ו is taken as adversative.

[10] 𝕸 (yibhar ᵉlōhîm hᵃdāšîm). 𝕰 (ḥāsᵊrû lāhem hārāšîm). Cf. Burney, 119.

[11] 𝕸 (ʾet-hammayim ʿad Bêt Bārāh wᵊʾet-hayYardēn). 𝕰 (ʾet-maʿbᵊrôt hayYardēn). Cf. Burney, 225. This verse is discussed further in the section on dittography, because the *BHS* reading is repeated twice.

[12] 𝕸 (ʾim-ʾādām). 𝕰 (ʾim-ᵃrām). Cf. Burney, 428.

[13] 𝕸 (ʾim-ʾādām). 𝕰 (ʾim-ᵃrām). Cf. Burney, 434.

[14] 𝕸 (haššôpārôt). 𝕰 (baššôpārôt). Cf. Burney, 218.

19:8[16]	וְהִתְמַהְמְהוּ and they tarried	וַיִּתְמַהְמְהוּ and they caused themselves to tarry

Confusion of ה for וי

20:31[17]	הָנְתְּקוּ they were drawn away	וַיִּנָּתְקוּ and were drawn away
20:43[18]	הִרְדִיפֻהוּ they chased him	וַיִּרְדְּפֻהוּ and pursued him

Confusion of ה for ש

14:19[19]	מֵהֶם from them	מִשָּׁם from there

Confusion of ו for כ

5:31[20]	וְאֹהֲבָיו but let them that love him	וְאֹהֲבֶךָ but let those you love

Confusion of ו for ת

3:3[21]	וְהַחִוִּי and the Hivites	וְהַחִתִּי and the Hittites

Confusion of ט for מ

5:4[22]	גַּם־שָׁמַיִם נָטָפוּ also heaven dropped	גַּם־שָׁמַיִם נָמוֹגוּ also heaven rocked

Confusion of י for ו

5:9[23]	לִבִּי לְחוֹקְקֵי My heart is to the commanders	לְכוּ לְחוֹקְקֵי Come, you commanders

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[15] 𝕸 *(kî-higîd lāh)*. 𝕰 *(kî-higîd lî)*. Cf. Burney, 383.

[16] 𝕸 *(wᵉhiṭmahmᵉhû)*. 𝕰 *(wayyiṭmahmᵉhû)*. Cf. Burney, 461.

[17] 𝕸 *(hāntᵉqû)*. 𝕰 *(wayyinnātᵉqû)*. Cf. Burney, 479.

[18] 𝕸 *(hirdîpuhû)*. 𝕰 *(wayyirdᵉpuhû)*. Cf. Burney, 485. KJV translates the *BHS* as "they chased them." This is an incorrect translation for the pronominal suffix, which would be 1CP or 3MS. If it were a plural form, then it would reflect another strand source, being from Benjamin's point of view.

[19] 𝕸 *(mēhem)*. 𝕰 *(miššām)*. Cf. Burney, 366.

[20] 𝕸 *(wᵃᵒōhᵃbāyû)*. 𝕰 *(wᵃᵒōhᵃbekā)*. Cf. Burney, 157, where he suggests this emendation should be translated "but let your friends."

[21] 𝕸 *(wihahiwwî)*. 𝕰 *(wihahittî)*. Cf. Burney, 62.

[22] 𝕸 *(gam-šāmayim nāṭpû)*. 𝕰 *(gam-šāmayim nāmôgû)*. Cf. Burney, 112.

[23] 𝕸 *(libî lᵉhôqᵉqê)*. 𝕰 *(lᵉkû lᵉhôqᵉqê)*. Cf. Burney, 122.

5:10[24]	יֹשְׁבֵי עַל־מִדִּין you that sit in judgment	יֵשְׁבוּ עַל־לֵב let them recall it to mind
5:13[25]	עַם יהוה יְרַד־לִי people, YHWH make me have dominion	עַם־יהוה יָרַד־לוֹ people of YHWH went down for him
6:5[26]	יָבָאוּ [and] they came	וּבָאוּ and they came
9:9[27]	אֲשֶׁר־בִּי In which with me	אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ in which

Confusion of כ for ו

16:24[28]	כִּי אָמְרוּ because they said	וַיֹּאמְרוּ and they said
20:39[29]	כִּי אָמְרוּ for they said	וַיֹּאמְרוּ and they said

Confusion of ל for נ

5:30[30]	לְצַוְּארֵי שָׁלָל for my neck of spoil	לְצַוְּארֵי שֵׁגָל for the neck of the queen

Confusion of ל for מ

5:9[31]	לִבִּי לְחוֹקְקֵי My heart is to the commanders	לְכוּ לְחוֹקְקֵי Come, you commanders

Confusion of ל for ת

7:25[32]	וַיִּרְדְּפוּ אֶל־מִדְיָן and they pursued unto Midian	וַיִּרְדְּפוּ אֶת־מִדְיָן and they pursued Midian

[24] 𝕸 (yōš°bê 'al-midin). 𝕰 (yāšibû 'al-lēb). Cf. Burney, 123.

[25] 𝕸 ('ām YHWH y°rad-lî). 𝕰 ('am YHWH yārad-lô). Cf. Burney, 131. KJV translates the *BHS* as "people, YHWH made me to have dominion." The emendation chosen follows the poetic stichoi of the text, where the subject is the people of YHWH, rather than YHWH, as most translations take. Although dominion is the result of the battle, the use of *(yrd)* ירד denotes geographical movement downward from Mount Tabor.

[26] 𝕸 (yybā'û). 𝕰 (ûbā'û). Cf. Burney, 122. 𝕸 differs from *BHS* by not including the *(w)* ו prefix. The vowel pointing is defective. *BHS* suggests *(yāb'û)* יָבְאוּ in the critical apparatus. This suggests the imperfect form, which betrays the context.

[27] 𝕸 (°ašer-bî). 𝕰 (°ašer-bô). Cf. Burney, 273.

[28] 𝕸 (kî 'ām°rû). 𝕰 (wayyō°m°rû). Cf. Burney, 388.

[29] 𝕸 (kî 'ām°rû). 𝕰 (wayyō°m°rû). Cf. Burney, 483.

[30] 𝕸 (l°ṣû°rē šālāl). 𝕰 (l°ṣû°rē šēgāl). Cf. Burney, 156. KJV translates the *BHS* as "for the necks of [them that take] the spoil. This translation with its insertion makes no sense in the context and suggests the alternate reading.

[31] 𝕸 (libî l°hôq°qê). 𝕰 (l°kû l°hôq°qê). Cf. Burney, 122.

[32] 𝕸 (wayyird°pû 'el-Midyān). 𝕰 (wayyird°pû 'et-Midyān). Cf. Burney, 226.

Confusion of מ for א

	הֲלֹא	הֲלֹם
14:15[33]	[is it] not [so]	hither

Confusion of מ for ב

	נְקַם־אַחַת מִשְּׁתֵי עֵינָי	נִקְמָה־אַחַת בִּשְׁתֵי עֵינָי
16:28[34]	vengeance for one of my two eyes	in one vengeance for my two eyes

Confusion of מ for ל

	יֹשְׁבֵי עַל־מִדִּין	יָשְׁבוּ עַל־לֵב
5:10[35]	you that sit in judgment	let them recall it to mind

Confusion of נ for ד

	מִיָּדִי לִבְנִי	מִיָּדִי לְבַדִּי
17:3[36]	from my hand for my son	from my hand alone

Confusion of נ for ל

	וְלֹא יָכִין	וְלֹא יָכֹל
12:6[37]	and he could not fix	and he was not able

Confusion of ן for ת

	פְּרָזוֹן	פְּרָזוֹת
5:7[38]	peasantry	unwalled villages

Confusion of ס for ם

	מִלְמַעֲלֵה הֶחָרֶס	מִלְמַעֲלֵה הֶחֳרִים
8:13[39]	from the ascent of Heres	from the heights he devoted to destruction

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[33] 𝔐 (*h^alō'*). 𝔈 (*h^alōm*). Cf. Burney, 364.

[34] 𝔐 (*n^eqam-'aḥaṭ miššᵉtê 'ênay*). 𝔈 (*n^eqāmāh-'aḥaṭ biššᵉtê 'ênay*). Cf. Burney, 390.

[35] 𝔐 (*yōšᵉḇê 'al-midin*). 𝔈 (*yāšiḇû 'al-lēḇ*). Cf. Burney, 123.

[36] 𝔐 (*mîyāḏî liḇnî*). 𝔈 (*mîyāḏî lᵉḇadî*). Cf. Burney, 419.

[37] 𝔐 (*w^elō' yāḵîn*). 𝔈 (*w^elō' yāḵōl*). Cf. Burney, 328-329. There are 12 manuscripts that suggest the emendation of (*yāḇin*) יָבִין which would render the translation "he did not understand how to speak right."

[38] 𝔐 (*pᵉrāzôn*). 𝔈 (*pᵉrāzôṭ*). Cf. Burney, 115.

[39] 𝔐 (*milma'^alēh Heḥāres*). 𝔈 (*milma'^alēh heḥᵉrîm*). Cf. Burney, 232. The point of emendation is mute because the phrase is an insertion into the text. See Appendix 2, Doublets.

Confusion of ס for ר

	בְּטֶרֶם יָבֹא הַחַרְסָה before the sun went down	בְּטֶרֶם יָבֹא הַחַדְרָה before he will enter the bridal chamber
14:18[40]		

Confusion of ע for שׁ

	וַיֹּדַע בָּהֶם and with them he knew	וַיָּדָשׁ בָּהֶם and with them he threshed
8:16[41]		

Confusion of פ for נ

	נַם־שָׁמַיִם נָטָפוּ also the heavens dropped	נַם־שָׁמַיִם נָמוֹגוּ also the heavens rocked
5:4[42]		

Confusion of צ for כ

	וַיִּקְהוּ אֶת צֵדָה הָעָם so the people took victuals	וַיִּקְהוּ אֶת־כַּדֵּי הָעָם and they took the pitchers of the people
7:8[43]		

Confusion of צ for נ (or ץ for ון)

	עַד־יוֹם נְלוֹת הָאָרֶץ until the day of the captivity of the land	עַד־יוֹם נְלוֹת הָאָרוֹן until the day of the captivity of the ark
18:30[44]		

Confusion of צ for ע

	צָרִים אֶת־הָעִיר they fortify the city	מֵעִירִים אֶת־הָעִיר they are stirring up the city
9:31[45]		

Confusion of צ for פ

	אֶת־חֲלִיצוֹתָם their spoil	אֶת־חֲלִפוֹתָם their changes of raiment
14:19[46]		

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[40] 𝔐 *(b³ṭerem yāḇō' haharsāh)*. 𝔈 *(b³ṭerem yāḇō' hahadrāh)*. Cf. Burney, 365. The emendation could be rendered as "entered" but it is in the Qal Imperfect form.

[41] 𝔐 *(wîyōda' bahem)*. 𝔈 *(wîyādāš bāhem)*. Cf. Burney, 233. KJV translates the *BHS* as "he taught" but that translation would require using a verbal form of *(lmd)* למד.

[42] 𝔐 *(gam-šāmayim nāṭp̄û)*. 𝔈 *(gam-šāmayim nāmōḡû)*. Cf. Burney, 112.

[43] 𝔐 *(wayyiqhû 'et ṣēdāh hā'ām)*. 𝔈 *(wayyiqhû 'et kadê hā'ām)*. Cf. Burney, 212.

[44] 𝔐 *('ad-yôm g³lôṭ hā'āreṣ)*. 𝔈 *('ad-yôm g³lôṭ hā'ārôn)*. Cf. Burney, 435.

[45] 𝔐 *(ṣārîm 'et-hā'îr)*. 𝔈 *(mē'îrîm 'et-hā'îr)*. Cf. Burney, 282.

[46] 𝔐 *('et-hᵃlîṣôṭām)*. 𝔈 *('et-hᵃlip̄ôṭām)*. Cf. Burney, 366.

Confusion of צ for ק

5:11[47]	מִקּוֹל מְחַצְצִים [louder] than the voice of the archers	קוֹל מְצַחֲקוֹת voice of maidens laughing

Confusion of ר for ד

1:36[48]	הָאֱמֹרִי the Amorites	הָאֱדֹמִי the Edomites
3:8[49]	מֶלֶךְ אֲרַם king of Aram	מֶלֶךְ אֱדֹם king of Edom
3:10[50]	מֶלֶךְ אֲרַם king of Aram	מֶלֶךְ אֱדֹם king of Edom
7:22[51]	צְרֵרָתָה Sereratah	צְרֵדָתָה Seredatah
14:18[52]	בְּטֶרֶם יָבֹא הַחַרְסָה before the sun went down	בְּטֶרֶם יָבֹא הַחַדְרָה before he will enter the bridal chamber

Confusion of ר for ק

7:21[53]	וַיָּרָץ כָּל־הַמַּחֲנֶה and all the camp ran	וַיִּיקַץ כָּל־הַמַּחֲנֶה and all the camp awoke

Confusion of ת for א

9:31[54]	בְּתָרְמָה in treachery	בַּאֲרוּמָה in Arumah
11:20[55]	אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל Israel	תֵּת יִשְׂרָאֵל to allow Israel

Confusion of ת for ל

11:29[56]	אֶת־מִצְפֶּה Mizpeh	אֶל־מִצְפֶּה to Mizpeh

[47] 𝔐 (miqqôl mᵉḥaṣṣîm). 𝔈 (qôl mᵉṣaḥᵃqôt). Cf. Burney, 128. The understood root of the noun is based upon (ḥṣṣ) חצץ, meaning divide, has been problematic for exegetes throughout the centuries.

[48] 𝔐 (hāʾᵉmōri). 𝔈 (hāʾᵉdōmî). Cf. Burney, 33.

[49] 𝔐 (melēḵ ʾᵃram). 𝔈 (melēḵ ᵉʾdōm). Cf. Burney, 65. KJV translates Aram as Mesopotamia.

[50] 𝔐 (melēḵ ʾᵃram). 𝔈 (melēḵ ᵉdōm). Cf. Burney, 65.

[51] 𝔐 (Ṣᵉrērāṯāh). 𝔈 (Ṣᵉrēḏāṯāh). Cf. Burney, 219.

[52] 𝔐 (bᵉṭerem yāḇō' haḥarsāh). 𝔈 (bᵉṭerem yāḇō' hahaḏrāh). Cf. Burney, 365.

[53] 𝔐 (wayyārāṣ kol-hammaḥᵃneh). 𝔈 (wayyîqaṣ kol-hammaḥᵃneh). Cf. Burney, 217.

[54] 𝔐 (bᵉṭorᵉmāh). 𝔈 (baʾᵃrûmāh). Cf. Burney, 281. KJV translates the *BHS* as "privily."

[55] 𝔐 ('ēṯ-Yiśrā'ēl). 𝔈 (tēṯ-Yiśrā'ēl). Cf. Burney, 312.

[56] 𝔐 ('eṯ-Miṣpēh). 𝔈 ('el-Miṣpēh). Cf. Burney, 319.

Transposition of Letters

1:35[59]	בְּהַר־חֶרֶס in Mount Heres		בְּהַר־סֶרַח in Mount Serah
5:8[60]	יִבְחַר אֱלֹהִים חֲדָשִׁים they chose new gods		חָסְרוּ לָהֶם חָרָשִׁים armorers had they none
5:8[61]	שְׁעָרִים at the gates		מֵעִיר from the city
5:11[62]	מִקּוֹל מְחַצְצִים [louder] than the voice of the archers		קוֹל מְצַחֲקוֹת voice of maidens laughing
5:11[63]	פִּרְזֹנוֹ his peasantry		זְרוֹעוֹ his arm
5:14[64]	שָׁרְשָׁם בַּעֲמָלֵק whose root [was] in Amalek		אָשְׁרוּ בָעֵמֶק they advanced in the valley
7:24[65]	אֶת־הַמַּיִם עַד בֵּית בָּרָה וְאֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן the waters unto Beth-Barah and the Jordan [river]		אֶת־מַעְבְּרוֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן The fords of the Jordan [river]

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[57] 𝕸 *('eṯ-haGil'āḏ)* . 𝕰 *('el-haGil'āḏ)*. Cf. Burney, 319.

[58] 𝕸 *(wi'eṯ-Mᵉnaššeh)*. 𝕰 *(wi'el-Mᵉnaššeh)*. Cf. Burney, 319.

[59] 𝕸 *(bᵊhar-Ḥeres)*. 𝕰 *(bᵊhar-Serah)*. Cf. Burney, 33.

[60] 𝕸 *(yiḇhar ᵉlōhîm hᵃḏāšîm)*. 𝕰 *(ḥāsᵉrû lāhem ḥārāšîm)*. Cf. Burney, 119. This is more obscure in its transposition. Burney states *(ybhr)* יבחר may have arisen through transposition of the letters *(hsrw)* חסרו and *('lhm)* אלהם from *(lhm)* להם.

[61] 𝕸 *(šᵉ'ārîm)*. 𝕰 *(mē'îr)*. Cf. Burney, 120. Transposition would remove the *(š)* שׁ prefix and then move *(m)* מ from the last letter to the first.

[62] 𝕸 *(miqqôl mᵊhaṣṣîm)*. 𝕰 *(qôl mᵊṣahᵃqôt)*. Cf. Burney, 128. This transposition is obvious when the emendation is in the masculine form *(mᵊṣahᵃqîm)* מְצַחֲקִים. Yet, the feminine form used follows the cultural tradition of women drawing water from the well. Cf. Gen. 24:13.

[63] 𝕸 *(pirzōnô)*. 𝕰 *(zᵊrô'ô)*. Cf. Burney, 129 and *BDB*, 283. KJV translates the *BHS* as "[inhabitants of] his villages" however the idea of a leader may be present in this rural population. The transposition comes from removing *(p)* פ and transposing *(r)* ר and *(z)* ז.

[64] 𝕸 *(šoršām ba'ᵃmāleq)*. 𝕰 *('ošrû bā'ēmeq)*. Cf. Burney, 133 and *BDB*, 80. Burney suggests that the emendation should be "they spread out/deployed." However, the *BHS* critical apparatus gives an alternate emendation that has been adopted reflecting a Qal Perfect form. KJV takes the *(b)* ב prefix as an adversative meaning "against."

[65] 𝕸 *('eṯ-hammayim 'ad Bêṯ Bārāh wᵊ'eṯ-hayYardēn)*. 𝕰 *('eṯ-ma'bᵊrôṯ hayYardēn)*. Cf. Burney, 225. This emendation requires more mental gymnastics. If the vowel letter י is removed along with the sign of the direct object, then the consonantal string is *(hmm'dbtbrhw't)* הממעדבתברהואת, which can constitute a corrupt dittography of *(ma'bᵊrôṯ)* מַעְבְּרֹת. This word involving letters 3-7 shows the transposition of the letters *(b)* ב and *(r)* ר, followed by a later corruption of the *(r)* ר to *(d)* ד. The genuine letters are 2, 8, 9, and 13 with the *(br)* בר in the correct order.

11:20[66]	וְלֹא־הֶאֱמִין סִיחוֹן and Sihon did not trust	וַיְמָאֵן סִיחוֹן and Sihon refused
12:3[67]	וָאָשִׂימָה I put	וָאָשִׂימָה I put
21:17[68]	יְרֻשַּׁת פְּלֵיטָה remnant [shall be] an inheritance	אֵיךְ תִּשָּׁאֵר פְּלֵיטָה how shall a remnant be left

Transposition of Clauses

BHS   **Emendation of Text**

Judges 5:10[69]

| רֹכְבֵי אֲתֹנוֹת צְחֹרוֹת
יֹשְׁבֵי עַל־מִדִּין
וְהֹלְכֵי עַל־דֶּרֶךְ שִׂיחוּ
You that ride on tawny asses
You that sit in judgment
And you that walk on the way, speak | רֹכְבֵי אֲתֹנוֹת צְחֹרוֹת יָשִׂיחוּ
וְהֹלְכֵי עַל־דֶּרֶךְ יָשְׁבוּ עַל־לֵב

Let the riders on tawny asses review it.
And the ones who walk upon the way, let them
recall it to mind. |

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[66] 𝔐 *(wᵉlō'-heᵉemîn Siḥon)*. 𝔈 *(waymā'ēn Siḥon)*. Cf. Burney, 312. *(wym'n)* וימאן first corrupted into *(wâyaᵃᵃmēn)* וַיַּאֲמֵן with the transposition of *(')* א and *(m)* מ, and then further corrupted with the particle of negation.

[67] 𝔐 *(wā'āśîmāh)*. 𝔈 *(wā'āśîmāh)*. Cf. Burney, 326-327, where he states this is an issue of reading *(Qᵉrê)* קְרִי instead of *(Kᵉṯîḇ)* כְּתִיב. See Weingreen, *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, 22-23, for a discussion of reading the marginal correction *(Qᵉrê)* in place of the uncorrected text *(Kᵉṯîḇ)*. Yet, the *BHS* has corrected the error *(w'yšmh)* ואישמה in 𝔐.

[68] 𝔐 *(yᵉruššaṯ pᵉlêṭāh)*. 𝔈 *('êḵ tiššā'ēr pᵉlêṭāh)*. Cf. Burney, 491 and *BDB*, 812. This a transposition of *(r)* ר and *(t)* ת, which then changes the verbal form so that the KJV insertion is not necessary.

[69] 𝔐 *(rōḵᵉḇê ᵃṯōnōṯ ṣᵉḥōrōṯ yōšᵉḇê 'al-midîn wᵉhōlᵉḵê 'al-dereḵ śîḥû)*. 𝔈 *(rōḵᵉḇê ᵃṯōnōṯ ṣᵉḥōrōṯ yāśîḥû wᵉhōlᵉḵê 'al-dereḵ yāšîḇû 'al-lēḇ)*. Cf. Burney, 122-124. The transposition of words involves the moving of words 4, 5, and 8. *BHS* shows the verse to be taken as a tristich which is unequal, whereas our distich emendation is equal in parallelism and rhythmic beat.

Judges 5:12[70]

(8) They chose new gods; then [was] war at the gates. Was there seen a shield or a lance Among forty thousand in Israel? (9) My heart is to the commanders of Israel You that volunteered among the people, [You] bless YHWH. (10) You that ride on white asses You that sit in judgment And you that walk on the way, speak (11) [Louder] than the voice of the archers between the wells. There they recount the righteous acts of YHWH, The righteous acts of his peasantry in Israel. Then shall the people of YHWH do down to the gates. (12) Awake, awake Deborah! Awake, awake sing a song. Arise Barak and lead your captives captive, son of Abinoam. (13) Then He caused me to tread upon the remnant of the noble ones of the people. YHWH make me have dominion!	(8) Armorers had they none; Armed men failed from the city. Was there seen a shield or a lance Among forty thousand in Israel? (12) Awake, awake Deborah! Awake, awake, sing a song. Arise Barak and lead captive your captors, son of Abinoam. (9) Come, you commanders of Israel. You that volunteered among the people, [You] bless YHWH. (10) Let the riders on white asses review it. And the ones who walk upon the way, let them recall it to mind, (11) The voice of maidens laughing between the wells. There they recount the righteous acts of YHWH, The righteous acts of His arm in Israel. (13) Then the nobles went down to the gates, the people of YHWH went down for Him among the mighty ones.

Judges 7:6[71]

וַיְהִי מִסְפַּר הַמְלַקְקִים בְּיָדָם אֶל־פִּיהֶם שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וְכֹל יֶתֶר הָעָם כָּרְעוּ עַל־בִּרְכֵיהֶם לִשְׁתּוֹת מָיִם And the number of them that lapped [putting] their hand to their mouth were 300 men but all the rest of the people bent down upon their knees to drink water.	וַיְהִי מִסְפַּר הַמְלַקְקִים שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וְכֹל יֶתֶר הָעָם כָּרְעוּ עַל־בִּרְכֵיהֶם לִשְׁתּוֹת מָיִם בְּיָדָם אֶל־פִּיהֶם And the number of them that lapped were 300 men but all the rest of the people bent down upon their knees to drink water [putting] their hand to their mouth.

[70] Cf. Burney, 120-122. The transposition involves the rearrangement of *BHS* verse 12 and the last clause of verse 11 to be a part of the beginning of *BHS* verse 13.

[71] 𝔐 (*wayhî mispar ham°laqqîm b°yādām 'el-pîhem š°lōš mē'ôt 'îš w°kōl yeter hā'ām kār°'û 'al-birkêhem lištôt māyim*). 𝔈 (*wayhî mispar ham°laqqîm š°lōš mē'ôt 'îš w°kōl yeter hā'ām kār°'û 'al-birkêhem lištôt māyim b°yādām 'el-pîhem*). Cf. Burney, 210. The emendation makes the lapping refer to the dogs that lap in verse 5, as opposed to a kneeling posture which is not a canine drinking posture.

Judges 16:24-25[72]

(24) And when the people saw him, they praised their god because they said: "Our god has given our enemy into our hand and him who laid waste our land, and who multiplied our slain." (25) And when their hearts were merry and they said, "Call Samson and he shall make sport for us." So they called Samson from the prison house And he made sport before them. And they made him stand between the pillars.	(25) And when their hearts were merry and they said, "Call Samson and he shall make sport for us." So they called Samson from the prison house And he made sport before them. And they made him stand between the pillars. (24) And when the people saw him, they praised their god and said: "Our god has given our enemy into our hand and him who laid waste our land, and who multiplied our slain."

Judges 17:2-3[73]

(2) And he said unto his mother, "The eleven hundred silver [pieces] which were taken from you, and you uttered a curse, even also you spoke in my ears; Behold, the silver [is] with me, I have taken it!" And his mother said, "Blessed [be] my son by YHWH!" (3) And he gave back the eleven hundred silver [pieces] to his mother and his mother said, "Wholly, I consecrated the silver to YHWH from my hand for my son to make a graven image and a molten image; and now I am giving it back to you."	(2) And he said unto his mother, "The eleven hundred silver [pieces] which were taken from you, and you uttered a curse, even also you spoke in my ears; (3) "Wholly, I consecrated the silver to YHWH from my hand alone to make a graven image and a molten image; Behold, the silver [is] with me, I have taken it! And now I am giving it back to you." And his mother said, "Blessed [be] my son by YHWH!"

Confusion of Similar Words and Forms

Reference	BHS Text	Alternate Emendation
1:11[74]	וַיֵּלֶךְ and he went	וַיַּעַל and they went up
3:7[75]	וְאֶת־הָאֲשֵׁרוֹת and the groves	וְאֶת־הָעַשְׁתָּרוֹת and the Ashtarts
3:28[76]	רִדְפוּ אַחֲרַי chase after me	רְדוּ אַחֲרַי come down after me

[72] Cf. Burney, 122-124. Without the transposition, *BHS* verse 24 is out of order because they need to see Samson. He must be called out before he can be seen by the Philistines.

[73] Cf. Burney, 417-420. This transposition rearranges the clauses of *BHS* verses two and three. The emendation also reflects the deletion of the opening phrase of verse three as a repetition of verse four. Burney suggests that the phrase *(haqdēš hiqdaštî)* הַקְדֵּשׁ הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי "Wholly, I consecrated" in verse three should be translated as a present tense or as an Aorist; however, it is clearly a Perfect form.

[74] 𝔐 *(wayyēlek)*. 𝔈 *(wayya'al)*. Cf. Burney, 10. Literally, the emendation is vocalized as singular, however in translation it has a collective sense.

[75] 𝔐 *(wᵉʾet̲-hā'ªšērôt̲)*. 𝔈 *(wᵉʾet̲-hā'aštārôt̲)*. Cf. Burney, 65. Note the connection with Baals as in Jg. 2:13; 10:6; 1 Sam. 7:4; and 12:10.

[76] 𝔐 *(rid̲pû 'aḥªray)*. 𝔈 *(rᵉd̲û 'aḥªray)*. Cf. Burney, 74. KJV translates *BHS* as "follow me."

5:8[77]	שְׁעָרִים at the gates	יִבְחַר אֱלֹהִים הַנָּשִׁים they chose women judges	
5:11[78]	פִּרְזֹנוֹ his peasantry	זְרֹעוֹ his arm	
5:14[79]	שָׁרְשָׁם בַּעֲמָלֵק whose root [was] in Amalek	אֹשְׂרוּ בָּעֵמֶק they advanced in the valley	
8:3[80]	אֱלֹהִים Elohim	יהוה YHWH	
8:4[81]	עֲיֵפִים וְרֹדְפִים exhausted yet pursuing	עֲיֵפִים וּרְעֵבִים exhausted and famished	
9:6[82]	מֻצָּב outpost	הַמַּצֵּבָה the pillar	
9:24[83]	לָבוֹא חָמַס violence will come	לְהָבִיא חָמַס to bring violence	
9:28[84]	הֲלֹא בֶן־יְרֻבַּעַל וּזְבֻל פְּקִידוֹ עִבְדוּ אֶת־אַנְשֵׁי חֲמוֹר [is he] not the son of Jerubbaal and Zebul his commander? [You] serve the men of Hamor	הֲלֹא בֶן־יְרֻבַּעַל וּזְבֻל פְּקִידוֹ יַעַבְדוּ אֶת־אַנְשֵׁי חֲמוֹר [should] not the son of Jerubbaal and Zebul his commander serve the men of Hamor	
9:29[85]	וַיֹּאמֶר and he said	וְאֹמַר and I will say	
10:4[86]	וּשְׁלֹשִׁים עֲיָרִים and thirty ass-colts	וּשְׁלֹשִׁים עָרִים and thirty cities	
10:18[87]	הָעָם שָׂרֵי גִלְעָד the people, the princes of Gilead	עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל the people of Israel	
11:37[88]	וְיָרַדְתִּי עַל־הֶהָרִים and descend upon the mountains	וְרַדְתִּי עַל־הֶהָרִים and wander restlessly upon the mountains	

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[77] ℳ (šᵊʿārîm). 𝔈 (yibḥar ᵉlōhîm hannāšîm). Cf. Burney, 119. Other suggested translations of the emendation include "God makes choice of women" or "Elohim chose women." But the problem with these suggestions is subject-verb disagreement and the use of YHWH throughout the poem instead of Elohim. This verse is corrupt at several points, as reflected throughout this appendix. After reviewing each of the emendations and their translations, some emendations have to be rejected, such as this one. For the complete translation of this verse see Appendix 4.

[78] ℳ (pirzōnô). 𝔈 (zᵊrôʿô). Cf. Burney, 129.

[79] ℳ (šoršām baʿᵃmāleq). 𝔈 (ʾošrû bāʿēmeq). Cf. Burney, 132.

[80] ℳ (ᵉlōhîm). 𝔈 (YHWH). Cf. Burney, 227.

[81] ℳ (ᵃyēp̄îm wᵊrōd̄ᵊp̄îm). 𝔈 (ᵃyēp̄îm ûrᵊʿēb̄îm). Cf. Burney, 228 and BDB, 944.

[82] ℳ (muṣṣāb̄). 𝔈 (hammaṣṣēb̄āh). Cf. Burney, 272 and BDB, 662-663. Literally, BHS is translated "standing place."

[83] ℳ (lāb̄ô' ḥᵃmas). 𝔈 (lᵊhāb̄î' ḥᵃmas). Cf. Burney, 277.

[84] ℳ (hᵃlō' b̄en-Yᵊrubaʿal ûZᵊbul pᵊqîd̄ô ʿib̄dû 'et-'anšê Ḥᵃmôr). 𝔈 (hᵃlō' b̄en-Yᵊrubaʿal ûZᵊbul pᵊqîd̄ô yaʿab̄dû 'et-'anšê Ḥᵃmôr). Cf. Burney, 279. BHS is vocalized as an imperative; however, it should be Qal Active Imperfect 3MS. This changes the object of who serves whom.

[85] ℳ (wayyō'mēr). 𝔈 (w'ōmar). Cf. Burney, 280. BHS is vocalized as Qal Imperfect 3MS. The emendation agrees with the pronoun in previous stichos and is vocalized as Qal Imperfect 1CS.

[86] ℳ (ûšᵊlōšîm ᵃyārîm). 𝔈 (ûšᵊlōšîm 'ārîm). Cf. Burney, 292.

[87] ℳ (hā'ām śārê Gilʿād̄). 𝔈 ('am Yiśrā'ēl). Cf. Burney, 307.

13:9[89]	וַיִּשְׁמַע הָאֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל מָנוֹחַ and Elohim listened to the voice of Manoah	וַיִּשְׁמַע יהוה בְּקוֹל מָנוֹחַ and YHWH listened to the voice of Manoah
13:9[90]	וַיָּבֹא מַלְאַךְ הָאֱלֹהִים and the angel of Elohim came	וַיָּבֹא מַלְאַךְ יהוה and the angel of YHWH came
14:11[91]	כִּרְאוֹתָם אוֹתוֹ when they saw him	בְּיִרְאָתָם אוֹתוֹ because they feared him
18:8[92]	מָה אַתֶּם What you?	מָה אִתְּכֶם What is with you?
18:9[93]	קוּמָה וְנַעֲלֶה עֲלֵיהֶם Arise and let us go up against them	קוּמָה וְנַעֲלֶה לַיְשָׁה Arise and let us go up [to] Laish
19:2[94]	וַתִּזְנֶה עָלָיו פִּילַגְשׁוֹ and his concubine was committing fornication with him	וַתִּזְעַף עָלָיו פִּילַגְשׁוֹ and his concubine was enraged with him
19:11[95]	וְהַיּוֹם רַד מְאֹד and the day ? much	וְהַיּוֹם יָרַד מְאֹד and the day was far gone
20:1[96]	וַיֵּצְאוּ כָּל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל and all of the children of Israel went out	וַיִּצָּעֲקוּ כָּל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל and all of the children of Israel were summoned
20:10[97]	לְנֶבַע בְּנְיָמִן to Geba of Benjamin	לְנִבְעַת בְּנְיָמִן to Gibeah of Benjamin
20:31[98]	לִקְרַאת הָעָם to meet the people	לִקְרָאתָם to meet them
20:31[99]	גִּבְעָתָה Gibeah	גִּבְעֹנָה Gibeon

[88] 𝕸 (wᵉyāradtî 'al-hehārîm). 𝕰 (wᵉradtî 'al-hehārîm). Cf. Burney, 323. *BHS* makes descending upon the mountains a geographic impossibility unless Jephthah's house was higher than the mountains. See *BDB*, 923, where the root is (rwd) רוד rather than (yrd) ירד.

[89] 𝕸 (wayyišma' hāᵉlōhîm bᵉqôl Mānôah). 𝕰 (wayyišma' YHWH bᵉqôl Mānôah). Cf. Burney, 346.

[90] 𝕸 (wayyābō' mal'ak hāᵉlōhîm). 𝕰 (wayyābō' mal'ak YHWH). Cf. Burney, 346.

[91] 𝕸 (kir'ōtām 'ōtô). 𝕰 (bᵉyir'ātām 'ōtô). Cf. Burney, 361 and *BDB*, 431. Note that (yr') ירא is an infinitive construct in the emendation, literally meaning "in they fearing him."

[92] 𝕸 (māh 'atem). 𝕰 (māh 'itkem). Cf. Burney, 428-429.

[93] 𝕸 (qûmāh wᵉna'ᵃleh 'ᵃlêhem). 𝕰 (qûmāh wᵉna'ᵃleh Layšāh). Cf. Burney, 429.

[94] 𝕸 (watizneh 'ālāyw pîlagšô). 𝕰 (watiz'ap 'ālāyw pîlagšô). Cf. Burney, 459 and *BDB*, 277. The root (z'p) זעף is vocalized as Qal Imperfect 3FS. *BHS* must be changed because the concubine was his wife, so it was not a case of fornication with the Levite. KJV translates this with "against him."

[95] 𝕸 (wᵉhayyôm rad mēʹōd). 𝕰 (wihayyôm yārad mēʹōd). Cf. Burney, 463. *BHS* uses (rad) רַד, of which there is no explicable word. Note *BDB*, 432, where it takes it as missing the (y) י. The literal translation for the verb is "it had gone down" referring to the sun.

[96] 𝕸 (wâyēṣᵉ'û kol-bᵉnê Yiśrā'ēl). 𝕰 (wâyyiṣṣāᵃqû kol-bᵉnê Yiśrā'ēl). Cf. Burney, 471 and *BDB*, 858. The root (ṣ'q) צעק is vocalized as Niphal Imperfect 3MP in the emendation. The verb implies being called to arms.

[97] 𝕸 (lᵉGeba' Binyāmin). 𝕰 (lᵉGib'at Binyāmin). Cf. Burney, 474. KJV reflects the Qᵉrê of *BHS*.

[98] 𝕸 (liqra't hā'ām). 𝕰 (liqrā'tām). Cf. Burney, 478. KJV translates *BHS* as "against," ignoring the infinitive construct use of (qr') קרא. See *BDB*, 896.

	מִמַּעֲרֵה־נֶבַע from the plain of Geba	מִמַּעֲרַב־נֶבַע on the west of Geba
20:33[100]		
20:42[101]	בְּתוֹכוֹ in their midst	בַּתָּוֶךְ in the midst
20:43[102]	מְנוּחָה resting place	מְנוּחָה from Nuhah
20:43[103]	הַגִּבְעָה Gibeah	הַנֶּבַע Geba

Substitution through Propinquity

	וּבְנֵי קֵינִי חֹתֵן מֹשֶׁה And the children of Kenite, the father-in-law of Moses	וְחֹבָב הַקֵּינִי חֹתֵן מֹשֶׁה And Hobab the Kenite, the father-in-law of Moses
1:16[104]		
1:21[105]	וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי יֹשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם לֹא הוֹרִישׁוּ בְּנֵי בִנְיָמִן But the Jebusites dwelling in Jerusalem, the children of Benjamin did not expel	וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי יֹשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם לֹא הוֹרִישׁוּ בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה But the Jebusites dwelling in Jerusalem, the children of Judah did not expel
1:21[106]	וַיֵּשֶׁב הַיְבוּסִי אֶת־בְּנֵי בִנְיָמִן בִּירוּשָׁלַם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה and the Jebusites are dwelling with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.	וַיֵּשֶׁב הַיְבוּסִי אֶת־בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה בִּירוּשָׁלַם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה and the Jebusites are dwelling with the children of Judah in Jerusalem unto this day.
5:15[107]	וְיִשָּׂשכָר כֵּן בָּרָק and Issachar was steadfast [with] Barak	וְנַפְתָּלִי כֵּן לְבָרָק and Naphtali was steadfast <to> Barak
15:5[108]	וַיְשַׁלַּח בְּקָמוֹת and he sent them out into the standing grain	וַיְשַׁלַּח בְּקָמַת and he sent them out into the standing grain
16:2[109]	וַיֶּאֶרְבוּ־לוֹ כָל־הַלַּיְלָה and they laid wait for him all the night	וַיֶּאֶרְבוּ־לוֹ כָל־הַיּוֹם and they laid wait for him all the day

[99] 𝕸 (Gib'ātāh). 𝕰 (Gib'ōnāh). Cf. Burney, 479.

[100] 𝕸 (mimma'ᵃrēh-Gāba'). 𝕰 (mima'ᵃrab-Gāba'). Cf. Burney, 480 and *BDB*, 789. Literally, it is translated "naked place," however, KJV translates it as "meadow."

[101] 𝕸 (b'ṯôḵô). 𝕰 (batāweḵ). Cf. Burney, 484.

[102] 𝕸 (m'nûḥāh). 𝕰 (m'Nûḥāh). Cf. Burney, 485 and *BDB*, 629. *BHS* does not make sense in the context, which is most likely why the word was ignored in KJV.

[103] 𝕸 (haGib'āh). 𝕰 (ha Gāba'). Cf. Burney, 485-486.

[104] 𝕸 (ûb'nê Qênî ḥōṯēn Mōšeh). 𝕰 (w'Ḥōbāb haqQênî ḥōṯēn Mōšeh). Cf. Burney, 14.

[105] 𝕸 (w''et-haY'bûsî yōšēb Y'rûšālaim lō' hôrîšû b'nê Binyāmin). 𝕰 (w''et-haY'bûsî yōšēb Y'rûšālaim lō' hôrîšû b'nê Y'hûdāh). Cf. Burney, 21. Burney makes this change based on Josh 15:63 and 18:16.

[106] 𝕸 (wayyēšeb haY'bûsî 'et-b'nê Binyāmin bîrûšālaim 'ad hayyôm hazzeh). 𝕰 (wâyēšeb haY'bûsî 'et-b'nê Y'hûdāh bîrûšālaim 'ad hayyôm hazzeh). Cf. Burney, 21.

[107] 𝕸 (w'Yiśśāśḵār kēn Bārāq). 𝕰 (w'Napṯālî kēn Bārāq). Cf. Burney, 137.

[108] 𝕸 (wayšallaḥ b'qāmôṯ). 𝕰 (wayšallaḥ b'qāmaṯ). Cf. Burney, 369. He suggests this is propinquity of (b'qāmôṯ) בקמות for (bišdôṯ) בְּשְׂדֹות; however, the critical apparatus of *BHS* offers a better emendation with a construct form of (qmh) קמה. Burney's choice misspells the word which should be (s'dēmāh) שְׂדֵמָה or (šadmôṯ) שַׂדְמֹות if in the plural construct. See *BDB*, 879 and 995.

20:12[110]	בְּכָל־שִׁבְטֵי בְנָיָמִן in all the tribes of Benjamin	בְּכָל־שֵׁבֶט בְנָיָמִן in all the tribe of Benjamin

Wrong Division of Words

5:8[111]	אָז לָחֶם שְׁעָרִים then [was] war at the gates	אָז לַחֲמֵשׁ עָרִים then for five cities
5:15[112]	וְשָׂרַי בְּיִשָּׂשכָר And the princes in Issachar	וְשָׂרַיִךְ יִשָּׂשכָר And your princes, Issachar
5:22[113]	אָז הָלְמוּ עִקְּבֵי־סוּס מִדַּהֲרוֹת then the hooves of the horse hammered down from the galloping	אָז הָלְמוּ עִקְּבֵי־סוּסִים דָּהֲרוּ then the hooves of the horses hammered down, they galloped
8:11[114]	דֶּרֶךְ הַשְּׁכוּנֵי בָאֳהָלִים the way of those dwelling in tents	דַּרְכָּה שֹׁכְנֵי בָאֳהָלִים the way of the ones dwelling in tents
20:13[115]	וּנְבַעֲרָה רָעָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל and we shall utterly consume the wickedness from Israel	וּנְבַעֵר הָרָעָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל and we shall utterly consume the wickedness from Israel
20:42-43[116]	בְּחוֹכוֹ כִּתְּרוּ in his midst. They surrounded	בַּתָּוֶךְ וַיַּכְתּוּ in the midst. And they beat down

Wrong Division of Sentence

5:11/13[117]	אָז יָרְדוּ לַשְּׁעָרִים עַם־יהוה עוּרִי עוּרִי דְּבוֹרָה Then went down to the gates the people of YHWH. Awake, Awake Deborah	אָז יָרְדוּ לַשְּׁעָרִים אַדִּירִים עַם־יהוה יָרַד־לוֹ בַּגִּבּוֹרִים Then the nobles went down to the gates The people of YHWH went down for Him among the mighty ones

[109] 𝔐 *(wayye'erbû-lô kol-hallaylāh)*. 𝔈 *(wayye'erbû-lô kol-hayyôm)*. Cf. Burney, 376.

[110] 𝔐 *(b'kol-šibtê Binyāmin)*. 𝔈 *(b'kol-šēbet Binyāmin)*. Cf. Burney, 474. *BHS* forces *(šbt)* שבט "tribe" to have a meaning of *(mšphh)* משפחה "family". See Chapter Three, Social Organization on pages 204-209.

[111] 𝔐 *('āz lāhēm š'ārîm)*. 𝔈 *('āz lah^mēš 'ārîm)*. Cf. Burney, 119. See footnote 77 on page 707, and Appendix 9 for the emended translation of this verse.

[112] 𝔐 *(w'śārâ b'Yiśśāškār)*. See the comment in footnote 2 regarding the defective pointing. 𝔈 *(w'śāreykā Yiśśāškār)*. Cf. Burney, 136. The letters *(b)* ב and *(k)* כ were confused when divided.

[113] 𝔐 *('āz hāl'mû 'iqq'bê-sûs midah^rôt)*. 𝔈 *('āz hāl'mû 'iqq'bê-sûsîm dāh^rû)*. Cf. Burney, 150. *BHS* takes "galloping" as a feminine plural construct noun, which should be a verb vocalized as Qal Perfect 3MP. *BDB* offers the possibility of translation to include: smite, hammer, or strike down. Burney suggests "Then loud beat the hoofs of the horses, off galloped." KJV suggests "Then were the horse hoofs broken by means of the prancing." See *BDB*, 187 and 240.

[114] 𝔐 *(derek haśś'kûnê bā'^hālîm)*. 𝔈 *(darkāh šōk'nê bā'^hālîm)*. Cf. Burney, 230 and *BDB* 1014-1015. The emendation is based on the vocalization of *(škn)* שכן as a participle.

[115] 𝔐 *(ûn'ba'^rāh rā'āh mîYiśrā'ēl)*. 𝔈 *(ûn'ba'ar hārā'āh mîYiśrā'ēl)*. Cf. Burney, 474 and *BDB*, 128-129. *BHS* vocalization of *(b'r)* בער is Piel Imperfect. The definite article is required for *(r'q)* רעק.

[116] 𝔐 *(b'tôkô kitrû)*. 𝔈 *(batāwek wayyaktû)*. Cf. Burney, 484 and *BDB*, 509-510. *BHS* vocalizes Piel Perfect 3MP. This moves the *(w)* ו from being a pronominal suffix that does not fit the context to a *(w)* ו consecutive status in the next sentence. The emendation vocalizes *(ktt)* כתת as Hiphil Imperfect 3MP.

Error due to the use of Abbreviation in Writing

5:8[118]	אזל' חמש'	אָזְלוּ חֲמֻשִׁים they go in battle array
5:10[119]	מד'	מִדִּין judgment
5:11[120]	מצחק'	מְצַחֲקוֹת maidens laughing
5:21[121]	עז י'	עֹז יהוה strength of YHWH
5:22[122]	מדהרו' דהרו'	מִדַּהֲרוֹת דַּהֲרוֹת from the galloping, the galloping of
10:18[123]	שרי גל'	שָׂרֵי גִלְעָד the princes of Gilead
19:18[124]	בית י'	בֵּיתִי my home

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[117] 𝕸 *('āz yordû laśś°'ārîm 'am-YHWH 'ûrî 'ûrî D°bôrāh)*. 𝕶 *('āz yordû laśś°'ārîm 'adirîm 'am-YHWH yārad-lô bagibbôrîm)*. Cf. Burney, 130. *BHS* connects the end of verse eleven with verse twelve. Because verse twelve is in the wrong order (see Transposition of Clauses), that places verse thirteen to follow verse eleven, whereby the stichos should be part of verse thirteen.

[118] The format of this section is slightly different. The transliteration, the Hebrew, and the translation of the 𝕸 are followed by the transliteration of the abbreviated Hebrew form above. The transliteration of the emendation follows. 𝕸 *('āz lāḥēm š°'ārîm)* אָז לָחֶם שְׁעָרִים; "then [was] war at the gates"; Abbr. *('zl. ḥmš.)*. 𝕶 *('ozlû h°mušîm)*. Cf. Burney, 119-120 and *BDB*, 23 and 332. The emendation vocalizes *('zl)* אזל as Qal Perfect 3MP. See footnote 77 on page 707, and Appendix 4 for the complete emended translation of this verse.

[119] 𝕸 *(yōš°bê 'al-midin)* יֹשְׁבֵי עַל־מִדִּין; "you that sit in judgment"; Abbr. *(md.)*. 𝕶 *(midîn)*. Cf. Burney, 123-124. This verse also has several corruptions that affect the translation. See Appendix 9 for the complete emended translation of this verse.

[120] 𝕸 *(miqqôl m°ḥaṣṣîm)*. מִקּוֹל מְחַצְצִים; "[louder] than the voice of the archers"; Abbr. *(mṣḥq.)*. 𝕶 *(m°ṣaḥ°qôt)*. Cf. Burney, 125-129.

[121] 𝕸 *(tidr°kî napšî 'ōz)* תִּדְרְכִי נַפְשִׁי עֹז; "my soul, you tread down strength"; Abbr. *('z Y.)*. 𝕶 *('ōz YHWH)*. Cf. Burney, 149.

[122] 𝕸 *(midah°rôt dah°rôt)* מִדַּהֲרוֹת דַּהֲרוֹת; Abbr. *(mdhrw. dhrw.)*. 𝕶. *(midah°rôt dah°rôt)*. Cf. Burney, 150. He suggests this should be emended based on *(dāh°rû dāh°rû)* דָּהֲרוּ דָּהֲרוּ, "they galloped, they galloped." Ultimately, this emendation is mute, because it is emended further. See Appendix 9 for the translation of the verse.

[123] 𝕸 *(śārê Gil'ād)* שָׂרֵי גִלְעָד; Abbr. *(śry Gl.)*. 𝕶 This is the same as the full form in *BHS*. Cf. Burney, 307. He suggests this should be emended based on *(Yiśrā'ēl)* יִשְׂרָאֵל, "Israel."

[124] 𝕸 *(w°'et-bêt YHWH)* וְאֶת־בֵּית יהוה; "and the house of YHWH"; Abbr. *(byt Y.)*. 𝕶 *('el bêtî)* אֶל בֵּיתִי; "unto my house." Cf. Burney, 466.

Error in Vocalization

4:11[125]	עַד־אֵלוֹן בְּצַעֲנַיִם by the oak in Saanim	עַד־אֵלוֹן בַּצַעֲנִים by the oak of Basaanim
4:21[126]	וַיָּעַף and so, he was exhausted	וְיָעֵף and exhausted
5:5[127]	הָרִים נָזְלוּ מִפְּנֵי יהוה The mountains shook before YHWH	הָרִים נָזֹלּוּ מִפְּנֵי יהוה The mountains shook before YHWH
5:6[128]	אֳרָחוֹת highways	אוֹרְחוֹת caravans
5:12[129]	שֶׁבְיְךָ your captives	שֹׁבֶיךָ your captors
5:13[130]	יְרַד־לִי make me have dominion	יָרַד־לוֹ went down for him
5:21[131]	קְדוּמִים נַחַל קִישׁוֹן the ancient Kishon River	קִדְמָם נַחַל קִישׁוֹן it faced them, the Kishon River
5:26[132]	לַיָתֵד תִּשְׁלַחְנָה to the tent peg she stretched forth	לַיָתֵד תִּשְׁלָחֶנָּה to the tent peg she stretched it forth
6:15[133]	אֲדֹנָי my Lord (Adonai)	אֲדֹנִי my lord
8:11[134]	הֶרֶךְ way	הַדְּרְכָה way
9:26[135]	בֶּן־עֶבֶד son of Ebed	בֶּן־עֹבֵד son of Obed
9:28[136]	בֶּן־עֶבֶד son of Ebed	בֶּן־עֹבֵד son of Obed
9:30[137]	בֶּן־עֶבֶד son of Ebed	בֶּן־עֹבֵד son of Obed

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[125] 𝕸 ('aḏ-'ēlôn bᵉṢa'ᵃnnayim). 𝕰 ('aḏ-'ēlôn Baṣ'annîm). Cf. Burney, 90.

[126] 𝕸 (wayyā'ap). 𝕰 (wᵊyā'ēp). Cf. Burney, 93 and *BDB*, 746. *BHS* vocalizes the root ('yp) עיף as Qal Imperfect 3MS, whereas the emendation vocalizes it as Qal Perfect 3MS. The issue of importance is whether the action is complete or incomplete and thus our emendation. Literally, the word is translated as "be faint."

[127] 𝕸 (hārîm nozlû mipnê YHWH). 𝕰 (hārîm nāzōllû mipnê YHWH). Cf. Burney, 112.

[128] 𝕸 ('ᵒrāḥôṯ). 𝕰 ('ōrᵊhôṯ). Cf. Burney, 114 and *BDB*, 73.

[129] 𝕸 (šeḇyᵊḵā). 𝕰 (šōḇeykā). Cf. Burney, 120.

[130] 𝕸 (yᵊraḏ-lî). 𝕰 (yāraḏ-lô). Cf. Burney, 130.

[131] 𝕸 (qᵊḏûmim naḥal Qîšôn). 𝕰 (qidmām naḥal Qîšôn). Cf. Burney, 147.

[132] 𝕸 (lâyāṯēḏ tišlaḥnāh). 𝕰 (lâyāṯēḏ tišlaḥennāh). Cf. Burney, 152-153.

[133] 𝕸 ('ᵃḏōnāy). 𝕰 ('ᵃḏōnî). Cf. Burney, 188.

[134] 𝕸 (dereḵ). 𝕰 (darkāh). Cf. Burney, 230. The difference is *BHS* is vocalized as masculine and the emendation is vocalized as feminine.

[135] 𝕸 (ben-'eḇeḏ). 𝕰 (ben-'ōḇēḏ). Cf. Burney, 278.

[136] 𝕸 (ben-'eḇeḏ). 𝕰 (ben-'ōḇēḏ). Cf. Burney, 278-279.

[137] 𝕸 (ben-'eḇeḏ). 𝕰 (ben-'ōḇēḏ). Cf. Burney, 278, 281.

9:31[138]	בֶּן־עֶבֶד son of Ebed	בֶּן־עֹבֵד son of Obed
9:35[139]	בֶּן־עֶבֶד son of Ebed	בֶּן־עֹבֵד son of Obed
9:49[140]	שׂוֹכֹה his branch	שׂוֹכָה a branch
11:26[141]	וּבְעַרְעוֹר and in Aroer	וּבַעֲרֹעֵר and in Aroer
11:26[142]	לֹא־הִצַּלְתֶּם you have not recovered	לֹא־הִצַּלְתָּם you have not recovered them
12:2[143]	וָאֶזְעַק and I summoned	וָאַזְעֵק and I summoned
12:12[144]	בְּאַיָּלוֹן in Ayalon	בְּאֵילוֹן in Elon
15:16[145]	חֲמוֹר חֲמֹרָתָיִם red, doubly red	חָמוֹר חִמַּרְתִּים I have reddened them really red
19:13[146]	לָךְ Come	לְכָה Come
20:48[147]	מֵעִיר מְתֹם from the entire city	מֵעִיר מְתִם from the inhabited city
21:19[148]	לִמְסִלָּה to a path	לַמְסִלָּה to the path
21:20[149]	וַיְצַוּ and they commanded	וַיְצַוּוּ and they commanded

[138] 𝕸 *(ben-ʿebed)*. 𝔈 *(ben-ʿōbēd)*. Cf. Burney, 278, 282.

[139] 𝕸 *(ben-ʿebed)*. 𝔈 *(ben-ʿōbēd)*. Cf. Burney, 278, 282.

[140] 𝕸 *(śôkōh)*. 𝔈 *(śôkāh)*. Cf. Burney, 287. It can also be translated as "bough."

[141] 𝕸 *(ûbəʾarʿôr)*. 𝔈 *(ûbaʿᵃrōʿēr)*. Cf. Burney, 316. Note 𝕸 is *(ʿarʿōr)* עַרְעוֹר, which is different than *BHS*.

[142] 𝕸 *(lōʾ-hiṣṣaltem)*. 𝔈 *(lōʾ-hiṣṣaltām)*. Cf. Burney, 317 and *BDB*, 664. The root *(nṣl)* נצל may also be translated as "delivered" or "rescued". It is vocalized as Hiphil Perfect in the emendation.

[143] 𝕸 *(wāʾezʿaq)*. 𝔈 *(wāʾazʿēq)*. Cf. Burney, 326. *BHS* is vocalized as Qal Perfect, whereas the emendation is vocalized as Hiphil Perfect.

[144] 𝕸 *(bəʾâyālón)*. 𝔈 *(bəʾêlôn)*. Cf. Burney, 334. This emendation is based on the Greek manuscripts where *(Ailōm)* Αιλωμ is used for both the name of the judge and the geographic location.

[145] 𝕸 *(ḥᵃmôr ḥᵃmōrātāyim)*. 𝔈 *(ḥᵃmôr ḥimmartîm)*. Cf. Burney, 372-373 and *BDB*, 331. *BDB* takes *(hmwr)* חמור as a masculine noun meaning "male jackass" or "heap." Also, it takes *(hmrtym)* חמרתים as a masculine construct noun, but it does not follow the normal plural ending, rather a dual ending with a *(t)* ת for euphony. KJV translates this as "heaps upon heaps." Our emendation vocalizes it as a Piel Perfect.

[146] 𝕸 *(lᵊkā)*. 𝔈 *(lᵊkāh)*. Cf. Burney, 466 and *BDB*, 229-237. This is a Qal Imperative vocalization of the root *(hlk)* חלך.

[147] 𝕸 *(mēʾîr mᵊtōm)*. 𝔈 *(mēʾîr mᵊtim)*. Cf. Burney, 488 and *BDB*, 607. Literally, this is "from city of men."

[148] 𝕸 *(limsillāh)*. 𝔈 *(lammᵊsillāh)*. Cf. Burney, 492. The word can be translated "highway" however, the meaning inferred suggests trails or paths used by travelers.

21:22[150]	לָרוּב to quarrel	לָרִיב to quarrel
21:22[151]	אֵלֵינוּ unto us	אֲלֵיכֶם unto you
21:22[152]	וְאָמַרְנוּ אֲלֵיהֶם and we will say to them	וַאֲמַרְתֶּם אֲלֵיהֶם and you will say to them
21:22[153]	כִּי לֹא אַתֶּם נְתַתֶּם for you did not give them	כִּי לֹא אַתֶּם נְתַתֶּם for if you did give them
21:22[154]	נְתַתֶּם לָהֶם did give them to them	נְתַתֶּם לָנוּ did give them to us

Grammatical Solecisms

Masculine for Feminine

4:20[155]	עֲמֹד stand	עִמְדִי stand
11:34[156]	מִמֶּנּוּ beside him	מִמֶּנָּה beside her
19:3[157]	לַהֲשִׁיבוּ to bring him back again	לַהֲשִׁיבָהּ to bring her back again
21:22[158]	אֲבוֹתָם אוֹ אֲחֵיהֶם their fathers or their brothers	אֲבוֹתָן אוֹ אֲחֵיהֶן their fathers or their brothers
21:22[159]	חָנּוּנוּ אוֹתָם Grant them to us	חָנּוּנוּ אֹתָן Grant them to us

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[149] 𝔐 *(wayṣawwu)*. 𝔈 *(wayṣawîw)*. Cf. Burney, 492 and *BDB*, 845. The *Qᵉrê* is read for the strange vocalization of the Piel Imperfect in *BHS*.

[150] 𝔐 *(lārûḇ)*. 𝔈 *(lārîḇ)*. Cf. Burney, 493 and *BDB*, 936. The *Qᵉrê* is read for *BHS*.

[151] 𝔐 *('ēlênû)*. 𝔈 *('ᵃlêḵem)*. Cf. Burney, 493.

[152] 𝔐 *(wᵉ'āmarnû 'ᵃlêhem)*. 𝔈 *(wa'ᵃmartem 'ᵃlêhem)*. Cf. Burney, 493.

[153] 𝔐 *(kî lō' 'atem niṯatem)*. 𝔈 *(kî lu' 'atem niṯatem)*. Cf. Burney, 493.

[154] 𝔐 *(niṯatem lāhem)*. 𝔈 *(niṯatem lānû)*. Cf. Burney, 493.

[155] 𝔐 *('ᵃmōḏ)*. 𝔈 *('imḏî)*. Cf. Burney, 93.

[156] 𝔐 *(mimmennû)*. 𝔈 *(mimmennāh)*. Cf. Burney, 321.

[157] 𝔐 *(lahᵃšîḇāwû)*. 𝔈 *(lahᵃšîḇāh)*. Cf. Burney, 467 and *BDB*, 996-1000. The *BHS* has a strange vocalization of the root *(šwb)* שׁוּב, which is emended as Hiphil Infinitive construct 3FS. The critical apparatus of Slotki's translation suggests *(lahᵃšîḇāhû)* לַהֲשִׁיבָהוּ for the 𝔐. See, J.A. Slotki, *Judges: Introduction and Commentary* (London: The Soncino Press, 1950), 297.

[158] 𝔐 *('ᵃḇôṯām 'ô 'ᵃḥêhem)*. 𝔈 *('ᵃḇôṯān 'ô 'ᵃḥêhen)*. Cf. Burney, 493.

[159] 𝔐 *(ḥānnûnû 'ôṯām)*. 𝔈 *(ḥānnûnû 'ōṯān)*. Cf. Burney, 493. This solecism occurs twice in the verse.

Feminine for Masculine

16:19[160]	וַתְּגַלַּח and she shaved off	וַיְגַלַּח and he shaved off
16:19[161]	וַתָּחֶל לְעַנּוֹתוֹ and she began to afflict him	וַיָּחֶל לְעַנּוֹת and he began to be afflicted
19:12[162]	הֵנָּה they	הֵמָּה they

Singular for Plural

2:13[163]	לַבַּעַל for Baal	לַבְּעָלִים for the Baals
5:29[164]	תַּעֲנֶנָּה answers her	תַּעֲנֶינָה answer
7:25[165]	וְרֹאשׁ and the head	וְרָאשֵׁי and the heads
8:6[166]	וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂרֵי סֻכּוֹת and the princes of Succoth said	וַיֹּאמְרוּ שָׂרֵי סֻכּוֹת and the princes of Succoth said
19:12[167]	אֶל־עִיר נָכְרִי to the city of a foreigner	אֶל־עִיר נָכְרִים to the city of foreigners
20:10[168]	אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה which it has done	אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ which they have done

Plural for Singular

2:22[169]	בָּם in them	בָּהּ in it
3:13[170]	וַיִּירְשׁוּ and they took possession	וַיִּירַשׁ and he took possession

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[160] 𝔐 *(watgallah)*. 𝔈 *(waygallah)*. Cf. Burney, 383. *BHS* is vocalized as Piel Imperfect 3FS instead of the emendation of Piel Imperfect 3MS.

[161] 𝔐 *(watāhel lᵊ'annôtô)*. 𝔈 *(wayyāhel lē'ānôt)*. Cf. Burney, 383 and *BDB*, 319-320, 776. *BHS* vocalizes the root *(hll)* חלל as Hiphil Imperfect 3FS instead of vocalizing it as Hiphil Imperfect 3MS. *BDB* also gives a meaning of "pierce, pollute, defile, or profane."

[162] 𝔐 *(hēnnāh)*. 𝔈 *(hēmmāh)*. Cf. Burney, 463.

[163] 𝔐 *(laBa'al)*. 𝔈 *(laBᵊ'ālim)*. Cf. Burney, 57.

[164] 𝔐 *(ta'ᵃnennāh)*. 𝔈 *(ta'ᵃneynāh)*. Cf. Burney, 155. *BHS* is vocalized as singular with feminine suffix, which is emended to a plural with no suffix.

[165] 𝔐 *(wᵊrō'š)*. 𝔈 *(wᵊro'šê)*. Cf. Burney, 226.

[166] 𝔐 *(wayyō'mer śārê Sukkôt)*. 𝔈 *(wayyō'mᵊrû śārê Sukkôt)*. Cf. Burney, 229.

[167] 𝔐 *('el-'îr nokrî)*. 𝔈 *('el-'îr nokrîm)*. Cf. Burney, 463.

[168] 𝔐 *('ᵃšer 'āśāh)*. 𝔈 *('ᵃšer 'āśû)*. Cf. Burney, 474.

[169] 𝔐 *(bām)*. 𝔈 *(bāh)*. Cf. Burney, 61.

[170] 𝔐 *(wayyiyrᵊšû)*. 𝔈 *(wayyiyraš)*. Cf. Burney, 68 and *BDB*, 439. The root *(yrš)* ירש is vocalized as Qal Imperfect 3MP in *BHS*, whereas it is emended to Qal Imperfect 3MS.

9:44[171]	וְהָרָאשִׁים and the bands	וְהָרֹאשׁ and the band
9:48[172]	אֶת־הַקַּרְדֻּמּוֹת the axes	אֶת־הַקַּרְדֹּם the axe
11:13[173]	הָשִׁיבָה אֶתְהֶן restore them	הָשִׁיבָה אוֹתָהּ restore it
13:12[174]	דְּבָרֶיךָ your words	דְּבָרְךָ your word
13:17[175]	דְּבָרֶיךָ your words	דְּבָרְךָ your word
20:33[176]	אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל קָמוּ the men of Israel rose up	אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל קָם the men of Israel rose up
20:42[177]	וַיִּפְנוּ so they turned	וַיִּפֶן so they turned
20:42[178]	מֵהֶעָרִים from the cities	מֵהָעִיר from the city

Third Person for First Person

16:18[179]	כִּי־הִגִּיד לָהּ for he has told to her	כִּי־הִגִּיד לִי for he has told to me

False Tense

3:23[180]	וְנָעָל and locked them	וְנָעֹל and locking them
7:13[181]	וְנָפַל הָאֹהֶל and the tent fell	[ ] This is also considered to be an addition to the text

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[171] 𝔐 *(wᵉhāro'šim)*. 𝔈 *(wᵉhārō'š)*. Cf. Burney, 285 and *BDB*, 910-911. Literally, it is translated "head."

[172] 𝔐 *('eṭ-haqqardummôṭ)*. 𝔈 *('eṭ-haqqardōm)*. Cf. Burney, 287.

[173] 𝔐 *(hāšîḇāh 'eṭhen)*. 𝔈 *(hāšîḇāh 'ōṭāh)*. Cf. Burney, 310.

[174] 𝔐 *(dᵉḇāreykā)*. 𝔈 *(dᵉḇār'kā)*. Cf. Burney, 347.

[175] 𝔐 *(dᵉḇāreykā)*. 𝔈 *(dᵉḇār'kā)*. Cf. Burney, 348.

[176] 𝔐 *('îš Yiśrā'ēl qāmû)*. 𝔈 *('îš Yiśrā'ēl qom)*. Cf. Burney, 480 and *BDB*, 877. *BHS* vocalizes the root *(qwm)* קום as Qal Perfect 3CP, whereas it is emended to Qal Perfect 3MS, in agreement with the collective sense of the subject.

[177] 𝔐 *(wayyipnû)*. 𝔈 *(wayyipen)*. Cf. Burney, 483-484 and *BDB*, 815. *BHS* vocalizes the root *(pnh)* פנה as Qal Imperfect 3CS, whereas it is emended to Qal Imperfect 3MS. Although it appears that the plural form would be correct, the singular form agrees with the grammatical context and should be taken as a collective singular form with a plural force. Literally, it is translated, "so he turned."

[178] 𝔐 *(mēhe'ārîm)*. 𝔈 *(mēhā'îr)*. Cf. Burney, 484.

[179] 𝔐 *(kî-higîḏ lih)*. 𝔈 *(kî-higîḏ lî)*. Cf. Burney, 383.

[180] 𝔐 *(wᵉnā'āl)*. 𝔈 *(wᵉnā'ōl)*. Cf. Burney, 73-73 and *BDB*, 653. *BHS* vocalizes the root *(n'l)* נעל as Qal Perfect 3MS with a weak *(w)* ו, which is irregular. The emendation vocalizes the form as Qal Infinitive Absolute with a *(w)* ו conjunctive.

[181] 𝔐 *(wᵉnāpal hā'ōhel)*. Cf. Burney, 214.

8:4[182]	עֹבֵר	וַיַּעֲבֹר
	passing over	and he passed over
16:18[183]	וְעָלוּ אֵלֶיהָ סַרְנֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים	וַיַּעֲלוּ אֵלֶיהָ סַרְנֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים
	and the lords of the Philistines came up to her	and the lords of the Philistines came up to her
20:39[184]	וַיַּהֲפֹךְ אִישׁ־יִשְׂרָאֵל	וְהָפַךְ אִישׁ־יִשְׂרָאֵל
	and the men of Israel turned back	the men of Israel will turn back

Intentional Perversion

1:5[185]	אֶת־אֲדֹנִי בֶזֶק	אֶת־אֲדֹנִי צֶדֶק
	the lord of Bezek	the lord of Sedek
2:13[186]	וְלָעַשְׁתָּרוֹת	וְלָעַשְׁתָּרְתוֹת
	and for the Ashtaroth	and for the Ashtarts
3:8[187]	כּוּשַׁן רִשְׁעָתַיִם	כּוּשַׁן רֹאשׁ הַתֵּימָנִי
	Cushan Rishathaim	Cushan, chief of the Temanites
3:8[188]	אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם	אֱדֹם
	Aram Naharaim	Edom
8:5[189]	צַלְמֻנָּע	צֵל מְמֻנָּע
	Salmunna	Sel being withheld
14:14[190]	שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים	שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים
	three days	six days
18:30[191]	מְנַשֶּׁה	מֹשֶׁה
	Manasseh	Moses

[182] 𝔐 (*'ōbēr*). 𝔈 (*wâya'ᵃbōr*). Cf. Burney, 227.

[183] 𝔐 (*wᵉ'ālû 'ēleyhā sarnê Pᵉlištîm*). 𝔈 (*wâya'ᵃlû 'ēleyhā sarnê Pᵉlištîm*). Cf. Burney, 383 and BDB, 748. *BHS* vocalizes the root ('lh) עלה as Qal Perfect 3MS, whereas it is emended to Qal Imperfect 3CP. The *BHS* usage is a strange form of Qal Perfect 3CP.

[184] 𝔐 (*wayyahᵃpōk 'îš Yiśrā'ēl*). 𝔈 (*wᵉhāpak 'îš Yiśrā'ēl*). Cf. Burney, 483 and BDB, 245. *BHS* vocalizes the root הפך as Qal Imperfect 3MS and takes the *(w)* ו as conjunctive. The emendation is vocalized as Qal Perfect 3MS with a *(w)* ו consecutive.

[185] 𝔐 (*'et-'ᵃdōnî Bezeq*). 𝔈 (*'et-'ᵃdōnî Ṣedeq*). Cf. Burney, 5. The same would follow for verses six and seven.

[186] 𝔐 (*wᵉlā'aštārôt*). 𝔈 (*wᵉlā'aštārtôt*). Cf. Burney, 58. The Hebrew emendation is based on the Greek versions identifying the female goddess *(hē Astartē)* ἡ Αστάρτη. The *BHS* form when translated could also be interpreted as the Ishtars, referring to the Babylonian goddess.

[187] 𝔐 (*Kûšan-Riš'ātayim*). 𝔈 (*Kûšan rō'š haTêmānî*). Cf. Burney, 64. Another possibility would be to emend the Hebrew with another proper name *(Kûš-Rîšat)* כּוּשׁ־רִישַׁת "Cush-Rishat," thus identifying Rishat with the territory of Cush.

[188] 𝔐 (*'ᵃram Nahᵃrāyim*). 𝔈 (*'ᵉdōm*). Cf. Burney, 65. The emendation is based on *(nhrym)* נהרים "rivers" being a gloss, which is not present in 3:10. Aram is a geographic perversion of Edom.

[189] 𝔐 (*Ṣalmunnā'*). 𝔈 (*Ṣēl mᵉmunnā'*). Cf. Burney, 228-229 and BDB, 586. The emendation is based on a similar perversion of the aforementioned proper names, Adoni-bezek and Cushan-Rishathaim as an irony in each pericope. Yet, this emendation shortens the name of one of the kings to a form that embodies the name of the North Arabian god *(Ṣalm)* צָלְם. The translation of the second part of the name is based on the Pual participle with the *(m)* מ prefix.

[190] 𝔐 (*šᵉlōšet yāmîm*). 𝔈 (*šēšet yāmîm*). Cf. Burney, 363.

[191] 𝔐 (*Mᵉnaššeh*). 𝔈 (*Mōšeh*). Cf. Burney, 434-435.

19:3[192]	וַתְּבִיאֵהוּ and she brought him	וַיָּבֹא and he came
20:15[193]	עֶשְׂרִים וְשִׁשָּׁה אֶלֶף twenty six thousand	עֶשְׂרִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה אֶלֶף twenty five thousand

Unclassified Corruption of the Text

5:13[194]	אָז יְרַד שָׂרִיד לְאַדִּירִים Then He caused me to tread upon the remnant of the noble ones	אָז יָרְדוּ לַשְּׂעָרִים אַדִּירִים Then the nobles went down to the gates
6:25[195]	קַח אֶת־פַּר־הַשּׁוֹר אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיךָ Take the bull of the ox which is your father's	קַח עֲשָׂרָה אֲנָשִׁים מֵעֲבָדֶיךָ Take ten men of your servants

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[192] 𝕸 *(watḇî'ēhû).* 𝕰 *(wayyāḇō').* Cf. Burney, 461.

[193] 𝕸 *('eśrîm wᵉšiššāh 'eleḡ).* 𝕰 *('eśrîm wᵉḥamiššāh 'eleḡ).* Cf. Burney, 475 and *BDB*, 331.

[194] 𝕸 *('āz yᵉraḏ śārîḏ lᵉ'adîrîm).* 𝕰 *('āz yārḏû laššᵉ'ārîm 'adîrîm).* Cf. Burney, 130-131.

[195] 𝕸 *(qaḥ 'eṯ-par-haššôr 'ᵃšer lᵉ'āḇîḵā).* 𝕰 *(qaḥ ᵃśārāh 'ᵃnāšîm mēᶜᵃḇāḏeyḵā).* Cf. Burney, 194-195.

APPENDIX 2

LISTING OF TEXTUAL ERRORS IN JUDGES
BY INSERTION

Dittography of Words

Reference	BHS Text	Alternate Emendation
3:2[1]	רַק לְמַעַן [דַּעַת] דֹּרוֹת only on account the generations [might know]	רַק לְמַעַן [ ] דֹּרוֹת only on account [ ] of the generations
7:24[2]	אֶת־הַמַּיִם עַד בָּרָה וְאֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן the waters [unto Beth-Barah and] the Jordan	אֶת־מַעְבְּרוֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן the fords [ ] of the Jordan
20:15[3]	לְבַד מִיֹּשְׁבֵי הַגִּבְעָה [הִתְפָּקְדוּ] שֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ בָּחוּר not including the inhabitants of Gibeah, [they were mustering themselves] 700 chosen men	לְבַד מִיֹּשְׁבֵי הַגִּבְעָה [ ] שֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ בָּחוּר not including the inhabitants of Gibeah, [ ] 700 chosen men
20:38[4]	עִם־הָאֹרֵב [הֶרֶב] לְהַעֲלוֹתָם מַשְׂאַת הֶעָשָׁן מִן־הָעִיר with the ambush [make great] their causing to go up smoke rising from the city	עִם־הָאֹרֵב [ ] לְהַעֲלוֹתָם מַשְׂאַת הֶעָשָׁן מִן־הָעִיר with the ambush was [ ] their causing to go up smoke rising from the city

Dittography of Letters

4:11[5]	עַד־אֵלוֹן בְּצַעֲנַיִם by the oak in Saanim	עַד־אֵלוֹן בַּצַעֲנִים by the oak of Basaanim
5:6[6]	בִּימֵי יָעֵל in the days of Jael	מִימֵי עֹלָם from the days of old

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[1] Throughout this appendix the brackets refer to the insertion or in the case of the emendation where the insertion had been. 𝔐 *(raq lᵉmaʿan [daʿat] dōrôṯ)*. 𝔈 *(raq lᵉmaʿan [ ] dōrôṯ)*. Cf. Burney, 61. *(daʿat)* דַּעַת is taken as dittography of *(dōrôṯ)* דֹּרוֹת.

[2] 𝔐 *(ʾeṯ-[hammayim ʿaḏ bārāh wᵉʾeṯ]-hâyarḏēn)*. 𝔈 *(ʾeṯ-[ ]-hâyarḏēn)*. Cf. Burney, 225. *(hammayim ʿaḏ bārāh wᵉʾeṯ)* הַמַּיִם עַד בֵּית בָּרָה וְאֶת is taken as dittography of *(maʿᵇᵉrōṯ)* מַעְבְּרֹת.

[3] 𝔐 *(lᵉḇaḏ mîyšᵉḇê haGibʿāh [hitpāqᵉḏû] šᵉḇaʿ mēʾôṯ ʾîš bāḥûr)*. 𝔈 *(lᵉḇaḏ mîyšᵉḇê haGibʿāh [ ] šᵉḇaʿ mēʾôṯ ʾîš bāḥûr)*. Cf. Burney, 475 and *BDB*, 823. The root *(pqd)* פקד is vocalized as Hithpael Perfect 3CP. *(hitpāqᵉḏû)* הִתְפָּקְדוּ is taken as dittography of *(wayyitpāqᵉḏû)* וַיִּתְפָּקְדוּ.

[4] 𝔐 *(ʾim-hāʾōreḇ [hereḇ] lᵉhaⁿᵃlôṯām maśʾaṯ hēʿāšān min-hāʿîr)*. 𝔈 *(ʾim-hāʾōreḇ [ ] lᵉhaⁿᵃlôṯām maśʾaṯ hēʿāšān min-hāʿîr)*. Cf. Burney, 482. *(hereḇ)* הֶרֶב is taken as dittography of *(hāʾōreḇ)* הָאֹרֵב.

[5] 𝔐 *(ʿaḏ-ʾēlôn bᵉSaⁿᵃnnayim)*. 𝔈 *(ʿaḏ-ʾēlôn Baṣʾannîm)*. Cf. Burney, 90. The dittography in the *BHS* is the *(n)* נ preceding the *(n)* נ.

[6] 𝔐 *(bîmê Yāʿēl)*. 𝔈 *(mime ʿōlām)*. Cf. Burney, 114. In the *BHS*, the *(y)* י of *(yʿl)* יעל is due to dittography of the final letter of *(bymy)* בימי.

7:22[7]	וַיָּשֶׂם יְהוָה אֶת־חֶרֶב אִישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ וּבְכָל־הַמַּחֲנֶה and YHWH set a man's sword against his companion [even] in all the camp	וַיָּשֶׂם יהוה אֶת־חֶרֶב אִישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ בְּכָל־הַמַּחֲנֶה and YHWH set a man's sword against his companion [ ] in all the camp
11:24[8]	הֲלֹא אֵת אֲשֶׁר יוֹרִישְׁךָ כְּמוֹשׁ אֱלֹהֶיךָ אוֹתוֹ תִירָשׁ Whatever Chemosh your god causes [you] to possess, do you not possess it?	הֲלֹא אֵת אֲשֶׁר יוֹרִישׁ כְּמוֹשׁ אֱלֹהֶיךָ אוֹתוֹ תִירָשׁ Whatever Chemosh your god causes [ ] to possess, do you not possess it?
19:29-30[9]	יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־נִהְיְתָה Israel. There has not been	יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲנִהְיְתָה Israel. Has there been …?

Doublets

2:11[10]	וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה [וַיַּעַבְדוּ אֶת־הַבְּעָלִים] And the children of Israel did evil in the eyes of YHWH [and they served the Baals]	וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יהוה [ ] And the children of Israel did evil in the eyes of YHWH [ ]
5:11[11]	שָׁם יְתַנּוּ צִדְקוֹת יְהוָה צִדְקֹת פִּרְזֹנוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל [אָז יָרְדוּ לַשְּׁעָרִים עַם־יְהוָה] There they recount the righteous acts of YHWH, the righteous acts of His peasantry in Israel, [then shall the people of YHWH go down to the gates].	שָׁם יְתַנּוּ צִדְקוֹת יהוה צִדְקֹת זְרוֹעוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל [ ] There they recount the righteous acts of YHWH, the righteous acts of His arm in Israel, [ ].
5:15-16[12]	<> בִּפְלַגּוֹת רְאוּבֵן גְּדֹלִים חִקְקֵי־לֵב לָמָּה יָשַׁבְתָּ בֵּין הַמִּשְׁפְּתַיִם לִשְׁמֹעַ שְׁרִקוֹת עֲדָרִים [לִפְלַגּוֹת רְאוּבֵן גְּדֹלִים חִקְרֵי־לֵב] < > in the factions of Reuben were great searchings of heart. Why did you sit between the sheepfolds to hear the bleating of flocks? [Among the divisions of Reuben great searchings of heart.]	<נִפְרָד> לִפְלַגּוֹת רְאוּבֵן גְּדֹלִים חִקְרֵי לִבּוֹ לָמָה יָשַׁבְתָּ בֵּין הַמִּשְׁפְּתַיִם לִשְׁמֹעַ שְׁרִקוֹת עֲדָרִים [ ] <Utterly torn> into factions was Reuben, great were the searchings of heart. Why did you sit between the sheepfolds to hear the bleating of flocks? [ ]

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[7] 𝕸 *(wayyāśem YHWH 'et-hereb 'îš bᵉrē'ēhû ûbᵉkol-hammaḥᵃneh).* 𝕰 *(wayyāśem YHWH 'et-hereb 'îš bᵉrē'ēhû bᵉkol-hammaḥᵃneh).* Cf. Burney, 218-219. This is a dittography of the *(w)* ו from the preceding word.

[8] 𝕸 *(hᵃlō' 'ēt ᵃšer yôrîšᵉkā Kᵉmôš ᵉlōheykā 'ôtô tîrāš).* 𝕰 *(hᵃlō' 'ēt ᵃšer yôrîš Kᵉmôš ᵉlōheykā 'ôtô tîrāš).* Cf. Burney, 316 and *BDB*, 439. *BDB* also gives this a meaning of inherit or dispossess. *BHS* is vocalized as *Hiphil* Imperfect 2MS and has been emended to *Hiphil* Imperfect 3MS.

[9] 𝕸 *(Yiśrā'ēl. lō'-nihyᵉtāh).* 𝕰 *(Yiśrā'ēl. hᵃnihyᵉtāh).* Cf. Burney, 470. The *BHS* rendering is taken by removing the inserted phrase *(yᵉhāyāh kol-hārō'eh wᵉ'āmar)* וְאָמַר כָל־הָרֹאֶה יְהָיָה. The dittography is because of the substitution of *(l')* לא for the *(h)* ה interrogative and from the last letter of Israel in verse 29. The insertion of the first phrase is dealt with later in this appendix.

[10] 𝕸 *(wayya'ᵃśû bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl 'ēt-hāra'bᵉ'ênê YHWH [wayya'abdû 'ēt-hāBᵉ'ālîm]).* 𝕰 *(wayya'ᵃśû bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl 'ēt-hāra'bᵉ'ênê YHWH [ ]).* Cf. Burney, 482.

[11] 𝕸 *(šām yᵉtannû ṣidqōt YHWH ṣidqōt pirzōnô bᵉYiśrā'ēl ['āz yārᵉdû laššᵉ'ārîm 'am-YHWH]).* 𝕰 *(šām yᵉtannû ṣidqōt YHWH ṣidqōt zᵉrô'ô bᵉYiśrā'ēl [ ]).* Cf. Burney, 57. The last phrase of verse eleven is a doublet of the first phrase of verse thirteen. See the section on Transposition of Clauses on pages 704-705.

8:13[13]	וַיָּשָׁב גִּדְעוֹן בֶּן־יוֹאָשׁ מִן־הַמִּלְחָמָה [מִלְמַעֲלֵה הֶחָרֶס] And Gideon the son of Joash returned from the battle [from the ascent of Heres].	וַיָּשָׁב גִּדְעוֹן בֶּן־יוֹאָשׁ מִן־הַמִּלְחָמָה [ ] And Gideon the son of Joash returned from the battle [ ].
10:11[14]	הֲלֹא מִמִּצְרַיִם וּמִן־הָאֱמֹרִי וּמִן־בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן וּמִן־פְּלִשְׁתִּים Did not [from] Egypt and [from] the Amorites and [from] the sons of Ammon and [from] the Philistines	הֲלֹא מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֱמֹרִי וּבְנֵי עַמּוֹן וּפְלִשְׁתִּים Did not [ ] Egypt and [ ] the Amorites and [ ] the sons of Ammon and [ ] the Philistines
12:4[15]	וַיַּכּוּ אַנְשֵׁי גִלְעָד אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם [כִּי אָמְרוּ פְּלִיטֵי אֶפְרַיִם אַתֶּם גִּלְעָד בְּתוֹךְ אֶפְרַיִם בְּתוֹךְ מְנַשֶּׁה] and the men of Gilead struck down Ephraim [because they said, "Fugitives of Ephraim are you Gilead, in the midst of Ephraim, in the midst of Manasseh].	וַיַּכּוּ אַנְשֵׁי גִלְעָד אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם [ ] and the men of Gilead struck down Ephraim [ ].
13:19[16]	וַיַּעַל עַל־הַצּוּר לַיהוה [וּמַפְלִא לַעֲשׂוֹת וּמָנוֹחַ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ רֹאִים] and he offered it upon the rock to YHWH [and doing wondrously, and Manoah and his wife were looking on].	וַיַּעַל עַל־הַצּוּר לַיהוה [ ] and he offered it upon the rock to YHWH [ ].
13:23[17]	וְלֹא הֶרְאָנוּ [אֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה וְכָעֵת לֹא הִשְׁמִיעָנוּ] כָּזֹאת neither would he have showed us [all these things, nor would he at this time have told us such a thing] as this.	וְלֹא הוֹרָנוּ [ ] כָּזֹאת and would not have instructed us [ ] thus.
17:10[18]	וְאָנֹכִי אֶתֶּן־לְךָ עֲשֶׂרֶת כֶּסֶף לַיָּמִים וְעֵרֶךְ בְּגָדִים וּמִחְיָתֶךָ [וַיֵּלֶךְ הַלֵּוִי] And I will give you ten pieces of silver for the days and an order of garments and your sustenance. [And the Levite went in.]	וְאָנֹכִי אֶתֶּן־לְךָ עֲשֶׂרֶת כֶּסֶף לַיָּמִים וְעֵרֶךְ בְּגָדִים וּמִחְיָתֶךָ [ ] And I will give you ten pieces of silver for the days and an order of garments and your sustenance. [ ].

[12] 𝔐 (< > biplagôt R'úbēn g'dōlîm hiq'qê-lēb lommāh yāšabtā bēn hammišp'tayim lišmoa‘ š'riqôt ‘ᵃdārîm [liplagôt R'úbēn g'dôlîm hiqirê-lēb]). 𝔈 (<niprōd niprad> liplagôt R'úbēn g'dōlîm hiqqrê-libô lommāh yāšabtā bēn hammišp'tayim lišmoa‘ š'riqôt ‘ᵃdārîm [ ]). Cf. Burney, 130, and BDB, 1057. Literally, the emendation is translated as "his heart." Also, the word bleating can be translated as "hissing" or possibly "piping."

[13] 𝔐 (wayyāšāb Gid'ôn ben-Yô'āš min-hammilhāmāh [milmaᵃ'lēh heHāres]). 𝔈 (wayyāšāb Gid'ôn ben-Yô'āš min-hammilhāmāh [ ]). Cf. Burney, 232. The last phrase of verse twelve in BHS is (wkl-hmmhnh hḥryd) וכל־המחנה החריד. When this is emended to as noted in Appendix 1, Confusion of Letters, the last four letters of the doublet are noticeable, on page 700.

[14] 𝔐 (hᵒlō' mimMiṣrayim ûmin-hāᵃ'mōrî ûmin-b'nê 'ammôn ûmin-P'lištîm). 𝔈 (hᵒlō' Miṣrayim w'hāᵃ'mōrî ûbinê 'ammôn ûP'lištîm). Cf. Burney, 296-297.

[15] 𝔐 (wayyakû 'anšê Gil'ād 'et-'eprayim [kî 'ām'rû p'lîtê 'eprayim 'atem Gil'ād b'tôk M'naššeh]). 𝔈 (wayyakû 'anšê Gil'ād 'et-'eprayim [ ]). Cf. Burney, 327. The doublet is based on a similar phrase in verse five which contains the first four words of this insertion.

[16] 𝔐 (wayya'al 'al-haṣṣûr laYHWH [ûmapli laᵃ'śôt ûMānôah w''ištô rō'im]). 𝔈 (wayya'al 'al-haṣṣûr laYHWH [ ]). Cf. Burney, 350. The BHS doublet insertion originates from the phrase repetition in verse twenty.

[17] 𝔐 (w'lō' her'ānû ['et-kol-'elleh w'kā'ēt lō' hišmî'ānû] kāzō't). 𝔈 (w'lō' her'ānû [ ] kāzō't). Cf. Burney, 351-352. Literally, (kz't) כזאת is translated "as this."

20:15-16[19]	לְבַד מִיֹּשְׁבֵי הַגִּבְעָה [הִתְפָּקְדוּ] שֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ בָּחוּר [מִכֹּל הָעָם הַזֶּה שֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ בָּחוּר] אִטֵּר יַד־יְמִינוֹ Besides the inhabitants of Gibeah [mustering themselves], seven hundred chosen men. [Among all the people, this seven hundred chosen men] bound in the right hand	לְבַד מִיֹּשְׁבֵי הַגִּבְעָה [ ] שֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ בָּחוּר [ ] אִטֵּר יַד־יְמִינוֹ besides the inhabitants of Gibeah [ ] seven hundred chosen men. [ ] Bound in the right hand
20:43[20]	הִרְדִּיפֻהוּ מְנוּחָה [הִדְרִיכֻהוּ] עַד נֹכַח הַגִּבְעָה מִמִּזְרַח־שָׁמֶשׁ they chased him from Nuhah and tread them down until opposite Gibeah at the sunrising.	וַיִּרְדְּפֻהוּ מְנוּחָה [ ] עַד נֹכַח הַגֶּבַע מִמִּזְרַח־שָׁמֶשׁ and pursued him from Nuhah [ ] until opposite Geba at the sunrising.

Other Marginal Notes Inserted in the Text

5:5[21]	הָרִים נָזְלוּ מִפְּנֵי יהוה [זֶה סִינַי] מִפְּנֵי יהוה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל mountains shook before YHWH, this Sinai, before YHWH, the God of Israel.	הָרִים נָזְלוּ מִפְּנֵי יהוה [ ] מִפְּנֵי יהוה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל mountains shook before YHWH, [ ] before YHWH, the God of Israel.
5:6[22]	וְהֹלְכֵי נְתִיבוֹת יֵלְכוּ [אֳרָחוֹת] עֲקַלְקַלּוֹת and those walking the ways walked the crooked [paths]	וְהֹלְכֵי נְתִיבוֹת יֵלְכוּ [ ] עֲקַלְקַלּוֹת and those walking [ ] walked the crooked ways
5:14[23]	וּמִזְּבוּלֻן מֹשְׁכִים בְּשֵׁבֶט [סֹפֵר] and from Zebulun men wielding the staff [of the scribe].	וּמִזְּבוּלֻן מֹשְׁכִים בַּשֵּׁבֶט [ ] and from Zebulun men wielding the staff [ ].

[18] 𝔐 *(wᵊʾānōkî ʾeten-lᵊkā ᵃšeret kesep layyāmîm wᵊʾērek bᵊgādîm ûmiḥyāteka [wayyēlek halLēwî]).* 𝔈 *(wᵊʾānōkî ʾeten-lᵊkā ᵃšeret kesep layyāmîm wᵊʾērek bᵊgādîm ûmiḥyāteka [ ]).* Cf. Burney, 423. The duplication in *BHS* at the end of verse ten originates with the first two words of verse eleven *(wayyô'el halLēwî)* וַיּוֹאֶל הַלֵּוִי.

[19] 𝔐 *(lᵊbad mîyšᵊbê haGib'āh [hitpāqᵊdû] šᵊba' mē'ôt ʾiš bāḥûr [mikōl hā'ām hazzeh šᵊba' mē'ôt ʾiš bāḥûr] ʾiṭēr yad-yᵊmînô).* 𝔈 *(lᵊbad mîyšᵊbê haGib'āh [ ] šᵊba' mē'ôt ʾiš bāḥûr [ ] ʾiṭēr yad-yᵊmînô).* Cf. Burney, 475. The first insertion is discussed earlier in the section Dittography of Words on page 719. The *BHS* doublet insertion originates from the phrase repetition in verse sixteen. Being bound in the right hand implies these men were left-handed.

[20] 𝔐 *(hirdîpuhû mᵊNûḥāh [hidrîkuhû] 'ad nōkaḥ haGib'āh mimmizrah-šāmeš).* 𝔈 *(wayyirdᵊpuhû mᵊNûḥāh [ ] 'ad nōkah haGāba' mimmizrah-šāmeš).* Cf. Burney, 484-485. The inserted doublet is based on a corruption of the first word of the phrase. For a discussion on this corruption see Appendix 1, Confusion of Letters on page 698. The translation of the geographical location is addressed in Appendix 1, Confusion of Similar Words and Forms on page 709. Literally, *(mmzrh-smš)* מִמִּזְרַח־שָׁמֶשׁ is translated "from the east of the sun."

[21] 𝔐 *(hārîm nāzᵊlû mipnê YHWH [zeh Sînay] mipnê YHWH ᵉlōhê Yiśrā'ēl).* 𝔈 *(hārîm nāzᵊlû mipnê YHWH [ ] mipnê YHWH ᵉlōhê Yiśrā'ēl).* Cf. Burney, 113. Burney questions the insertion based on an uneven metrical beat in the distich, whereas it is even with the emendation. The scribal gloss to the mountains earlier mentioned suggests that the author would have been looking at Mount Sinai when the song was written. Cf. Moore, 141-142.

[22] 𝔐 *(wᵊhōlᵊkê nᵊtîbôt yēlᵊkû [ᵃrāḥôt] ᵃqalqallôt).* 𝔈 *(wᵊhōlᵊkê nᵊtîbôt yēlᵊkû [ ] ᵃqalqallôt).* Cf. Burney, 115.

[23] 𝔐 *(ûmizZᵊbûlun mōšᵊkîm bᵊšēbeṭ [sōpēr]).* 𝔈 *(ûmizZᵊbûlun mōšᵊkîm bᵊšēbeṭ [ ]).* Cf. Burney, 136 and *BDB*, 604.

6:26[24]	וְלָקַחְתָּ אֶת הַפָּר [הַשֵּׁנִי] וְהַעֲלִיתָ and shall take the second bull and offer it	וְלָקַחְתָּ אֶת הַפָּר [ ] וְהַעֲלִיתָ and shall take the [ ] bull and offer it
6:28[25]	וְאֵת הַפָּר [הַשֵּׁנִי] הֹעֲלָה and the second bull had been offered up	וְאֵת הַפָּר [ ] הֹעֲלָה and the [ ] bull had been offered up
7:14[26]	אֵין זֹאת בִּלְתִּי [אִם־חֶרֶב גִּדְעוֹן בֶּן־יוֹאָשׁ] אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל This is nothing except with the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel	אֵין זֹאת בִּלְתִּי [ ] אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל This is nothing except [ ] a man of Israel
13:6[27]	אִישׁ [הָאֱלֹהִים] בָּא אֵלַי A man [of Elohim] came unto me	אִישׁ [ ] בָּא אֵלַי A man [ ] came unto me
13:6[28]	וּמַרְאֵהוּ כְּמַרְאֵה [מַלְאַךְ] הָאֱלֹהִים and his appearance like the appearance of [the angel of] Elohim	וּמַרְאֵהוּ כְּמַרְאֵה [ ] אֱלֹהִים and his appearance like the appearance of [ ] a god
13:19[29]	וַיַּעַל עַל־הַצּוּר לַיהוה [וּמַפְלִא] and he offered it upon the rock to YHWH and doing wondrously,	וַיַּעַל עַל־הַצּוּר לַיהוה [ ] and he offered it upon the rock to YHWH [ ].
16:14[30]	וַיִּיקַץ מִשְּׁנָתוֹ וַיִּסַּע אֶת־[הַיְתַד] הָאֶרֶג וְאֶת־הַמַּסָּכֶת and he awoke from his sleep and pulled out the peg of the loom and the web.	וַיִּיקַץ מִשְּׁנָתוֹ וַיִּסַּע [ ] אֶת־הָאֶרֶג וְאֶת־הַמַּסָּכֶת and he awoke from his sleep and pulled out [ ] the loom and the web.
18:7[31]	וְאֵין־מַכְלִים דָּבָר < > בָּאָרֶץ [יוֹרֵשׁ עֶצֶר] וּרְחֹקִים הֵמָּה מִצִּדֹנִים and there were no humiliators in any thing < > in the land [possessing restraint] and they were far from the Sidonians,	וְאֵין מַחְסוֹר כָּל־דָּבָר <אֲשֶׁר> בָּאָרֶץ [ ] וּרְחֹקִים הֵמָּה מִצִּדֹנִים and there was no want of any thing <that is> in the earth, [ ] and they were far from the Sidonians,
20:10[32]	לַעֲשׂוֹת [לְבוֹאָם] לְגֶבַע בִּנְיָמִן that they may do [when they come] to Geba of Benjamin	לַעֲשׂוֹת [ ] לְנִבְעַת בִּנְיָמִן that they may do [ ] to Gibeah of Benjamin

[24] 𝔐 *(wᵊlāqaḥtā 'ēṯ hapar [haššēnî] wᵊhaᵃᵃlîtā).* 𝔈 *(wᵊlāqaḥtā 'ēṯ hapar [ ] wᵊhaᵃᵃlîtā).* Cf. Burney, 198-199.

[25] 𝔐 *(wᵊ'ēṯ hapar [haššēnî] hōᵃᵃlāh).* 𝔈 *(wᵊ'ēṯ hapar [ ] hōᵃᵃlāh).* Cf. Burney, 198-199.

[26] 𝔐 *('ên zōᵗ biltî ['im-hereḇ Giḏ'ôn ben-Yô'āš] 'iš Yiśrā'ēl).* 𝔈 *('ên zōᵗ biltî [ ] 'iš Yiśrā'ēl).* Cf. Burney, 214.

[27] 𝔐 *('iš [hāᵉᵉlōhîm] bā' 'ēlay).* 𝔈 *('iš [ ] bā' 'ēlay).* Cf. Burney, 345.

[28] 𝔐 *(ûmar'ēhû kᵊmar'ēh [mal'aḵ] hāᵉᵉlōhîm).* 𝔈 *(ûmar'ēhû kᵊmar'ēh [ ] hāᵉᵉlōhîm).* Cf. Burney, 345-346. If transliterated, *(ᵉᵉlōhîm)* אלהים would be Elohim; however, at this point in the narrative, the wife of Manoah does not know whether it is Elohim or another god, and thus the translation "god."

[29] 𝔐 *(wayya'al 'al-haṣṣûr laYHWH [ûmapli']).* 𝔈 *(wayya'al 'al-haṣṣûr laYHWH [ ]).* Cf. Burney, 349-350. This marginal explanation originates from the last word in verse eighteen.

[30] 𝔐 *(wayyîqaṣ miššᵊnāṯô wayyissa' 'eṯ-[hayṯaḏ] hā'ereg wᵊ'eṯ-hammassāḵeṯ).* 𝔈 *(wayyîqaṣ miššᵊnāṯô wayyissa' [ ]'eṯ-hā'ereg wᵊ'eṯ-hammassāḵeṯ).* Cf. Burney, 382. Burney cites the gloss referring to the use of *(bayāṯēḏ)* בַּיְתֵד in verse fourteen.

[31] 𝔐 *(wᵊ'ên-maklîm dāḇār < > bā'āreṣ [yôrēš 'eṣer] ûrᵊhōqîm hēmmāh miṣṢidōnîm).* 𝔈 *(wᵊ'ên mahsôr kol-dāḇār <ᵃšer > bā'āreṣ [ ] ûrᵊhōqîm hēmmāh miṣṢidōnîm).* Cf. Burney, 427-428. Another possibility is to accept 𝔐 with the insertion but to translate the phrase differently. As such, it would be "There was no one speaking with authority in the land, no one in possession of control." This alternate translation is based on the 𝔄 cognate *(klem)* كلم meaning "speak." A.A. Macintosh, "The Meaning of MKLYM in Judges XVIII 7," *VT 35* (1985), 68-77.

[32] 𝔐 *(laᵃᵃśôṯ [lᵊḇô'ām] lᵊḠeḇa' Binyāmin).* 𝔈 *(laᵃᵃśôṯ [ ] lᵊḠiḇ'at Binyāmin).* Cf. Burney, 473-474.

Insertions Explicative of an Already Corrupt Text

5:21[33]	נַחַל קִישׁוֹן גְּרָפָם [נַחַל] קְדוּמִים נַחַל קִישׁוֹן The Kishon River swept them away, the ancient river, the Kishon River	נַחַל קִישׁוֹן גְּרָפָם [ ] קִדְמָם נַחַל קִישׁוֹן The Kishon River swept them off [ ], it faced them the Kishon River
5:23[34]	אוֹרוּ מֵרוֹז [וְאָמַר מַלְאַךְ יהוה] Curse Meroz, said the angel of YHWH.	אוֹרוּ מֵרוֹז אָרוֹר [ ] Curse you, curse you Meroz! [ ]
6:25[35]	קַח אֶת־פַּר־הַשּׁוֹר אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיךְ וּפַר [הַשֵּׁנִי] שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים Take the bull of the ox which is your father's and the second bull 7 years old	קַח עֲשָׂרָה אֲנָשִׁים מֵעֲבָדֶיךָ וּפַר [ ] שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים Take ten men of your servants and a [ ] bull 7 years old
12:3[36]	וָאֶרְאֶה כִּי־אֵינְךָ מוֹשִׁיעַ And when I saw that you would not deliver	וָאֶרְאֶה כִּי־אֵין [ ] מוֹשִׁיעַ And when I saw that there was none delivering
14:19[37]	וַיִּתֵּן [הַחֲלִיפוֹת] לְמַגִּידֵי הַחִידָה and gave the changes to those telling the riddle	וַיִּתֵּן [ ] לְמַגִּידֵי הַחִידָה and gave them [ ] to those telling the riddle
19:30[38]	[וְהָיָה כָל־הָרֹאֶה וְאָמַר לֹא־נִהְיְתָה וְלֹא־נִרְאֲתָה כָּזֹאת] < > לְמִיּוֹם עֲלוֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל [מֵאֶרֶץ] מִצְרַיִם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה שִׂימוּ־לָכֶם עָלֶיהָ עֻצוּ וְדַבֵּרוּ [And it was so all who saw it said, there was not, and there was not seen like this] < > from the day the sons of Israel came up [out of the land of] Egypt until this day. Set yourselves upon it, take counsel and speak.	[ ] <וַיְצַו אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר שִׁלַּח לֵאמֹר כֹּה תֹאמְרוּ לְכָל־אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲנִהְיְתָה כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה> לְמִיּוֹם עֲלוֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל [ ] מִמִּצְרַיִם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה שִׂימוּ־לָכֶם עָלֶיהָ עֵצָה וְדַבֵּרוּ [ ] <And he commanded the men that he sent to say, "Thus shall you say to all of the men of Israel, 'Has there been such a thing as this> from the day that the sons of Israel came up from [ ] Egypt until this day? Take counsel concerning it and speak.'"

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[33] 𝕸 (naḥal Qîšôn gᵉrāpām [naḥal] qᵉdûmîm naḥal Qîšôn). 𝕰 (naḥal Qîšôn gᵉrāpām [ ] qidmām naḥal Qîšôn). Cf. Burney, 147-148, and BDB, 636. The word (nḥl) נחל, which we have translated as "river" also conveys the meaning of "torrent." For further discussion on the other errors associated with this verse see Appendix 1, Confusion of Letters, Error due to the use of Abbreviation in Writing, and Error in Vocalization on page 697.

[34] 𝕸 ('ôrû Mērôz ['āmar mal'ak YHWH]). 𝕰 ('ôrû Mērôz 'ārôr [ ]). Cf. Burney, 151-152.

[35] 𝕸 (qaḥ 'ēt-par-haššôr ᵃšer lᵉ'ābîkā ûpar [haššēnî] šeba' šānîm). 𝕰 (qaḥ ᵃśārāh ᵃnāšîm mēᵃbāreykā ûpar [ ] šeba' šānîm). Cf. Burney, 194-195.

[36] 𝕸 (wā'er'eh kî-'ênᵉkā môšia'). 𝕰 (wā'er'eh kî-'ên môšia'). Cf. Burney, 326.

[37] 𝕸 (wayyitēn [haḥᵃlîpôt] lᵉmagîdê haḥîdāh). 𝕰 (wayyitēn [ ] lᵉmagîdê haḥîdāh). Cf. Burney, 366-367 and BDB, 322.

[38] 𝕸 ([wᵉhāyāh kol-hārō'eh wᵉ'āmar lō'-nihyᵉtāh wᵉlō'-nirᵃtāh kāzō't] < > lᵉmiyôm ᵃlôt bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl [mē'ereṣ] Miṣrayim 'ad hayyôm hazzeh śîmû-lākem ᵃleyhā 'uṣû wᵉdabērû). 𝕰 ([ ] <wayṣaw 'et-hā'ᵃnāšîm ᵃšer šillaḥ lē'mōr kōh tō'mᵉrû lᵉkol-'îš Yiśrā'ēl hᵃnihyᵉtāh kadābār hazzēh> lᵉmiyôm ᵃlôt bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl [ ] mimMiṣrayim 'ad hayyôm hazzeh śîmû-lākem ᵃleyhā 'ēṣāh wᵉdabērû). Cf. Burney, 470. The whole verse is presented because of the complexity of two sets of insertions and a deletion. The other insertion is discussed in the section Dittography of Letters on page 720.

Unclassified Insertions

5:17[39]	וְדָן [לָמָּה] יָגוּר אֳנִיּוֹת and Dan why did he abide by the ships?	וְדָן [ ] יָגוּר אֳנִיּוֹת and Dan [ ] abides by the ships
5:24[40]	תְּבֹרַךְ מִנָּשִׁים יָעֵל [אֵשֶׁת חֶבֶר הַקֵּינִי] מִנָּשִׁים בָּאֹהֶל תְּבֹרָךְ Most blessed of women is Jael the wife of Heber, the Kenite, among women dwelling in the tent, most blessed.	תְּבֹרַךְ מִנָּשִׁים יָעֵל [ ] מִנָּשִׁים בָּאֹהֶל תְּבֹרָךְ Most blessed of women is Jael, [ ] among women dwelling in the tent, most blessed.
5:29[41]	אַף־הִיא תָּשִׁיב אֲמָרֶיהָ [לָהּ] Yes, she returned her words [to herself].	אַף־הִיא תָּשִׁיב אֲמָרֶיהָ [ ] Yes, she returned her words [ ].
9:9[42]	הֶחֳדַלְתִּי אֶת־דִּשְׁנִי אֲשֶׁר־בִּי יְכַבְּדוּ אֱלֹהִים [וַאֲנָשִׁים] וְהָלַכְתִּי לָנוּעַ עַל־הָעֵצִים Should I cease from my fatness in which in me they honor Elohim [and man], and go to wave over the trees?	הֶחֳדַלְתִּי אֶת־דִּשְׁנִי אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ יְכַבְּדוּ אֱלֹהִים [ ] וְהָלַכְתִּי לָנוּעַ עַל־הָעֵצִים Should I cease from my fatness in which men honor Elohim [ ], and go to wave over the trees?
10:10[43]	וְכִי עֲזַבְנוּ < > אֶת־אֱלֹהֵינוּ For [even] we have forsaken < > our Elohim	כִּי עֲזַבְנוּ <יהוה> אֶת־אֱלֹהֵינוּ For [ ] we have forsaken <YHWH> our Elohim

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[39] 𝕸 (w³Dān [lommāh] yāgûr ⁿⁱyôṭ). 𝕰 (w³Dān [ ] yāgûr ⁿⁱyôṭ). Cf. Burney, 143.

[40] 𝕸 (t³bōrak minnāšim Yā'ēl ['ēšeṭ Heber haqQênî] minnāšim ba'ōhel t³bōrāk). 𝕰 (t³bōrak minnāšim Yā'ēl [ ] minnāšim ba'ōhel t³bōrāk). Cf. Burney, 152. The emendation changes the *BHS* tristich to a distich of equal rhythm.

[41] 𝕸 ('ap̱-hî' tāšîḇ ʰmāreyhā [lāh]). 𝕰 ('ap̱-hî' tāšîḇ ʰmāreyhā [ ]). Cf. Burney, 155. The insertion adds an extra beat to the stichos couplet.

[42] 𝕸 (heḥᵃdaltî 'eṭ-dišnî ᵃšer-bî y³kabḏû ᵉlōhîm [w³ᵃnāsîm] w³hālaḵtî lānûa' 'al-hā'ēṣîm). 𝕰 (heḥᵃdaltî 'eṭ-dišnî ᵃšer-bō y³kabḏû ᵉlōhîm [ ] w³hālaḵtî lānûa' 'al-hā'ēṣîm). Cf. Burney, 273 and *BDB*, 457. The emendation restores the rhythm. Most likely the insertion was introduced as a gloss to match verse thirteen. However, the word "and men" is not needed when the root *(kbd)* כבד vocalized as *Qal* Imperfect embodies an impersonal form and implies the word men.

[43] 𝕸 (w³kî 'āzaḇnû < > 'eṭ-ᵉlōhênû). 𝕰 (kî 'āzaḇnû <YHWH> 'eṭ-ᵉlōhênû). Cf. Burney, 296.

LISTING OF TEXTUAL ERRORS IN JUDGES
BY DELETION

Homoeoteleuton

Reference	BHS Text	Alternate Emendation
	וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אִם־תַּאַרְגִי אֶת־שֶׁבַע מַחְלְפוֹת רֹאשִׁי עִם־הַמַּסָּכֶת < > וַתִּתְקַע בַּיָּתֵד וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו פְלִשְׁתִּים עָלֶיךָ שִׁמְשׁוֹן וַיִּקַץ מִשְּׁנָתוֹ וַיִּסַּע אֶת־הַיְתַד] הָאֶרֶג וְאֶת־הַמַּסָּכֶת	וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אִם־תַּאַרְגִי אֶת־שֶׁבַע מַחְלְפוֹת רֹאשִׁי עִם־הַמַּסֶּכֶת <וּתְקַעַתְּ בַּיָּתֵד וְחָלִיתִי וְהָיִיתִי כְּאַחַד הָאָדָם וַיְהִי בְּשָׁכְבוֹ וַתִּקַּח דְּלִילָה אֶת־שֶׁבַע מַחְלְפוֹת רֹאשׁוֹ וַתַּאֲרֹג עִם־הַמַּסֶּכֶת> וַתִּתְקַע בַּיָּתֵד וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו פְלִשְׁתִּים עָלֶיךָ שִׁמְשׁוֹן וַיִּקַץ מִשְּׁנָתוֹ וַיִּסַּע [ ] אֶת־הָאֶרֶג וְאֶת־הַמַּסֶּכֶת
16:13-14[1]	And he said unto her, "If you weave the seven braids of my head along with the web, < > and fastened with the peg, and said unto him, "The Philistines are upon your Samson." And he awoke from his sleep and pulled out [the peg of] the loom and the web.	And he said unto her, "If you weave the seven braids of my head along with the web, <and fasten with the peg, then I shall become weak, and shall be like any other man." So, when he slept, Delilah took the seven braids of his head and wove them along with the web,> and fastened with the peg, and said unto him, "The Philistines are upon you Samson." And he awoke from his sleep and pulled out [ ] the loom and the web.
	[וְהָיָה כָל־הָרֹאֶה וְאָמַר לֹא־נִהְיְתָה וְלֹא־נִרְאֲתָה כָּזֹאת] < > לְמִיּוֹם עֲלוֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל [מֵאֶרֶץ] מִצְרַיִם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה שִׂימוּ־לָכֶם עָלֶיהָ עֻצוּ וְדַבֵּרוּ	[ ] <וַיְצַו אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח לֵאמֹר כֹּה תֹאמְרוּ לְכָל־אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲנִהְיְתָה כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה> לְמִיּוֹם עֲלוֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל [ ] מִצְרַיִם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה שִׂימוּ־לָכֶם עָלֶיהָ עֻצָה וְדַבֵּרוּ
19:30[2]	[And it was so all who saw it said, there was not, and there was not seen like this] < > from the day the sons of Israel came up [out of the land of] Egypt until this day. Set yourselves upon it, take counsel and speak.	[ ] <And he commanded the men that he sent to say, "Thus shall you say to all of the men of Israel, 'Has there been such a thing as this> from the day that the sons of Israel came up from [ ] Egypt until this day? Take counsel concerning it and speak.'"

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[1] 𝔐 *(wayyōmer ʿeleyhā ʾim-taʾargî ʾet-šeḇaʿ maḥlᵉpôṯ rōʾšî ʿim-hammassāḵeṯ < > watitqaʿ bayyāṯēḏ watōʾmer ʾēlāyw Pᵉlištîm ʿāleyḵā Šimšôn wayyiyqaṣ miššᵉnāṯô wayyissaʿ ʾet-[hayṯaḏ] hāʾereg wᵉʾet-hammassāḵeṯ)*. 𝔈 *(wayyōmer ʿeleyhā ʾim-taʾargî ʾet-šeḇaʿ maḥlᵉpôṯ rōʾšî ʿim-hammassāḵeṯ <wᵉṯāqaʿaṯ bayyāṯēḏ wᵉḥālîṯî wᵉhāyiyṯî kᵉʾaḥaḏ hāʾāḏām wayhî bᵉšoḵḇô watiqah Dᵉlîlāh ʾet-šeḇaʿ maḥlᵉpôṯ rōʾšô wataʾᵃrōg ʿim-hammasseḵeṯ> watitqaʿ bayyāṯēḏ watōʾmer ʾēlāyw Pᵉlištîm ʿāleyḵā Šimšôn wayyiyqaṣ miššᵉnāṯô wayyissaʿ [ ] ʾet-hāʾereg wᵉʾet-hammassāḵeṯ)*. Cf. Burney, 379-382. The symbol [ ] refers to corrupt insertions whereas < > refers to corrupt deletions to the text.

Haplography of Letters

20:2[3]	וַיִּתְיַצְּבוּ פִּנּוֹת כָּל־הָעָם < > כֹּל שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל And all of the leaders of the people, < > all the tribes of Israel presented themselves	וַיִּתְיַצְּבוּ פִּנּוֹת כָּל־הָעָם מִכֹּל שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל And all of the leaders of the people, <from> all the tribes of Israel presented themselves

Haplography of Words

20:13[4]	וְלֹא אָבוּ > < בִּנְיָמִן לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹל אֲחֵיהֶם בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל But < > Benjamin was not willing to listen to voice of their brothers, the children of Israel.	וְלֹא אָבוּ >בְּנֵי< בִּנְיָמִן לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹל אֲחֵיהֶם בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל But <the children of> Benjamin were not willing to listen to voice of their brothers, the children of Israel.

Prosaizing

Deletion of the Definite Article

5:20[5]	מִן־שָׁמַיִם from heaven	מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם from the heavens
7:22[6]	וַיִּתְקְעוּ שְׁלֹשׁ־מֵאוֹת הַשּׁוֹפָרוֹת and they blew the three hundred rams' horns	וַיִּתְקְעוּ שְׁלֹשׁ־הַמֵּאוֹת בַּשּׁוֹפָרוֹת and the three hundred blew on the rams' horns
18:16[7]	וְשֵׁשׁ־מֵאוֹת אִישׁ and < > six hundred men	וְשֵׁשׁ־מֵאוֹת הָאִישׁ and <the> six hundred men

Deletion of the Conjunction

15:5[8]	וְעַד־כֶּרֶם > < זָיִת and even vineyard < > olive	וְעַד־כֶּרֶם וָזָיִת and even vineyard <and> olive

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[2] 𝔐 ([wᵉhāyāh kol-hārō'eh wᵉ'āmar lō'-nihyᵉtāh wᵉlō'-nirᵉ'ᵃtāh kāzō't] < > lᵉmiyôm ᵃlôt bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl [mē'ereṣ] Miṣrayim 'ad hayyôm hazzeh śîmû-lākem ᵃleyhā 'uṣû wᵉdaběrû). 𝔈 ([ ] <wayṣaw 'et-hā'ᵃnāsîm ᵃšer šillaḥ lē'mōr kōh tō'm'rû lᵉkol-'îš Yiśrā'ēl hᵃnihyᵉtāh kadābār hazzēh> lᵉmiyôm ᵃlôt bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl [ ] mimMiṣrayim 'ad hayyôm hazzeh śîmû-lākem ᵃleyhā 'eṣāh wᵉdaběrû). Cf. Burney, 470-471.

[3] 𝔐 (wayyityaṣṣᵉbû pinnôt kol-hā'ām kōl šibtê Yiśrā'ēl). 𝔈 (wayyityaṣṣᵉbû pinnôt kol-hā'ām mikōl šibtê Yiśrā'ēl). Cf. Burney, 472.

[4] 𝔐 (wᵉlō' 'ābû < > Binyāmin lišmōa' bᵉqôl ᵃhêhem bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl). 𝔈 (wᵉlō' 'ābû <bᵉnê> Binyāmin lišmōa' bᵉqôl ᵃhêhem bᵉnê-Yiśrā'ēl). Cf. Burney, 474 and McCarter, 39.

[5] 𝔐 (min-šāmayim). 𝔈 (min-haššāmayim). Cf. McCarter, 56-57. The noun is a dual form.

[6] 𝔐 (wayyitqᵉ'û šᵉlōš-mē'ôt baššôpārôt). 𝔈 (wayyitqᵉ'û šᵉlōš-hamē'ôt baššôpārôt). Cf. Burney, 218.

[7] 𝔐 (wᵉšēš-mē'ôt 'îš). 𝔈 (wᵉšēš-mē'ôt hā'îš). Cf. Burney, 432.

[8] 𝔐 (wᵉ'ad-kerem zāyit). 𝔈 (wᵉ'ad-kerem wāzāyit). Cf. Burney, 369.

Deletion of the Preposition

5:15[9]	וְיִשָּׂשכָר כֵּן בָּרָק and Issachar was steadfast [with] Barak	וְנַפְתָּלִי כֵּן לְבָרָק and Naphtali was steadfast <to> Barak
11:29[10]	וּמִמִּצְפֵּה גִלְעָד עָבַר < > בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן and from Mizpeh of Gilead he crossed over < > the children of Ammon.	וּמִמִּצְפֵּה גִלְעָד עָבַר <אֶל> בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן and from Mizpeh of Gilead he crossed over <to> the children of Ammon.
11:39[11]	וַתְּהִי־חֹק בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל and it was < > a statute in Israel	וַתְּהִי־לְחֹק בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל and it was <for> a statute in Israel

Deletion of the Particle

18:7[12]	וְאֵין־מַכְלִים דָּבָר < > בָּאָרֶץ [יוֹרֵשׁ עֶצֶר] וּרְחֹקִים הֵמָּה מִצִּדֹנִים and there were no humiliators in any thing < > in the land [possessing restraint] and they were far from the Sidonians,	וְאֵין מַחְסוֹר כָּל־דָּבָר <אֲשֶׁר> בָּאָרֶץ [ ] וּרְחֹקִים הֵמָּה מִצִּדֹנִים and there was no want of any thing <that is> in the earth, [ ] and they were far from the Sidonians,

Unclassified Omissions of Single Words or Parts of Words

1:19[13]	כִּי לֹא < > לְהוֹרִישׁ אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי הָעֵמֶק for not < > to expel the inhabitants of the valley	כִּי לֹא <יָכֹל> לְהוֹרִישׁ אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי הָעֵמֶק for <he was> not <able> to expel the inhabitants of the valley
5:21[14]	תִּדְרְכִי נַפְשִׁי עֹז < > my soul, you tread down strength < >	תִּבְרְכִי נַפְשִׁי עֹז <יהוה> Bless thou, my soul, the might <of YHWH>
7:1[15]	וּמַחֲנֵה מִדְיָן הָיָה־לוֹ מִצָּפוֹן < > מִגִּבְעַת הַמּוֹרֶה בָּעֵמֶק and the camp of Midian was to the north of him, < > from the hill of Moreh, in the valley.	וּמַחֲנֵה מִדְיָן הָיָה־לוֹ מִצָּפוֹן <מִתַּחַת> לְגִבְעַת הַמּוֹרֶה בָּעֵמֶק and the camp of Midian was to the north of him, <from beneath> the hill of Moreh, in the valley.
10:10[16]	וְכִי עֲזַבְנוּ < > אֶת־אֱלֹהֵינוּ For [even] we have forsaken < > our Elohim	כִּי עֲזַבְנוּ <יהוה> אֶת־אֱלֹהֵינוּ For [ ] we have forsaken <YHWH> our Elohim

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[9] 𝕸 *(wᵊYiśśāskār kēn Bārāq)*. 𝕰 *(wᵊNapṯālî kēn lᵊBārāq)*. Cf. Burney, 137.

[10] 𝕸 *(ûmimMiṣpēh Gilᵊʿāḏ ʿāḇar < > bᵊnê ʿammôn)*. 𝕰 *(ûmimMiṣpēh Gilᵊʿāḏ ʿāḇar <ʾel> bᵊnê ʿammôn)*. Cf. Burney, 318.

[11] 𝕸 *(waṯhî-ḥōq bᵊYiśrāʾēl)*. 𝕰 *(waṯhî-lᵊḥōq bᵊYiśrāʾēl)*. Cf. Burney, 324-325. *BHS* rendering has a subject verb disagreement on the basis of gender.

[12] 𝕸 *(wᵊʾên-maklîm dāḇār < > bāʾāreṣ [yôrēš ʿeṣer] ûrᵊḥōqîm hēmmāh miṣṢiḏōnîm)*.
𝕰 *(wᵊʾên maḥsôr kol-dāḇār <ᵃšer> bāʾāreṣ [ ] ûrᵊḥōqîm hēmmāh miṣṢiḏōnîm)*. Cf. Burney, 427-428.

[13] 𝕸 *(kî lōʾ < > lᵊhôrîš ʾet-yōšᵊḇê hāʿēmeq)*. 𝕰 *(kî lōʾ <yāḵōl> lᵊhôrîš ʾet-yōšᵊḇê hāʿēmeq)*. Cf. Burney, 19. The verb *(ykl)* יכל must be supplied to accompany the infinitive.

[14] 𝕸 *(tiḏrᵊkî napšî ʿōz < >)*. 𝕰 *(tᵊḇorkî napšî ʿōz <YHWH>)*. Cf. Burney, 148-149.

[15] 𝕸 *(ûmaḥᵃnēh Midyān hāyāh-lô miṣṣāpôn <mitaḥaṭ> lᵊGibʿaṭ hamMôreh bāʿēmeq)*.
𝕰 *(ûmaḥᵃnēh Midyān hāyāh-lô miṣṣāpôn < > miGibʿaṭ hamMôreh bāʿēmeq)*. Cf. Burney, 205 and *BDB*, 435. Burney does not take *(môreh)* מוֹרֶה as a geographical location to be transliterated, but rather translates it as "Oracle-giver" instead of the literal rendering of "teacher."

12:2[17]	אֲנִי וְעַמִּי וּבְנֵי־עַמּוֹן <> מְאֹד I and my people, and the children of Ammon <> much	אֲנִי וְעַמִּי וּבְנֵי־עַמּוֹן ‹עִנּוּנִי› מְאֹד I and my people, and the children of Ammon <oppressed me> much
12:7[18]	וַיִּקָּבֵר בְּעָרֵי <> גִלְעָד and was buried in the cities <> of Gilead	וַיִּקָּבֵר בְּעִירוֹ ‹בְּמִצְפֵּה› גִלְעָד and was buried in his city, <in Mizpeh> of Gilead
15:6[19]	וַיַּעֲלוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּשְׂרְפוּ אוֹתָהּ וְאֶת־אָבִיהָ <> בָּאֵשׁ And the Philistines went up and burned her and her father <> in the fire.	וַיַּעֲלוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּשְׂרְפוּ אוֹתָהּ וְאֶת־‹בֵּית› אָבִיהָ בָּאֵשׁ And the Philistines went up and burned her and her father's <house> in the fire.
16:2[20]	<> לַעַזָּתִים לֵאמֹר בָּא שִׁמְשׁוֹן < > the Gazites saying, Samson comes	‹וַיֻּגַּד› לַעַזָּתִים לֵאמֹר בָּא שִׁמְשׁוֹן <And it was told> the Gazites saying, Samson comes
18:1[21]	כִּי לֹא־נָפְלָה <> לוֹ עַד־הַיּוֹם הַהוּא בְּתוֹךְ־שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנַחֲלָה for it had not fallen unto them unto that day <> an inheritance in the midst of the tribes of Israel.	כִּי לֹא־נָפְלָה ‹אֶרֶץ› לוֹ עַד־הַיּוֹם הַהוּא בְּתוֹךְ־שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנַחֲלָה for it had not fallen unto them unto that day <land> for an inheritance in the midst of the tribes of Israel.
20:9[22]	וְעַתָּה זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר נַעֲשֶׂה לַגִּבְעָה <> עָלֶיהָ בְּגוֹרָל and now this thing which we shall do to Gibeah; <> against it by lot.	וְעַתָּה זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר נַעֲשֶׂה לַגִּבְעָה ‹נַעֲלֶה› עָלֶיהָ בְּגוֹרָל and now this thing which we shall do to Gibeah; <we will go up> against it by lot.

Unclassified Omissions of Sentences or Parts of Sentences

1:24[23]	וַיִּרְאוּ הַשֹּׁמְרִים אִישׁ יוֹצֵא מִן־הָעִיר <> וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ and the guards saw a man coming out from the city, <> and said to him	וַיִּרְאוּ הַשֹּׁמְרִים אִישׁ יוֹצֵא מִן־הָעִיר ‹וַיֹּאחֲזוּ בוֹ› וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ and the guards saw a man coming out from the city, <and they laid hold on him> and said to him

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[16] 𝔐 (w°kî 'azabnû < > 'eṯ-°elōhênû). 𝔈 (kî 'azabnû <YHWH> 'eṯ-°elōhênû). Cf. Burney, 296.

[17] 𝔐 (°anî w°'ammî ûb°nê-'ammôn < > m°'ōḏ). 𝔈 (°anî w°'ammî ûb°nê-'ammôn <'innûnî > m°'ōḏ). Cf. Burney, 326.

[18] 𝔐 (wayyiqqāḇēr b°'îrô < > Gil'āḏ). 𝔈 (wayyiqqāḇēr b°'îrô <b°Miṣpēh> Gil'āḏ). Cf. Burney, 329.

[19] 𝔐 (wayya°alû P°lištîm wayyiśr°pû 'ôṯāh w°'eṯ-'āḇîhā < > bā'ēš). 𝔈 (wayya°alû P°lištîm wayyiśr°pû 'ôṯāh w°'eṯ-<bêṯ> 'āḇîhā bā'ēš). Cf. Burney, 369.

[20] 𝔐 (< > la'azzātîm lē'mōḏ bā' Šimšôn). 𝔈 (<wayyugaḏ> la'azzātîm lē'mōḏ bā' Šimšôn). Cf. Burney, 376.

[21] 𝔐 (kî lō'-noplāh < > lô 'aḏ-hayyôm hahû' b°tôk-šiḇṭê Yiśrā'ēl b°naḥ°lāh). 𝔈 (kî lō'-noplāh <'ereṣ> lô 'aḏ-hayyôm hahû' b°tôk-šiḇṭê Yiśrā'ēl b°naḥ°lāh). The phrase translated "unto them" (lô) לוֹ is a collective sense, although literally it is translated "unto him". Cf. Burney, 424.

[22] 𝔐 (w°°°tāh zeh hadāḇār °ašer na°°śeh laGib'ah < > °°leyhā b°gôrāl). 𝔈 (w°°°tāh zeh hadāḇār °ašer na°°śeh laGib'ah <na°°leh> °°leyhā b°gôrāl). Cf. Burney, 473.

2:1[24]	וַיֹּאמֶר < > אַעֲלֶה אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם and he said, < > I caused you to go up out of Egypt	וַיֹּאמֶר <פָּקוֹד פָּקַדְתִּי אֶתְכֶם וָאַעֲלֶה> אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם and he said, <I visited you indeed, and> I caused you to go up out of Egypt
2:16[25]	< > וַיָּקֶם יְהוָה שֹׁפְטִים < > and YHWH raised up judges	<וַיִּזְעֲקוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה> וַיָּקֶם יְהוָה שֹׁפְטִים <And the children of Israel cried unto YHWH> and YHWH raised up judges
5:7[26]	חָדְלוּ פְרָזוֹן בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל חָדֵלּוּ < > Peasantry ceased in Israel. < > ceased,	חָדְלוּ פְרָזוֹת בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל חָדֵלּוּ < > Unwalled villages ceased in Israel. < > ceased,
5:15[27]	< > בִּפְלַגּוֹת רְאוּבֵן גְּדֹלִים חִקְקֵי־לֵב < > in the factions of Reuben were great searchings of heart.	<נִפְרֹד נִפְרַד> לִפְלַגּוֹת רְאוּבֵן גְּדֹלִים חִקְרֵי־לִבּוּ <Utterly torn> into factions was Reuben, great were the searchings of heart.
7:5[28]	וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יִכְרַע עַל־בִּרְכָּיו לִשְׁתּוֹת < > and all who bows upon his knees to drink < >.	וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יִכְרַע עַל־בִּרְכָּיו לִשְׁתּוֹת <תַּצִּיג אוֹתוֹ לְבָד> and all who bows upon his knees to drink <you shall set him apart>.
21:11[29]	וְזֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּ כָּל־זָכָר וְכָל־אִשָּׁה יֹדַעַת מִשְׁכַּב־זָכָר תַּחֲרִימוּ < > and this thing you shall do; every male and every woman known from lying with a male, you shall devote to destruction < >.	וְזֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּ כָּל־זָכָר וְכָל־אִשָּׁה יֹדַעַת מִשְׁכַּב־זָכָר תַּחֲרִימוּ <וְאֶת־הַבְּתוּלוֹת תְּחַיּוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כֵן> and this thing you shall do; every male and every woman known from lying with a male, you shall devote to destruction; <but the virgins you shall save alive. And they did so>.

[23] 𝔐 *(wayyir'û haššōm'rîm 'îš yôṣē' min-hā'îr < > wayyō'm'rû lô).* 𝔈 *(wayyir'û haššōm'rîm 'îš yôṣē' min-hā'îr <wayyō'ḥᵃzû bô> wayyō'm'rû lô).* Cf. Burney, 22.

[24] 𝔐 *(wayyō'mer <> 'a'aleh 'etkem mimMiṣrayim).* 𝔈 *(wayyō'mer <pāqōd pāqadtî 'etkem> wā'a'aleh 'etkem mimMiṣrayim).* Cf. Burney, 37-38.

[25] 𝔐 *(< > wayyāqem YHWH šōp'ṭîm).* 𝔈 *(<wayyiz'ᵃqû b'nê-Yiśrā'ēl 'el-YHWH> wayyāqem YHWH šōp'ṭîm).* Cf. Burney, 59.

[26] 𝔐 *(ḥadlû p'rāzôn b'Yiśrā'ēl ḥadēllû < >).* 𝔈 *(ḥadlû p'rāzôt b'Yiśrā'ēl ḥadēllû < >).* KJV and other versions follow 𝔐; however, they supply the 3CP pronoun and ignore there has been a deletion of the stichos subject. Cf. Burney, 115-116.

[27] 𝔐 *(< > liplagôt R'ûbēn g'dōlîm hiqqê-lēb).* 𝔈 *(<niprōd niprad> liplagôt R'ûbēn g'dōlîm hiqqrê-libô).* Cf. Burney, 140.

[28] 𝔐 *(w'kōl 'ᵃšer-yikra' 'al-birkāyw lištôt < >).* 𝔈 *(w'kōl 'ᵃšer-yikra' 'al-birkāyw lištôt <taṣṣîg 'ōtô l'bād>).* Cf. Burney, 210-211.

[29] 𝔐 *(w'zeh hadābār 'ᵃšer ta'ᵃśû kol-zākār w'kol-'iššāh yōda'at miškab-zākār taḥᵃrîmû < >).* 𝔈 *(w'zeh hadābār 'ᵃšer ta'ᵃśû kol-zākār w'kol-'iššāh yōda'at miškab-zākār taḥᵃrîmû <w''et-habtûlôt t'ḥayyû wayya'ᵃśû kēn>).* Cf. Burney, 490.

APPENDIX 4

TRANSLATION OF EMENDED VERSES IN JUDGES

Chapter 1

1:5[1]   And they came upon the lord of Ṣedeq in Ṣedeq, and they fought against him, and slew the Kᵊnaʿᵃnî and the Pᵊrizzî.

1:6   But the lord of Ṣedeq fled, and they pursued after him, and captured him, and cut off his thumbs and great toes.

1:7   And the lord of Ṣedeq said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and their great toes cut off used to pick up food under my table. As I did, so has ᵊlōhîm repaid me.

1:11[2]   And they went up there against the inhabitants of Dᵊbîr. (And the name of Dᵊbîr formerly was Qiryaṭ-Sēp̄er.)

1:16[3]   And Ḥobab the Qēnî, the father-in-law of Mōšeh, went up from the city of Palms with the children of Yᵊhûḏāh into the wilderness of Yᵊhûḏāh which is in the Negeḇ of ʿᵃrāḏ; and he went and dwelt with the ʿᵃmālēqî.

1:19   And YHWH was with Yᵊhûḏāh, and he gained possession of the hill country; but he was not able to expel the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.

1:21   But the Yᵊbûsî dwelling in Jerusalem, the children of Yᵊhûḏāh did not expel; and the Yᵊbûsî are dwelling with the children of Yᵊhûḏāh in Jerusalem unto this day.

1:24   And the guards saw a man coming out from the city, and they laid hold on him and said to him, "Please show us, the way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you."

1:35[4]   And the ʾᵉmōrî persisted in dwelling in Mount Seraḥ, in ʾayyālôn and in Šaʿalḇîm; yet the hand of the house of Yôsēp̄ became heavy, and they became tributaries.

1:36[5]   And the border of the ʾᵉdōmî was from the ascent of ʿaqrabîm.

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[1] 𝕳 צֶדֶק "righteousness," כְּנַעֲנִי "trader," and פְּרִזִי "one who lives in open, rural country." The three names are normally Anglicized to Sedek, Canaanites, and Perizzites. See *NIDOTTE,* 2:669; 3:681-683, and 744-769.

[2] 𝕳 דְּבִיר "most holy place" and קִרְיַת סֵפֶר "village of the book." The Anglicized forms are Debir and Kiriath-Sepher. See *NIDOTTE,* 1:910; 3:283-285 and 988-989.

[3] 𝕳 מֹשֶׁה "draw out" and עֲמָלֵק "taking away the people." These words are normally Anglicized to "Moses" and "Amalek or Amalekites." The geographical place names *(Hatmārîm)* הַתְּמָרִים "Palms" and *(midbar)* מִדְבַּר "wilderness" have been translated; whereas נֶגֶב "south" and עֲרָד "flee" have been transliterated. See *BDB,* 766; *NIDOTTE,* 2:849, 949; 3:16; 4:308-309 and *GHCL,* 76.

[4] 𝕳 סֶרַח "sprawl over or unrestrained," אַיָּלוֹן "deer-field," and שַׁעַלְבִים "foxes-field." See *NIDOTTE,* 1:379-381; 3:287-288; and Burney, 33.

[5] 𝕳 עַקְרַבִּים "scorpions." See *NIDOTTE,* 3:510-511.

Chapter 2

2:1[6]   And the Angel of YHWH went up from Gilgāl to Bêṯ-'ēl. And he said, "I visited you indeed, and I caused you to go up out of Miṣrayim, and I have brought you unto the land which I swore to your fathers;" and I said, "I will never break My covenant with you."

2:3   And furthermore I said, "I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be adversaries to you, and their gods shall be a trap unto you."

2:11   And the children of Israel did evil in the eyes of YHWH.

2:13[7]   And they forsook YHWH and served the Bᵃ'ālîm and the 'aštārṯôṯ.

2:16   And the children of Israel cried unto YHWH, and YHWH raised up judges, and they saved them from the hand of their spoilers.

2:22   in order to prove Israel by them, whether they would keep the way of YHWH to walk in it, as their fathers kept it or not.

Chapter 3

3:2   only on account of the generations of the children of Israel, to teach them war, only which before they did not know.

3:3[8]   The five lords of the Pᵃlištîm, and all the Kᵃna''ᵃnî, and the Ṣîdōnî, and the Ḥittî dwelling in mount Lᵃbānōn, from mount Ba'al Ḥermôn unto the entry of Ḥᵃmāṯ.

3:7[9]   And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the eyes of YHWH and forgot YHWH their 'ēl, and served for the Bᵃ'ālîm and for the 'aštārṯôṯ.

3:8[10]   And the anger of YHWH was kindled against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Kûšan, chief of the Têmānî, king of 'ᵉḏôm; and the children of Israel served Kûšan, chief of the Têmānî eight years.

3:10   And the Spirit of YHWH came upon him, and he judged Israel; and he went forth to war; and YHWH gave into his hand, Kûšan, chief of the Têmānî, king of 'ᵉḏôm, and his hand was heavy against Kûšan, chief of the Têmānî.

3:13[11]   And he gathered unto him the children of 'ammôn and 'ᵃmālēq and went and smote Israel; and he took possession of the city of Palms.

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[6] 𝔐 גִּלְגָּל "rolling or circle," בֵּית-אֵל "house of 'ēl (God)," and מִצְרַיִם "afflictions (dual form)" otherwise known as Egypt. See *NIDOTTE*, 1:400-401, 655-657, 860; and 2:1076-1077.

[7] 𝔐 בְּעָלִים "masters" or "Canaanite god, *Baal*" and עַשְׁתָּרוֹת "lambs" or "Western Semite goddess *'Astarte'* or Eastern Semite goddess *'Ishtar.'*" Literally, this would be Baals and Ashtarts. See *NIDOTTE*, 1:681-683 and 3:562-563.

[8] 𝔐 פְּלִשְׁתִּים "sea people" or "invaders," הַצִּידֹנִי "fishing," הַחִתִּי "terror." Literally, this would be Philistines, Sidonians, and Hittites. The geographical locations are *(Har HalL³bānôn)* הַר הַלְּבָנוֹן "the white mountain" which implies snow, *(Har Ba'al Ḥermôn)* הַר בַּעַל חֶרְמוֹן "the possessor of mount Hermon" or "the possessor of the mountain put under the ban," and *(L³bô' Ḥ³māṯ)* לְבוֹא חֲמָת "to come to Hamath," or "to come to the dawn's glow," or "come to the hot springs." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:1051-1055; 2:171-172, 276-277, 331-332, 754-755; 3:631-634; *NUHED*, 620 and *GHCL*, 708.

[9] 𝔐 *('³lōhêhem)* אֱלֹהֵיהֶם, "their God" literally.

[10] 𝔐 *(Hatêmānî)* הַתֵּימָנִי, literally, "south." The proper names are כּוּשַׁן "dark" and אֱדֹם "red." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:261-262 and 4:289.

[11] 𝔐 בְּנֵי-עַמּוֹן "sons of Ammon" or "sons of his people." It is Anglicized as Ammonites. See *NIDOTTE*, 3:429-432; and BDB, 766.

3:23[12] And 'ēhûd went out into the hidden place; and shut the doors of the roof chamber upon him and locking them.

3:28[13] And he said unto them, "Come down after me, for YHWH has given your enemies, even Mô'āb into your hand." And they went down after him, and took the fords of Yardēn to Mô'āb, and permitted no man to pass over.

Chapter 4

4:11[14] Now Ḥeber the Qēnî had separated himself from Qayin, from the children of Ḥobab the Qēnî, the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent by the oak of Baṣ'annîm, which is Qedeš.

4:20 And he said unto her, "Stand at the tent opening, and it shall be, when any man comes and asks you, and says: 'Is there any man here?' that you shall say, 'No.'"

4:21[15] Then Yā'ēl, the wife of Ḥeber, took a tent-peg, and took a hammer in her hand, and went unto him secretly, and struck the peg into his temple, and it went into the ground; for he was fast asleep and exhausted. So he died.

Chapter 5

5:4[16] YHWH, when you exited from Śē'îr,
In Your march from the field of 'ᵉdōm,
Earth quaked,
Even the heavens rocked,
Also the clouds dropped water.

5:5[17] The mountains shook before YHWH,
Before YHWH, 'ᵉlōhê of Israel.

5:6[18] From the days of Šamgar, the son of 'ᵃnāt,
From the days of old, caravans ceased.
And those walking walked the crooked ways.

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[12] 𝕳 אֵהוּד "union." See *BDB*, 26. The standard renditions of "hidden place" is derived from the 𝕳 root *(sdr)* סדר meaning "order." The idea of a colonnade, portico, and porch, is based on the ordering or rows of external pillars. Cf. *BDB*, 690; and Burney, 73. *Contra* this approach, Halpern identifies it as a rear exit, possibly an audience hall, but assuredly "the hidden place." He bases this from comparative research in 𝕳, 𝕿, and the 𝕬 root *(sadira)* سدر meaning "to be blinded" or "to be puzzled." And since it mirrors the euphemistic idiom the *hapax legomenon* works well as a rhetorical device with this translation possibility. Cf. Halpern, *The First Historians*, 44, and 56-58.

[13] 𝕳 מוֹאָב "Moab" or "from the father" and *(Hâyardēn)* הַיַרְדֵן "the going down" but literally referring to the Jordan River. See *NIDOTTE*, 1:219-223 and 2:534-535.

[14] 𝕳 חֶבֶד "alliance," קַיִן "spear or bead of a lance," *('ēlôn Baṣ'annîm)* אֵלוֹן בַּצְעַנִים "oak of muddy affliction," and קֶדֶשׁ "holiness." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:405-406; 2:16-18; and 3:867-877; *NUHED*, 75, 587, and 679.

[15] 𝕳 יָעֵל "ibex." See *NIDOTTE*, 2:488.

[16] 𝕳 שֵׂעִיר "storm" or "goat demon." The format change of an unjustified right margin reflects poetry in the text, as opposed to the standard margin form reflecting prose. See *NIDOTTE*, 3:1260-1262.

[17] 𝕳 אֱלֹהֵי "God." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:405-406.

[18] 𝕳 שַׁמְגַּר "stranger there" and *(Ben-'ᵃnāt)* בֶּן־עֲנָת "son of answer (to prayer)." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:836-839 and 4:147; *BDB*, 779; and *SECB-HCD*, 90.

5:7¹⁹ Unwalled villages ceased in Israel.
< > ceased, until you did arise,
Dᵊbôrāh did arise a mother in Israel.

5:8 Armorers had they none;
Armed men failed from the city.
Was there seen a shield or a lance among forty thousand in Israel?

5:12²⁰ Awake, awake Dᵊbôrāh! Awake, awake, sing a song.
Arise Bārāq and lead captive your captors, son of 'ᵃbînō'am.

5:9 Come, you commanders of Israel.
You that volunteered among the people, bless YHWH.

5:10 Let the riders on tawny asses review it.
And let the ones who walk upon the way,
Let them recall it to mind,

5:11 The voice of maidens laughing between the wells.
There they recount the righteous acts of YHWH,
The righteous acts of His arm in Israel.

5:13 Then the nobles went down to the gates,
The people of YHWH went down for Him among the mighty ones.

5:14²¹ From 'eprayim they advanced in the valley;
After you Binyamin, among your clansmen;
From Mākîr came down the commanders;
And from Zᵊbûlun men wielding the staff.

5:15²² And your princes, Yiššākār, were with Dᵊbôrāh;
And Naptālî was steadfast to Bārāq;
Into the valley being sent away to his feet.
Utterly torn into factions was Rᵊ'ûbēn,
Great were the searchings of heart.

5:16 Why did you sit between the sheepfolds to hear the bleating of flocks?

5:17²³ Gil'ād dwelling beyond the Yardēn;
And Dān abides by the ships.
'āšēr dwelling at the sea shore;
And resting by its creeks.

5:20²⁴ From the heavens fought the stars.
From their paths they fought with Sîsᵊrā'.

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[19] 𝕳 דְּבוֹרָה "honey bee" or "wasp." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:909-910. The subject of the second stichos has been lost through deletion and only conjecture would supply the answer. See Burney, 116.

[20] 𝕳 בָּרָק "lightning" and (Ben-ᵃbînō'am) בֶּן־אֲבִינֹעַם "son of my father is kindness." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:219-223, 769-770 and 3:121-123.

[21] 𝕳 אֶפְרַיִם "double fruit," בְּנְיָמִין "son of the right [hand]," מְכִיר "trading" or "selling," and זְבוּלֻן "exalt" or "honor." See *NIDOTTE*, 2:937-938 and *BDB*, 68, and 122, 259. If Mākîr was not taken as a geographic location inserted within a description of tribal activity, the phrase would be translated "from trading, the commanders came down."

[22] 𝕳 יִשָּׂשכָר "he will bring a reward," נַפְתָּלִי "my wrestling," and רְאוּבֵן "See, a son." See *BDB*, 441, 836, 910, 969; and *NIDOTTE*, 4:119-123.

[23] 𝕳 גִּלְעָד "testimony, a rolled heap [of stones]," דָן "judge," and אָשֵׁר "happiness." See *BDB*, 81, 166, and 192.

[24] 𝕳 סִיסְרָא "a field of battle," which is a Syriac loan word, *GHCL*, 585.

5:21[25] The Qîšôn River swept them off.
      It faced them, the Qîšôn River.
      Bless thou, my soul, the might of YHWH!

5:22   Then the hooves of the horses hammered down,
      They galloped, their powerful galloping.

5:23[26] "Curse you, curse you Mērôz," said the Angel of YHWH.
      "Curse you, curse you, her inhabitants!"
      For they came not to the help of YHWH,
      To the help of YHWH against the mighty ones.

5:24   Most blessed of women is Yā‘ēl,
      Among women dwelling in the tent, most blessed.

5:26   Her hand to the tent peg she stretched it forth,
      And her right [hand] to the hammer of the workmen.
      And with the hammer, she hammered Sîs°rā’,
      She destroyed his head, shattered and pierced his temples.

5:29   Her wisest of princesses make answer;
      Yes, she returned her words:

5:30   "Are they not finding;
      Are they not dividing the spoil?
      A captive woman, two captive women to every man;
      A spoil of dyed garments for Sîs°rā’, a spoil of dyed garments embroidered;
      Two dyed garments of embroidery for the neck of the queen."

5:31   So perish all Your foes, YHWH;
      But let those You love
      Be like the sun going forth in its might.
      And the land had rest forty years.

Chapter 6

6:5   For they and their cattle used to come up, with their tents, and they came in like locusts for multitude; and both they and their camels were without number; and they came into the land to destroy it.

6:15[27] And he said unto him, "Oh, my lord, in what way can I save Israel? Behold, my family is the weakest in M°naššeh; and I am the least in my father's house."

6:25[28] And it came to pass the same night, that YHWH said unto him, "Take ten men of your servants and a bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Ba‘al which belongs to your father, and cut down the ’ªšērāh which is beside it.

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[25] H קִישׁוֹן "winding." The word (nahal) נַחַל translated "river" technically is only a river during the rainy season when it becomes a torrent. Otherwise it is a dry river bed which can be a trail or path for walking. The best geographical description is the A word (ôadî) وادي wadi. Cartographers use this descriptive label in arid regions where this phenomenon occurs. See NIDOTTE, 3:81 and 964-966.

[26] H מֵרוֹז "curse" or "retreat." DCH, 5:482; and BDB, 72.

[27] H מְנַשֶּׁה "causing to forget." See BDB, 586. The literal rendering of "family" is actually "clans" from (’lp) אָלֶף with the sense of military might. See the section on Social Organization in chapter three, pages 196-199.

[28] H (Hāªšērāh) הָאֲשֵׁרָה "wooden cult pole." See NIDOTTE, 1:569-570.

6:26[29] And build an altar to YHWH your 'ᵉl upon the top of this stronghold in the proper arrangement, and take the bull and offer it up as a burnt offering with the wood of the 'ᵃšērāh which you shall cut down.

6:28 And the men of the city rose up early in the morning, and behold, the altar of Ba'al was broken down, and the 'ᵃšērāh which was by it was cut down, and the bull had been offered up on the altar which had been built.

Chapter 7

7:1[30] And Yᵉrubba'al, he is Gid'ôn, and all the people who were with him, rose up early in the morning, and camped beside the spring of Hᵃrōd, and the camp of Midyān was to the north of him, beneath the hill of Môreh, in the valley.

7:5 So he brought the people down to the water, and YHWH said to Gid'ôn, "All who laps from the water with his tongue, as which the dog laps, you shall set him apart and all who bows upon his knees to drink, you shall set him apart.

7:6 And the number of them that lapped were three hundred men, but all the rest of the people bent down upon their knees to drink water [putting] their hand to their mouth.

7:8[31] And they took the pitchers of the people and their rams' horns from their hand. And all the men of Israel he sent every man to his tent but the three hundred men he retained. And the camp of Midyān was beneath him in the valley.

7:13 And when Gid'ôn came, behold, a man was recounting a dream unto his friend, and he said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream and behold a cake of barley bread was turning itself over into the camp of Midyān. And when it came to a tent, and struck it so that it fell, then it turned it upside down.

7:14[32] And his friend answered and said, "This is nothing except a man of Israel, the 'ᵉlōhîm gave into his hand Midyān and all the camp.

7:21 And they stood every man in his place circling the camp; and all the camp awoke and gave a shout and fled.

7:22[33] And the three hundred blew on the rams' horns, and YHWH set a man's sword against his companion in all the camp, and the camp fled as far as Bêt Šiṭṭāh toward Sᵉrēdāh, as far as the edge of 'ābēl Mᵉhôlāh by Ṭabāh.

7:24[34] And Gid'ôn sent messengers in all Mount 'eprayim, saying, "Come down to meet Midyān, and take the fords of the Yardēn [River] against them." So all the men of 'eprayim were called to arms and to the fords of the Yardēn [River].

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[29] 𝔐 (*'ᵉlōheykā*) אֱלֹהֶיךָ "your God."

[30] 𝔐 יְרֻבַּעַל "Ba'al will contend," גִּדְעוֹן "one who violently cuts down," *('ên Hᵃrōd)* עֵין חֲרֹד "spring of fear" or "spring of trembling," מִדְיָן "contentious" or "strife," and *(Gibᵊ'at Hammôreh)* הַמּוֹרֶה גִּבְעַת "the heights of the teacher." See *NIDOTTE,* 1:805, 828; 2:263-265, 537-539; *BDB,* 193, and 937.

[31] 𝔐 *(šôpᵊrōṯêhem)* שׁוֹפְרֹתֵיהֶם "their shofars or rams' horns."

[32] 𝔐 *(Hā'ᵉlōhîm)* הָאֱלֹהִים "God" or "the gods."

[33] 𝔐 *(Bêt hašŠiṭṭāh)* הַשִּׁטָּה בֵּית "the house of acacia," צְרֵרָה "hoarseness," אָבֵל מְחוֹלָה "mourning dance," and טַבָּה "renowned," which is a Syriac loan word. See *NIDOTTE,* 1:243-248; 2:45-46; 4:94-95; *NUHED,* 663 and *GHCL,* 318.

[34] 𝔐 *(Har 'eprayim)* הַר אֶפְרַיִם "doubly fruitful mountain."

7:25[35] And they took the two princes of Midyān, ʻōrēḇ and Zᵉēḇ; and they slew ʻōrēḇ at the Rock of ʻōrēḇ and they slew Zᵉēḇ at the wine-vat of Zᵉēḇ. And they pursued Midyān. And the heads of ʻōrēḇ and Zᵉēḇ they brought to Gidʻôn beyond the Yardēn [River].

Chapter 8

8:3[36] "Into your hand has YHWH given the princes of Midyān, ʻōrēḇ and Zᵉēḇ; and what was I able to do in comparison with you?" Then their anger toward him subsided in that he had spoken this word.

8:4 And Gidʻôn came to the Yardēn [River] and he passed over, he and the three hundred men who were with him, exhausted and famished.

8:5[37] And he said to the men of Sukkôt, "Please give loaves of bread unto the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing after Zebaḥ and Ṣalmunnāʻ, the kings of Midyān."

8:6 And the princes of Sukkôt said, "Are the hands of Zebaḥ and Ṣalmunnāʻ now in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?"

8:11[38] And Gidʻôn went up towards the way of the ones dwelling in tents, east of Nōbaḥ and Yogbᵉhāh; and he attacked the camp because the camp was secure.

8:12 And Zebaḥ and Ṣalmunnāʻ fled; and he pursued after them; and he took the two kings of Midyān, even Zebaḥ and Ṣalmunnāʻ, but all of the camp he devoted to destruction.

8:13[39] And Gidʻôn, son of Yôʼāš, returned from the battle.

8:16 And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and the briers, and with them he threshed the men of Sukkôt.

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[35] 𝔐 עֹרֵב "raven," זְאֵב "wolf," *(ṣûr-ʻōrēḇ)* צוּר־עוֹרֵב "large rock of the raven," and *(yeqeḇ-Zᵉēḇ)* יֶקֶב־זְאֵב "wine-vat of the wolf". See *NIDOTTE*, 3:793-794; *BDB*, 255, and 786.

[36] The 𝔐 word translated "anger" is literally *(rûḥām)* רוּחָם "their spirit."

[37] 𝔐 סֻכּוֹת "shelter or booth," זֶבַח "sacrifice," and צַלְמֻנָּע "shadow withheld," with the idea of protection being denied. The word translated loaves is literally *(kikkᵉrôṯ)* כִּכְּרוֹת "circles." See Slotki, 223.

[38] 𝔐 נֹבַח "bark" or "howl" and יָגְבְּהָה "lofty hill" or "haughty." The word translated secure is literally *(beṭaḥ)* בֶּטַח "security," embodying the idea of trusting in themselves and being secure or safe. See *NIDOTTE*, 1:644-649, 797-798; and 3:7-8.

[39] 𝔐 *(Ben-Yôʼāš)* בֶּן־יוֹאָשׁ "son of he has despaired." See *NUHED*, 288.

Chapter 9

9:6[40] And all the men of Šᵉkem and all Bêṯ Millô' assembled themselves together and went and they enthroned 'ᵃbîmelek as king, by the oak of the pillar that was in Šᵉkem.

9:9 And the olive tree said to them, "Should I cease from my fatness in which men honor 'ᵉlōhîm and go to wave over the trees?"

9:24 To bring the violence done to the seventy sons of Yᵉrubba'al, and to lay their blood upon 'ᵃbîmelek their brother, who killed them, and upon the men of Šᵉkem[41], who strengthened his hands to kill his brothers.

9:26[42] And Ga'al, the son of 'ōbēd, came with his brothers, and they went over into Šᵉkem; and the men of Šᵉkem put their trust in him.

9:28[43] And Ga'al, the son of 'ōbēd, said, "Who is 'ᵃbîmelek, and who is Šᵉkem, that we should serve him? [Should] not the son of Yᵉrubba'al and Zᵉbul, his commander serve the men of Ḥᵃmôr, the father of Šᵉkem? But why should we serve him?"

9:29[44] "And who will give this people into my hand? Then I will remove 'ᵃbîmelek. And I will say to 'ᵃbîmelek, 'Increase your army and come out.'"

9:30 And when Zᵉbul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Ga'al, the son of 'ōbēd, his anger was kindled.

9:31[45] And he sent messengers to 'ᵃbîmelek in 'ᵃrûm, saying, "Behold, Ga'al, the son of 'ōbēd, and his brothers are come to Šᵉkem, and behold, they are stirring up the city against you.

9:35 And Ga'al, the son of 'ōbēd, went out, and stood at the opening of the gate of the city, and 'ᵃbîmelek rose up, and the people who were with him, from the ambush.

9:44[46] And 'ᵃbîmelek and the band who was with him, attacked him, and stood at the opening of the city gate, and the two bands made an onset, and attacked all who were in the field and killed them.

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[40] ℋ שְׁכֶם "ridge" or "shoulder," בֵּית מִלּוֹא "house of fullness or abundance," and אֲבִימֶלֶךְ "my father is king." The phrase translated "men of Šᵉkem" here and throughout the chapter is literally *(baᵃlê Šᵉkem)* בַּעֲלֵי שְׁכֶם and does not necessarily indicate male citizens, however the primary meaning associated with it are men that are owners or possessors of property. It is noteworthy, that this usage in chapter nine is distinct from the remainder of Judges and as a climax of the chiastic structure may be a negative association given the context and the connection to the Canaanite deity. The ℋ phrase translated "oak of the pillar" is literally *('ēlôn hammaṣēbāh)* אֵלוֹן הַמַּצֵּבָה. See *NIDOTTE*, 1:219-223, 405, 655-656, 681-683; 2:939-941, 956-965, 3:134-136; and 4:108.

[41] See the footnote above relating to verse 9:6 and the phrase "men of Šᵉkem".

[42] ℋ נַעַל "abhor, loathed, or rejected" and *(Ben-'ōbēd)* בֶּן־עֹבֵד "son of a server." See *BDB*, 172 and 714.

[43] ℋ זְבֻל "exalt" or "honor" and חֲמוֹר "reddish male donkey" or "heap up." See *BDB*, 259 and 331.

[44] The ℋ form of the first phrase is difficult to bring into the context of the narrative. The interrogative *(mî)* מִי in the previous verse conveys the necessity to maintain the pattern. KJV and other translations take this first phrase as either subjunctive or optative. The translation of the phrase "into my hand" implies being under his authority or control.

[45] ℋ אֲרוּם "high region," which is the old accusative form of 'aram and שְׁכְמָה the old accusative form of Šᵉkem. See *GHCL*, 80.

[46] The ℋ word *(hārō'š)* הָרֹאשׁ translated "band" literally means "head, chief, or leader." Yet, in this context there is some reason to extend this word into a collective sense where it is a band or company of men, which would be lead by a single person. See *NIDOTTE*, 3:1015-1020.

9:48[47] And 'ªbîmelek went up to Mount Ṣalmôn, he and all the people with him; and 'ªbîmelek took the axe in his hand, and cut a tree branch, and took it up and placed it on his shoulder, and said to the people who were with him, "What you have seen me do, quickly do as I have done."

9:49[48] And also all the people cut down every man a branch, and they went after 'ªbîmelek, and placed them upon the stronghold, and set the stronghold on fire upon them; so all the men of the tower of Sᵉkem died also, about one thousand men and women.

Chapter 10

10:4[49] And he had thirty sons who rode on thirty ass-colts; and they had thirty cities. They are called Ḥawwôt Yā'îr unto this day, which are in the land of Gilʻād.

10:10[50] And the children of Israel cried unto YHWH, saying, "We have sinned against You, for we have forsaken YHWH our 'ᵉl, and have served the Bᵉʻālîm."

10:11[51] And YHWH said unto the children of Israel, "Did not Miṣrayim and the 'ᵉmōrî and the children of ʻammôn and the Pilištîm...

10:18 And the people of Israel said, ever man to his companion, "Who is the man who will begin to fight the children of ʻammôn? He shall be head over all the ones dwelling in Gilʻād."

Chapter 11

11:13[52] And the king of the children of ʻammôn said unto the messengers of Yiptāḥ, "Israel took away my land when they came up out of Miṣrayim, from the 'arnôn [River] even unto the Yabbōq [River], and unto the Yardēn [River]; now, therefore restore it in peace."

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[47] ℳ (Har-Ṣalmôn) הַר־צַלְמוֹן "mount of shade." See NUHED, 656.

[48] The translation of the ℳ word (haṣṣᵉrîaḥ) הַצְּרִיחַ "stronghold" can also refer to a cellar, a vault, or pit. The cognate A word (deraḥa) ضَرَحَ means "to excavate." The phrase "tower of Sᵉkem" is literally, (Migdal-Sᵉkem) מִגְדַּל־שְׁכֶם. The last phrase of the verse, if not taken numerically, could be transliterated as ('elep) אֶלֶף representing a tribal clan. See the section on Social Organization in chapter three, pages 196-199. See NIDOTTE, 3:845 and Slotki, 243.

[49] ℳ חַוֹּת יָאִיר "the villages he enlightens." See NIDOTTE, 1:324-331; and 2:44.

[50] ℳ ('ᵉlōhênû) אֱלֹהֵינוּ, "our God."

[51] ℳ (ûpilištîm) וּפְלִשְׁתִּים, which is the same word used in verse 3:3 with a different vowel pointing because of the preformative (w) ו. The modern English rendering would be: Egypt, Amorites, sons of Ammon, and Philistines.

[52] ℳ יִפְתָּח "he will open," אַרְנוֹן "a brawling [stream]," and (hayYabbōq) הַיַּבֹּק "emptying [forth]." These locations are rivers, commonly rendered in English as Arnon, Jabbok, and Jordan. See BDB, 836; SECB-HCD, 17, and 46.

11:20[53]But Sîḥôn refused to allow Israel to pass through his border; and Sîḥôn gathered together all his people, and they camped in Yāhᵊṣāh, and fought against Israel.

11:24[54]Whatever Kᵊmôš your god causes to possess, do you not possess it? So all who YHWH our ᵉl has possessed from before us, them we will possess.

11:26[55]When Israel dwelt in Ḥešbôn and its towns, and in ᵃrōʿēr, and in all the cities that are beside the ʾarnôn [River], three hundred years, so why have you not recovered them in that time.

11:29[56]And the Spirit of YHWH came upon Yiptāḥ, and he crossed over to Gilʿād and to Mᵊnaššeh, and he crossed over to Miṣpēh of Gilʿād, and from Miṣpēh of Gilʿād he crossed over to the children of ʿammôn.

11:34 And Yiptāḥ came to Miṣpēh unto his house, and behold, his daughter exited out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; and she was his only beloved; beside her he had no son or daughter.

11:37[57]And she said unto her father, "Let this thing be done for me. Let me alone two months, that I may go, and wander restlessly upon the mountains, and weep over my youth, I and my companions."

11:39 And at the end of two months, she returned unto her father, and he did to her that which he had vowed, she having never known a man. And it was for a statute in Israel.

Chapter 12

12:2 And Yiptāḥ said to them, "I had a quarrel, even I and my people, and the children of ʿammôn oppressed me much, and I summoned you, but you did not save me from their hand.

12:3 And when I saw there was none delivering, I put my life in my hand, and crossed over unto the children of ʿammôn, and YHWH gave them into my hand. Why then are you come up unto me this day to fight against me?

12:4 Then Yiptāḥ gathered together all the men of Gilʿād, and fought ʾeprāyim. And the men of Gilʿād struck down ʾeprāyim.

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[53] 𝔐 סִיחוֹן "tempestuous" or "sweeps away" and יְהָצָה "he will quarrel" or "he will arouse a dispute" which is strangely transliterated in English to Jahaz. This would require removing the old accusative ending and revocalizing the word, as the penultimate consonant can not be vocalized with a composite vowel. See, BDB, 695 and NUHED, 178.

[54] 𝔐 כָּמוֹשׁ "dried up" or "withered". See, NUHED, 333.

[55] 𝔐 חֶשְׁבּוֹן "account" or "reckoning" and עֲרֹעֵר "lonely" or "juniper tree". The phrase "and its towns" is literally translated (ûbibnôteyhā) וּבִבְנוֹתֶיהָ "and its daughters." See, NUHED, 267 and 599.

[56] 𝔐 (Miṣpēh Gilʿād) מִצְפֵּה גִלְעָד "watch tower of testimony of a rolled heap [of stones]". See NIDOTTE, 2:1074.

[57] The 𝔐 word translated "my youth" (bᵊtûlay) בְּתוּלַי often has been translated with prejudice toward female virginity, yet the biblical evidence is not conclusive. See NIDOTTE, 1:781-783.

12:6[58] They said to him, "Please say 'Šibbōleṯ'." And he said, "Sibbōleṯ" for he was not able to pronounce it right. Then they laid hold on him and killed him at the fords of the Yardēn [River]. And in that time there fell from 'eprāyim forty two thousand.

12:7[59] And Yiptāḥ judged Israel six years. And Yiptāḥ the Gil'ādî died, and was buried in his city, in Miṣpēh of Gil'ād.

12:12[60] And 'êlôn the Zᵉbûlōnî died, and was buried in 'êlôn in the land of Zᵉbûlun.

Chapter 13

13:6   And the wife came and told her husband, saying, "A man came unto me, and his appearance was like the appearance of a god, being very fearful, and I did not ask him from where he was and he did not tell me his name.

13:9[61] And YHWH listened to the voice of Mānôaḥ, and the angel of YHWH came again unto the wife, as she was sitting in the field and Mānôaḥ. Her husband was not with her.

13:12[62] And Mānôaḥ said, "Now, [when] your word comes to pass, what will be the judgment of the lad and what will he do?"

13:17 And Mānôaḥ said unto the Angel of YHWH, "What is your name? For when your word comes to pass, we will really honor you."

13:19[63] And Mānôaḥ took the kid of the goats, and the grain offering, and offered it upon the rock to YHWH.

13:23 But his wife said to him, "If YHWH had desired to kill us, He would not have received at our hand a burnt offering and a grain offering, and would not have instructed us thus.

Chapter 14

14:11 And because they feared him, they took thirty companions, and they were with him.

14:14 And he said to them,
"From the eater there came forth something to eat,
And from something strong came forth something sweet."
And they were not able to tell the riddle for six days.

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[58] 𝕳 שִׁבֹּלֶת "flowing stream" and סֻבֹּלֶת "suffering" or "burden." See *NUHED*, 533 and 738.

[59] 𝕳 *(Hagil'āḏî)* הַגִּלְעָדִי.

[60] 𝕳 אֵילוֹן "strength or mighty tree" and *(Hazzᵉbûlōnî)* הַזְּבוּלֹנִי. See *NIDOTTE*, 1:372-379.

[61] 𝕳 מָנוֹחַ "from rest". See *BDB*, 629.

[62] The 𝕳 word translated *(mišpaṭ)* מִשְׁפַּט "judgment" as a literal translation implies the nature of his life work, whereas traditional interpretations have opted for the idea of "order" which is a different word altogether. The 𝕳 word translated "lad" *(hanna'ar)* הַנַּעַר also connotes the idea of any unmarried male servant/disciple, regardless of age. See *NIDOTTE*, 2:1142-1144 and 3:124-127.

[63] The 𝕳 word translated *(hamminḥah)* הַמִּנְחָה "grain offering" is a play on words with the name Mānôaḥ. See *NIDOTTE*, 2:978-990.

14:15[64]And it was on the seventh day, they said to the wife of Šimšôn, "Entice your husband, that he may tell us the riddle, or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Was it to impoverish us that you invited us here?

14:18 And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day, before he entered the bridal chamber,

"What is sweeter than honey?
And what is stronger than a lion?"

And he said to them,

"If you had not plowed with this heifer of mine,
You would not have found out this riddle of mine."

14:19[65]And the Spirit of YHWH rushed upon him, and he went down to 'ašq°lôn, and killed thirty men from there, and took their changes of raiment, and gave them to those telling the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to the house of his father.

Chapter 15

15:5 And he set fire to the torches, and he sent them out into the standing grain of the P°lištîm, and burned both the shocks and standing corn, and even vineyard and olive [trees].

15:6[66] And the P°lištîm said, "Who has done this?" And they said, "Šimšôn, the son-in-law of the Timnî, because he took his wife, and gave her to his best man." And the P°lištîm went up and burned her and her father's house in the fire.

15:16 And Šimšôn said,

"With the red ass's jawbone, I have reddened them really red;
With the red ass's jawbone, I have killed a thousand men."

Chapter 16

16:2[67] And it was told the 'azzātîm, saying, "Šimšôn comes here." And they surrounded him and laid wait for him all the day at the gate of the city, and they kept quiet all night, saying, "When the light morning comes, we will kill him."

16:13[68]And D°lîlāh said unto Šimšôn, "Until now you have deceived me, and told me lies. Tell me by what way you may be bound." And he said unto her, "If you weave the seven braids of my head along with the web, and fasten it with the peg, then I shall become weak, and shall be like any other man.

16:14 So when he slept, D°lîlāh took the seven braids of his head and wove them along with the web, and fastened them with the peg, and said unto him, "The P°lištîm are upon you Šimšôn." And he awoke from his sleep and pulled out the loom and the web.

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[64] Ⱨ שִׁמְשׁוֹן "sun." The word *(patî)* פַּתִּי "entice" also carries along with it the idea of persuade and deceive, both being elements involved against him. See *NIDOTTE*, 3:714-716 and *BDB*, 1039.

[65] Ⱨ אַשְׁקְלוֹן "cluster." See *NIDOTTE*, 46.

[66] Ⱨ *(Hattimnî)* הַתִּמְנִי "restraint." The phrase *(mērē'ēhû)* מֵרֵעֵהוּ "his best man" normally conveys the idea of "companion" or "friend." See *NIDOTTE*, 3:1144-1149; and *SECB-HCD*, 125.

[67] Ⱨ *('azzātîm)* עַזָּתִים "strong," who are the inhabitants of Gaza. See *SECB-HCD*, 87.

[68] Ⱨ דְּלִילָה "languishing" or "impoverished." See *BDB*, 196.

16:18 [69] And when Dᵊlîlāh saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the princes of the Pᵊlištîm, saying, "Come up this once, for he has told me all his heart." And the princes of the Pᵊlištîm came up unto her, and brought the money in their hand.

16:19 And she made him sleep upon her knees, and called for a man, and he shaved off the seven locks of his head, and he began to be afflicted, and his strength departed from him.

16:25 [70] And when their hearts were merry and they said, "Call Šimšôn, and he shall make sport for us." So they called Šimšôn from the prison house, and he made sport for them. And they made him stand between the pillars.

16:24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god and said,

"Our god has given
Our enemy into our hand,
And him who laid waste our land,
And who multiplied our slain."

16:28 [71] And Šimšôn called unto YHWH, and said, "'ᵃdōnāy YHWH, please remember me, and please strengthen me, only this once 'ᵉl, that I may avenge myself upon the Pᵊlištîm in one vengeance for my two eyes."

Chapter 17

17:2 And he said unto his mother, "The eleven hundred silver [pieces] which were taken from you, and you uttered a curse, even also you spoke in my ears;

17:3 "Wholly, I consecrated the silver to YHWH from my hand alone to make a graven image and a molten image; behold, the silver is with me, I have taken it! And now I am giving it back to you."

17:10 [72] And Mîkāh said to him, "Dwell with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten [pieces] of silver for the days and an order of garments and your sustenance.

Chapter 18

18:1 [73] In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the Dānî were seeking for themselves an inheritance to dwell in, for it had not fallen unto them unto that day land for an inheritance in the midst of the tribes of Israel.

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[69] The 𝕳 word translated (sarnê) סַרְנֵי "princes of" is a Hebraicized Philistine loan word referring to the rulers of the five city-states of the Philistine Pentapolis. The 𝕳 word translated (hakesep) הַכֶּסֶף "money" is literally, "silver". See *NIDOTTE*, 2:683-684 and 3:295:298.

[70] For the transposition of these verses, see Appendix 1, Transposition of Clauses, page 706.

[71] 𝕳 אֲדֹנָי "Lord." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:275.

[72] 𝕳 מִיכָה "who is like."

[73] 𝕳 (Hadānî) הַדָּנִי "judge, although literally, the tribe of Dan. See *SECB-HCD*, 31.

18:7[74] And the five men walked, and came to Lāy°šāh, and saw the people that were there; they were dwelling in security, like the judgment of the Ṣîdōnî, quiet and secure. And there was no want of anything that is in the earth, and they were far from the Ṣîdōnî, and had no dealings with '°rām.

18:8[75] And they came to their brothers, to Ṣor'āh and 'eštā'ōl, and their brothers said to them, "What [news] is with you?"

18:9 And they said, "Arise and let us go up to Lāy°šāh, for we have seen the land, and behold, it is very good, and will you be still? Do not be lazy to go and to enter in to possess the land."

18:16 And the six hundred men girded with their weapons of war, who were of the children of Dān, were standing at the entrance of the gate.

18:28[76] And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Ṣîdôn, and they had no dealings with '°rām, and it is in the valley which is by Bêṯ-R°ḥôḇ. And they built the city, and dwelt there.

18:30[77] And the children of Dān reared up for themselves the graven image, and Y°hônāṯān, the son of Gēršōm, the son of Mōšeh, he and his sons became priests to the tribe of the Dānî until the day of the captivity of the ark.

Chapter 19

19:2[78] And his concubine was enraged with him, and went away from him unto her father's house, unto Bêṯ-Leḥem in Y°hûḏāh, and was there some time—four months.

19:3[79] And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak kindly to her, to bring her back again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses, and he came to her father's house, and when the father of the woman servant saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.

19:8 And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, and the father of the woman servant said, "Please, refresh your heart." So they caused themselves to delay until the day declined, and they did eat, both of them.

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[74] 𝕳 לְיְשָׁה "crushing" and אֲרָם "highland." See *SECB-HCD*, 17, and 60. The phrase "And there was no want of anything that is in the earth" may alternatively be translated as "There was no one speaking with authority in the land, no one in possession of control." For the discussion of this possibility see the verse reference in the section "Other Marginal Notes Inserted in the Text" in Appendix 2, "Listing of Textual Errors in Judges by Insertion," page 723.

[75] 𝕳 צָרְעָה "wasp" or "hornet" and אֶשְׁתָּאֹל "petition" or "request." See *SECB-HCD*, 101 and *GHCL*, 91. Even so, the phrase "what is with you" may even be translated into the colloquial idiom "how have you fared?" For this suggestion, see G.R. Driver, "Problems in Judges Newly Discussed," *ALUOS 4* (1964), 18.

[76] 𝕳 צִירוֹן "catching [as in fish]" and בֵּית־רְחוֹב "house of the street." See *SECB-HCD*, 21, and 99.

[77] 𝕳 יְהוֹנָתָן "YHWH has given" and גֵּרְשֹׁם "stranger there." See *BDB*, 177 and 220.

[78] 𝕳 *(Bêṯ Leḥem Y°huḏāh)* בֵּית לֶחֶם יְהוּדָה "house of bread" and "praise," although it is commonly Anglicized to the geographical location of Bethlehem, a town in Judah. The phrase *(yāmîm)* יָמִים "some time" is literally "days." See *NIDOTTE*, 2:419-424 and 789-792.

[79] For the usage of the 𝕳 word *(na°rô)* נַעֲרוֹ "his servant" and" *(hanna°rāh)* הַנַּעֲרָה "servant woman, see the footnote to verse 13:12.

19:11[80]When they were by Yᵊḇûs, the day was far gone, and the servant said unto his master, "Please come, and let us turn aside into the city of the Yᵊḇûsî, and stay in it."

19:12[81]And his master said unto him, "We will not turn aside into the city of foreigners, who are not of the children of Israel, but we will cross over unto Gibʻāh."

19:13[82]And he said to his servant, "Come and let us draw near to one of these places, and stay in Gibʻāh or in Rāmāh.

19:18 And he said to him, "We are crossing over from Bêṯ-Leḥem in Yᵊhûḏāh unto the farther side of Mount ʼepⱬrayim. I am from there, and I went to Bêṯ-Leḥem in Yᵊhûḏāh, and I am going to my home, and there is no man taking me into his house.

19:30 And he commanded the men that he sent to say, "Thus shall you say to all of the men of Israel, 'Has there been such a thing as this from the day that the children of Israel came up from Miṣrayim until this day? Take counsel and speak.'"

Chapter 20

20:1[83] Then all the children of Israel were summoned, and the congregation was assembled as one man from Dān even to Bᵊʼēr Šeḇaʻ, and the land of Gilʻāḏ, unto YHWH at Miṣpāh.

20:2[84] And all of the leaders of the people, from all the tribes of Israel presented themselves in the assembly of the people of ʼᵉl, even four hundred thousand footmen who drew a sword.

20:9 And now this thing which we shall do to Gibʻāh, we will go up against it by lot,

20:10[85]And will take ten men of one hundred of all the tribes of Israel, and one hundred of one thousand, and one thousand of ten thousand to bring food for the people, that they may do to Gibʻāh of Binyāmin according to all the wickedness that they have done in Israel.

20:12 And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Binyāmin saying, "What evil is this that has come from among you?"

20:13[86]"Now therefore deliver up the men, the sons of Bᵊlîyaʻal, who are in Gibʻāh, that we may put them to death, and we shall utterly consume the wickedness from Israel." But, the children of Binyāmin were not willing to listen to the voice of their brothers, the children of Israel.

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[80] 𝕳 יְבוּס "threshing place," commonly referred to as Jebus. See *SECB-HCD*, 46.

[81] 𝕳 גִּבְעָה "height" or "hill." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:805.

[82] 𝕳 רָמָה "highlands" or "high place." See *NUHED*, 721.

[83] 𝕳 בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע "well of seven" or "well of oath" and *(Hammiṣpāh)* הַמִּצְפָּה, which is a different vocalization of מִצְפֶּה, as in the footnote to verse 11:29.

[84] See the section on Social Organization in chapter three regarding whether this should be translated as 400,000 soldiers or 400 clans of soldiers, pages 196-199.

[85] 𝕳 *(Gibʻaṯ Binyāmin)* גִּבְעַת בִּנְיָמִן, in its construct state. The number *(rᵊḇāḇāh)* רְבָבָה "ten thousand" may actually be better stated as "myriad" referring to an innumerable amount of people. See *NIDOTTE*, 3:1036-1037.

[86] 𝕳 *(Bᵊnê-Bᵊlîyaʻal)* בְּנֵי-בְלִיַּעַל "worthless sons." See *NIDOTTE*, 1:661-663.

20:15 And the children of Binyāmin were mustered in that day from the cities twenty five thousand men who drew the sword, besides the ones dwelling in Gibʻāh, seven hundred chosen men,

20:16 Bound in the right hand. All of these could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.

20:31[87] And the children of Binyāmin went out to meet them, and were drawn away from the city, and they began to strike and kill of the people, as before, in other times, in the paths, of which one goes up to Bêt̠-'ēl, and one to Gibʻōnāh, in the field, about thirty men of Israel.

20:33[88] And all the men of Israel rose up from their place, and set themselves in array at Baʻal Tāmār, and the ones ambushing from Israel burst forth from the place on the west of Gāb̠aʻ.

20:38 Now the appointed time between the men of Israel with the ambush was their causing to go up smoke rising form the city.

20:39 The men of Israel will turn back in the battle. And Binyāmin began to strike and kill among the men of Israel about thirty men, and they said, "Surely, being stricken, he is completely stricken before us as in the first battle."

20:42 So they turned before the men of Israel unto the way of the wilderness, but the battle overtook them, and the ones who were from the city were destroying them in the midst.

20:43[89] And they beat down Binyāmin, and pursued him from Nûḥāh, until opposite Gāb̠aʻ at the sun rising.

20:45[90] And they turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the crag of Rimmôn. And they gleaned of him in the paths, five thousand men, and followed hard after him as far as Geb̠aʻ, and struck down of him two thousand men.

20:48 And the men of Israel turned back unto the children of Binyāmin, and struck them with the edge of the sword, from the inhabited city unto the cattle and all they had found, also all the cities they had found they set on fire.

Chapter 21

21:11 And this thing you shall do. Every male and every woman known from lying with a male, you shall devote to destruction; but the virgins you shall save alive. And they did so.

21:17 And they said, "How shall a remnant be left to Binyāmin, that a tribe not be blotted out from Israel?"

21:19[91] And they said, "Behold, there is the feast of YHWH in Šilô from year to year, which is on the north of Bêt̠-'ēl, from the sun rising to the path that goes up from Bêt̠-'ēl to Šᵊkemāh and from the Negeb̠ to Lᵊb̠ôn.

21:20 And they commanded, the children of Binyāmin, saying, "Go and lie in ambush in the vineyards."

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[87] 𝕳 גִּבְעָנָה "hill," which is the old accusative form of Gibʻôn. See *NIDOTTE*, 1:805-806.

[88] 𝕳 בַּעַל תָּמָר "possessor of the palm tree" and גֶבַע "small hill." See *SECB-HCD*, 23, and 25.

[89] 𝕳 נוּחָה "quietude." See *SECB-HCD*, 77.

[90] 𝕳 *(Selaʻ Hārimmôn)* סֶלַע הָרִמּוֹן "rock of the pomegranate" or "stronghold of the pomegranate" and גֶבַע which is a different vocalization of *(Gāb̠a')* נֶבַע of verse 20:43 . See *SECB-HCD*, 83, and 109.

[91] 𝕳 שִׁלוֹ "tranquil" and לְבוֹן "frankincense." The phrase translated *(miyāmîm yāmîmāh)* יְמִימָה מִיָּמִים "from year to year" is literally "from days to day." See *SECB-HCD*, 58, and 115.

APPENDIX 5

CHART OF TEXTUAL ERRORS BY CATEGORY WITHIN A CHAPTER

□ **Alteration** ■ **Insertion** □ **Deletion**
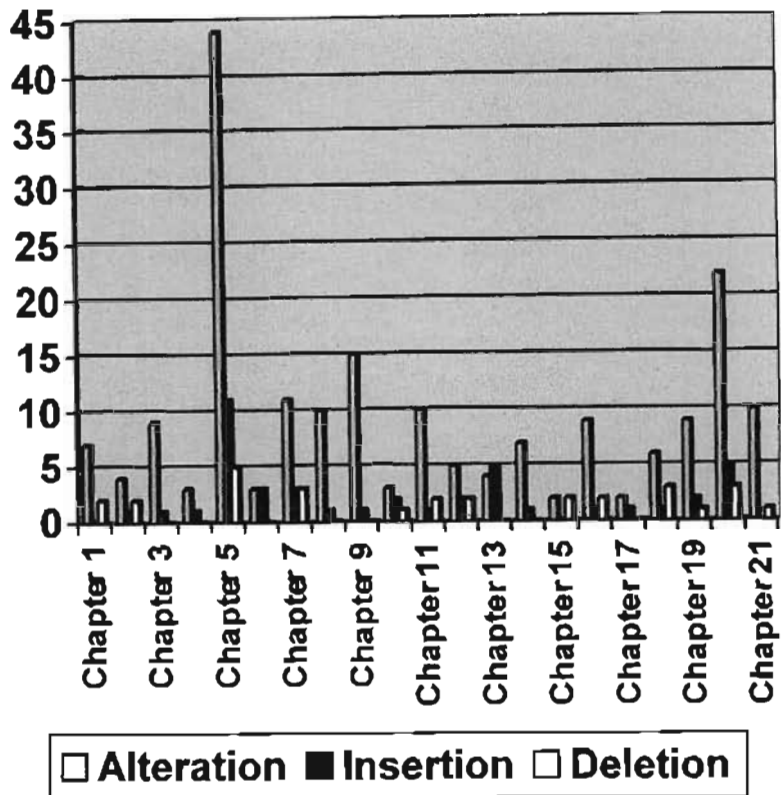
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Alteration	7	4	9	3	44	3	11	10	15	3	10
Insertion	0	1	1	1	11	3	3	1	1	2	1
Deletion	2	2	0	0	5	0	3	0	0	1	2

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Alteration	5	4	7	2	9	2	6	2	22	10
Insertion	2	5	1	0	1	1	1	1	5	0
Deletion	2	0	0	2	2	0	3	1	3	1

It should be noted that the numbers above reflect the number of occurrences of a textual error within the corresponding chapter, rather than the number of verses with those errors, which would be slightly less. In some instances there were several errors within the same verse.

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