Abstract

The book of Joshua belongs to the early historiographic Israeli literature. During the first half of the 20th century, subsequent to Noth's research, many believed, that the book of Joshua was part of a comprehensive act of editing that described the history of Israel from the exodus from Egypt to the destruction of the First Temple. The Deuteronomistic editing included, according to this approach, the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. Before that, at the beginning of the century, researchers tended to include the book of Joshua with the books of the Pentateuch,in a series that had been called the Hexateuch (Six books).

It seems that what had led to these approaches, aside from the stylistic and linguistics links to the various books, was the dramatic place of the book of Joshua in the epos that describes the history of the Jewish nation during the period of the Bible. The book of Joshua is placed at an especially important crossroad in the Biblical historiography. It both closes several narrative circles in the Pentateuch and constitutes an opening to a long and complicated historiographic story that is told in the following books. The book of Joshua seals the cycle of the story of the promise to the Patriarchs in Genesis and the cycle of the story of the salvation from Egypt in Exodus. It also seals the cycle of the story of the walk through the desert, which reaches its peak in the story of the Spies' sin, and the cycle of stories of the events of the covenant - the covenant of Sinai in Exodus and the covenant of Arvot Moav in Deuteronomy.

As research on the book of Joshua progressed, more complex approaches developed regarding the editing of the first books of the Prophets in general, and the book of Joshua in particular. For the past few decades, the acceptable claim has been that the editing of each one of the books was done separately, in a complicated process that included several stages of editing. Nevertheless, it seems that the connection of the book of Joshua to various issues that appear in the books surrounding it requires clarification, and this is one of the subjects discussed throughout my research.

The affinity between the book of Joshua and the various cycles in the Torah is clarified in this paper in an analysis of the brief events that are described in chapter 5, and the story of the blessing and cursing (8:30-35). Likewise, the affinity of the book to the Pentateuch is examined by noting its employment of story of the Spies' sin (Numbers 13) and analzing the book's comparison between the persona of Moses and that of Joshua. In addition, the present research devotes several discussions to the affinity of the book of Joshua to the book of Judges in the act of editing.

The history of the research on bhe book of Joshua includes studies on its formation, its various sources and the extent of its historical credibility. The conclusions that were reached as a result of dividing it into smaller units led to insights and important directions regarding the era of the conquest and the literary nature of the book of Joshua. However, by reducing the book into smaller units the larger picture had been missed as well as the many artistic elements that are part of the comprehensive act of editing. From a literary standpoint, the continuous plot between the appointment of Joshua at the beginning of the book and his death at its end has hardly been examined. One of the significant innovations of the present research is the attempt to fill in this gap.

This study examines the significance of the historiographic description in the book, in an attempt to understand the logic in the order and organization of the stories of the conquest and the descriptions of the settlements. However, the main goal of this research is to clarify the rationale of the structure of the stories and lists and to define the general aim of the act of editing of the book.

The division of the book of Joshua into two parts: the stories of the conquest (1-12) and the descriptions of the settlement (13-24) is agreed upon by everyone. It is supported by the editing of the book, which stresses the boundaries between the two parts. Thus, the present research examines the two parts of the book separately. It defines the order and organization of the stories of the conquest on their own and the descriptions and lists of settlement their own. The two parts of this study are thus built in accordance with the two parts of the book of Joshua. Nevertheless, during the analysis, and especially in the chapter of conclusions, the common principles of the two parts are discussed and the question of the general editing of the book, with its two parts, is examined.

Part A - The stories of the conquest (1-12)

The first five chapters of the present research are devoted to an analysis of the structure of the stories of the conquest. The **first chapter** presents the general structure of the stories, which is divided into two: the unit of the stories of the first entrance and wars (1-8) and the unit of the great battle over the land (9-12).

The structure of the two units is of a double recurrence (the first cycle in the first unit and a second cycle in the second unit) of movement between three models of stories: 1. **Stories of 'praise and success'**: Stories that are characterized by descriptions of appropriate communication and proceeding between Israel and God. These stories are recognizable by the

description of a Divine presence, which is expressed in several components of the story: the plotting of the action by God, its transmission through the mediating chain by Joshua, a ritual performed by the Cohanim, the bearers of the Ark of the Covenant, and marvelous miracles that leave much impression on the settlers. These stories are characterized by harmoni between the parts of the story. That is, they do not usually contain a surprise or complication that requires coping and finding solutions; 2. **Stories of 'complication and conflict'**: Stories that are characterized by a plot of human involvement and sins or military failures. The Divine presence is unnoticeable in these stories and often, it is even remarkable in its absence. In these stories, as opposed to the previous series, coping with the failure that had been caused is described. This coping leads to a certain calm and the failure is fixed; 3. Stories of **'diminution and compromise'**: The stories of this model are usually placed at the end of the cycle and a synthesis between the first ideal model and the diminished second model can be seen in them. These stories are characterized by a relative success on the one hand and an intensive absence of Divine presence on the other.

The second part of the first chapter addresses the characteristics that prove the division between the two units and especially the description of the event of the blessing and cursing (8:30-35). Its location assists in determining the boundaries between the units and in defining the aim of the stories of the conquest. The chapter ends with an appendix that examines the significance of the religious events that are inlaid in chapter 5.

The **second chapter** discusses the three central stories of the first unit of the stories of the conquest: 1. The story of the crossing of the Jordan River (3-4); 2. The story of the war in Jericho (6); 3. The story of the second war in Ay (8). These stories present the movement of the successive plot, from the entrance to the Land of Israel until the event of the blessing and the cursing, which seals the first stage of the period. In the course of the chapter, the characteristics that are common to the stories are examined: a. their parallelism to similar stories in the Pentateuch, which describe Moses' leadership; b. the way they are organized, which emphasizes the description of the mediating chain from the order of God and his plotting to conveying the order by Joshua and a description of the execution of the plan; c. descriptions of Divine presence; 4. collective participation of the whole nation during the occurrences; 5. a description of considerable success that left its impression on the nations of Canaan.

These components stress the status of these stories as stories of **'praise and success'** - the first model that had been presented in the first chapter of this research. In the course of the chapter, the structure of each one of the three stories was examined as well as the components of its

plot. The analysis stresses the link that exists between the first two stories (the crossing of the Jordan and the war in Jericho) as opposed to the story of the war in Ay, which is a realistic story without noticeable miracles and without descriptions of the movement of the Ark of the Covenant and its bearers, the Cohanim. A rigorous examination of the story of the war in Ay raises the possibility that there is a trend of diminution between the first two stories (stories of 'praise and success') and the third story, which belongs to the diminished model: stories of **'diminution and compromise'**. That is, subsequent to Achan's sin and the problematic proceeding that preceded the first war against Ay (7), a change in the movement of the general plot of the stories of the conquest occurs. This change in the movement is part of a regular pattern that exists throughout the stories of the conquest, as presented in the first chapter.

The **third chapter** examines three stories: 1. The story of the spies in Rachav's house (2); The story of Achan's sin (7) The story of the people of Givon (9). These three stories share common characteristics in the structure of the plot, in expressions and modes of evaluation and judgment that are hidden in them. Especially salient connections exist between the story of the spies in Rachav's house and the story of the people of Givon. In both stories a conflict is described, which is related to the joining of Canaanite strangers to the Israelite nation subsequent to an oath which Israel swore to them. The link between them is characterized by a developmental analogy, which points, I believe, to a negative trend that is gradually strengthening during the course of the book. The criticizm that develops in these stories is related to the absence of Divine presence in them, as opposed to what characterizes the series of stories in the second chapter. The three stories in this chapter are discussed under the common category which I have termed, stories of 'complication of conflict'. This model is characterized by a negative movement that exists in the stories of the conquest.

The **fourth chapter** discusses the stories of the great battle over the land. At the center of the chapter, an analogy between the story of the war against the kings of the South (10) and the story of the war against the kings of the North (11) is presented. Between the two stories there are many shared traits in the structure of the description, the texture of the words and the style. Aside from the similarity between the stories, a contrasting comparison is stressed, which emphasizes the important differences between them: 1. The absence of the unconcealed miracle in the story of the war in the North; 2. The absence of the collective participation of the nation throughout the war, which is one of the prominent characteristics of the battles over the conquering of the land; 3. Difference and contrast between the presentation of Joshua as an independent leader in the story of the war against the kings of the South and his presentation as

submissive and obedient to the orders that Moses, his master, had bequeathed him in the story of the war against the kings of the North; 4. A significant difference in the length of the war: several days in the story of the war against the kings of the South ("once") and "many days" in the story of the war against the kings of the North.

During the course of the chapter, I offer the explanation that by means of the contrast between the stories, the editor-author presented the circumstantial and ideological foundation for the gaps that exist in the descriptions of the settlement: between the description of the settlement of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and that of the Northern tribes. The editor-author, who demonstrated a preference for the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, presented the achievements of the war against the kings of the South and those of the war against the kings of the North differently. In the stories of the wars he did this indirectly; only a literary reading that compares the stories reveals the differences between them. Conversely, in the descriptions of the settlement, he presented the differences between the lists of tribes in a direct and salient manner. In this chapter I demonstrate that The story of the people of Givon, which opens the stories of the second unit discussed in this chapter, is also thematically and theologically related to the movement between the stories and has much significance in the structure of the stories of the conquest.

The **fifth chapter** presents the two trends that exist in the structure of the stories of the conquest: 1. A trend that emphasizes the movement of diminution between the two stories, which is noticeable in the inner structure of the units, and whose principles were described in three previous chapters of the research; 2. A trend that exists mainly in the frameworks of the stories of the conquest, whose perspective on the process of the conquest is positive and sympathetic. The inclusio structure of the stories of the conquest, which compares the description of the opening event at the beginning of the book of Joshua to the description that concludes the wars over the conquering of the land, emphasizes the complete circular movement of the process. The parallelism between the description of the opening event (1) and the description of the conclusion (12) focuses on two areas: 1. Presenting the image of Joshua opposite that of his predecessor Moses in the book of Joshua; 2. The status of the two and a half tribes. The two subjects that are discussed in this chapter are related to the characteristics of the editing of the complete book. I have attempted to show that the tension between the two trends that characterize the editing is noticeable in these subjects. On the one hand, the trend of continuity between Moses and Joshua is stressed, which matches the integrity of the plot; on

the other, the trend of diminution from Moses to Joshua is noticeable, which matches the trend of diminution in the plot.

Part B - The descriptions of the settlement (13-24)

In the second part of the present research, which addresses the second part of the book of Joshua, the lists of settlement of the tribes are examined. I maintain that in this part of the book as well, ideological decisions were made regarding the order and organization of the lists in addition to the historiographic decisions. The examination of the structure is done by employing literary by an analysis of the short stories that are integrated into the lists and by determining the boundaries of the units and the connections between them. Conversely, I have almost completely omitted the geographical issues that are at the center of the descriptions, due to the literary approach of this research.

The **sixth chapter**, the introduction to the second part, discusses research that addresses the descriptions of the settlement and their evaluation. Then, the general structure of the descriptions is presented and the evidence for the boundaries of these units. The unit of the settlement (14-19) is divided into two groups of lists: 1) the lists of estates of Judah and Joseph (14-17); 2) the list of estates of the slothful tribes (18-19). Between the two groups of lists there is a movement of diminution: the lists in the first group include the tribes that received their estates according to God's order, out of devotion and obedience, while the lists of the second group are of tribes that were neglectful of the mission.

The **seventh chapter** examines the lists of the tribes of Judah and Joseph and the stories that are integrated into them, especially Caleb's request for an estate (14 and 15). The story of Caleb is a foundation of the lists of the settlement, in as much as it opens the lists and presents the suitable model of settling in the country. In contrast to Caleb's story, the story of the Joseph's sons is presented. Although Joseph's sons wanted an estate, they came to Joshua with complaints and presented a compromising and non-idealistic approach. Aside from the analysis of the stories, I examine the structure of the lists, including the short stories that are integrated into them.

The **eighth chapter** discusses the lists of the slothful tribes. First examine, the story of the remiss tribes (18: 1-10) and the connection between them and the short lists that are presented after their story. Later on, the unique list of Benjamin (18: 11-28) is discussed. In particular I discuss this list's similarity to the list of Judah, and its vocabulary, which implies a connection to the cultic sites associated with this tribe. This list differs from the other lists of the slothful

tribes, and therefore, its place in the list is different than that of its place in the order of princes in the book of Numbers (34). In the list of the six remaining tribes (19), the link between the opening list of the tribe of Shimon (19: 1-9) and the closing list of the tribe of Dan (19: 40-48) is discussed. The two tribes did not receive a complete estate of their own, as can be seen in the description of their list. The common features between the two lists emphasizes that the list of the six tribes has been shaped as an incomplete list, which characterizes the description of the estate of the remiss tribes.

The **ninth chapter** summarizes the two trends that exist in the descriptive structure of the settlement. One trend describes the movement of degeneraion between the two groups of lists of settlement and within each one of the groups in itself. The second trend describes an ideal comprehensive picture within the frameworks of the unit and a concentric structure of three elements: 1. Opening as opposed to closing; 2. The story of Caleb's request for an estate versus the story of Joshua receiving his estate; 3. The list of Judah's estate as opposed to versus the list of estate of Dan. On the one hand the structure supports the trend of an ideal picture. On the other hand, from the comparison of the opening elements to the closing ones, one can discern a critical trend in it as well. Similar to the stories of the conquest, in the descriptions of the settlement, despite the movement of comprehensive, there is a complete framework structure of a positive nature, which attests to an acceptance of the diminished achievements.

The **tenth chapter** examines the lists of the Levites' cities (20-21) and the link between them and the characteristics of the editing of the lists of estates of the tribes. Here too, a preference was given to the estates of Judah and Benjamin while emphasizing the cities that had been given to the Cohanim the sons of Aharon. Likewise, the link between Aharon's sons and Caleb, who received parts of the city of Hebron, is discussed.

The **eleventh chapter** examines the story of the two and a half tribes (22) with its two parts. The first part belongs to the framework of the book of Joshua and completes the dialogue between Joshua and the two and a half tribes in the opening of the book in chapter 1. The story of the two and a half tribes seals the narrative cycle of the book. The second part of the story - the deed of the altar, foresees the next period, that of the Judges. The story of the altar is similar to the story of the concubine of Givah in the collective encounter between the nation and the suspects of the sin. Unlike the story of the two and a half tribes, which ended with reconciliation and calm, the story of the concubine ends with a civil war and critical evaluation and judgement that color the whole book in a negative manner.

The **twelfth chapter** discusses the two events that are described at the end of the book. They are similar in their structure and materials of the plot, yet differ in their style and texture of words. An analysis of the differences between the two descriptions leads to the conclusion that that the first description (23) constitutes an ending to the book and a closing for the description of the opening event (1). The second description, in contrast, foresees the future, the era of the Judges and prepares for it. The dramatic event of the making of the covenant and the writing of the words in the book of the Torah of God (24: 26) alludes to the power of the event that took place in Shekhem. The critical moment of ending the process that had begun in the days of the Patriarchs and concluded with the entrance to the Land of Israel forces the nation to decide about the extent of its commitment to the covenant in the following generations.

The **thirteenth chapter** presents the general conclusions of this research. The prominent differences between the two parts of the book are first discussed. Then structural contexts are presented, which are expressed in the frameworks of the book and teach about the act of integrating the various parts into one whole book. In the course of the chapter, various motifs are presented, which are referred to throughout the book and support the claim of an act of editing and a common design to the two parts. At the end of the summary, the general structure of the book is discussed. The structure proves the two aims of the editing: the **first aim** is to present a movement of diminution between the two parts of the book: the stories of the conquest and the descriptions of the settlement. The movement of diminution points at gaps between the beginning of the period and its end. The gaps derive from the change in the leadership between Moses and Joshua and from the continuous deviation from the Divine plan and pursite of human initiatives without conferring with God. This diminution leads to a diminishment in the presence of God and a damage to the achievements of Israel, so that eventually, the enterprise of conquest and settlement is not completed. The **second aim** is to present the general framework of each one of the two periods (the conquest and the settlement) in a way that leaves the impression that the process is complete, without deficits, failures or omission. This aim stresses the achievements of Joshua's leadership and likens Joshua to Moses.

These two aims, one beside the other, shape the final, complex picture of the book. On the one hand, a diminished picture compared to the preceding period, that of Moses' leadership; on the other hand, a picture of great achievements and of observing God's commandments compared to the following period, the period of the Judges. In the editing of the book of Joshua, there are descriptions that look backwards, in a manner that contains a certain critical evaluation.

Conversely, there are descriptions that foresee the future and prepare the readers for stories, which are critical in nature. This dichotomy that characterizes the book is one of the most prominent and potent impression with which the editor had wanted to convey to his readers.