

**ALL ISRAEL'S RESPONSE TO JOSHUA:
A NOTE ON THE NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK OF JOSHUA 1****

David M. Howard, Jr., Ph.D.

This essay treats a question arising from the narrative framework of Joshua 1, namely, the relationship of Joshua's speech to the Transjordan tribes in 1:12-15 to the surrounding material. This material consists of Joshua's instructions to Israel's leaders in 1:10-11 and the response to Joshua by an unspecified group of people in 1:16-18. Two related questions are dealt with: (1) How did the author of Joshua 1 conceive of the relationship between Joshua's two speeches in the chapter? (2) Who are the respondents to Joshua in vv. 16-18?

The solution advanced here is recovered from the syntax of the text itself in vv. 12 and 16: there is a cohesion¹ in the text that renders unnecessary any recourse to various traditions or sources to solve the problem. This approach brings together some trends in general linguistics, which are concerned with literary relations above the sentence level,² and in biblical studies, which have turned in the last two decades to synchronic literary concerns.

It is a pleasure to offer this brief study in honor of my *Doktorvater*. While most of my work with Freedman was in Hebrew poetry and the Psalms, I had one memorable seminar with him on the book of Joshua, in which a handful of students met for an hour per week in his office and covered 5-6 chapters at a time. Thus, it may be appropriate to return to the book in the present essay to address an issue we did not discuss in that seminar.

I. THE PROBLEM

Chapter 1 of Joshua consists mainly of spoken discourse. The only narrative portions form a framework in vv. 1, 10, 12, and 16a. Each portion is merely a brief introduction to the discourse that follows. Verses 1, 10, and 16 all begin with the *w*w-* "consecutive"³ plus prefixed verb construction (*wayyiqtl*),⁴ which functions as the normal mode of relating sequential actions in past-time narrative. In verse 1, the speech introduced is YHWH's charge to Joshua; in verse 10, it is Joshua's instructions to the officers of the people; in verse 16, it is a response to Joshua's words.

Verse 12, on the other hand, begins with a disjunctive construction, with three prepositional phrases intruding between the *w*w* and the (suffixed) verb. This fits the common pattern in Hebrew, whereby non-sequential material -- such as a narrator's editorial aside, an account of concomitant or previous action, or an action that is conceived of as part and parcel of that described in the preceding verb -- generally is introduced via a disjunctive construction of some type.⁵ At least two commentators have commented upon this phenomenon in v. 12, noting the introduction of significant new material here.⁶

Some question exists, however, as to the extent of the new material or the editorial aside here. That is, does the *wayyiqtl* construction in v. 16 hark back to the same construction in v. 10 (i.e., to the nearest preceding *wayyiqtl* in the narrative framework), or does it refer back to the nearest verb of any type in the narrative framework (i.e., the suffixed form in v. 12)? Put another way, are the speakers/respondents in vv. 16-18 the two-and-a-half Transjordan tribes alone (mentioned in v. 12), or do they in some way include the representatives of all twelve tribes (mentioned in v. 10)? The issue is ambiguous because the subject of the verb in v. 16 is not directly specified; thus, it could be either the Transjordan tribes or representatives of the entire nation.

Most commentators simply assume that the words in vv. 16-18 belong to the Transjordan tribes alone.⁷ If the issue is addressed at all, usually the close correspondence between Joshua's words in vv. 13-15 and the hortatory response in vv. 16-18 is noted, and the *wayyiqtl***l* of v. 16 is merely assumed to hark back to the nearest verb in the narrative framework, namely, in v. 12.⁸

However, the argument here is that the respondents in vv. 16-18 are not just the two-and-a-half Transjordan tribes, but rather representatives of the entire nation. The disjunctive verbal pattern at v. 12 signals the author's inclusion of *both* the officers of the people (v. 10) *and* the two-and-one-half tribes (v. 12) among the respondents, and the plural verb with unspecified subject in v. 16 brings both groups together in the response. Joshua's two speeches in the chapter are considered to be part and parcel of one event, with both groups responding to him in the end. This contention will be supported on the basis of syntax, parallel constructions, and context.

II. SYNTAX

A. The Narrative Framework

On the syntactical level, the solution proposed here presents itself if we see the disjunctive construction in v. 12 as a device to signal simultaneous action, which is a well-recognized feature of such disjunctions.⁹ It represents a clause of the type that Andersen calls a "paragraph-level circumstantial clause."¹⁰ This type of clause performs the function of coordination, representing two events as simultaneous or contemporaneous.

Thus, Joshua's two speeches in the chapter -- to the leaders in vv. 10-11 and to the Transjordan tribes in vv. 12-15 -- are unified into one "simultaneous" event. Then, the response to Joshua in vv. 16-18, affirming him, is that of both groups already mentioned. This understanding is possible because (among other reasons) the subject of the verb in v.

16 -- *wy`nw* "and they answered" -- is not directly specified, as we have noted. Indeed, it is the only speech verb in the narrative framework of the chapter for which the subject is not expressed in the surface structure. This singular indeterminacy functions to reinforce the lumping of Joshua's two speeches into one event and presenting the response as all Israel's response.

We can further argue the point by noting the chiasmic pattern in the words of the narrative framework that is created by the disjunctive construction in v. 12. That is, Joshua's two speeches are introduced by narrative frames that unfold in a chiasmic pattern with each other. The pattern is as follows.

V. 10: *w*w* + speech verb + speaker + hearers + *l*m*r*

V. 12: *w*w* + hearers + speech verb + speaker + *l*m*r*

V. 10: A - B - C - D - E

V. 12: A - D' - B' - C - E

The closely related nature of material bound together chiasmically has been noted by scholars.¹¹ Andersen calls it "chiasmic coordination."¹² He explains it thus:

This construction achieves the most complete integration of two clauses to represent actions of two participants as two sides of a single event. The simultaneity of the two actions is implied, and also their similarity....¹³

In Joshua 1, the chiasmic pattern serves precisely this function, presenting Joshua's two speeches as part and parcel of one event. The response in vv. 16-18, then, is the response of everyone who had been addressed in this one event, namely, both groups.

This analysis is confirmed by Robert Bergen, who explored the "fronting" of subject, object, or prepositional phrases in the narrative framework of the Pentateuch in

the course of studying one construction (w^*w plus subject plus "perfect" verb [WSP]) in depth.¹⁴ Bergen states that

narrative-framework WSP constructions were regularly employed in Biblical Hebrew storytelling as a means of indicating actions which were chronologically simultaneous with the WI [w^*w - "consecutive" plus "imperfect" verb] clauses which preceded them. Alternatively, WSP clauses could be used to portray actions which, while not precisely coterminous with the immediately preceding WI clauses, were conceived by the author as being part of a continuous event initiated in the WI clause.¹⁵

The syntax in Josh 1:12 is not "WSP," but rather w^*w plus three prepositional phrases plus suffixed (speech) verb plus subject (as noted below in more depth, Sect. III).

However, the crucial fact is the breaking of a *wayyiqtl* string, by whatever means, not by the subject *per se*. As Bergen notes,

This observation about the semantic/chronological function of WSP clauses can be demonstrated to be fully applicable to clauses initiated by a waw-plus-prepositional-phrase (WPrPh) such as the one found in Josh. 1:12a.¹⁶

B. A Note on Word Order

As is obvious, the issue at hand in the narrative framework of Josh 1:12 is bound up with the question of word order. That the verse contains an "abnormal" (i.e., disjunctive) word order is not disputed by those who address the issue. What can be disputed is the explanation for this. That is, it might be argued that the disjunction introduced in the verse signals an emphasis upon the Transjordan tribes, or performs some other function, and does not signal the simultaneity of events in two adjacent paragraphs that is argued for here.

The question of norms and divergences from norms has been addressed in most grammars. In the case of word order, probably the most prominent explanation for the reversal of the normal V-S word order in Hebrew, or for the breaking of a *wayyiqtl* string, is that this serves to emphasize the subject in some way.¹⁷

However, the notion of emphasis is frequently over-applied, mis-applied, ill-defined, or overly vague. As Muraoka has noted,

the term 'emphasis' is often too rashly called in, like a pinch-hitter in the baseball game, without much thought being given to precisely what is meant by the term nor, more importantly, to the question why the writer or speaker possibly felt the need for an emphatic form or construction. The impression is thus created that 'emphasis' is a ready panacea for Hebraists' (and Semitists') headaches of all sorts.¹⁸

Muraoka's work is a sober corrective to such imprecise application of the concept of emphasis. He notes many instances of words and word order where specific types of emphases are in view, but he also demonstrates that other explanations are better applied in many cases, including cases of disjunctive word order.

Such an inversion or breaking of the expected norm as we have in Josh 1:12 does not, in and of itself, and of necessity, signal emphasis (to use this popular explanation). Those same works¹⁹ that use the concept of emphasis to explain such constructions almost always include other possible explanations for this, as well. Perhaps the most common of these explanations is that such a construction may signal a circumstantial clause (which describes a variety of circumstances somehow related to the main action),²⁰ but this by no means exhausts the possibilities advanced. Other possibilities include contrast,²¹ anterior time,²² and creation of chiasms,²³ to mention but three.

What is relevant here is that the observation of a syntactical disjunction, on purely formal grounds, does not yield one single, incontrovertible explanation for its

interpretation. It must be further interpreted by contextual or other considerations in order to be meaningful. These signal which of several possibilities best accounts for it.

Thus, in recent years, several scholars have attempted to account with more precision for the various disjunctive or "abnormal" phenomena, rather than lumping them together into one convenient category labelled, e.g., "emphasis." Among the most detailed treatments of this sort are those already noted by Andersen,²⁴ Muraoka,²⁵ and Niccacci,²⁶ to which can be added those of Richter²⁷ and Longacre.²⁸

Among the numerous categories laid out by these (and other) scholars for classifying the various types of disjunctions, the explanation advanced here, that the disjunction in Josh 1:12 signals simultaneity, would best seem to satisfy conditions of syntax, parallel constructions, and context.²⁹

As noted above (n.), only two of the major commentators on Joshua even comment upon the disjunction in Josh 1:12. Surely, to ignore a significant syntactical signal such as this is to miss something of import in the text. Even the two commentators who note the disjunction, however, have deficiencies in their analysis of it. Boling merely assumes the continuity of vv. 12-18,³⁰ along with most scholars, and he does not address the implications of the syntax for the two questions posed at the outset. To his credit, Butler at least classifies the circumstantial clause here,³¹ but he mis-identifies it as an "episode-initial circumstantial clause." As detailed by Andersen (to whom Butler appeals), such a clause signals the beginning of a new episode, but it is *marginal* to what follows.³² This certainly cannot be said of the material in Josh 1:12-15.³³

III. PARALLEL CONSTRUCTIONS

Additional support for the understanding of Joshua 1 here comes when parallel syntactical constructions are examined. This support depends in part on the formal

characteristics of syntax, but it also is dependent on understanding the speech events in question, and so this argument is treated in its own section.

We have noted above (Sect. II.A.) that the clause in Josh 1:12 does not represent the most common type of circumstantial clause, which is of the *w*w-plus-subject-plus-suffixed-verb* type (*w*w-S-V*).³⁴ Rather, it consists of *w*w* plus three prepositional phrases plus suffixed verb plus subject. However, the important point is not that the *wayyiq̄t*l* string is broken by the subject, but that it is broken at all, by any element. As Andersen notes, "other items beside the subject can, on occasion, precede the predicator."³⁵ What is important is that a circumstantial clause can be "*any other kind of clause* which breaks the chain of WP (or WS) clauses."³⁶ This point is seconded by the quote from Joüon-Muraoka in n. , above, as well, since the salient feature of such constructions is the breaking of the *wayyiq̄t*l* string, by whatever means, and not the *w*w-S-V* word order *per se*.³⁷

The closest syntactical parallels to the clause in Josh 1:12 occur in Deuteronomy 33 (the Blessing of Moses).³⁸ There, Moses speaks to or about each of the tribes in succession, and, in the narrative framework of that chapter, the exact syntactical construction found in Josh 1:12 is also found. The poetic material is introduced in v. 2 with a simple *w*w*- "consecutive" plus prefixed (speech) verb (*wayy*mer*). The next narrative is found in v. 7, where a mixed construction is found, consisting of *w*w* plus pronoun plus prepositional phrase plus *wayy*mer* (*wz't lyhwdh wy'mr*). Thereafter, the pattern of *w*w* plus prepositional phrase plus suffixed (speech) verb is consistently followed through the rest of the chapter's narrative framework:

Deut 33:8: *wllwy 'mr*

Deut 33:12: *lbnymn 'mr*³⁹

Deut 33:13: *wlywsp 'mr*

Deut 33:18: *wlzbwln 'mr*

Deut 33:20: *wlgd 'mr*

Deut 33:22: *wldn 'mr*

Deut 33:23: *wlnptly 'mr*

Deut 33:24: *wl'Yr 'mr*

Other examples in narrative texts of the construction found in Josh 1:12 include the following:

Gen 1:5: *wyqr' 'lhym l'wr ywm wl*Yk qr' lylh*

Gen 1:10: *wyqr' 'lhym lybYh 'r* wlmqwh hmym qr' ymym*

Gen 3:14, 17:

<14> *wy'mr yhwh 'lhym 'l-hn*Y ...* <17> *wl'dm 'mr*⁴⁰

Gen 20:15, 16: <15> *wy'mr 'bymlk ...* <16> *wl*rh 'mr*

Exod 20:22, 24:1:

<20:22> *wy'mr yhwh 'l-mYh ...* <24:1> *w'l-mYh 'mr*⁴¹

Exod 24:13, 14:

<13> *wy`l mYh 'l-hr h'lhym* <14> *w'l-hzqnym 'mr*

1 Sam 25:35: *wyq* dwd mydh 't 'Yr-hby'h lw wlh 'mr*

2 Sam 19:9: *wyqm hmlk wyYb bY`r wlkl-h`m hgydw l'mr*

In each of these cases, the pattern is similar to that in Josh 1:10, 12: *w*w-* "consecutive" plus subject (plus intervening miscellaneous material), followed by *w*w* plus prepositional phrase plus suffixed speech verb.⁴² What is notable in all cases is that each set of actions is part and parcel of one event. In almost no case are the actions actually concurrent in real time (except perhaps those in 1 Sam 25:35), but in every case the actions are presented as if they were, since they are integrally related to each other.

IV. CONTEXT

A third line of support for the argument here is contextual. In arguing that Joshua's words to the two groups were part of a single event, we do not mean to imply that he spoke the words in vv. 11 and 13-15 in the same *instant* to both groups. Thus, vv. 12-15 must be understood as a lengthy aside. However, their precise chronological relationship to what precedes and follows it is irrelevant. In the mind of the author, the two events were inextricably bound up into one, causing him to use a construction that signals concomitant action.

The actual "historical" fact was likely that Joshua spoke first to the officers and then to the Transjordan tribes. However, had the author wanted, he could easily have expressed this via a normal *wayyiqtl***l* string. Since he did not, we must ask why. The answer lies in the author's desire to present Joshua's instructions to both groups as parts of a single event, and the response to Joshua as one given by the entire nation.

There is no denying the close correspondence between Joshua's words to the Transjordan tribes and the words of response, as well as the importance of the Transjordan tribes in the book of Joshua. Thus, the assumption that the respondents in vv. 16-18 are these tribes is natural enough. Many scholars have noted as well that the response echoes very closely these tribes' response to Moses already in Num 32:16-27, where they committed themselves to helping their brethren and swore loyalty to what Moses had commanded (cf. also Deut 3:18-20). Furthermore, scholars have noted the importance of Joshua's comments at the end of the book to these tribes, where he commended them for their obedience and loyalty (Josh 22:1-9).

Nevertheless, we must also note that there is no *inherent* incongruity between the words of response in vv. 16-18 and Joshua's instructions to the leaders in v. 11. The words of response are general enough to represent easily the leaders' reaction to Joshua. If the close connections between this response and the Transjordan tribes texts that we have just noted were not apparent, there should be little question that the words in vv. 16-

18 would belong to the leaders. That is, if vv. 12-15 were excised from the text, commentators would have little trouble in seeing the response of vv. 16-18 as having come from the leaders mentioned in v. 10, responding to Joshua's words in v. 11. Neither the contents of vv. 16-18 nor the syntax of the verbs in the narrative framework *demand* that the respondents be the Transjordan tribes alone.

In fact, it can be argued -- from the perspective of the book's message -- that this response *must* have come from both groups. This is because, otherwise, we would have no record of any response to Joshua's words in v. 11, nor any affirmation of him as Israel's leader by representatives of all Israel. Seeing the words in vv. 16-18 as coming from both groups, including representatives of the entire nation, places Joshua (the man) on sound footing as Israel's leader, since he has been affirmed by all the people.

As presented in the book, Joshua is a worthy successor to Moses, Israel's great leader and law-giver (although no one could completely replace Moses). He had proven his worth earlier by being one of two spies (out of 12) who counseled entering the land of Canaan despite seemingly prohibitive odds (Numbers 13-14). Now he was called by YHWH to function as Moses' successor (Josh 1:1-9). The book is clear that YHWH was with him, and that he enjoyed the same stature that Moses did (1:5, 9, 16-18; 3:7; 4:14; 6:27; 10:14; 11:15, 23). He appears throughout the book speaking and acting with authority, and he is as eloquent as Moses in his farewell speeches (chaps 22-24).

Yet, at the outset of the book, all of this is not so clear. He is merely "Moses' aide" in 1:1 (*mʾrt mʾh*), whereas Moses appears here (1:1, 2, 13) and throughout (8:31, 33; 9:24; 11:12, 15; 12:6; 13:8; 14:7; 18:7; 22:2, 4, 5) in a much more exalted role, as the "servant of YHWH" (*ʿbd yhwh*). One of the book's subthemes is to trace Joshua's rise, his growing into the job, such that, by the end of the book, he too can be called the "servant of YHWH" (24:29). Joshua rises to a stature similar to Moses' by the end: he is the undisputed leader of the people, he addresses them in hortatory addresses reminiscent

of Moses' (chaps 22-23), and he even leads them in covenant renewal (chap 24). This rise in stature is signalled at the beginning of the book by his affirmation as leader, not by a small portion of the nation, but by representatives of the entire nation.

It would appear, then, that the close correspondences between the texts dealing with the Transjordan tribes and the response in Josh 1:16-18 has prevented scholars from considering the more likely solution, that the response represents both groups mentioned in the chapter, a solution supported contextually on the level of the chapter as well as the level of the book.

V. CONCLUSION

We conclude, then, that Joshua's first two speeches in the book were part of one event, and that the people's response to him was given by representatives of all Israel, not just the Transjordan tribes. Considerations of syntax, parallel constructions, and context all point in this direction. The implications of this for assessment of Joshua's role as Moses' worthy successor have been hinted at above, but they remain to be explored in further depth.

ENDNOTES

** I have profited in this essay from discussions with Professors Robert Bergen, Mark Hillmer, Anson Rainey, and John Sailhamer, and Dr. Trent Butler. None should be held responsible for any deficiencies herein, nor for necessarily agreeing with every point made, but each contributed in helpful ways to the topic at hand.

¹. The term "cohesion" is used here in order to echo the title of the influential work by M. A. K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, *Cohesion in English* (London: Longman, 1976), which explores literary relations in a text above the sentence level.

². For entrée into the field, see Walter R. Bodine, "Linguistics and Philology in the Study of Ancient Near Eastern Languages," pp. 39-54 in D. M. Golomb, ed., *Working With No Data': Semitic and Egyptian Studies Presented to Thomas O. Lambdin* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), especially pp. 51-54.

³. The term is inadequate, but it is used here for convenience. Waltke and O'Connor use the better term "w*w-relative" (Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990], 477 and *passim*).

⁴. In v. 1, there are actually two *wayyiqṭ*ls*: *wayehî* and *wayy*mer*. The first is part of the chapter's time margin; the second is the relevant one here, in terms of the string of *wayyiqṭ*l* speech verbs introducing discourse.

⁵. S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of Tenses in Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1892), 195-211; Francis I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 77-91; Waltke-O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, 650-52. See also the works in n. below.

[0]⁶. Robert G. Boling and G. Ernest Wright, *Joshua*, AB 6 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982), 126; Trent C. Butler, *Joshua*, WBC 7 (Waco: Word, 1983), 18-19.

⁷. Marten H. Woudstra (*The Book of Joshua*, NICOT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981], 66, n. 9) mentions two who see the respondents as being the twelve tribes -- A. Gelin (*Josué. La Sainte Bible*. Paris, 1955) and J. Steinmann (*Josué. Connaître la Bible*. Bruges, 1960) -- but he does not give their reasoning; these works are inaccessible to me.

⁸. E.g., Boling, *Joshua*, 126-28; Butler, *Joshua*, 18-23; J. Alberto Soggin, *Joshua*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 212; John Gray, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*, NCBC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 61-62; C. J. Goslinga, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*, Bible Student's Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 39-42.

[0]⁹. "Wayyiqtol is also avoided if the 2nd action is **simultaneous** or represented as such" (Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* [Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991], §118f; cf. also §§166d, h, on simultaneity in temporal clauses). See also Driver, *Syntax*, 195; A. B. Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901), §137; T. Muraoka, *Emphatic Words and Structures in Biblical Hebrew* (Jerusalem: Magnes; Leiden: Brill, 1985), 33-34, 36-37; Alviero Niccacci, *The Syntax of the Verb in Classical Hebrew Prose*, trans. W. G. E. Watson (*JSOTSup* 86; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 63-64.

¹⁰. Andersen, *Sentence*, 65-66.

¹¹. Andersen, *Sentence*, 120-21; Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 36-37; Joüon-Muraoka, *Grammar*, §118f.

¹². Andersen, *Sentence*, 67-68.

¹³. Andersen, *Sentence*, 67.

¹⁴. Robert D. Bergen, *Varieties and Functions of Hebrew waw-Plus-Subject-Plus-Perfect Sentence Constructions in the Narrative Framework of the Pentateuch* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1986).

¹⁵. Bergen, private communication, November 1, 1989.

¹⁶. Bergen, private communication, November 1, 1989.

[0]¹⁷. Driver, *Tenses*, 200-1; Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax*, §107.1; §110; *GKC*, §142f; J. Wash Watts, *A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 25-26; R. J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1976), §573; Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 32-33; Niccacci, *Syntax*, §48.

¹⁸. Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, xi.

¹⁹. See n. .

²⁰. Driver, *Tenses*, 195-211; Davidson, *Syntax*, §137; *GKC*, §142d; Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §573; Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 33-34; Niccacci, *Syntax*, §§40, 43.

²¹. Driver, *Syntax*, 196-97; Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §573; Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 33; Niccacci, *Syntax*, §42.

²². Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax*, §39c; *GKC*, §142b; Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §573; Niccacci, *Syntax*, §40.

²³. *GKC*, §142f, n. 1; Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 36-37.

²⁴. Andersen, *Sentence*.

²⁵. Muraoka, *Emphatic Words* (especially pp. 1-46, on word order).

²⁶. Niccacci, *Syntax*.

²⁷. Wolfgang Richter, *Grundlagen einer althebräischen Grammatik*, 3 vols., Münchener Universitätsschriften: Arbeiten zu Text Sprache im Alten Testament 8, 10, 13 (St. Ottilien: EOS, 1978-1980), especially volume 3.

²⁸. Robert E. Longacre, *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence: A Text Theoretical and Textlinguistic Analysis of Genesis 37 and 39-48* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1989).

²⁹. A recent discordant note about ways of explaining the disjunctions under consideration here has been sounded forcefully by Nicholas A. Bailey and Stephen H. Levinsohn, in an essay entitled "The Function of Preverbal Elements in Independent Clauses in the Hebrew Narrative of Genesis" (*Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 5 [1992], 179-207). Bailey and Levinsohn argue that fronting of any given element to a pre-verbal position performs one of only *two* functions, that of "focusing" or of "topicalizing" that element. They use "focus" as an informal term for "highlight" or "emphasis" (179, n. 3). They do not define "topic" *per se*, but it appears in the phrase (borrowed from A. Andrews) "topic-comment articulation," where a propositional topic is introduced, and a comment is made about it. Bailey and Levinsohn disagree especially vigorously with the multiple categories introduced by Andersen and Longacre.

No in-depth rebuttal can be made here except to note the following. First, Longacre has responded in some detail in the same issue of that journal ("The Analysis of Preverbal Nouns in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: Some Overriding Concerns," *JOTT* 5 [1992], 208-23). Second, we should note that, as soon as Bailey and Levinsohn introduce two different explanations for pre-verbal fronting of elements ("topic" and "focus"), they have opened the door to the necessity of using some criteria besides the strictly formal level of syntax in making judgments. There is no difference in kind between what they propose and what

Andersen, Longacre, and others propose, except that the number of categories may be larger for others. In all cases, other criteria must also play a role in the interpretation.

³⁰. Boling, *Joshua*, 126.

³¹. Butler, *Joshua*, 18-19.

³². Andersen, *Sentence*, 78-80.

³³. Intriguingly, Butler speaks of the clause as "contemporaneous to the preceding [clause]" (p. 19), which would point toward the interpretation in this essay, but he does not pursue the implications of this. In any case, Andersen does not speak of the "contemporaneous" function in connection with the "episode-initial circumstantial clause," but rather with the paragraph-level circumstantial clause or the chiasmic coordination mentioned above (Andersen, *Sentence*, 65-68).

³⁴. This is the type cited in a large number -- but not all -- of the examples given in the works in n. .

³⁵. Andersen, *Sentence*, 78.

³⁶. Andersen, *Sentence*, 77 (emphasis added).

³⁷. The exception to this is any negated clause of the *wel*'* plus suffixed or prefixed verb variety; negated circumstantial clauses must have some item besides *wel*'* inserted between the *w*w* and the verb (Andersen, *Sentence*, 78).

³⁸. I am indebted to Robert Bergen for this observation, as well as most of the references in the following paragraph.

³⁹. Strong textual evidence argues for addition of *w*w* here (*wlbnymn 'mr*): Targum, Samaritan Pentateuch, Old Greek, Syriac, Vulgate.

⁴⁰. YHWH's speech to Adam introduced in 3:17 is part of a string that begins in 3:14, where YHWH's speech to the serpent is introduced in the normal way: *wy'mr yhw h'lhym 'l-hn*ʔ*. The sequence is continued in v. 16, with YHWH's speech to Eve, in 3:16. In the MT, this speech is introduced with *'l-h'ʔh 'mr* (with no *w*w*), but this is probably just a textual problem; in the Samaritan Pentateuch, Old Greek, Syriac, and Vulgate versions, the reading includes the conjunction -- *w'l-h'ʔh 'mr* -- thus yielding an additional case of the pattern under discussion here.

⁴¹. The two parts of the narrative framework here are at a farther remove from each other than in the other examples, but the pattern nevertheless holds. The intervening material (Exod 20:22b-23:33) consists entirely of YHWH's words to Moses.

⁴². The two examples from Genesis 1 are least like the example in Joshua 1. All the others are in a true narrative framework, introducing discourse.

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