

THE AI-ACHAN STORY (JOSHUA 7-8) ACCORDING TO JOSEPHUS

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The interwoven narrative of Achan's theft and Ai's fate told in Joshua 7:1-8:29 poses a variety of text-critical, literary, and moral/theological difficulties for modern readers.¹ This paper investigates how an ancient learned reader, Josephus, dealt with the story's perceived problems in his retelling of it in *Antiquitates Judaicae* (*Ant.*) 5.33-48.²

¹ On this last category of problems posed by the story, see R.E. Clements, "Achan's Sin: Warfare and Holiness," in *Shall Not the Judge of All the Earth Do What Is Right? Studies on the Nature of God in Tribute to James L. Crenshaw*, eds. D. Penchansky and P.L. Redditt (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 113-26.

² For the text and translation of the works of Josephus, I have used H. St. J. Thackeray, R. Marcus, A. Wikgren and L.H. Feldman, eds., *Josephus* (LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1926-1965). *Ant.* 5.33-48 is found in vol. V, 17-23 where the translation and notes are by Marcus. I have likewise consulted the text and apparatus for *Ant.* 5.33-48 in B. Niese, *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, II, 2d ed. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1955), 298-300; and the text and annotated translation of E. Nodet, *Flavius Josèphe II: Les Antiquités Juives Livres, IV et V* (Paris: Cerf, 1995), 122-26. On Josephus' overall treatment of the protagonist of Joshua 7-8, see L.H. Feldman, *Josephus' Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 443-60.

Prior to the proposed investigation a word does need to be said about the text-form(s) of Joshua 7-8 and their utilization by Josephus. As is well known, the text of these chapters found in the MT (as well, e.g., in the Vulgate and Targum Jonathan) is considerably more expansive than that preserved in *Codex Vaticanus* (B)³ and the *Vetus Latina* (VL)⁴, while 4QJosh^{a5} offers a (quite fragmentary) text whose degree of expansiveness stands somewhere in between.⁶ Josephus' affinities are in most instances clearly more with the text of B and VL than with MT. Thus, e.g., he uses "Achar" as compared to "Achan" in the MT, just as he lacks many of the same MT additions as does B (e.g., mention of the ark in 7:6 and the stoning/burning of Achan's household reported in 7:25b).⁷ This finding is worthy of note given the general consensus that for the Book of Joshua Josephus made primary use of a MT-like text.⁸ In

³ For B I have used A.E. Brooke and N. Maclean, eds., *The Old Testament in Greek According to the Text of Codex Vaticanus, I.IV: Joshua, Judges and Ruth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1917). I have also consulted the translation of B Joshua 7:1-8:29 by J. Moatti-Fine, *La Bible d'Alexandrie, 6: Jésus (Josué)* (Paris: Cerf, 1996), 128-38. The notes to this translation contain numerous references to Josephus' version.

⁴ For the VL text of Joshua 7-8 I have used U. Robert, ed., *Heptateuchi Partis Posterioris Versio Latina Antiquissima e Codice Lugdunensi* (Lyon: Rey & C^{ie}, 1900), 63-67.

⁵ For the text of Joshua 7:1-8:29 preserved in this MS, see E. Ulrich et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4, IX. Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings* (DJD XIV; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 149-50.

⁶ For more on the text-critical problem posed by the differences among the witnesses for the Book of Joshua overall, see L. Greenspoon, "The Qumran Fragments of Joshua: Which Puzzle Are They Part of and Where Do They Fit?" in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings*, ed. G. Brooke, *Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 33 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1990), 157-94; L. Mazar, "The Septuagint Translation of the Book of Joshua," *BIOSCS* 27 (1994): 29-38; A.G. Auld, "Joshua: The Hebrew and Greek Texts," in *Joshua Retold: Synoptic Perspectives* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 7-18; E. Noort, *Das Buch Josua: Forschungsgeschichte und Problemfelder* (Erträge der Forschung 292; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1998), 46-59.

⁷ It should, however, be noted here that indications of Josephus' familiarity also with a MT-like text of Joshua 7-8 are not completely lacking. His reference (Ant. 5.33), e.g., to Achar's "digging a deep hole in his tent" wherein he conceals the stolen goods corresponds to wording ("they [the objects] are hidden in the earth inside my tent") in MT 7:21 to which B has no equivalent. See also Ant. 5.43b-44a in comparison with 7:16-18 and Nodet's comment thereon, *Flavius Josèphe II*, 125, n. 3.

⁸ On the point, see, e.g., A. Mez, *Die Bibel des Josephus: Untersucht für Buch V-VII der Archäologie* (Basel: Jaeger & Kober, 1895), 79-80; Feldman, *Interpretation*, 30; Nodet, *Flavius Josèphe II*, xiii.

the case of Joshua 7:1-8:29 at least, it would seem that Josephus was working with a text-type closer to B.

The relevant material can be divided up into eight parallel segments: (1) The Crime (Josh. 7:1// *Ant.* 5-33[34]); (2) Initial Defeat (Josh. 7:2-5a// *Ant.* 5.35); (3) Double Reaction (Josh. 7:5b-9// *Ant.* 5.36-41); (4) God's Response (Josh. 7:10-15// *Ant.* 5.42); (5) Culprit Exposed (Josh. 7:16-23// *Ant.* 5.43-44b); (6) Culprit(s) Punished (Josh. 7:24-26// *Ant.* 5.44c); (7) Ambush(es) Set (Josh. 8:1-13// *Ant.* 5.45a); (8) Victory & Sequels (Josh. 8:14-28// *Ant.* 5.45b-48).

The Crime

The Bible sets up the whole following sequence of events with its notice on an act of sacrilege involving the "devoted things" captured at Jericho (Josh. 7:1). Josephus follows suit in *Ant.* 5.33, but leaves aside, both the opening accusation against "the people of Israel" as a whole and the closing mention of the Lord's anger.⁹ In place thereof, anticipating the words of Achan's confession as cited in Joshua 7:21, the historian, already here, specifies the objects purloined by Achar¹⁰ and their burial by him in his tent. At the same time, he also greatly expands the brief allusion ("I [Achar] coveted them") of 7:21 to the motivation(s) behind the culprit's deed. He does so with mention of Achar's "... thinking it cruel that he should deprive himself of the enjoyment of lucre, which he had won at his own peril, and bring and offer it to God... thinking to elude alike his comrades in arms and withal the eyes of God."¹¹

Josephus rounds off his parallel to Joshua 7:1 (plus 7:21) with a parenthetical notice (*Ant.* 5.34) which he has "held over" from Joshua 4:19 on "Galgala" (so B; MT Gilgal) as the site of Israel's camp once it crossed the Jordan. To this he appends an etymological comment on the

⁹ See further n. 24. Joshua 7:1 gives the names of Achan's father ("Carmi"), grandfather ("Zabdi"), and great-grandfather ("Zerah"). Of these ancestral names, Josephus has an equivalent ("Zebedee") only for the second; see Nodet, *Flavius Josephus II*, 122*-23, n. 7.

¹⁰ In Joshua 7:21 three such objects are cited (RSV: "a beautiful mantle from Shinar, and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels"). Josephus' version ("a royal mantle all woven of gold and a mass of gold of the weight of two hundred shekels") seems to conflate the second and third of these items.

¹¹ On such enhanced "psychologizing" as a hallmark of Josephus' retelling of Biblical narratives, see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 197-204.

site's name as meaning "freedom" (ἐλευθέριον).¹² This comment represents his version of the etymology supplied in Joshua 5:9 according to which the name "Gilgal" alludes to the fact that God there "rolled away" (Hebrew *galal*) the reproach of Egypt from the people.¹³

Initial Defeat

Joshua 7:2-5a tells of Israel's first, failed attempt to capture Ai (B Γαί).¹⁴ Josephus' parallel in *Ant.* 5.35 focus on Joshua by omitting any mention of the spies sent out by him and their ill-conceived suggestion that only a part of Israel's army need to be sent against the city, given small number of its inhabitants (7:2-3).¹⁵ Josephus lacks an equivalent to the detailed indications about the pursuit of the defeated Israelites given in 7:5aβ. On the other hand, he expands the Bible's account of the Ai debacle with the opening chronological notice that this "took place a few days after the fall of Jericho." Thereby, he makes an explicit connection as well as a contrast between the two events. He likewise supplies alternative localization of the recalcitrant city, situating it "above Jericho" instead of "near Bethaven (absent in B and VL), east of Bethel" (7:2).

Double Reaction

The Bible relates in turn the reactions of the people (7:5b) and Joshua himself (7:6-9) to their defeat. Of the people's response, 7:5b merely comments metaphorically that their "hearts melted and became like water." For this brief image, Josephus substitutes two extended paragraphs (*Ant.* 5.36-37); in which he first speaks of the "great grief and dire despondency" that news of the defeat had aroused among Israelites (*Ant.* 5.36a). He then goes on to provide a motivation for this

¹² On the theme of "freedom" in *Ant.* overall, see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 148.

¹³ Joshua 5:9 represents the conclusion of the Biblical account of Joshua's circumcising the Israelites at Gilgal in 5:2-9, a narrative to which Josephus has no equivalent.

¹⁴ In *Josephus* the city is called Ναῖα. On the derivation of this Greek form, see Marcus, *Josephus*, V, 18-19, n. a.

¹⁵ Josephus' omission of the spies' role may have been prompted by the "contradiction" between their claim about the "fewness" of the inhabitants in 7:3, and the notice that its total population consisted of no less than twelve thousand people in 8:25. The disparity here reflects poorly on Israel's intelligence service (and on Joshua's own military judgment in giving immediate, unquestioned credibility to the spies' report).

reaction both negatively and positively: this was not, in the first place, due to the death of their "valiant and worthy"¹⁶ kinsmen (*Ant.* 5.36b); rather, their response reflected their "utter despair" at finding, contrary to their presumptuous expectations, that the enemy still had the capacity to fight and do them harm (*Ant.* 5.37a). To these psychologizing remarks, the historian further attaches a notice (*Ant.* 5.37b) on the various mourning practices undertaken by the despondent people (wearing sackcloth, weeping, fasting).¹⁷ Finally, he rounds off the whole sequence with the editorial comment that the people "in their vexation unduly magnified what had happened." This comment serves to set up a contrast between the people's excessive grief and Joshua's more measured response (see below). It is in line as well with Josephus' generally unfavorable portrayal of the ways of "the crowd."¹⁸

In contrast to its very brief allusion to the people's reaction to the Ai debacle, the Bible relates Joshua's own response at length (7:6-9). Josephus, too, gives considerable attention to the leader's initial response. At the same time, the historian does not hesitate to deal quite freely with the source's presentation of the matter. Thus, whereas 7:6 relates a series of penitential initiatives undertaken by Joshua and the elders (rending their clothes, prostration, putting dust on their heads),¹⁹ Josephus – who has already attributed a like series of measures to the people as a whole – makes no mention of these at this juncture. Rather, he introduces the following speech of Joshua with a statement concerning the motivation for and character of the leader's words: "Seeing his army thus cast down

¹⁶ The Bible itself provides no such characterization of the thirty-six slain Israelites cited in Joshua 7:5a. Josephus' indication on the matter does, however, have parallels in Rabbinic literature where the thirty-six are qualified as "righteous", and/or the figure of thirty-six casualties is explained as a reference to the loss of Jair, the son of Manasseh, who was equal in worth to the majority of the 71-man Sanhedrin. For references, see L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 6 vols. (rpt.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1987), 4.8; 6.175, n. 23.

¹⁷ Josephus may have found his inspiration for attributing these actions to the Israelites here in another Biblical account of the people's response to a painfully unexpected defeat, i.e. that of the Israelites at the hands of the Benjaminites in Judges 20; see v. 26 where the defeated Israelites "weep" and "fast" before the Lord. On the Josephan version of Judges 20-21 in *Ant.* 5.150-174, see C.T. Begg, "Josephus' Account of the Benjaminite War," *Liber Annuus* 48 (1998): 273-304.

¹⁸ On this feature of *Ant.* – which, of course, is widely paralleled in Greco-Roman literature – see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 145-47.

¹⁹ In MT 7:6 these actions take place "before the ark of the Lord"; B and VL lack mention of the ark. In *Ant.* 5.42 Josephus will make delayed use of Joshua's "prostration" as cited in 7:6.

and a prey to gloomy forebodings concerning the whole campaign, Joshua frankly (παρησιῶν)²⁰ appealed to God." Contrary to his frequent practice, Josephus reproduces the direct discourse of Joshua's prayer cited in 7:7-9.²¹ On the other hand, he significantly modifies the content and tone of the leader's words, making them both less accusatory and more purposeful. In 7:7 the Biblical Joshua commences his address to the Deity with a sharply worded question: why God transported the people²² over Jordan to destroy them at the hands of the Amorites. Josephus has him begin rather with an extended retrospective (*Ant.* 5. 39-40a) Joshua reminds God that the people had not undertaken the conquest of the land on their own initiative but they had done so at the urging of Moses. To Moses the Deity, in turn, had repeatedly promised success; and this promise has indeed been partially realized. The core of Joshua's Scriptural prayer is a statement of bewildered exasperation: "O Lord, what can I say, when Israel has turned their backs before their enemies!" (7:8) His Josephan counterpart is much more articulate regarding Israel's current state: "... but now, having lost some of our force, we are distressed at these things, which make thy promises and those predictions of Moses appear unsure; and yet more sorely are we pained at what the future holds in store, having met such an issue in our first assault" (*Ant.* 5.40bc). In the Biblical text Joshua's prayer ends (7: 9) with the seemingly overwrought assertion that Israel, who has lost "merely" thirty-six men in the preceding battle is now facing annihilation by its enemies. This assertion leads into a provocative question, "what will thou [God] do for thy great name?" Josephus turns this negative ending of Joshua's prayer into an explicit appeal which is permeated by the ingratiating acknowledgement that God can indeed do what he is being asked (*Ant.* 5.41). It reads: "But do, thou, Lord,²³ since thou hast the power to find healing for these ills, dispel our present affliction by

²⁰ Also other ancient Jewish documents underscore the intensity, even the "insolence," of Joshua's dealings with the Deity on the occasion of the Ai-defeat; for references, see L.H. Feldman, "Prolegomenon," in M.R. James, *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo* (rpt.; New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1971), cvii.

²¹ On the historian's tendency to substitute indirect discourse for Biblical direct discourse, see C.T. Begg, *Josephus' Account of the Early Divided Monarchy* (*AJ* 8,212-420), BETL 108 (Leuven: Leuven University Press/ Peeters, 1993), 10-11, n. 32 and the literature cited there. See also n. 26.

²² So MT; in B and VL 7:7 the subject is "thy servant," i.e. Joshua himself.

²³ "Lord" here is δέσποτε. On Josephus' virtually complete avoidance of the term κύριος (used, e.g., in B 7:7) as a divine title, see Begg, *Josephus' Account*, 45, n. 218.

vouchsafing us victory and thus banish from our mind our deep dispondency concerning the future."

God's Response

God responds to Joshua's preceding prayer at length in Joshua 7: 10-15. Here too, Josephus (*Ant.* 5.42) drastically abbreviates the original narrative. He introduces his rendering of this with a notice which serves to round off the words of the leader's prayer in *Ant.* 5.39-41: "Thus did Joshua, prostrated upon his face,²⁴ make petition to God." In Joshua 7: 10-12 God, having commanded Joshua to "arise" (v. 10), first delivers an extended, six-part accusation against Israel (v. 11). This denunciation provides an explanation for her recent defeat (v. 12a), and the basis for the conditional divine threat to the people's future, should they fail to deal appropriately with the offense that has been committed (v. 12b). In *Ant.* 5.42bc Josephus has God pronounce a shortened, more positive version of this sequence, in which the transgression is nowhere attributed to Israel as a whole (compare Josh. 7:11a).²⁵ It runs: "And the response came from God that he²⁶ should arise (compare Josh. 7:10)²⁷ and purge the army of the pollution that had been wrought therein²⁸ and of a daring theft of objects devoted to Him,²⁹ since that was the cause of their recent

²⁴ With this indication about Joshua's "prayer posture," Josephus makes delayed use of an item found in Joshua 7:6 in the introduction to the leader's words; see n. 18.

²⁵ This modification is in accord with Josephus' handling of Joshua 7:1 whose references to Israel's "breaking faith" and the Lord's resultant "anger" against the Israelites he passes over in *Ant.* 5.33 where the crime is ascribed to Achar alone; see above.

²⁶ Note that here, in contrast to his procedure with regard to Joshua's speech of 7: 7-9 in *Ant.* 5.39-40, Josephus recasts the Biblical Deity's direct discourse as indirect. See n. 21.

²⁷ From God's opening word to Joshua in 7:10 Josephus leaves aside the Deity's appended question "why have you thus fallen upon your face?" which might appear both otiose – given Joshua's preceding words which have made quite clear the reason for his supplicatory posture – and suggestive of limits on the divine omniscience.

²⁸ The divine response in 7:10-15 lacks such an explicit injunction about a "purging" of the stolen objects; see, however, the Deity's double allusion to the necessity of their removal if Israel is ever to be able to stand against its enemies in 7:12b,13b.

²⁹ Compare God's triple charge against Israel as cited in Joshua 7:11: "they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen...and put them among their own stuff." Of the six divine accusations in 7:11 Josephus omits the first two ("Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant") and the fifth ("they have lied"). On the historian's avoidance of the key LXX term διαθήκη in the meaning of "covenant" (so, e.g., in 7:11), see Begg, *Josephus' Account*, 100-101, n. 609.

defeat (cf. Josh. 7:12a).³⁰ But were the culprit sought out and punished,³¹ they would be for ever assured of victory (νική)³² over their enemies (cf. Josh. 7:12b)."³³

In Joshua 7:13-15 God issues a series of detailed directives on how Joshua is to go about identifying and then requiting the transgressor; the wording of which recurs, largely verbatim, in the account of their execution by Joshua in 7:16-26. Here again reducing the Deity's role in the proceedings (on this point see n. 74) – as well as avoiding the source's verbal repetitions – Josephus passes over the content of 7:13-15 (cf., however, n. 31). In its place, he rounds off, at the end of *Ant.* 5.42, God's communication to Joshua with mention of the latter's "repeating all this to the people."³⁴

³⁰ This item represents Josephus' (condensed) version of God's words as cited in Joshua 7:12a: "Therefore the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become a thing for destruction."

³¹ The reference here is to Achar whose crime has been recounted in *Ant.* 5.33 (= Josh. 7:1,21). In the Biblical version of God's word to Joshua in Joshua 7:10-12 which Josephus is drawing on here in *Ant.* 5.42, all attention goes to the offense perpetrated by Israel as a whole, Achan not being singled out in any way. With the above words the historian makes allusive, compressed use of the extended sequence of Joshua 7:13-15 – not as such reproduced by him (see below) – in which the Deity gives Joshua elaborate directives for seeking out and punishing the guilty party. The effect of this modification is to magnify the stature of Joshua – God leaves it up to him to determine procedures to be followed in finding out and punishing the culprit, rather than spelling these out in detail for him.

³² Via the use of the above term, God signifies his (conditional) readiness to grant Joshua's petition as voiced in *Ant.* 5.41: "(dispel our present affliction) by vouchsafing us victory (νική)...".

³³ With this positive promise concluding the Deity's word to Joshua, compare the negative formulation used by God in the threat of Joshua 7:12b: "I will be with you no more (unless you destroy the devoted things among you)." In this respect, Josephus' Deity appears more responsive and encouraging *vis-à-vis* Joshua's appeal than does his Biblical counterpart.

³⁴ This notice might be seen as Joshua's execution of the command given him by God in Joshua 7:13 (this duplicate the language of the Deity's statements to Joshua in 7:11-12) about what he is to say to the people: "There are devoted things in the midst of you. O Israel, you cannot stand before your enemies, until you take away the devoted things among you." Here too, Josephus takes care to avoid the source's verbal repetitions.

Culprit Exposed

Joshua 7:16-18, echoing God's directives in 7:14, relates the elaborate process of elimination which finally eventuates in Achan's being taken.³⁵ Josephus prefaces the actual process with an inserted mention of Joshua's summoning "Eleazar the high priest"³⁶ and the magistrates (οἱ ἐν τέλει)... (Ant. 5.43a)³⁷ Whereas the Bible nowhere uses the terms "lots" or "cast lots" as such in connection with the proceedings, Josephus clarifies the matter with his opening reference to Joshua's "drawing lots" (ἐκλήρου).³⁸ The historian then goes on to relate a four-stage process which moves from tribe to clan, to family, and to the guilty individual (Ant. 5.43b-44). In this respect, his presentation for once stands closer to that of MT than to B or VL, in that the second of these four stages is not mentioned; see nn. 7, 35. On the other hand, he has no equivalent to the proper names used by the MT in connection with the second (the Zerahites) and third (Zabdi) stages.³⁹

The second act of the inquiry process, as recorded in Joshua 7:19-23, involves an exhortation addressed by Joshua to Achan (7:19) and the latter's confession (7:20-21). The culprit's confession (7:20-21) is confirmed when the stolen items are recovered by messengers dispatched by Joshua (7:22-23). Josephus replaces Joshua's opening appeal to the culprit and his dispatch of messengers to Achan's tent with a self-

³⁵ B and VL are much shorter than MT here. They lack all but the opening and closing words of v. 17, passing over the intervening mention of the "bringing near" and "taking" of the family of the Zerahites within the tribe of Judah.

³⁶ In its version of Joshua 7-8 the "Samaritan Chronicle No II" likewise makes explicit mention of Eleazar's presence at the proceedings related in Joshua 7:15-18; see J. MacDonald, *The Samaritan Chronicle No. II (or Sepher Ha-Yamim) from Joshua to Nebuchadnezzar* (BZAW 107; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1969), 84. Compare P.R.E. 38 which speaks of Joshua's examining the stones on the breastplate of the (unnamed) high-priest on this occasion, the guilty tribe of Judah being disclosed by the fact that its stone, unlike those of all the others, failed to shine. *Los capítulos de Rabbí Eliezer*, trans. M. Perez Fernandez (Biblioteca Midrásica 1; Valencia: Institución San Jerónimo, 1984), 270.

³⁷ As Feldman, *Interpretation*, 452-53 points out, Josephus repeatedly interjects such mentions of Joshua's associating Eleazar and Israel's civil leaders with the initiatives taken by him. Feldman sees this feature as serving to accentuate the piety of Joshua.

³⁸ The same specification is found in a number of Rabbinic sources, in that God refuses to simply disclose the identity of the culprit to Joshua, but instruct him to employ the lot-casting procedure for this purpose. See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 4.8; 6.176, n. 27.

³⁹ Recall that in Ant. 5.33 Josephus limits his genealogy of Achar to mention of his father Zebedee (in Josh. 7:1 Zabdi is rather the grandfather of Achan).

incriminating presentation wherein Achor takes the initiative both in acknowledging his own transgression and providing the evidence against himself. It reads: "And he, unable to make denial, being thus shrewdly circumvented by God,⁴⁰ avowed his theft⁴¹ and produced the stolen goods before all." (*Ant.* 5.44b)⁴²

Culprit Punished

MT Joshua 7:24-26 tells in considerable detail of the punishment of the culprit subsequent to his "discovery": transfer of Achan, his household and the stolen objects (no equivalent in B) to the Valley of Achor (v. 24); Joshua's final words to Achan plays on the term "trouble" (Hebrew *'akar*; v. 25a); stoning of Achan, along with the burning and stoning of his household (v. 25b; no equivalent in B and VL),⁴³ erection of a (still existent) stone heap (v. 26aα); God's relenting from his anger (v. 26aβ; cf. 7:1b); and the naming of the execution site as the Valley of Achor (v. 26b). Josephus compresses this entire sequence into a two-part notice (*Ant.* 5.44c): "He (Achar) was straightway put to death⁴⁴ and

⁴⁰ By contrast, other ancient Jewish writings represent Achan as contesting the fairness of the lots-device and urging that a person's guilt can, by the law of Moses, only be established on the testimony of two witnesses. In the face of this challenge, Joshua, in his concern with upholding the legitimacy of the lot-casting practice, pleads with Achan to confess his crime. The later only doing so, however, when he sees the members of his tribe (Judah) assaulting the other tribes on his behalf. For references, see Ginzberg, *Legends*, 4.8-9; 6.176, nn. 29-30. In comparison with these midrashic developments (and the Bible's own presentation) Josephus' culprit – who needs no prompting by Joshua to confess – appears more cooperative and resigned to the fact that he has indeed been found out; see further n. 42.

⁴¹ In Joshua 7:21 Achan recounts what he took, why he did this, and his concealing of the stolen articles. Josephus' limiting himself to the fact of Achar's confession here accords with the fact that he has already anticipated the content of the culprit's words at the beginning of his account in *Ant.* 5.33; see above.

⁴² Josephus thus says nothing of the messengers whom Joshua dispatches to retrieve the stolen items in 7:22-23. The effect is, once again (see n. 40), to accentuate the culprit's readiness to cooperate with the investigation: rather than leaving it to others to fetch the incriminating articles from his tent, he does this himself.

⁴³ So MT; recall that in B and VL the punishing of Achan's household is not mentioned.

⁴⁴ Joshua 7:25bα specifies that Achan was *stoned* to death by "all Israel"; Josephus leaves the manner of the culprit's death unspecified, perhaps reflecting that to have the entire community cast stones at Achan would seem like an egregious instance of "overkill" which, as such, can hardly be visualized. Cf. further the suggestion of Nodet, *Flavius Josephus II*, 125*, n. 5 that in leaving the manner of Achar's execution indeterminate, Josephus avoids having to choose between the two modes of punishment cited in (MT)

at nightfall was given the ignominious (ἄτιμος) burial proper to the condemned."⁴⁵ Josephus thus has no equivalent to most of the items making up the above three verses. What accounts for his omission of this material? The etymological explanations concerning the "Valley of Trouble" in verses 24, 25a and 26b (as well as the related mention of the stone heap at the site, v. 26aα) might appear extraneous and secondary *vis-à-vis* the story's narrative thrust.⁴⁶ Also conspicuous among Josephus omissions is any mention of the culprit's household. In this regard, he stands in the line with B and VL which, as mentioned above, lack MT's notices (v. 25bβ) on the household's being "burned" and "stoned," subsequent to Achan's own stoning. The historian goes further in the same line, likewise passing over the preceding mention of the household's being taken to the Valley of Achor found in all witnesses of v. 24.⁴⁷ Thus, in his presentation, the culprit's household simply disappears from the account of Achar's punishment wherein all attention goes to the culprit's personal fate. Thereby, Josephus neatly eliminates the problem posed by the MT narrative, namely the household's execution, seems to involve a violation of the prescription of Deuteronomy 24:16 (compare Josephus' own version of this passage in *Ant.* 4.289), which forbids a

7:25, i.e. stoning and burning. In any event, however, the reason for Josephus' failure to speak specifically of Achar's being "stoned" remains something of his puzzle since in *Ant.* 4.262 (cf. 4.265) – to which he will make allusion immediately hereafter in connection with the culprit's burial (see n. 45) – that mode of execution is in fact the one prescribed for the blasphemer.

⁴⁵ Josephus's mention of Achar's burial has no equivalent as such in the Biblical record (here and elsewhere I italicize such items) which thus leaves the matter indeterminate (although the "stone heap" spoken of in v. 26a might be thought of as a kind of "tombstone"). On the other hand, his statement on the subject does accord with his combined version of the laws of Leviticus 24:16 (execution of the blasphemer) and Deuteronomy 21:22-23 (burial of the corpse of the hanged man before nightfall) in *Ant.* 4.202: "(Let him that blasphemeth God be stoned, then hung for a day and) buried ignominiously (ἄτίμως; cf. ἄτιμος, *Ant.* 5.44) and in obscurity."

⁴⁶ Another factor may be at work here as well. Josephus apparently held the view, attested in *b. Baba Batra* 14b, that Joshua wrote the book called by his name (cf. *Contra Apionem* 1.40). The double etymological notice of Joshua 7:26 about the stone heap and the name "Valley of Achor" both perduring "to this day" might well, however, seem indicative of the perspective of a writer long after Joshua's own time. Accordingly, Josephus leaves aside these notices (and the items to which they relate), just as he does a whole series of related notices found elsewhere in the Book of Joshua. On the point, see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 169, n. 10, 437.

⁴⁷ MT and VL 7:24 also speak of the "taking" of the three items which Achan had appropriated (see v. 21). Like B 7:24, Josephus does not mention these items at this juncture.

guilty party's punishment being extended to his family members.⁴⁸ Finally, Josephus' rendition also lacks an equivalent to the parenthetical statement about the Lord's "turning from his fierce anger" (Josh. 7:26aβ). This omission corresponds to the historian's earlier non-mention of the Lord's anger "burning against Israel" in Joshua 7:1b. In both instances, the effect is to diminish the all-pervading role of the Deity in the source story (see n. 74).

Ambush Prepared

Joshua 8 recounts the reversal of Israel's initial disaster at Ai. The MT chapter opens with an elaborate account (8:1-13) of the preparations for the upcoming battle. These involve God's directives to Joshua (vv. 1-2) and the latter's setting of a double ambush – one at night featuring 30,000 men (v. 3), the other by day and consisting of 5,000 men (vv. 10-12). B and VL (in part) are considerably shorter here, lacking an equivalent to MT's verses 7b-8a, 11b-13. Josephus, for his part, recounts the preparations for battle in a still more reduced form (*Ant.* 5.45a). He leaves out entirely the Deity's opening instructions to Joshua (8:1-2), thereby accentuating the military stature of Israel's commander who makes the necessary preparations entirely on his own.⁴⁹ In relating those preparations, the historian also limits himself to the essentials, i.e. advance to Ai by the Israelites, the placing of a single, nocturnal ambush (so B), and the actual commencement of hostilities. His formulation on the point thus reads: "Joshua, *having purified his army* (ἀγνίσας τὸν στρατόν),⁵⁰ now led them out against Naia, and after posting ambushes during the night all about the town [compare 8:3-4a],⁵¹ at daybreak joined battle with the enemy [compare 8:10]."

⁴⁸ The discrepancy in question is one which evoked varying responses in Jewish tradition: some authorities hold that the household was indeed executed, but rightly so because they had failed to report Achan's theft (thus, e.g., *b. Sanh.* 44b), while others aver that the household was taken to the Valley of Achor simply as witnesses to Achan's punishment (thus, e.g., *P.R.E.* 38); see further Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6.176, n. 31.

⁴⁹ Josephus's procedure here recalls his non-utilization of the divine directives to Joshua about the discovery and punishment of the culprit as cited in 7:14-15 in his version of God's response to him in *Ant.* 5.42; see above.

⁵⁰ This transitional notice, inserted by Josephus here, echoes the divine command as cited in *Ant.* 5.42: καθαίρειν τὸν στρατόν.

⁵¹ From 8:3 Josephus eliminates the figure (30,000) for those placed in ambush by Joshua, perhaps finding it excessive for the purpose at hand.

Victory & Sequels

Joshua 8:14-29 gives a quite extended account of the battle which eventuates in the destruction of Ai. The MT in particular evidences numerous repetitions (e.g. the double mention of the burning of the city in vv. 21b and 28a), while B and VL lack equivalents to MT's verses 15b-16, 20b β , and 26. Here too, Josephus' rendition (*Ant.* 5.45b-48) compresses and clarifies the complicated, confusing story told by his source. In accord with Joshua 8:14 he first has the inhabitants of Ai initiate hostilities (*Ant.* 5.45b),⁵² adding a remark on their sallying forth that harks back to his account of their initial triumph in *Ant.* 5.35, i.e. "with an assurance begotten of their former victory (vukr $\acute{\eta}$)."⁵³

In accord with Joshua 8:15a Josephus next cites the pretended flight of the Israelites. The MT specifies that this was "in the direction of the wilderness;" B and VL lack this indication (just as they do the geographical precisions of MT 8:14; see n. 53). The historian, for his part, having spoken in general terms of Joshua's "drawing the inhabitants in this way to a distance from the town," underscores yet again the pursuers' self-confidence: "imagining themselves in pursuit of a beaten foe and being disdainful of them in anticipation of victory (vukr $\acute{\eta}$)."⁵⁴

Joshua 8:16-17 in the MT goes on to emphasize the "emptying" of Ai by its defenders in their eager pursuit of "fleeing" Israel (B and VL lack a parallel to the MT's initial statement on the matter in 8:16). Joshua 8:18 then relates the divine directive to Joshua that he extend his javelin towards the city and Joshua's compliance therewith. Josephus has no

⁵² In Joshua 8:14 there is reference to the "king of Ai" who leads his people into battle. Josephus nowhere refers to this figure who appears prominently throughout chapter 8 (see vv. 2, 14, 23, 29). His appearance there seems, however, somewhat abrupt, given that the account of the first battle of Ai in Joshua 7:2-5a makes no mention of him. By omitting the king also from his version of Joshua 8, Josephus "harmonizes" the two battle scenes.

⁵³ This motivation takes the place of the (self-evident) statement attached to the mention of the king's advance in 8:14, i.e. "he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city." Like B, VL and 4QJosh^a, Josephus has no equivalent to the MT indication that the inhabitants headed "to the descent, towards the Arabah."

⁵⁴ Josephus' double mention of the inhabitants' expectation of "victory" here in *Ant.* 5.45 ironically echoes the twofold use of the same term as something which Joshua asks for of God (*Ant.* 5.41) and which the latter promises to the Israelites (*Ant.* 5.42). The wordplay in question underscores the deluded character of the inhabitants' expectation – the reader knows, as they do not, that their opponents have already been assured of the victory of which they are so confident.

equivalent to this entire sequence. He will subsequently depict Naia as not altogether lacking defenders, and so dispenses with the "emptying" reference in 8:16-17. As for the Deity's javelin command in 8:18, Josephus' omission of this accords with his general tendency to diminish the divine role in the proceedings narrated in Joshua 7-8 (see n. 74).⁵⁵ Accordingly, he moves immediately (*Ant.* 5.46a) to the double assault which Israel now unleashes against its enemy. In Joshua 8:19 we hear, in first place, of those in ambush rushing into empty Ai and setting the city on fire. The sight of the smoke from the burning city is seen by the pursuing Aiites (8:20a) and the "fleeing" Israelites who now turn on their pursuers (8:20b-21 MT; B and VL have no equivalent to the initial mention of the fugitives' halt in 8:20b). In *Ant.* 5.46a events unfold in reverse order and without any mention of a fire (see, however, below). Josephus Joshua initiates the proceedings by "turning his forces about and making them face their pursuers" (cf. Josh. 8:20b [MT], 21b). Thereafter, "giving the prearranged signals to those in ambush, [he] roused them also to the fight" (*Ant.* 5.46b-47; cf. Josh. 8:19).⁵⁶ There the ambushers encounter not an empty city which they burn (compare Josh. 8:16-17,19-21), but one supplied with defenders whom the intruders butcher: "These flung themselves into the town, *the occupants of which were around the ramparts, some wholly engrossed in watching their friends outside.*"⁵⁷ "So while they took the town and slew all whom they encountered...."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ The historian's non-mention of Joshua's javelin here (and throughout his version of Joshua 8) might also be prompted by the fact that this object surfaces quite abruptly at this point in the Book of Joshua, no reference to it having previously been made there. In this connection note as well that in his version of Exodus 17:19 in *Ant.* 3.53, Josephus leaves aside the source reference to "the rod of God" in Moses' hand on the occasion of the battle with Amalek. In both instances, perhaps, there is a concern that Israel's leaders not be seen as making use of a magical object of some sort.

⁵⁶ The above notice takes the place of the reference in 8:19 to Joshua's stretching out his javelin as a signal to those in ambush to begin their assault on Ai; as noted above, Josephus makes no mention of the leader's javelin in his retelling of Joshua 8. The allusion here to "the prearranged signals" that had been given those in ambush reflects the historian's familiarity with the instructions given the ambushers as cited in Joshua 8:4-8 but not previously reproduced by him; see *Ant.* 5.45. Compare Josephus' delayed use of the mention of Joshua's prostrating himself before the Lord (Josh. 7:6) in *Ant.* 5.42.

⁵⁷ The above reference to those on the wall being "engrossed" in their friends' pursuit of the Israelites helps explain how the ambushers could so easily overrun the city, even though this, in Josephus's presentation, is not "empty" of defenders as Joshua 8:16-17 has it: those defenders' attention was directed elsewhere.

⁵⁸ The reference here would seem to be to those "engrossed" spectators or defenders

Joshua 8:20-24a is focus on the battle that occurs outside Ai itself. Those who had sallied forth are hemmed in between Israelite forces attacking them from front and rear (vv. 20b-22a). The result is that the men of Ai are all slain (vv. 22b, 24a), with the exception of their king, who is captured alive and brought to Joshua (v. 23). Josephus attributes the rout of the Naïetans solely to those Israelites under Joshua who had been in flight before them. This perhaps because he realized that it would have taken too long for the ambushers to complete their work in the city before go in pursuit of those who have earlier sallied forth. In describing the rout perpetrated by Joshua's forces he makes selective and modified use of the Biblical battle scene. His rendition reads:

Joshua broke the ranks of his adversaries and forced them to flee. Driven in a body to the town which they supposed to be intact, when they saw that it too was taken and found that it was in flames,⁵⁹ along with their wives and children,⁶⁰ they scattered throughout the open country,⁶¹ incapable through their isolation of offering resistance.⁶²

As noted above, the Biblical narrative makes a parenthetical reference in Joshua 8:23 to the person captured alive in the field, the king of Ai. Subsequently, Joshua 8:26 recounts the capture also of "the cattle and the spoil of the city." Between these two capture notices stand a variety of indications: the massacre outside (v. 24a) and inside (v. 24b) the city; the total number of casualties among the inhabitants (12,000; v. 25); and Joshua's not drawing back the javelin in his hand

on the ramparts; in Joshua 8 the slaughter of those who had remained behind in Ai is mentioned only after Israel's victory in the open country (see v. 24b).

⁵⁹ With this reference to the Aiites' seeing their town burning, Josephus makes delayed use of the references to the matter as found in verses 20-21; see above.

⁶⁰ This reference to the Naïetans' perceiving their wives and children trapped in the burning city has no parallel as such in Joshua 8 which nowhere mentions the "children" of Ai and speaks of its womenfolk having been killed along with the men in the summary notice of v. 25.

⁶¹ Compare the reference to the Israelites' slaughtering all the inhabitants "in the open wilderness" in Joshua 8:24a.

⁶² Compare Joshua 8:20a where the Aiites' having "no power to flee this way or that" is attributed to their perceiving their city on fire. It might be further noted here that whereas the Bible clearly states that those men of Ai who had sallied forth from the city were all killed in battle by Israelites (see Josh. 8:22a, 24a), Josephus leaves the matter indeterminate. His wording seems to suggest that the Naïetan combatants escaped with their lives by flight. Perhaps then we have here another instance of Josephus' tendency to play down, in deference to the sensibilities of Gentile readers, the bloodiness of Israel's occupation of her land as described in the Book of Joshua. On the point, see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 445-46 and cf. further below.

until the slaughter completed (v. 26, MT; B and VL lack an equivalent). Josephus concludes his version of Joshua 8 concerning the booty captured by the Israelites with a continuous, but also expanded sequence on this occasion. The sequence (*Ant.* 5.48) reads:

Such being the fate that befell the Naïetans,⁶³ a crowd of *children*, women and slaves was taken,⁶⁴ beside an immense mass of material.⁶⁵ The Hebrews⁶⁶ captured moreover herds of cattle and money (χρήματα) in abundance,⁶⁷ for the region was rich,⁶⁸ and all this Joshua distributed to his soldiers,⁶⁹ while he was at Galgala.⁷⁰

In constructing this booty sequence Josephus leaves out a whole series of items cited in the closing verses of Joshua 8 according to the MT. In line with his earlier non-mention of the figure, he omits, first of

⁶³ This transitional phrase refers back to Josephus's preceding reference (*Ant.* 5.47b) to the dispersion (and death?) of the city's combattants. See n. 62.

⁶⁴ This mention of the capture of the city's "children and women" echoes the reference to the combattants seeing their "wives and children" trapped in the burning city in *Ant.* 5.47b. Josephus is thus indicating here that the two groups of non-combattants survived the earlier burning of their city. In so doing, he diverges from Joshua 8:25 which speaks of the women of Ai being killed by the Israelites cf. n. 62. As pointed out in n. 60, Joshua 8 itself makes no mention of the city's "children"; this is likewise the case with the "slaves" whose capture Josephus records here in *Ant.* 5.48.

⁶⁵ This item has no equivalent in Joshua 8 as such. Josephus's insertion of it serves to magnify Israel's victory over so wealthy a city.

⁶⁶ On Josephus' use of this name for his people, alongside the designations "Israelites" and "Jews," see G. Harvey, *The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew, and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature* (AGJU 35; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 124-29.

⁶⁷ Compare Joshua 8:27a (MT): "Only the cattle (> B) and the spoil (B τῶν σκυλῶν, > VL) of that city Israel took as their booty." Josephus has no equivalent to the indication of Joshua 8:27b that this booty was taken "according to the word of the Lord which he commanded Joshua." This indication, in turn, harks back to the Deity's directive to Joshua as cited in Joshua 8:2bα ("only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves"), likewise not reproduced by Josephus; see above. Once again, the historian plays down the divine involvement in the proceedings.

⁶⁸ This "explanation" concerning the source of the rich booty Israel derives from its capture of the city has no Biblical counterpart.

⁶⁹ Also this indication lacks a Biblical basis as such. It serves to highlight the stature of Joshua who takes control of the booty-division process (in Josh. 8:24 no such role for the leader is mentioned) as well as his astuteness as a commander who knows how to ingratiate himself with his troops in this way.

⁷⁰ This specification concerning the site of Joshua's distribution of the booty (which presupposes Israel's return there following the battle) harks back to Josephus' – likewise inserted – reference to "Galgala" as the place of Israel's camp following its crossing of the Jordan in *Ant.* 5.34. The double mention of "Galgala" in *Ant.* 5.34 and here in 5.48 serves to frame the intervening account of events that transpire around "Naia" (*Ant.* 5.35-47).

all, any reference to the capture of the king of Ai (v. 23), his subsequent hanging, the taking down of his body, its being cast at the entrance of the city, and the raising over it of a stone heap which perdures to this day (v. 29).⁷¹ He further dispenses with the figure for Ai's total casualties cited in Joshua 8:25 (12,000). This omission accords with his wider tendency to attenuate the bloodbath recounted in Joshua 8 (see nn. 62, 64). Having already alluded, on the basis of Joshua 8:20b-21a, to the city's being "in flames" (*Ant.* 5.47), he omits the repeated narrative of the matter in 8:28a, just as he does the attached aitiological notice on the site's being made "a heap of ruins to this day" (Josh. 8:28b).⁷² Finally, in accordance with his previous procedure (see above), he does not reproduce the MT statement (absent in B and VL) in Joshua 8:26 that Joshua kept the javelin in his hand extended until the extermination of the inhabitants had been completed.

Conclusion

In summing up on the findings of the above study of Josephus' version of the Biblical Ai-Achan event, I begin with a consideration of the various rewriting techniques brought to bear by him on the source data; of these, the most conspicuous is clearly his recurring tendency either to omit entirely (e.g., God's words to Joshua prior to the second assault on Ai, Josh. 8:1-2) or to reduce drastically (e.g. the Deity's response to Joshua's complaint, Josh. 7:10-15; compare *Ant.* 5.42) elements in his *Vorlage*.⁷³ On the other hand, expansions of that *Vorlage* are not completely absent. His elaboration of Israel's response to its defeat (Josh. 7:5b) in *Ant.* 5.36-37 is the most noteworthy example. Josephus re-arranges the sequence of the Biblical account as well. For example, he anticipates the specifics of Achan's crime, moving these from Joshua 7:21 to the very beginning of his own account in *Ant.* 5.33, just as he delays mentioning Joshua's prostration till after he has cited the words

⁷¹ Josephus' non-reproduction of the aitiological notice of 8:29 about the Ai stone-heap corresponds to his non-utilization of the comparable notices concerning the stone heap in the Valley of Achor and the name of that place found in Joshua 7:26. See n. 46 concerning the possible motivation for the historian's procedure in this regard.

⁷² It thus appears that Josephus consistently eliminates all the aitiological notices that punctuate his two source chapters (Josh. 7:26; 8:28, 29). On the point, see nn. 46, 71.

⁷³ It needs, of course, to keep in mind here that certain of Josephus' omissions/abridgements may reflect his dependence on a shorter form of the Biblical text as reflected in B and/or VL; see above.

of the general's prayer (*Ant.* 5.42; compare Josh. 7:6). A last such rewriting technique involves the historian's modification of Scriptural items, a technique evident, for instance, in his recasting of the content and tone of Joshua's prayer (Josh. 7:7-9) in *Ant.* 5.38-41.

Overall then, Josephus relates the entire event in a markedly "streamlined" form, wherein numerous secondary and/or extraneous figures and features of his source simply disappear. Among them are the preliminary spying out of Ai (Josh. 7:2-3), the numerous aitiological notices (Josh. 7:26; 8:28, 29), Joshua's javelin (Josh. 8:18, etc.) and the figure of the king of Ai and his fate (Josh. 8:2, 14, 23, 29). Still other source elements which might appear of undue length (e.g., the "ambush arrangements" of Josh. 8:1-13) are retained, but only in suitably abridged form (see *Ant.* 5.45). In the same vein, Josephus's rendition exhibits a clear tendency to diminish the Deity's directive role in the proceedings.⁷⁴

On the more "positive" side, Josephus accentuates the stature and authoritative initiatives of Joshua who, e.g., determines the procedure to be used in identifying the culprit on his own (*Ant.* 5.43; compare Josh. 7:14 where God instructs him about how this is to be done) and takes charge of the division of the booty (*Ant.* 5.47; compare Josh. 8:27 where no such role for Joshua is mentioned). Achan, too, appears in a more favorable light than does his Scriptural prototype (and its Rabbinic elaborations; see nn. 40,42): he confesses his misdeed without having to be called on to do so and himself produces the incriminating evidence (*Ant.* 5.44a; compare Josh. 7:19-23). The historian goes far beyond the Bible in his attention to characters' motivations and emotional states, e.g., he greatly elaborates on the thinking that prompts Achan's crime (*Ant.* 5.33; compare Josh. 7:21 where the culprit makes only passing allusion to his "coveting" the objects he appropriates). Stylistically as well, he improves on his source, with, among other things, his repeated insertion of transitional notices between its component parts; see, e.g., the introduction (*Ant.* 5.38) to Joshua's prayer explicitly relating this to the people's prior response to their defeat (*Ant.* 5.36-37; compare Josh. 7:6).

⁷⁴ On such "detheologizing" as a feature of Josephus' entire retelling of the Biblical story and the motivation for this, i.e. a concern not to put off cultivated, sceptical Gentile readers with constant references to divine interventions in his people's history, see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 205-14.

Noteworthy, too, are Josephus's efforts to dispose of the story's problematic features, i.e. its underlying notions of collective guilt (see Josh. 7:1: all Israel "breaks faith" when Achan sins) and punishment (see MT Josh. 7:25: Achan's household dies along with him), as well as Israel's blood-thirsty dealings with the inhabitants of Ai. In the first two of these instances, Josephus resolves the problem by simply eliminating the feature in question; in the third, he attenuates the Bible's presentation of the matter.

Finally, in its numerous divergences from the original, Josephus' version of the Ai-Achan episode seems designed to appeal to the sensibilities, perplexities, etc. of his two general audiences, i.e. cultivated Gentiles and fellow Jews.⁷⁵ To Greco-Roman readers he offers a smoother-reading, a "tightened-up" account; from which much of the source's excessive theologizing and anti-Gentile violence has been removed. Instead, more congenial matters are emphasized. In this way, the achievements of Joshua, a Jewish great man whose military and political abilities would remind readers of such famous leaders in their own tradition (as well as of the fact that the Jews had indeed produced comparable figures).⁷⁶ As for his coreligionists, Josephus presents them with a revised version of the Joshua 7-8 narrative that has been reworked so as to counter doubts regarding the traditional dating/authorship of the Book of Joshua⁷⁷ and the internal consistency⁷⁸ of their Bible. In thus developing a version of the Ai-Achan episode that has something to offer to both of his antagonistic audiences, Josephus gives evidence of his skill as a practitioner of the art of Biblical rewriting.

⁷⁵ On the double intended audience of Josephus' *Ant.*, see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 46-56.

⁷⁶ On Josephus' concern to answer the canard that his people had failed to produce great (military) men, like those of the Greeks and Romans, see Feldman, *Interpretation*, 106-109.

⁷⁷ On this point, see n. 46 concerning the rationale for Josephus' non-reproduction of the aitiological notices of Joshua 7-8.

⁷⁸ This issue arises given the apparent contrast between the references to collective guilt and punishment in Joshua 7:1 and 25 (MT), respectively, and many other Biblical passages (e.g., Deut. 24:16) where such conceptions are rejected. As we saw, Josephus deals with the inconsistency here by simply eliminating the verses in question from his own presentation.

ABSTRACT

This paper examines Josephus' rewriting of the interwoven story of Achan's theft and the battle(s) of Ai as told in Joshua chapter 7 to 8. The paper looks to such questions as the text-form(s) of Joshua chapter 7 to 8 available to Josephus, the re-writing techniques he applied to the Biblical account, and the purpose or effect of these, given his double audience, i.e. cultivated Gentiles and fellow Jews.

撮 要

本文探討約瑟夫重寫亞干犯罪與艾城戰爭的故事。約書亞記七至八章交替記載這兩件事。文中特別討論到：約瑟夫當時可接觸的經文文本、重組故事運用的技巧如何反映約瑟夫對該段經文的理解，以及藉著這段經文，他想向猶太人及外邦知識分子表達甚麼訊息。