Reading a Bible in the Canon:

Receptions of Chronicles Through the Ages

Blaire A. French
Charlottesville, Virginia

Master's Degree, University of Virginia, 2013

A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Religious Studies
University of Virginia
May, 2014

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to: Calum Carmichael, who introduced me to the reception history of Chronicles and who has served as my mentor from afar; to Martien Halvorson-Taylor, for teaching me Biblical Hebrew, for inspiring my engagement with the Hebrew Bible, and for being my mentor close by; Judith Kovacs, who taught me Patristic Greek and opened to me the treasures of the Church Fathers; Asher Biemann, for introducing me to the world of Jewish thought and philosophy; Elizabeth Shanks Alexander, who taught me how to read Talmud; James Nohrnberg, who helped me appreciate the political dimensions of Chronicles; and Emily Gravett, who gave me thoughtful criticism and kept reminding me that there was an end in sight.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Some today accord Chronicles the dubious distinction of being the least read book in the Bible, citing first and foremost its opening nine chapters of genealogies as a major stumbling block.[1] Such claims are difficult to evaluate, but it is probably safe to assume that most modern readers (biblical scholars excepted) know little about the book. This dissertation will demonstrate, however, that Chronicles in certain periods commanded a highly attentive audience. In general, Jewish reception of Chronicles was most robust during the ancient period, whereas for Christians, Chronicles' exegesis took on new energy with the Reformation. Today Chronicles is enjoying a resurgence in popular culture through a best-selling book, *The Prayer of Jabez*.

The focus of this dissertation is on how Chronicles has been interpreted, adapted, disputed, or ignored by readers through the ages. The study of the influence of the Bible on its readers is known as "reception history." Hans-Georg Gadamer is credited as the first to call attention to what he termed "*Wirkungsgeschichte*," or "the history of effect" in his *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method), published in 1960. In that work, Gadamer argued that, though our own historical conditioning renders us incapable of truly reconstructing the past, we can examine its effects as described by others throughout history.[2] Gadamer's emphasis on the historical setting in which a reading took place had a major impact on biblical criticism, as scholars turned

[1] Joseph Telushkin, *Biblical Literacy: The Most Important People, Events, and Ideas of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: William Morrow and Company Inc., 1997), 393-95. See also Isaac Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature: A Historical Journey* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 1. More generally, Robert North calls the book "dull and repetitious." Robert North, "Theology of the Chronicler," *JBL* 82 (1963), 373.
[2] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall; London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 311-18.

their attention to the cultural and historical contexts of interpreters.[3] A reception history of Chronicles, therefore, traces over time its influence in the various realms of human expression, including religion, literature, art, music, and scholarship.

Within this genre of inquiry, Chronicles represents a special case. Readers' responses to Chronicles are affected by the fact that Chronicles is itself a work of reception. As others have argued (and as this dissertation will show), Chronicles is a revision of the books of Genesis through Kings.[4] There is no evidence that it was ever accepted *in toto* as authoritative. Ehud Ben Zvi examines various texts from the late Second Temple period (second century BCE to the first century CE) and concludes that the Deuteronomistic History (DH) was "more authoritative" than Chronicles.[5] Extant copies of the Septuagint (LXX) dating from the third and fourth century CE are also witnesses of this fact.[6] The LXX's title for Chronicles is *Paraleipomenōn* ("Things Left Out"[7]), indicating that Chronicles is a supplement to the historical books that precede it. To this day, Genesis-Kings supplies the standard biblical version and functions as the "default option" for readers. The title *Paraleipomenōn* implies that a comprehensive sacred history that does not have primacy can become a collection of miscellaneous data. Still, in the course of canonizing

---

[3] J. C. Robinson, "Gadamer, Hans-Georg," *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; New York: Routledge, 2007), 123. See also John F. A. Sawyer, *A Concise Dictionary of the Bible and Its Reception* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2009); R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden, eds., *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (London: SCM Press, 1990).

[4] Benjamin Sommer and David Carr characterize Chronicles as a revision. Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 26. David Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 200.

[5] Ehud Ben Zvi, "The Authority of 1-2 Chronicles in the Late Second Temple Period," *JSP* 3 (1988), 59-88.

[6] The *terminus ad quem* for the translation of Chronicles into Greek is Eupolemus' dependence on LXX Chr for his history of the kings of Judah (c. 150 BCE). Roger Good, *The Septuagint's Translation of the Hebrew Verbal System in Chronicles* (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 27. It is not possible, however, to determine when Chronicles acquired its Greek title.

[7] All translations of Greek are my own unless otherwise noted.

scripture, Chronicles made it in. As part of the Bible, it is a permanent reservoir of tradition from which readers through the centuries may draw, if they so choose. Chronicles derives its importance from being read against or in contrast to the standard account. Had Chronicles never been written and preserved, our view of the Bible's figures, events, and theology would be decidedly different.

One of the keys to understanding Chronicles' enduring reception, therefore, is that it offers an alternative to the interpretations of history found in the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets. When interpreters select Chronicles, the choice is deliberate. They turn to the book because it makes a different point. Against the background of the customary accounts, the distinctive elements of Chronicles' narrative are thrown into high relief.

Another important element contributing to Chronicles' afterlife is that it offers an alternative theology to the other historical books, one that emphasizes God's swift and active engagement with every human being. Chronicles uniquely highlights the efficacy of individual supplication and the immediacy of divine reward and punishment within one's own lifetime. In Kings, for example, the exile is Judah's punishment for the earlier sins of Manasseh (2 Kgs 21.10-15; 23.26-27), whereas in Chronicles the inhabitants of Judah bring destruction upon themselves (2 Chr 36.15-16).[8]

Finally, Chronicles provides a cohesive and succinct overview of Israel's past. Its unfragmented account and homogenous outlook combine to make the book an attractive substitute for the disparate stories and viewpoints in Genesis-Kings. The influential Christian exegete St. Jerome (c. 347-420 CE) was drawn to the work on these grounds, and his admiration

[8] Robert North asserts that Chronicles' "short-range," this-worldly retribution theology is the reason for "the relatively prompt acceptance" of the book into the canon. North, "Theology of the Chronicler," 373.

spawned its modern title. He lauded the book for giving its readers "a chronicle of the whole of the sacred history."[9]

In sum, the interpreter's preference for Chronicles stems from its unique perspective and overall coherence. To a greater extent than any other book of the Bible, Chronicles venerates David and Solomon as religious leaders in the Temple cult, appreciates the importance and variety of Levitical service, correlates a ruler's longevity and prosperity with his obedience to God, and notes the effectiveness of individual prayer and repentance. Chronicles also offers readers a fluent and comprehensive history. In its retelling of events, Chronicles synthesizes the historical record of the world from a particular perspective.

The dissertation unfolds in five chapters. Chapter one ("Chronicles' Inception") argues that Chronicles' inception bears on the book's reception. This chapter sets forth my understanding of Chronicles as a revision of Genesis-Kings, with special attention to its reworking of Samuel/Kings. To begin, I outline the development of the consensus among contemporary biblical scholars that Chronicles postdates Genesis-Kings and that the version before the Chronicler[10] was close enough to the Masoretic text to permit us to identify his changes. Building on the work of David Carr, Ronald Hendel, and Benjamin Sommer, I then discuss the nature of Chronicles' revision of Genesis-Kings and provide specific examples. I pay special attention to the Chronicler's revision of Samuel/Kings because it is in his recasting of

[9] "…quod significantius, Chronicon totius divinae historiae possumus appellare…" Jerome, "Hieronymi Prologus Galeatus," *Biblia sacra vvlgatae editionis: ex ipsis exemplaribvs vaticanis inter se atqve cvm indice errorvm corrigendorvm cellatis* (ed. Michael Hetzenauer; Oeniponte: svmtibvs Librariae academicae wagnerianae, 1906), xviii.

[10] My use of the singular "Chronicler" indicates that I think the book was the product of one author. I do not preclude the possibility, however, that Chronicles was the product of a scribal school. Also, when I assign agency to "Chronicles," I mean the author of the book.

these accounts that Chronicles' distinct theology and understanding of prophecy emerge. In reception, Chronicles' innovations become the loci of interest among readers.

Chapters two, three, four, and five present important receptions of Chronicles by different exegetes at influential times: the early Rabbis and Christians of the ancient period, the first post-Reformation English lay interpreters, the founder of historical criticism at the end of the nineteenth century, and modern-day evangelicals with a worldwide audience. These chapters show that Chronicles' allure is double-edged. Although most exegetes are attracted to Chronicles because its worldview is consonant with their own, for others the disparity between Chronicles and Genesis-Kings offers grounds for questioning or disregarding its biblical authority.

Chapter two ("The Reception of Chronicles' Manasseh") argues that modern scholars have taken insufficient note of Chronicles' King Manasseh's complicated afterlife in early Judaism, and as a result the issues he raises concerning individual and collective salvation have been obscured. The complications arose from the Bible's conflicting record of his reign. Both Kings and Chronicles detail his atrocities, but only Chronicles relates Manasseh's repentance and God's immediate restoration of his fortunes. Early Christians enthusiastically invoked Chronicles' Manasseh as proof of God's desire for individual repentance, and Christians continue to do so today. Ancient Jewish texts debated the king's standing in eternal Israel, God's forgiveness notwithstanding, and came to no definite answer. Ultimately Chronicles' Manasseh failed to gain a foothold in the transmission of Jewish tradition. The divergent responses within ancient Jewish and Christian interpretative communities point to different perspectives on salvation that continue to be relevant. They also show how potent Chronicles can be when its alternative history proves the more attractive choice for readers.

Chapter three ("Epitomes of an Epitome") addresses a gap in the scholarship of Chronicles' reception. This chapter argues that eighteenth-century epitomized Bibles in English (illustrated Bibles, Bibles in verse, and hieroglyphic Bibles) represent a milestone in Chronicles' interpretation, both as the end-product of important events influenced by Chronicles' reception, and as important exegetical works in their own right. In current scholarship, however, they receive scant notice. The chapter briefly surveys Chronicles' role in the struggle over vernacular scripture in the late medieval period. Interpretations of Chronicles inspired those who strove for alternatives to state-sanctioned Bibles as well as those who advocated submission to established political and religious authority. The eighteenth-century epitomes of Chronicles in English, written by laity for laity, represented the culmination of a tug-of-war between the demand for universal access to scripture and the desire to maintain "orthodox" interpretation. A close reading of these popular works shows that Chronicles, as an epitome of scripture, provided lay exegetes with the opportunity to transmit their own summaries of sacred history to a wide audience.

If the epitomizing of Chronicles demonstrates how some exegetes employ Chronicles' qualities "positively" (that is, in a way that is consistent with Chronicles' own agenda), the next chapter shows that other interpreters use them "negatively" (that is, in a way that is subversive to Chronicles). Chapter four ("Julius Wellhausen's Use and Abuse of Chronicles") argues that Julius Wellhausen's efforts to undermine the book's canonical status resulted in distorted interpretations of Chronicles, and that these distortions persist in contemporary exegesis. For Wellhausen, Chronicles presented an idealized and sterile version of Israel's history that is the product of Second Temple Judaism and has no authentic connection to earlier tradition. In my view, Wellhausen deliberately overlooked or underplayed contrary evidence in the service of his greater goal: to sever Judaism from biblical Israel. He both exaggerated Chronicles' uniqueness

and understated its non-idealized elements. Even a distorted reading of Chronicles, however, counts as reception. In the case of Wellhausen, his reception of the book has exerted powerful influence over subsequent exegetes, including the most prominent Chronicles scholars today.

Lastly, chapter five ("Chronicles in the Twenty-first Century") discusses two striking examples of modern reception of Chronicles—Bruce Wilkinson's best-selling inspirational book *The Prayer of Jabez* and Graham Power's widely observed Global Day of Prayer—and argues that, contrary to the claims of others, they are intimately tied to a long chain of tradition transmission. Placing Wilkinson and Power in their proper interpretive context allows scholars to better evaluate their significance. Their exegesis draws attention to persistent problematic passages of Chronicles as well as to the book's adaptation throughout time through innovative reading.

In the conclusion I reflect on my findings. The reception of Chronicles shows that, though its revision of history failed to replace that of Genesis-Kings, at certain times and places it exerted great influence. The particular instances I examine are those that have not received attention from scholars of reception history. For the ancient Rabbis and early Christians, for the English Protestants of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and for the modern exegetes Graham Power and Bruce Wilkinson, Chronicles' depiction of God's direct involvement in human affairs provided them an opportunity to articulate their own perception of that involvement. For Wellhausen, however, the book's worldview detracted from its historical importance and canonical status. Based on the examination of these receptions of Chronicles, I speculate on the reasons it did not replace Genesis-Kings yet still remained within the canon. I also consider the potential contribution of my study to the field of biblical hermeneutics.

The appendix ("A Historical Survey of Chronicles' Reception") provides a summary of Chronicles' afterlife from ancient times to the present. Its purpose is to give the reader a sense of the greater terrain, and draw attention to the more important instances of Chronicles' reception throughout history. It begins with Chronicles' placement in the canon lists and ends with a description of Chronicles' reception in contemporary religious and secular settings.

Chapter One

Chronicles' Inception

In reception history, it is the subsequent readers, not the original authors, who count. Questions regarding the inception of biblical books—the historical critical inquiries into who wrote a text where, when and why—are less important than attempts to identify the significance readers find within the text at any given time and place.[11] I begin here, however, with Chronicles' inception because its inception decisively affects its reception. The character of the Chronicler's revisions of Genesis-Kings influenced, and continues to influence, the import of Chronicles for its readers.

My view of the formation of Chronicles takes as its foundation the consensus among Chronicles scholars today that the Chronicler knew a version of Genesis-Kings that is close to the MT, and that from a comparison of Genesis-Kings with Chronicles we may assess the changes the Chronicler made in his composition. Further, relying on the insights of David Carr, Benjamin Sommer, and Ronald Hendel regarding the dynamics of tradition transmission, I argue that the Chronicler's work is best understood as a revision of scripture.

[11] For example, the introduction of the commentary on the book of Lamentations in the Wiley-Blackwell Bible Commentaries series (a series dedicated to the reception history of the Bible) has a section titled "Who Wrote Lamentations?" The authors begin, "The biblical book of Lamentations is anonymous: the identity of the author or authors of this book is unknown. However, the early and long-standing tradition, within both Judaism and Christianity, is that it comes from the prophet Jeremiah." There is no further interest in the author of the book. Paul M. Joyce and Diana Lipton, *Lamentations Through the Centuries* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 2.

Chronicles' Dependence on (MT) Genesis-Kings

According to the Babylonian Talmud (the Bavli), the composition of Chronicles postdates the writing of the books of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets. Moses recorded the Pentateuch (with the exception of the record of his death, Deut 34.5-12), Joshua authored Joshua and Deut 34.5-12, Samuel wrote the books of Samuel and Judges, and Jeremiah composed Kings. Ezra began Chronicles and Nehemiah finished it.[12]

Modern biblical scholars largely concur with the Bavli on Chronicles' placement in the chronology, as there is almost universal agreement that the book derives its history from the traditions preserved in Genesis-Kings. Gary Knoppers, in his commentary on Chronicles, best expresses this position:

> By the time the author of Chronicles wrote, much of the literature that we associate with the Hebrew Bible was already written. Chronicles draws extensively upon these rich literary traditions. ….The dependence upon Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua is evident in the genealogies (1 Chr 1-9), the dependence upon Samuel is patent in the narration of Saul's demise and of David's reign (1Chr 10-29), and the dependence on Kings is unmistakable in the narration of Solomon and the kingdom of Judah (2 Chr 1-36). In each case, the book quotes extensively from earlier materials.[13]

Konrad Schmid, in his study of the formation of Genesis-Kings, similarly holds that the two books of Chronicles "presuppose and accept the existing context of Genesis-2 Kings, including

[12] *b. B.Bat.* 14b-15a.

[13] Gary Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9* (2 vols.; AB 12; New York: Doubleday, 2003), 66. Knoppers points out that Chronicles also alludes to or cites some of the prophetic books and the Psalms. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9,* 68. Isaac Kalimi's opening sentence in *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* is: "Chronicles is the only comprehensive book of the Bible whose sources are, for the most part, available to us." In his conclusion, he states, "…[T]he Chronicler worked from the full range of 'biblical' sources—to mention some of them: the complete Torah, early historical writings, early and late prophetic sources, Psalms, and even Ezra-Nehemiah." Isaac Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns), 1, 412.

the essentials and even the wording."[14] So, too, Sara Japhet states in her commentary on Chronicles: "Because of his peculiar literary method of employing and citing earlier works, the 'library' which was available to the Chronicler may be easily reconstructed. The Deuteronomistic history is extant basically in its final canonical form…."[15]

Even if there is consensus that Chronicles employed previous texts, there is debate over just how closely the Chronicler's sources parallel the Masoretic text (MT). The answer is important because it helps determine the degree to which the Chronicler's *Sondergut* (material exceptional to the book) reflects its *Vorlage* or the Chronicler's own changes. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1949, and the subsequent identification of a fragment from Chronicles in Cave 4, called into question the assumption that MT Samuel/King was the Chronicler's source. The eleven legible words from 2 Chr 28.27-29.3 recovered at Qumran vary from the corresponding verses in MT Chr *and* LXX Chr, testifying to the textual fluidity of the text as late as the first century BCE.[16] Eugene Urlich's 1978 study comparing the 4QSam^{a} scroll, MT Samuel, and MT Chronicles showed that the Chronicler used a version of Samuel that was closer to the 4QSam^{a} scroll than to MT Samuel.[17] His analysis suggested that the Chronicler may have been more faithful to the text he had at hand than previously thought. In the wake of these findings, the most respected Chronicles commentators now read MT Chr in light of the LXX and 4QSam^{a}. This fact, however, has not changed the basic agreement that the Chronicler

[14] Konrad Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 287.
[15] Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 27.
[16] The date assigned to these fragments is between 50 and 25 BCE. Julio Trebolle Barrera, "First and Second Books of Chronicles," in *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1:129.
[17] Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus* (HSM 19; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978), 151-64.

purposefully made changes in his reception of his sources, and in particular his reception of Samuel/Kings, including the deletion of material that placed David and Solomon in a less-than-flattering light.

In 1994, however, that consensus was challenged by Graeme Auld in *Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings*.[18] Auld proposed that the differences between Samuel/Kings and Chronicles were due to their mutual dependence on a postexilic text ("The Book of the Two Houses"), and that Samuel/Kings and Chronicles should each be considered a revision with its own ideological axe to grind. The editorial changes were evident in their respective *Sondergut*, meaning that whatever information was missing from one book (Chronicles *or* Samuel/Kings) was also missing from the Ur-text and did not constitute a deliberate omission on the part of either work. For example, Auld argued that it was highly unlikely that the Chronicler would omit Kings' information concerning the building of the temple, and yet Chronicles' account is much shorter (2 Chr 3.1-14; cf. 1 Kgs 6.1-7.12).[19]

While scholars have lauded Auld's challenge to the presumption that Samuel/Kings presents a more "objective" history than Chronicles, his position on how the book was written has not prevailed in the discipline.[20] They point to places in the text (such as Michal's anomalous appearance [1 Chr 15.29] and the Chronicler's reference to Ahab despite his absence from Chronicles' history [2 Chr 18.19; 21.13; 22.3]) which they believe betray a knowledge of Samuel/Kings. Ralph Klein, in the introduction to his definitive commentary, ends his discussion of Chronicles' primary biblical sources by claiming that "the Chronicler used the nearly final

[18] A. Graeme Auld, *Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994).
[19] Ibid., 22-29.
[20] See for example the critiques of Auld in Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 67-68; Richard J. Coggins, *Theology* 98 (1995), 383; Hugh Williamson, *VT* 46 (1995), 553-55.

form of Samuel/Kings, although from a copy of the text of those books that is often variant from the MT of Samuel and Kings…."[21] Knoppers adopts a similar stance. In his exposition of chapter twenty of First Chronicles—whose corresponding chapter in Second Samuel details David's affair with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11)—he says "the Chronicler has carefully culled his source (Samuel)," purging a great deal of material as he excised David's familial and political difficulties from the record. [22] Thus, the understanding that the Chronicler altered Samuel/Kings—sources that closely resemble their versions in the MT—remains the regnant view today.

The Date and Authorship of Chronicles

Chronicles scholars agree that the book is a post-exilic work, but they disagree in their determinations of a more precise date. Chronicles' *terminus a quo* is 539 BCE, based on the book's reference to "the establishment of the kingdom of Persia" (2 Chr 36.20), and its *terminus ad quem* is set by Eupolemos' citation of LXX Chr in the mid-second century BCE.[23] The following discussion gives a brief overview of the debate over when during this period Chronicles was composed.[24]

---

[21] Ralph S. Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 31-32.
[22] Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 737. See also Ehud Ben Zvi, "One Size Does Not Fit All: Observations on the Different Ways That Chronicles Dealt with the Authoritative Literature of Its Time," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?*(eds. Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011, 13-35 (18-19); and Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Ideology and Utopia in 1-2 Chronicles," *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?*, 99-100. C. T. R. Hayward writes, "With Samuel/Kings as his main source, the Chronicler regularly omits material which does not suit his purpose." C. T. R. Hayward, "Rewritten Bible." in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (eds., R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden; London: SCM Press, 1990), 596.
[23] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 15.
[24] For an excellent in-depth survey of the literature on Chronicles from 1994-2007, see Rodney K. Duke, "Recent Research in Chronicles," *Currents in Biblical Research* 8 (2009): 10-50.

Some favor a late-sixth-century date. They believe that Chronicles' focus on the Temple and the Davidic line reflects the tentative sanctity of the newly rebuilt Temple and the recent returnees' hopes for the restoration of the Davidids.[25] Others, relying on the same evidence, argue that Chronicles' handling of these matters signaled a transference of the dynastic promise to the community. Such a move would make sense when all hope of restoration was at an end, indicating that the book was composed during the late-Persian period.[26]

Recent scholarship on Chronicles assigns the book a relatively late date, towards the end of the fourth century/beginning of the third BCE. Japhet inclines toward this view based on the genealogy of Jehoiachin which carries the bloodline down to 400 BCE (though some contend this is a later addition), Chronicles' depiction of a well-developed Temple cult, and the near-canonical form of its sources.[27] Schmid and Carr concur on the late date, with Carr adding to the

---

Benjamin Sommer's criticism of "Pseudo-Historicism" pertains to the debate over Chronicles' date. Sommer objects to dating a biblical text based on a judgment of what historical circumstances best fit its perceived themes or concerns. Such judgments are highly subjective and, in any case, not all authors are representative of their own age. He maintains that not all biblical books can be dated. Benjamin Sommer, "Dating Pentateuchal Texts and the Perils of Pseudo-Historicism," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research* (eds. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz; Forschungen zum Alten Testament 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 85-108.

[25] "…[T]he Chronicler composed his work shortly after the completion of the temple, ca. 515 B.C., and…this date provides an explanation for the failure to deal further with the fortunes of Zerubbabel and the house of David." David Noel Freedman, "The Chronicler's Purpose," CBQ 23 (1963), 441. See also William M. Schniedewind, "The Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (eds. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 158-59.

[26] W. Riley, *King and Cultus in Chronicles: Worship and the Reinterpretation of History* (JSOTSup 160; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 26, 202; Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History*, 195.

[27] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 26-27. See also Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 111-17; Ralph W. Klein, "I Chronicles," in *The HarperCollins Study Bible Fully Revised and Updated: New Revised Standard Version, with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (eds. Harold W. Attridge et al.; San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 565. In the LXX, the list of descendants extends an additional four generations, which puts the proposed date for Chronicles even later, into the third century BCE. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 329-30.

evidence Chronicles' use of Persian loan words.[28]

Up until about forty years ago, there was general agreement that whoever wrote Ezra/Nehemiah also authored Chronicles. It was thought that the nearly identical verses recounting Cyrus' edict that end Chronicles and open Ezra indicated one writer (2 Chr 36.22-23 and Ezra 1.1-3a). Also important were general similarities in presentation, linguistic as well as substantive, including interest in genealogies, the Temple cult, and the Levites.

That consensus was decisively challenged by Sara Japhet in 1968. She argued that a close examination of language and style uncovered significant differences, sufficient to think that the two works must have different authors. Her thesis received important support from H. G. M. Williamson in 1977. Both scholars concede that there are important similarities between the books, but these are accounted for by a general pattern of word choice in Late Biblical Hebrew and their common social context and historical milieu account.[29]

Not all, however, have found their methods and conclusions persuasive. Joseph Blenkinsopp sees structural continuity between the books through their equal interest in the genealogies of the returning exiles, which establishes their credentials as the true inheritors of the land (1 Chr 1-10, Ezra 2); the natural transition of one to the other (Ezra picks up where Chronicles leaves off); and other similarities relating to the building of the Temple, the Temple

---

Some argue, however, that the entire block of opening genealogies (1 Chr 1-9) is a later addition. Peter R. Ackroyd, *I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah* (London: SCM Press, 1973), 23. See also Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary*, 14, 113; and Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 115-16.

[28] Konrad Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 194-95. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 196.

[29] Sara Japhet, "The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew," VT 18 (1968): 330-71. In a later book, Japhet expanded her argument to include ideological differences. Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (trans. Anna Barber; Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1989), 4-5, 269, 350, 513. H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 37-59.

cult, and liturgical music.[30] First Esdras is also often cited in support of an integral connection between the two works, as its account seamlessly weaves together the end of Chronicles (2 Chr 35.1-36.23) and the beginning of Ezra (Ezra 1-11).[31]

The pendulum today has largely swung in the direction of Japhet and Williamson. On the basis of analyses of the content and themes of the two books, recent commentaries and studies argue that Ezra/Nehemiah and Chronicles come from different hands.[32] For example, Ezra-Nehemiah vehemently opposes mixed marriages (Ezra 6.21; 9-10.18-44; Neh 131-3, 23-30), while Chronicles reports without reproach that Judah married a Canaanite (1 Chr 2.3), Solomon wed an Egyptian (2 Chr 8.11), and descendants of Shelah married Moabites (1 Chr 7.14). Also, in Nehemiah's record of Israel's national confession, the exodus experience is central to Ezra's synopsis of sacred history (Neh 9.9-25; cf. 1.8-10);[33] but in the whole book of Chronicles, there is only one explicit mention of the revelation at Sinai (2 Chr 5.10). The events that receive the most attention in Chronicles are those that occur within the borders of Israel.[34]

---

[30] See, for example, Joseph Blenkinsopp's critique of Japhet and Williamson in *Judaism: The First Phase* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009), 163-67, and in *Ezra-Nehemiah* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 47-54. For an overview of scholars who criticize Japhet and Williamson, see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 73-75.

[31] Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 59. The rejoinder to this point is that 1 Esdras' own authorship, date, and purpose remain a mystery, and this fact limits its usefulness in making any definitive conclusions regarding Chronicles' relationship to Ezra/Nehemiah. Knoppers, Ibid., 56-59. See also Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 6.

[32] Recent commentaries that assume separate authorship include Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 34-35; Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 4; and Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 10. See also Steven James Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia In Chronicles* (New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 3; Jonathan E. Dyck, *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler* (Biblical Interpretation Series, vol. 33; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 31; Duke, "Recent Research in Chronicles," 12.

[33] Ezra also attributes the assigned divisions and courses of the priests and Levites courses to Moses rather than to David (Ezra 6.18).

[34] Knoppers takes a different view: "One of the putative contrasts between the two works—Moses and Sinai—is not really a contrast. Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah share similar interests in upholding the importance of the Mosaic law." Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 88.

Chronicles' Revision of Scripture

Chronicles revised Genesis-Kings in order to present a new history of Israel, one that was uninterrupted and in which events consistently demonstrated the active presence of God. The goal was not to reject the older works, but rather to reshape their contents into a homogenous whole. I base my understanding of the Chronicler's revision of his sources on David Carr's treatment of tradition transmission, Ronald Hendel's identification of countermemories in the Bible, and Benjamin Sommer's analysis of Deutero-Isaiah.

In 2011, David Carr refined the consensus that Chronicles intentionally alters prior biblical accounts through an examination of the dynamics of reception in *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*. Based on his study of documented cases of transmission history of Ancient Near Eastern traditions (the Gilgamesh epic, the Temple Scroll, the Qumran Community Rule, and Chronicles), he argued that transmission of biblical tradition had both an oral and written component and that it displayed certain common characteristics: reproduction (with semantic shifts due to "memory variants"), expansion, abbreviation, omission, and harmonization.[35] Carr

---

On Chronicles' emphasis on the autochthonous origins of Israel, see Konrad Schmid, *Genesis and the Moses Story: Israel's Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible* (trans. James D. Nogalski; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 286-290.

[35] "[A]ncient transmission of tradition seems to have involved an intricate balance of preservation and revision. On the one hand, the oral-written tradition (as a whole, not its individual compositional parts) was regarded as a holy, precious set of messages from an otherwise inaccessible past, to be preserved and passed on to future generations. One's virtuosity as a student and scholar was proven by one's ability to cite and reproduce portions of the tradition, generally from memory. On the other hand, documented cases of transmission history show that ancient scholars did revise such traditions in multiple ways, generally expanding the tradition, but sometimes omitting parts, inserting additional traditions deemed relevant, and/or harmonizing/coordinating one part of the tradition with another….[T]hese cases also document that scribes *did* innovate at times in their transmission of tradition, including broader innovations that appear to be intended to address the concerns of contemporary communities." Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible,* 100-101.

maintains that when the Chronicler chooses to reproduce passages from Samuel/Kings, he closely follows his source text.[36] As for relatively small differences between MT Samuel/Kings and MT Chronicles (such as word order and equivalent word choice), Carr posits that, while they could reflect the Chronicler's use of a variant text, they may also be due to "memory variants." They are the sorts of changes one would expect when a scribe reproduces a written text from memory, and Carr cautions against over-interpreting these lexical differences.[37] Carr's depiction of the dynamic interface of oral and written transmission and detection of tell-tale traces of that interface is highly persuasive.

Carr's explanation of the Chronicler's literary techniques, and his motivation for employing them, also makes a great deal of sense. Carr argues that the Chronicler omits and expands parts of Samuel/Kings in order to give his history a particular cast. The Chronicler does not record negative traditions about David and Solomon, nor does he preserve accounts of the Northern Kingdom. The omissions in Chronicles allow the heroic and Torah-observant founders of the monarchy in Judah to come to the fore. In turn, the Chronicler expands on the importance of the Temple cult and Levitical service within it (1 Chr 22.2-29.30; 24.20-26.32). He also adds to the account of Jehoshaphat's reign (2 Chr 17.7-9; 2 Chr 19.4-11; 2 Chr 20.1-30) and of Hezekiah's reforms (2 Chr 32.1-23) to show that these kings promoted Torah observance and recognized the importance of proper worship.[38]

Carr finds evidence of harmonization of the greater biblical traditions in Chronicles. In

---

[36] Ibid., 75.

[37] Ibid., 59-63, 75. For example, Isaac Kalimi comes to the following conclusion based on his identification of inverted word order in MT Chronicles in comparison to MT Samuel/Kings: "The Chronicler copied words and phrases into his book in inverse order from their order of appearance in the books of Samuel/Kings, creating 'chiastic parallelism' between his text and the earlier text." Isaac Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 232.

[38] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 197-98.

one particular case, the book reconciles two conflicting dictums. Deuteronomy instructs that the Passover sacrifice be boiled (Deut 16.7), whereas Exodus orders that it be roasted in fire (Ex 12.8-9). In Chronicles' description of Josiah's observance of the Passover meal, the Passover lamb is boiled with fire (2 Chr 35.13).[39]

Carr also speaks of "the incomplete abbreviation of portions of Samuel/Kings that have produced incongruities into the later text." An incomplete abbreviation left a telltale seam between the verse giving notice that David remained in Jerusalem (1 Chr 20.1//2 Sam 11.1) and the verse immediately following, in which he is suddenly in Rabbah (1 Chr 20.2//2 Sam 12.30).[40] The intervening text in Samuel relates, among other things, David's affair with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah (2 Sam 11.2-27).[41]

I adopt Carr's conceptualization of Chronicles' revision, with one caveat. I believe that Carr's "abbreviated omissions" are best understood as countermemories. Ronald Hendel, in his examination of the stories about Abraham in Genesis, identifies conflicting depictions about the patriarch. On the one hand, he is the sort of man who argues with God over the fate of strangers (Gen 18), but offers no resistance when asked to sacrifice his own son (Gen 22).[42] Hendel asserts that the various facets reflect Genesis's preservation of countermemories, defined as competing versions or interpretations of a tradition that may reflect conflicting perspectives.[43] They are witnesses to the resistance of tradition to wholesale revision.[44] The incongruities noted by Carr

[39] Ibid., 198. [Note: Carr mistakenly cites 2 Chr 35.12.]
[40] Ibid., 73.
[41] Ibid., 74.
[42] Ronald Hendel, *Remembering Abraham: Culture, Memory, and History in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 38.
[43] Ibid., 41.
[44] Ehud Ben Zvi also speaks of "core facts" that could not be changed in Chronicles' account of Israel's history. Ehud Ben Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles* (London: Equinox, 2006), 93.

are strong evidence of another dynamic within the transmission of tradition: the purposeful retention of stories—or of their vestige—*despite* their incompatibility with the host narrative.

Other incomplete abbreviations include the statement that David "took more wives" even though there is no mention of them elsewhere in the text (1 Chr 14.3//2 Sam 5.13; cf. 1 Sam 25; 2 Sam 3.13-16); the complaint of Israel against the oppression of Solomon despite the absence of any previous description of Solomon's policy of forced labor (2 Chr 10.4//1 Kgs 12.4; cf. 1 Kgs 4.6-7; 5.7-8 [Eng. 4.27-28]); and reference to the fulfillment of Ahijah's prophecy even though that prophecy (declaring that God would take the ten tribes from Solomon as punishment for his idolatry) is not articulated in Chronicles (2 Chr 10.15//1 Kgs 12.15; cf. 1 Kgs 11.29-39).[45] These examples all betray knowledge of incidents in Samuel/Kings that are omitted in Chronicles.

There is a notable omission from Carr's list: the Chronicler's preservation of Michal observing David from her window upon the return of the ark to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15.29//2 Sam 6.16). Her appearance in Chronicles is radically abridged, as Chronicles retains none of the details of her complicated relationship with David in Samuel (1 Sam 18-19; 2 Sam 3.12-16) nor does it reproduce the verses from Samuel that describe her subsequent encounter with the king (2 Sam 6.20-23). I deal with this verse in the fourth chapter of the dissertation.

My approach to Chronicles follows that of Benjamin Sommer in his book on Isaiah, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. In his discussion of literary theory at the outset of his study, Sommer distinguishes an intertextual methodology, which "focuses not on the author of a text but either on the text itself (as part of a larger system) or on the reader," from his approach, which is "oriented toward 'influence' and 'allusion.'"[46] In the intertextual

[45] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 74.
[46] Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 6-7.

approach, the meaning of a literary text is relative, as each reader's decoding of its words draws on a broad constellation of associations that are unique to that individual. Questions of authorial intent or historical context are not pertinent. The method that relies on allusion and influence, on the other hand, explores an author's evocation of earlier texts in his or her composition. Intent and historical sequence are of paramount importance.[47]

For Sommer, the means by which a later biblical text connects to an earlier one include "explicit citation, implicit reference, and inclusion."[48] Explicit citation usually names the older text (e.g., "as it is written in the Teaching of Moses") but may also indicate citation through a formulaic statement ("according to their regulation").[49] An implicit reference does not cite an older text by name but rather "reuses vocabulary or imagery from the source" and is dependent on the reader's prior knowledge of that source.[50] Inclusion denotes an author's wholesale borrowing of material from a prior work.[51] Inclusion does not preclude interpolation: "by adding material to a text (or by removing material from it), a scribe can drastically change the meaning of the original."[52]

A biblical author's purpose for using older material may be exegetical ("to explain the meaning of a specific older text"[53]) and/or the author may be intent on revision ("restat[ing] some aspects of an earlier text while altering elements of the older text's message or adding to the earlier message"[54]). A revision may explain an older text, but revision is ultimately distinct from exegesis: "In exegesis, the older text is already authoritative, and the new text is secondary,

[47] Ibid., 7-8.
[48] Ibid., 20.
[49] Ibid., 21.
[50] Ibid., 21-22.
[51] Ibid., 22
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 23.
[54] Ibid., 25.

not only temporally but ontologically—even if the new text suggests a radical interpretation of the older one. In revision, the new text assumes a more independent and assertive posture. "[55] The attempt to replace an older work, however, does not necessarily mean that text is rejected.[56] Rather, it is superceded by the new composition.

Sommer classifies Chronicles as largely a revision of Samuel/Kings.[57] I concur with the sole caveat that, though Samuel/Kings is its primary focus, the book's revision extends to Genesis-Kings. As Sommer describes the process, a revision recasts an older text (through exegesis, implicit reference, expansion, inclusion and interpolation) in a bid to replace it.[58] An example of Chronicles' employment of these methods is its inclusion of Samuel's report on David's successful battle against the Ammonites and Arameans (1Chr 19.1-19//2 Sam 10.1-19); its omission of David's affair with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11); and its expansion on David's involvement with the construction and administration of the Temple (1 Chr 22-29). The Chronicler takes virtually verbatim portions of Samuel's David that are consonant with his version of David, omits the stories that do not comport with his version, and adds something that is muted in Samuel—David's exceptional piety. The result is a heroic and Torah-observant king, an image that partially stands on the prestige of an older authoritative image of David as it strives to supersede that David.

---

[55] Ibid., 27.
[56] "The core ideas of the older text are preserved in the new one along with various improvements. Precisely because that core remains, however, the older text no longer serves any practical role (at least in the view of the author of the new text)." Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 26.
[58] Ibid., 25-27. Michael Walzer concurs that Chronicles was intended as a replacement of other scripture: "…[T]he authors of Chronicles probably meant to replace the books of Samuel and Kings with their own expurgated history, heavily emphasizing the temple cult and the role of the priesthood. They must have hoped for readers who would find only their account available…." Michael Walzer, *In God's Shadow: Politics in the Hebrew Bible* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 18. See also Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (New York: Oxford, 1988), 380-82.

Chronicles' Revision of Genesis-Kings

Chronicles' originality stems, paradoxically, from its similarities with other biblical texts. It is Chronicles' interweaving and recasting of the stories in Genesis through Kings—its deviations—that allows it to make its distinctive mark. In reception, the appeal of Chronicles is directly related to the contrast it presents to these other accounts.

Chronicles and Genesis

Chronicles' affinity with Genesis is in some ways greater than may first appear. Not only does Chronicles start its genealogy of humankind at the same point (with Adam), it also gives an identical reckoning of Israel's ancestry. However, the Chronicler's reorganization of Genesis's information renders it part of a greater preamble to the sacred past. The Davidic monarchy—not the patriarchs (or Moses)—is the starting point for unfurling the details of Israel's history.

Genesis opens with a description of the world's creation and relates the stories of Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel before listing Adam's descendants (Gen 1.1- 5.1a). Also, Genesis's genealogies stop and start. Their tenfold refrain ("These are the generations of…") punctuates a dramatic narrative that culminates with tales of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's children.

Chronicles' beginning indicates little interest in anything other than tracing the chain of humanity that connects mythic Israel to post-exilic Israel. Though Chronicles sets down almost all the bloodlines traced in Genesis,[59] it omits virtually everything else. The precious few additional details it does relate appear in the most abbreviated fashion, leaving Chronicles' cascade of parallel lineages largely unadorned: "Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalel, Jared…"

[59] Chronicles leaves out the list of Cain's descendants (Gen 4.17-22) and makes no mention of Moab and Ben-ammi, the children Lot conceives with his daughters (Gen 19.30-38).

(1 Chr 1.1-2). The effect is somewhat levelling: the patriarchs appear by name within a sea of other names. There is no record of what they did. What matters is whom they begot. The result is that when Chronicles finally turns to narration and relates Saul's downfall and David's rise, a synopsis of Israel's origins forms the immediate background and sets the stage.

The Chronicler provided a genealogy of David through his inclusion and interpolation of Genesis 38. The result complicated David's image by introducing potentially negative elements. In this chapter of Genesis, Judah takes the daughter of the Canaanite Shua, has three sons by her (Er, Onan, and Shelah), refuses his daughter-in-law Tamar's rightful claim to a levirate marriage with Shelah, and is by tricked by Tamar into procreating with her himself. The Chronicler's focus on chapter 38 is significant in light of the possibility that some authors argue that this passage, at its inception, may have been intended as a commentary on David. Some scholars contend that its author had knowledge of 2 Samuel and wrote Genesis 38 as implied criticism of David. In support, they note that the only characters named Tamar occur in Genesis 38 and 2 Samuel 13, and that 2 Samuel 13 is also a story of interfamilial intercourse that involves deception. In 2 Samuel 13, David's son Amnon contrives through trickery to rape his half-sister, David's daughter Tamar. Moreover, Genesis 38 appears to interrupt the Joseph narrative,[60] a protracted composition that is otherwise homogenous in comparison to the rest of Genesis.[61] In light of these parallels, chapter 38 may well have been inserted into the Joseph story as a critique

[60] For an overview of the debate over whether chapter 38 was originally part of the Joseph cycle, see Mark Leuchter, "Genesis 38 in Social and Historical Perspective," *JBL* 132 (2013), 209-11.
[61] Konrad Schmid convincingly argues that the Joseph cycle was originally an independent collection of stories that became attached to Genesis 12-36, with the final redactions occurring in the exilic period. Konrad Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 120-22. See also Konrad Schmid, *Genesis and the Moses Story: Israel's Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 50-55.

of David's own handling of his family affairs.[62]

The Chronicler explicitly connected David to the events in Genesis 38 by tracing David's lineage to Perez, the son of Judah and Tamar. On the positive side, the Chronicler gave David patriarchal lineage (1 Chr 2.9-15). According to the book of Samuel, David is simply the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite (cf. 1 Sam 16.1). Only Chronicles and the book of Ruth report his ancestry through Perez.[63] Either these books preserve an expansion of tradition concerning David—a story that was already in circulation—or the pedigree represents an innovation. The implications, however, are mixed. The genealogy allows Judah's descendants to trace their bloodline to David, but now David is the product of a controversial liaison, as Leviticus forbids intercourse with one's daughter-in-law (Lev 18.15).

The Chronicler muddied the picture further. Chronicles lists these sons as Judah's descendants and adds, "These three the Canaanite woman Bat-Shua (בַּת־שׁוּעַ) bore to him" (1 Chr 2.3). On the one hand, Chronicles is offering no more or less information than Genesis—after all, who is Bat-Shua but the daughter (in Hebrew, *bat*) of Shua? The name, however, assumes great significance in light of 1 Chr 3.5, for here David's wife is called, not Bat-Sheba (as in Samuel and Kings), but Bat-Shua. The identical names open the door to comparing Judah's exploits to David's own illicit sexual relations, a tale that the Chronicler had otherwise expunged from his

[62] David Carr thinks Gen 38 is meant to draw parallels between "the misdeeds of Judah and his sons and the misdeeds of David's offspring." Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 484. As I show in my analysis of 1 Chr 2.3, however, the parallels are between Judah and David. Mark Leuchter argues that the parallels are between David and Judah, but disagrees that the comparison is meant to compare the figures as such. Rather, "2 Samuel 13 and Genesis 38…represent divergent views on the religious and social legacy of Israelite agrarian life." Leuchter, "Genesis 38 in Social and Historical Perspective," 227.

[63] Most consider Chronicles a source for Ruth's concluding genealogy rather than the other way around. See Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 66-69. Kalimi, however, disputes that it is possible to determine which is the source for David's genealogy, and offers the possibility that Chronicles and Ruth reproduce a list that predates both. See Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature*, 368.

account.[64] Altogether, these parallels drive home the point that David is not just Judah's descendant. The two are fundamentally alike—and the resemblances are not entirely flattering. In my view, David's genealogy qualifies as a countermemory, and I discuss it further in chapter four of the dissertation.

Elsewhere, the Chronicler offered unmitigated elevation of Judah through David. The retrospective enhancement of Judah is evident in Chronicles' exegesis of Jacob's deathbed statement in Genesis 49.[65] Chronicles interpreted Jacob's words to mean that Jacob himself predicted David's rise from Judah. The Chronicler did so through implicit reference (which presupposes knowledge of Genesis 49), marked by his reuse of Genesis's vocabulary.

To begin, the Chronicler appropriated Jacob's rationale for stripping Reuben of the privileges due to the firstborn son as his own rationale for not listing Reuben's genealogy first.

רְאוּבֵן בְּכֹרִי אַתָּה כֹחִי וְרֵאשִׁית אוֹנִי
יֶתֶר שְׂאֵת וְיֶתֶר עָז׃
פַּחַז כַּמַּיִם אַל־תּוֹתַר כִּי עָלִיתָ מִשְׁכְּבֵי אָבִיךָ
אָז חִלַּלְתָּ יְצוּעִי עָלָה׃

Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the beginning of my vigor—
excellence in dignity and excellence in might.
Unstable as water, you shall not excel because you went up into
the bed of your father;
then you polluted my couch. He went up!
Gen 49.3-4[66]

וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן בְּכוֹר־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי הוּא הַבְּכוֹר וּבְחַלְלוֹ יְצוּעֵי אָבִיו
נִתְּנָה בְּכֹרָתוֹ לִבְנֵי יוֹסֵף בֶּן־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא לְהִתְיַחֵשׂ לַבְּכֹרָה׃

[64] Others have noted this connection. See Mark Leuchter, "Genesis 38 in Social and Historial Perspective," 225.
[65] Genesis 49 is itself an allusive text. See Calum M. Carmichael, "Some Sayings in Genesis 49," in *JBL* 88 (1969): 435-44.
[66] All translations of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic are my own unless otherwise noted.

The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel. He was the firstborn son,
but when he polluted the couch of his father, his birthright was given to
the sons of Joseph the son of Israel and he is not enrolled in the genealogy
in accordance with the right of the firstborn.
1 Chr 5.1

The Chronicler invoked Genesis 49 through borrowed vocabulary ("you polluted my couch!" חִלַּלְתָּ יְצוּעִי Gen 49.4; "he polluted the couch of his father" וְּבְחַלְלוֹ יְצוּעֵי אָבִיו 1 Chr 5.1) in order to provide justification for his own demotion of Reuben.

Chronicles went on to revise Jacob's deathbed statement to indicate why Judah deserves preferential treatment.

יְהוּדָה אַתָּה יוֹדוּךָ אַחֶיךָ יָדְךָ בְּעֹרֶף אֹיְבֶיךָ
יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ׃
Judah, it is you whom your brothers will praise;
your hand will be on the neck of your enemies;
your father's sons will bow down before you.
Gen 49.8

לֹא־יָסוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיהוּדָה וּמְחֹקֵק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו
A scepter will not depart from Judah
nor a commander's staff from between his feet.
Gen 49.10.a

The Chronicler interpreted Jacob's depiction of Judah's preeminence among his brothers and Jacob's declaration that the symbol of rule shall not depart from Judah to mean that Judah himself will beget a ruler:

כִּי יְהוּדָה גָּבַר בְּאֶחָיו וּלְנָגִיד מִמֶּנּוּ
Though Judah was mighty among his brothers,
and a ruler came from him…
1 Chr 5.2a

Though the Chronicler did not identify David as the ruler who comes from Judah, he is the obvious candidate, given his dominance within Chronicles' account. Through indirect reference and implication, the Chronicler indicated that the prophetic utterance of the dying patriarch finds fulfillment in David.[67]

In addition, Chronicles' description of David's purchase of the land that would become the site of the Temple established a connection between the king and Abraham, and here one could argue that the Chronicler was not only exalting David, he was also in some sense defining Abraham. As already noted in the discussion of Hendel and countermemories, there are many "faces" to Abraham in Genesis. The patriarch lies (Gen 12.13, 20.2), he is unquestioningly obedient to God (Gen 22), he is cruel (Gen 16.6); he is a prophet (Gen 20.7); and he is a fierce warrior (Gen 14). David Carr notes the "mix of traditions" concerning Abraham and claims they are difficult to date.[68] Konrad Schmid makes a convincing argument that the figure of Abraham only emerged as the "*one* tribal ancestor of Israel" during the redaction of the Pentateuch in the Persian period.[69]

The Chronicler used Abraham's first acquisition of land in Israel as the model for David's purchase of the site of the future Temple, and the connection Chronicles establishes reflects well on both men. In 1 Chr 21.22, Ornan offers to give David the site of his threshing floor. David declines and says, "At its full price you shall give it to me (בְּכֶסֶף מָלֵא תִּתְּנֵהוּ לִי)." This phrase is an indirect reference to Abraham's insistence on paying for the cave of Machpelah in

[67] Japhet makes a similar observation: "Chronicles takes Jacob's blessing as an historical fact: Judah's destiny to govern was first foretold and then realized in the course of history, and David's election is contingent upon the choice of Judah as ruling tribe." Japhet, *Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, 448.
[68] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 484-85.
[69] Schmid, *Genesis and the Moses Story*, 267. For the dating of the redaction of the Pentateuch, see ibid., 348.

Gen 23.13: "I will give the price of the field (נַתַּתִּי כֶּסֶף הַשָּׂדֶה)."[70] The cave becomes the burial ground of Sarah, Abraham, and Jacob, and David's purchase becomes the site of the Temple. In this construction, David is not only related to Abraham (through Judah), he also acts like Abraham when he, too, is faced with the purchase of a sacred site. Abraham benefits as well, however. The Chronicler reenforces, from among his various options, the pious Abraham by connecting him, albeit indirectly, to the Temple. Once again, the force of the passage is balanced by our knowledge of the Abrahamic precedent in Genesis.

The Chronicler sought to forge a unified narrative of the biblical account by tying David to Judah and the patriarchs. Overall the result was positive. The Chronicler conferred on David the aura of the sacred ancestral past and in turn cast some of David's glory back on the patriarchal age. As David's genealogy shows, however, the connection was not always to good effect.

Chronicles and Deuteronomy

Chronicles resembles Deuteronomy in an important respect: both end with the people of Israel on the cusp of return from another land. As with comparisons of Chronicles to other books in Genesis-Kings, however, the similarities in this case ultimately highlight differences. In Deuteronomy the exodus defines Israel. In Chronicles the reigns of David and Solomon fill that role, and the difference is important. These kings overshadow Moses, and their founding of the Temple looms larger than the giving of the law at Sinai. Chronicles' reach also goes further back as well as further forward in time than that of Deuteronomy. In Chronicles' broad historical

[70] Japhet and Klein also note the reference. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 387; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 427.

sweep, the Israelites' wanderings in the desert barely register.[71] If, as some contend, Deuteronomy is a revision of prior tradition, then in Chronicles Deuteronomy is itself revised.[72]

Chronicles and Samuel/Kings: History and Theology

The Chronicler also revised Israel's history through selective inclusion of vast amounts of material from Samuel/Kings.[73] Isaac Kalimi estimates that "almost half" of Chronicles parallels these books.[74] Many passages are reproduced virtually verbatim, such as Kings' description of Solomon's dedication of the Temple (2 Chr 6.1-40//1 Kgs 8.12-52).

The Chronicler's purpose in importing the material was to alter its meaning through omission and expansion. Specifically, his portrayals of David and Solomon were much more positive than in Samuel/Kings. Chronicles did not discuss David's affair with Bathsheba and his orchestration of Uriah's death (2 Sam 11-12) or the intrigues of his children (2 Sam 13-15). In Chronicles David is acclaimed king by all Israel, the north and the south, in one fell swoop, whereas in Samuel his rise is marked by dissention (1 Chr 11.1-3; cf. 1 Sam 16.13, 2 Sam 2.1-4, 2 Sam 5.1-5). Chronicles also does not relate Solomon's blasphemous descent into idolatry (1

---

[71] This point is also noted by Schmid in *The Old Testament: A Literary History*, 194-96. See also his discussion of Chronicles in *Genesis and the Moses Story*, 286-90.

[72] See Knoppers' thoughtful examination of the question of whether Chronicles is a "rewritten Bible" in Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 129-134. See also George J. Brooke, "Rewritten Bible," in *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 2:778; Michael Segal, "Between Bible and 'Rewritten Bible," in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. Matthias Henze; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), 20-21; Philip S. Alexander, "Retelling the Old Testament," in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars SSF* (eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 100; C. T. R. Hayward, "Rewritten Bible," in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (eds. R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden; London: SCM, 1990), 596.

[73] Sommer notes, "Chronicles serves as the most obvious example of this phenomenon [inclusion] as it repeats, more or less verbatim, large parts of Samuel and Kings. In cases of inclusion, the new work may make small by highly significant changes in the reused material, but this does not change the *formal* status of the borrowing…." Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 22.

[74] Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles*, 1.

Kgs 11). Moreover, Kings contains the history of both Israel and Judah, but Chronicles largely restricts its narrative to an account of the southern kingdom.[75] The near-exclusive focus on Judah highlights that its rulers are the true claimants to the kingdom of David and Solomon.[76]

Chronicles expands on and highlights the devotion of David and Solomon to God, Torah, and Israel. Their portraits set a tone that carries forward throughout the rest of the book. In Chronicles, David is intimately involved in all matters relating to the Temple and Temple cult. Though Solomon is charged with building the Temple, David does all the preliminary work. He receives the pattern for the building in writing from God (1 Chr 28.19), and he provides the materials (1 Chr 29.1-4). Equally significant, he is the one who organizes the priests and Levites according to their functions (1 Chr 23.2-24.19, 2 Chr 8.14, 23.18, 29.25). All these elements are those for which Chronicles has been most widely celebrated—and sometimes disparaged.

Another expansion in Chronicles is the attribution of great value to the Levites and Levitical service. Chronicles' David expanded their duties, once they are no longer needed as arkbearers (1 Chr 23.26). In addition to their usual work in the Temple assisting the priests (1 Chr 23.28), David designated them to be officers, judges, gatekeepers, and musicians (1 Chr 23.4-5, 28-32). Their importance is underscored by the changes Chronicles made in its account of the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem. According to the book of Samuel, the initial transfer failed because Uzzah touched the ark (2 Sam 6.6-8). In Chronicles, that failure is attributed to the bearing of the ark by non-Levites; its transfer is successful only when Levites perform their rightful task (1 Chr 15.11-15; cf. Deut 10.8). Once David corrected the mistake, the installation was successful (1 Chr 15.15-29). This incident shows that Levitical service is vital to the proper

[75] Chronicles relates events involving the northern kingdom to the extent that they bear upon Judah: 2 Chr 10, 16.1-6, 18, 20.35-36, 22.2-9, 25.17-24, 28.8-21, 30, 31.6.
[76] Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, 355.

functioning of the community.

David's establishment of the Levitical singers as a divinely authorized temple choir was one of the Chronicler's most striking innovations (1 Chr 16.4-5, 37-4; 23.5, 30; 25.1; 2 Chr 29.25).[77] Knopper emphasizes the originality of the Chronicler here: "Recourse to the model of the author being simply an exegete of older sources will not suffice… to explain the portrayal of the Levitical singers. There are stipulations governing priests, prophets, judges, and kings in Deuteronomy (16:18-18:22), but none governing singers and musicians."[78] Moreover, the Temple musicians are said to be prophets (1 Chr 25.1) and one of them is identified as "the king's seer" (1 Chr 25.5). The result is that the praise of God through song attains great prominence, and David is credited as the founder of a sacred office.

Chronicles distinguishes David in another way over and above his depiction in Samuel/Kings. In Chronicles he is the seventh son of Jesse (1 Chr 2.15), not the eighth (1 Sam 16.10-11, 17.12-14). Elsewhere in the Bible, seven sons signify exceptional blessing. The womenfolk of Bethlehem declare that Ruth is more precious to Naomi than seven sons (Ruth 4.15), and Job loses and regains seven sons (Job 1.2 and 42.13). Chronicles goes one step further: David, as the seventh son, is himself exceptional.

The Chronicler's revision of Samuel/Kings, however, is not without criticism of David. As in Samuel, David conducts the census and invokes God's wrath (though it is Satan, not God, who incites him) (1 Chr 21.1-18). Chronicles also makes a unique charge against David. In First Chronicles David reports that he was prohibited from building the temple because he is a bloodshedder (22.8, 28.3). In Kings, Solomon says David's preoccupation with warfare kept him

[77] According to Chronicles, David received the command to station Levitical musicians within the Temple through the prophets Gad and Nathan (2 Chr 29.25).
[78] Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 429.

from constructing the temple, but he makes no mention of David's shedding blood (1 Kgs 5.3). David's admission in Chronicles is significant, as the shedding of blood in the Bible is usually connected to the murder of innocents.[79] At a minimum David is rendered impure from fighting battles on God's behalf,[80] but at a maximum he is guilty of a great offence (Gen 9.9). If the latter is the case, then the notice that David is a bloodshedder is another countermemory.[81]

It is possible that the Chronicler also reinterpreted God's dynastic promise to David in order to replace him with the community as its inheritors. The book of Samuel specifies that David's physical offspring shall be his heirs ("I [God] will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom" [וַהֲקִימֹתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ֨ אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵ֤א מִמֵּעֶ֙יךָ֙ וְהַכִינֹתִ֖י אֶת־מַמְלַכְתּֽוֹ׃] [2 Sam 7.12]). Chronicles states that the promise is to one of David's sons ("I [God] will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom" [וַהֲקִימוֹתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ֨ אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶ֤ה מִבָּנֶ֙יךָ֙ וַהֲכִינוֹתִ֖י אֶת־מַלְכוּתֽוֹ׃] [1 Chr 17.11]), which does not necessarily mean a biological child.[82] Konrad Schmid convincingly argues that Chronicles' new wording emphasizes God's dominion over and above that of the Davidic dynasty: "The kingdom in view is that of *God* (1 Chr 17:4), not David (2 Sam 7:16)."[83] The change indicates that the special character of Israel's eternal relationship with God is

[79] Gen 9.6; 37.22; Num 35.33; Lev 17.4; Dtr 21.7; 1 Sam 25.31; 1 Kgs 2.3; 18.28; 2 Kgs 21.16; 24.4; Ps 79.3; Pr 1.16; 6.17; Jer 22.3; 17.3; La 4.13; Ez 16.38; 22.4, 6, 9, 12, 27; 18.10; 22.3-4; 23.45; 33.25; 36.18;1 Chr 22.8; 28.3. I discuss David's self-identification as a bloodshedder in the fifth chapter of the dissertation.

[80] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 397-98 and Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 772-75.

[81] I argue for this reading of the notice in chapter five of the dissertation.

[82] As Konrad Schmid points out, the word "son" in Hebrew may refer to someone who functions as such. The king in Ps 2.7 is called God's "son." Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History*, 195.

[83] The emphasis is in the original. Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History*, 195.

independent of David.[84]

Chronicles' revision of Samuel/Kings did not just present new portraits of David and Solomon, the monarchy more generally, and the Temple cult. It also offered a more distinct and consistent theological outlook: God is manifestly and promptly responsive to all, whether for good or ill. Julius Wellhausen is often credited with being the first to articulate Chronicles' view of divine retribution.[85] It is best described by Japhet: "Reward is mandatory, immediate and individual. Every generation is requited for its own deeds, both good and evil, with no postponement of recompense; there is no accumulated sin and no accumulated merit."[86]

In Kings, divine punishment for an individual's bad acts may be delayed for generations:

---

[84] The change is important for assessing Chronicles' position on the restoration of the Davidic monarchy. Japhet argues that "[T]he book of Chronicles is clearly a non-eschatological work"—meaning that, for the Chronicler, the present fulfills God's expectations. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, 499. Others maintain that Chronicles holds out hope for the restoration of Israel with a Davidic monarchy. See Yairah Amit, "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World," in *Prophets, Prophecy and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* (eds. M. H. Floyd and R. L. Haak; LHBOTS, 427; London: T&T Clark International, 2006), 100-101; Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*, 237-41; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 134; Freedman, "The Chronicler's Purpose," 440-42.

[85] Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), 411-12; rep. of *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (trans. J. Sutherland Black and A. Enzies, with preface by W. Robertson Smith; Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1885); trans. of *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, Band 1 (2nd ed.; Berlin: G. Reimer, 1883), 203 [in both the original German as well as in the English translation].

Brian Kelly surveys the "mid-twentieth century consensus" on immediate retribution in Chronicles in ""'Retribution' Revisited," in *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 206-210.

[86] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, 44. Prophets such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel foretold immediate divine recompense, but the Chronicler documents its reality in history. Sara Japhet, *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Highlands of Judah: Collected Studies on the Restoration Period* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 390. See also Amit, "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World," 87-88.

Kelly argues against this view: "Retribution for *persistent and impenitent evil* is certainly one of the book's themes, but such punishment is never 'immediate', nor is it always inevitable. Far from stressing the outworking of a strict theodicy in the world, the Chronicler is concerned primarily to highlight the offer of God's prevenient and undeserved mercy to a sinful yet penitent people…" Brian Kelly, "'Retribution' Revisited," 226. Several passages in Chronicles, however, draw attention to immediate divine retribution (for good or ill) where its working is either delayed or lacking in the Kings' parallels. See note 87.

for example, God declares that retribution for Solomon's idolatry will occur after his death (1 Kgs 11.11-13). In Chronicles, however, justice is meted out within the lifetime of the offender. When King Uzziah transgresses by attempting to usurp the role of priest, he is immediately afflicted with leprosy (2 Chr 26.16-21, 33). Conversely, Jehoshaphat's acknowledgment of total dependence on God for salvation in the face of the enemy ("We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you," 2 Chr 19.12) meets with an immediate and positive response.[87]

Chronicles' theology is inseparable from the book's affirmation of God's zealous interest in the righteousness of every individual, and most especially in the righteousness of monarchs. Here, too, Chronicles' David sets the standard for subsequent kings. David dies "at a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor" (1 Chr 29.28), demonstrating that the piety of a monarch is closely tied to his political fortunes.[88] Chronicles' theology makes the book as much a guide to civic behavior as to religious devotion.

Chronicles' revision of Samuel/Kings also makes for a more fluent presentation of sacred history. Whereas Samuel/Kings at times preserves a patchwork of perspectives, Chronicles maintains a largely consistent outlook. In chapter eight of First Samuel, for instance, God is offended by the people's request for a king and Samuel details the many ways in which a monarch will exploit them (1 Sam 8.7-18). Chapter nine, however, lauds the divinely designated ruler of Israel as God's instrument of salvation (9.15-17). By contrast, Chronicles' endorsement of the institution of monarchy is unequivocal. In this matter, as in all others, the book maintains a homogeneous outlook.

[87] See also 2 Chr 11.17-12.1 [cf. 1 Kgs 14.21-25]; 13.1-22 [cf. 1 Kgs 15.3-6]; 2 Chr 24.15-26 [cf. 2 Kgs 12.3-21/Eng 12.2-20]; 2 Chr 35.20-24 [cf. 2 Kgs 23.28-30]).
[88] David sets the positive example. Saul shows what happens to kings who are unfaithful to God (1 Chr 10.13-14).

Chronicles and Samuel/Kings: Prophecy

Chronicles' treatment of prophecy is a subject of special importance. In Samuel/Kings, the prophets are in some sense "professional," meaning that they have a permanent calling and go by the title "prophet" or "prophetess." Examples include "the prophet Gad" (1 Sam 22.5), "the prophet Nathan" (2 Sam 7.3), "the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite" (1 Kgs 11.29), "the prophet Elijah" (1 Kgs 18.36), "the prophet Isaiah" (2 Kgs 20.1), and "the prophetess Huldah" (2 Kgs 22.14). In Samuel/Kings, there are also travelling bands of prophets (e.g., 1 Sam 10.10, 1 Kgs 20.35, 2 Kgs 4.1) and anonymous prophets (e.g., 1 Kgs 13.11, 18.4). All appear to engage in prophecy as a primary occupation.

Chronicles includes nearly all the prophets mentioned in Samuel/Kings,[89] but the book also presents an important innovation of the office in the form of "*pro tem*" prophets.[90] These are people who come from all ranks of society and assume the role of prophet temporarily. The spirit seizes (literally, clothes) (וְרוּחַ לָבְשָׁה) them in a manner akin to the spirit's possession of the judges in pre-monarchic Israel (e.g. Judg 6.34, 14.19). Examples include the military leader Amasai (1 Chr 12.19 [Eng. 1 Chr 12.18]), the otherwise unknown Azariah son of Oded (2 Chr 15.1), [91] the Levite Jahaziel (2 Chr 20.14), and Zechariah, the son of a priest (2 Chr 24.20).

Unlike the prophets in Samuel/Kings, Chronicles' prophets do not perform miracles nor do they act as intercessors: their purpose is strictly to deliver messages from God, either to the

[89] The exception is Elisha from Second Kings. The prophets in Samuel/Kings who also appear in Chronicles include Nathan (1 Chr 17.1-15), Gad (1 Chr 21.9-13), Shemaiah (2 Chr 11.2-4), and Huldah (2 Chr 34.22-28).
[90] The term comes from Amit, "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World," 93.
[91] Knoppers considers Azariah to be a professional prophet. Knoppers, "Democratizing Revelation? Prophets, Seers and Visionaries in Chronicles," in *Prophecy and Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* (ed. John Day; LHBOTS 531; London: T&T Clark, 2010), 397. Amit, however, classifies him as a temporary prophet. Amit, "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World," 86.

king or to Israel as a whole.[92] For example, in Kings, Elijah resurrects a widow's child (1 Kgs 17.17-24), and Isaiah makes the shadow of the sundial move backwards as a sign to Hezekiah that God will heal him (2 Kgs 20.8-11). In Chronicles, Isaiah's interaction with the king is limited to praying *with* him for the defeat of Sennacherib (2 Chr 32.20). As for Elijah, he works no wonders in Chronicles. In fact, he does not actually even appear in the book. Rather, he delivers his prophecy of doom to Jehoram via a letter (2 Chr 21.12).

Chronicles' notice that the Levitical musicians and singers are prophets further illustrates the variety of prophetic expression (1 Chr 25.1-3). The sons of Aspah, Heman, and Jeduthun prophesy "with lyres, harps, and cymbals" (1 Chr 25.1).[93] Performance of the sacred music and song was not restricted to males only, however. Heman's three daughters as well as his fourteen sons were trained to sing and play "for the service for the house of God" (1 Chr 25.6). As Knoppers puts it, "In Chronicles, the medium is not the message; the message is the message."[94]

Chronicles arguably equalizes the balance between kings and prophets in favor of the kings. In First Samuel, Samuel is both the maker and breaker of King Saul (1 Sam 10, 13.8-14). Samuel does not play that role in Chronicles.[95] Moreover, in Chronicles, rulers receive divine

---

[92] Knoppers, "Democratizing Revelation? Prophets, Seers and Visionaries in Chronicles," 400.
[93] John W. Kleinig lists four ways in which the musicians prophesied: "First, since they stood in God's presence at the temple and mediated between him and his people, their status and authority was prophetic, in that they spoke for God to his people. Like some of the prophets they were authorized to intercede for the people in their song…Second, the manner of their proclamation was prophetic. Like many of the classical prophets they addressed the people in poetry and song. Thirdly, and most significantly, by association with the burnt offering their proclamation was prophetic in purpose….Fourthly, their proclamation was prophetic in power, since it was empowered by the Lord himself. It did not merely speak about him and his strength but actually communicated him and his strength to the people…" John W. Kleinig, *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles* (JSOTSup 156; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 149-150.
[94] Knoppers, "Democratizing Revelation? Prophets, Seers and Visionaries in Chronicles," 400.
[95] In Chronicles, the elders of Israel anoint David king over Israel "according to the word of the Lord through the hand of Samuel" (1 Chr 11.3).

communiqués from diverse individuals and may even assume the role of mediator themselves.[96] Chronicles' claim that "the Lord stirred the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia" (הֵעִיר יְהוָה אֶת־רוּחַ כֹּורֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ־פָּרַס) underscores this point (2 Chr 36.22).

Indeed, in Chronicles this non-Israelite king may also be considered a prophet, and he plays a key role in Israel's history. The Persian monarch proclaims that he has been charged by God to rebuild the Temple, and urges exiled Israelites to return home (2 Chr 36.22-23). Chronicles states that the proclamation is a prophetic fulfillment, demonstrating that God rules over all, even foreign kings, and directs the course of world events. The edict naturally poses another issue about Chronicles' composition because it also opens the book of Ezra with almost identical wording (Ezra 1-3a). Some argue that Chronicles took the verses from Ezra/Nehemiah, while others argue the reverse position.[97] Even without knowing which book borrows from the

[96] Amit goes much further in asserting the denigration of prophets in Chronicles: "…[T]he Chronicler's prophet became a colorless character, a stereotypical preacher, whose sole gift is the ability to interpret current events and to call for belief in God, and the main variation in his appearance is its timing. This monochrome figure is further defined by its function as the historian of his time. Consequently, while in the book of Kings the prophets are highly colorful characters, and the kings often, almost stereotypically, sinners and corrupters, in the historical narrative of the book of Chronicles the figures of the kings outweigh the others. A large part of the book is devoted to David and Solomon, and the other kings notably portrayed are those who engaged in purifications and religious reforms in the temple—Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah. The prophets are consigned to a persistent presence and sermonizing." Amit, "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World," 92.

[97] For an overview of the contours of the debate, see P. L. Redditt, "The Dependence of Ezra-Nehemiah on 1 and 2 Chronicles," in *Unity and Disunity in Ezra-Nehemiah: Redaction, Rhetoric and Reader* (eds. Mark J. Boda and Paul L. Redditt; Hebrew Bible Monograph 17; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 217-40. Most scholars date Ezra/Nehemiah before Chronicles. See, for example, David Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible*, 196; Mark S. Smith, *The Memoirs of God: History, Memory, and the Experience of the Divine in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), xvi; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1076; Brian E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSup 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 17. Carr, Japhet, and Kelly posit Ezra as the source of the edict. See, however, Person, who concludes that Chronicles "likely predates" Ezra/Nehemiah. Person, *The Deuteronomic History and the Books of Chronicles*, 13, 174.

other, however, the doublet allows us to appreciate the role of the edict in Chronicles. In Ezra/Nehemiah, Cyrus's proclamation is the prelude to a description of a resettlement marked by danger, dissent, and disappointment. In Chronicles, the ending opens to a future yet to be described, and is potentially full of hope.

The Character of Chronicles

Debates about the composition and dating of Chronicles are generally subordinate to the question of the aim of the book. Since there are no unequivocal markers of when exactly Chronicles was written, exegetes identify a purpose and then deduce from it the period when such a purpose would be most pertinent. The main objective of Chronicles is thought to fall into one of three different categories: historical, theological, and political.[98] A good number of scholars today consider the book to be in some sense an historical account. Included in this group are Knoppers, Kalimi and Japhet, who view the Chronicler's efforts to be akin to that of a historian.[99] Also in this camp, though from a different perspective, is Steven Schweitzer who

---

Mark Leuchter has recently claimed that Chronicles takes the opening lines of an already authoritative version of Ezra for its ending in order to invite readers to rethink Ezra's assumptions regarding Jeremiah's prophesy. Mark Leuchter, "Rethinking the 'Jeremiah' Doublet in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (eds. Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011). See also Roddy L. Braun, "Cyrus in Second and Third Isaiah, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah," in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein* (eds. M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie, and Gary N. Knoppers; London: T&T Clark International, 2003), 152-55. Knoppers argues, however, that ultimately attempts to ascribe the original edict definitively to one book or the other are "fruitless." Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 76. See also Paul L. Reditt, "The Dependence of Ezra-Nehemiah on 1-2 Chronicles," 262.

[98] For a good summary of the various positions, see Rodney D. Duke, "A Rhetorical Approach to Appreciating the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Author*, 155-58.

[99] Gary N. Knoppers, "History and Historiography: The Royal Reforms," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (eds. M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie; JSOT 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 178-203.

says Chronicles is best classified as utopian literature, the goal of which is to foster reevaluation of the present in light of an idealized past.[100] In this assessment the book's record of events is a literary foil.

The next school stresses Chronicles' theological, exegetical, and homiletic character. By one account, Chronicles is a reinterpretation of scripture along the lines of Jewish midrash.[101] For H. G. M. Williamson, on the other hand, Chronicles is "a 'Levitical sermon', warning and encouraging [the Chronicler's] contemporaries to a responsive faith which may again call down the mercy of their God."[102] Michael Wilcock also considers Chronicles to be a sermon; in his view, its aim parallels that of the book of Revelation: to provide a decisive evaluation of everything that has gone before.[103]

Others think the composition of Chronicles may have been motivated by immediate political concerns. Some see the Chronicler endeavoring to deal with the tensions between Judah and Samaria—and this by two radically different means. Either Chronicles sought to establish

---

Isaac Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns), 2. Kalimi also calls the book the work of "a skilled professional historian." Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, 407.

Japhet says Chronicles is "an idiosyncratic expression of biblical historiography." Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 32. Elsewhere Japhet called Chronicles "theocentric historiography." Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, 11.

Kenneth Hoglund defines historiography as "the process of creating a narrative that possesses cohesion, while treating a variety of different events and chronological periods." Kenneth G. Hoglund, "The Chronicler as Historian: A Comparativist Perspective," in *The Chronicler as Historian,* 20. Hoglund concludes that the Chronicler is "an accomplished historiographer."

[100] Steven James Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 29-30.

[101] William Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles: Volume 1, 1 Chronicles 1 to 2 Chronicles 9: Israel's Place among the Nations* (JSOTSup, 253; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 23. Julius Wellhausen also considered Chronicles to be akin to midrash. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 227.

[102] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 33. See also Gerhard von Rad, "Levitical Sermon in I and II Chronicles," in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* (trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken; Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1966), 267-80.

[103] Michael Wilcock, *The Message of Chronicles: One Church, one Faith, one Lord* (The Bible Speaks Today; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1987.

the exclusive legitimacy of Judah, over and against the Samaritans,[104] or it meant to draw together in one religious community the Israelites of the North and South.[105] Another political concern that Chronicles may be addressing is related to the fears of the newly returned exiles. The book was written to demonstrate that the community meets the qualifications for the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant.[106]

A final perspective, which spans the others, regards Chronicles' aim to be prophetic, and this is the view I find most persuasive. Prophecy's many conduits and forms in Chronicles leaves open the possibility that the Chronicler thought of himself as God's messenger. Knoppers hints at this prospect near the end of his essay on the democratization of prophecy in Chronicles:

> Prophecy as written text is no less prophetic than is prophecy as oral declamation. The inspired exposition and explication of scripture also appears as a form of prophecy….God continues to deliver his word, but does so employing a variety of speakers, context and forms. Indeed, the Chronicler may have thought of his own writing as participating in this larger interpretative prophetic tradition.[107]

---

[104] See Martin Noth, *The Chronicler's History* (trans. H. G. M. Williamson; German original 1943; JSOTS 50; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 101; Robert H. Pfeiffer, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (2nd ed.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 802, 806; Wilhelm Rudolph, *Chronikbücher* (HAT, 21; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1955), viii-ix. More recent scholars include Joachim Becker, *1 Chronik* (NEchtB 18; Wurzburg: Echter, 1986), 9-10; and Rainer Albertz, *A History of Religion in the Old Testament Period* (OTL; Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 545-56.

[105] Charles C. Torrey, *The Chronicler's History of Israel: Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah Restored to its Original Form* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), xxiv-xxv; Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, 318; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 10; and Roddy L. Braun, "A Reconsideration of the Chronicler's Attitude toward the North," *JBL* 96 (1986): 59-62.

[106] E.g., Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1979), 644; and Martin J. Selman, *1 Chronicles: An Introduction & Commentary* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, 10a; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 26.

[107] Knoppers, "Democratizing Revelation? Prophets, Seers and Visionaries in Chronicles," 405. See also Amit, "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World," 99. William Schniedewind also posits that the Chronicler considered himself a prophet. William M. Schniedewind, "Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Historian*, 222.

If the Chronicler did indeed conceive of himself as a prophet, as seems likely, the entire text is best considered an inspired interpretation of sacred history that was meant to replace Genesis-Kings.[108] In this context, "replace" does not mean "discard," but rather "render ineffective."[109] To the extent that Genesis-Kings could be considered a Bible in the Chronicler's day, the aim of the book was to become the "new revised standard version," superseding all others.

Chronicles did not achieve this status. Carr suggests that the book's demotion may have been due to the Hasmoneans' preference for the Deuteronomistic history because they identified more with the "judges" than with the priests and "may have supported the books of the Deuteronomistic history taking priority over their Chronistic ("Priestly" in the broad sense of the word) counterparts."[110] Though Carr's proposal is speculative, his reconstruction of events seems entirely plausible. It is also possible, however, that Chronicles always had secondary status, even in the short run. The great works of scripture are not easily superceded. In any case, authorial intentions do not dictate outcomes.

In the end, Chronicles failed as a replacement Bible but became scripture. Of course the Chronicler never knew of a "Bible" or of a "book of scripture." Canonization was the work of later generations, but once the canon formed Chronicles was forced to take its place alongside of, rather than in the stead of, the books it intended to replace. As part of the Bible, the distinctive elements of its revision of Genesis-Kings—its alternative history and theology, its unique presentation of prophecy and the Temple cult, and its sense of its own completeness—were

[108] Knoppers disagrees. In his commentary on Chronicles, he states, "Chronicles was composed not necessarily as a replacement of, but as an alternative to the primary history." Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9,* 133.
[109] Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture,* 27.
[110] Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible,* 201.

preserved. For readers through the ages, these are the principal features driving Chronicles' reception.

Chapter Two

The Reception of Chronicles' King Manasseh

The responses to Chronicles' Manasseh by exegetes within nascent Judaism and Christianity—ambivalence on the part of the early Rabbis and enthusiastic embrace by the early Church Fathers—exerted great influence in the transmission of tradition within their respective faith communities, and continue to do so to this day. Their interpretations of Manasseh touch on views of human repentance and divine forgiveness, which are central themes of Chronicles.

The reception of Chronicles' Manasseh was complicated from the start by the account of Manasseh in the book of Kings. Parallel accounts in Chronicles and Kings often contain variances, but in this case their versions of King Manasseh's reign are fundamentally at odds. Manasseh engages in heinous acts at the outset of his rule in both Chronicles and Kings, but in Chronicles he repents and is rewarded by God, while in Kings he remains a lifelong villain. The repercussions for Israel also drastically differ. In Kings, the consequences for the people are catastrophic: generations later, they suffer exile on his account. In Chronicles, Manasseh has no role in the destruction of the Temple or of Jerusalem. God recompenses only Manasseh for his actions, first in the form of penalty and then of dispensation.

Confronted with two opposite reports, early Jewish and Christian interpreters followed the common hermeneutical practice (then and now) of reconciling inconsistencies. They sought to harmonize the disparate accounts—meaning they looked to one version to provide context for understanding the other. In their reception of Chronicles' Manasseh, the early Rabbis explored whether the king's sins were so heinous that they warranted his expulsion from covenantal Israel,

despite indications of divine forgiveness. The Rabbis weighed Manasseh's repentance against the enormity of his crimes and against the notice in Kings that he caused the Babylonian exile. They questioned whether he had standing in the world to come, his turn to God notwithstanding; they came to no definitive answer. For the Rabbis, the account in Chronicles is qualified by Kings. By contrast, the early Church Fathers subordinated Kings to Chronicles. They read Chronicles' Manasseh in light of their understanding of the kerygma of Christ. God has mercy on the repentant sinner, no matter how sinful he may be.

These early receptions of Chronicles' King Manasseh proved highly influential for later exegetes. The Rabbis' doubts about Manasseh's fate predisposed other important Jewish interpreters to be equally equivocal in their reception of Chronicles' version. Ultimately in the Jewish transmission of tradition, the repentant king faded away and is now all but forgotten. By contrast, among Christians, Manasseh has had a vigorous afterlife as an exemplar of contrition and reformation.

Yet despite the importance of the reception of Manasseh, it has been a notable weak point in the scholarship of reception history. In one of the most prominent books on Chronicles reception history, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature* by Isaac Kalimi, there is no mention of the original controversy that engulfed Manasseh.[111] Kalimi's treatment of Manasseh is limited to his discussion of a later devotional composition attributed to the king (the Prayer of Manasseh).[112]

The prominent scholar James Sanders, unlike Kalimi, treats Manasseh, but unfortunately only tells half of the story. Sanders is noteworthy for raising the great issue of the development

[111] Isaac Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature: A Historical Journey* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2009).
[112] Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature*, 47, 76-77, 84, 116, 121, 311.

of individualism in Judaism and Christianity. In a well-known essay he writes:

> As Greek culture became more and more influential in Semitic, and especially Jewish thinking, increasing attention was given to the moral struggles of the individual, as in Ecclesiastes and the Psalter. This became so much the case that the Chronicler told of King Manasseh's repentance and of God's acceptance of his repentance to the point of restoring him to the throne (2 Chron. 33:10-17). The Chronicler, however, failed to record a prayer of repentance for Manasseh. Eventually such a prayer was attributed to Manasseh, and today is present in Greek and Slavonic Orthodox canons, but not in Protestant or Catholic canons…. God's acceptance of the repentance of individuals, no matter how heinous their sins or character, became a cornerstone of Judaism, which focuses on the belief that God can be obeyed and pleased by human effort.[113]

In making Chronicles' Manasseh the parade example of the development of individual repentance in Judaism, Sanders tracks the line of the king's reception that leads to the Prayer of Manasseh, which became important to Christians. What he omits is the line of reception that leads to the foundational texts of Judaism. This line was ultimately determinative of Manasseh's reception in Judaism. Whether or not God accepted Chronicles' King Manasseh's repentance and what that repentance portended for eternal Israel were matters of contentious debate among the early Rabbis, a point missed by Sanders. His account leaves us with the false impression that Chronicles' King Manasseh was as warmly received by Jews as by Christians from the outset.

The aim of this chapter is to give a full accounting of the reception of Chronicles' Manasseh by the early Rabbis and Church Fathers. Before analyzing their interpretations, however, it is important to understand Chronicles' Manasseh in biblical context as well review the various receptions of King Manasseh that led up to and set the stage for their reading of the biblical ruler.

---

[113] James A. Sanders, "The Stabilization of the Tanak," in *The History of Biblical Interpretation: Volume 1, The Ancient Period* (eds. Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003), 239.

Chronicles' King Manasseh: The Biblical Context

Chronicles' revision of King Manasseh presents a portrait that was at stark variance with his depiction in Kings. It is also at odds with the book of Jeremiah, which sides with Kings. In the case of Manasseh we are thrown into the midst of one of the greatest deviations of Chronicles from the rest of the biblical accounts.

Kings begins its account of Manasseh with the notice that he ruled for fifty-five years (2 Kgs 21.1), making him the longest reigning monarch in Israel's history. He is unequivocally evil (21.2): he consorts with wizards and soothsayers and emulates them (21.6), he erects an idol of his own making in the Temple (21.4), he offers his progeny as burnt sacrifice (21.6), and he spurs his people to commit great evil themselves. The king sheds "very much" (הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד) innocent blood—so much that it fills Jerusalem "from end to end" (פֶּה לְפֶה) (21.16).

God takes note of Manasseh's wickedness and vows punishment, not on the king, but upon Judah:

> Because King Manasseh of Judah has committed these abominations, has done more evil than all the Amorites did who were before him, and has induced Judah also to sin with his idols, therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I am bringing upon Jerusalem and Judah such evil that both ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the leveling line of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping and turning it upside down. I will abandon the remnant of my possession, and give them into the hand of their enemies….
> 2 Kgs 21.11-14a

God determines, however, to delay punishment for several generations; when it finally comes, it falls on the people as a whole, resulting in destruction and exile (2 Kgs 21.10-16, 23.26, 24.3-4).

The book of Jeremiah also identifies Manasseh as the reason for Israel's deportation to Babylon. Through Jeremiah, God declares that not even Moses and Samuel could have deterred

the divine wrath against Judah (Jer 15.1-3), wrath that Manasseh incited: "I will make them an object of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what Manasseh son of Hezekiah of Judah did in Jerusalem" (Jer 15.4).

The Chronicler revised Kings' account through inclusion, omission, and expansion in order to tell a tale of repentance. He imported almost verbatim Kings' opening report on the length of Manasseh's reign and his bad acts (2 Chr 33.1-19),[114] and omitted God's proclamation of doom as well as the description of Jerusalem filled with blood. In place of the omitted material, the Chronicler inserted another narrative. Because Manasseh and the people failed to heed God, God sent the Assyrians, who took Manasseh in shackles to Babylon. As a captive, he did an about-turn: "When he was in dire straits, he entreated the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers" (וּכְהָצֵר לוֹ חִלָּה אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו וַיִּכָּנַע מְאֹד מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתָיו) (33.12). God heard his prayer and restored him to Jerusalem and his throne (2 Chr 33.11-13a). For the remainder of his life, Manasseh was a reformed man. He cast out the idols, restored proper worship in the Temple, and ordered Judah to serve God (33.15-16). The people, however, continued to sacrifice on the high places (33.17). The Chronicler's expansion ends here.[115] The narrative continues with a notice of Manasseh's death that closely follows Kings and then closes with a direct quotation of Kings' ending: "His son Amnon succeeded him" (2 Chr 33.20; cf. 2 Kgs 21.18). By encapsulating his revisions within citations from Kings, the Chronicler strove to replace—and derive authority from—the older text.

---

[114] In its opening, Chronicles omits Kings' notice of his mother's name (2 Kgs 21.1). Also, in Kings, Manasseh passes only one son through fire, but in Chronicles he immolates "his sons" (בָּנָיו).

[115] Scholars debate whether the Chronicler invented his new material or borrowed from existing sources. The answer bears on the question of Chronicles' historicity: if he drew on written or oral tradition, the book may preserve important historical information. Ralph Klein summarizes the various positions in his commentary on Second Chronicles. Ralph Klein, *2 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; ed. Paul D. Hanson; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 473-77.

Scholars posit several motives for the Chronicler's revisions. Some maintain that the Chronicler constructed his version of Manasseh as a topological paradigm for exile and return, demonstrating the efficacy of repentance.[116] In this case, Chronicles' history of the ruler offered an appealing assessment of post-exilic Judah: restoration is a sign of divine approbation.

Students of Chronicles also argue that Kings' version of Manasseh's reign presented a theological problem for the Chronicler. In Chronicles, David sets the gold standard for rulers. As a reward for his righteousness, he dies "at a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor" (1 Chr 29.28). How, then, could the longest ruling monarch of Judah be irredeemably wicked?[117] By expanding and revising Kings' account, the Chronicler transforms Manasseh into a model penitent and Torah-observant king. The importance for the Chronicler of maintaining this correlation between faithful obedience and a ruler's political fortunes is illustrated, not only by his treatment of Kings' Manasseh, but also by his treatment of Kings' Josiah.

---

[116] Those who think Chronicles' Manasseh is a topological paradigm for exile and return include William Schniedewind, "The Source Citations of King Manasseh: King Manasseh in History and Homily," *VT* 91 (1991), 450-61; H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (The New Century Bible Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 388-89; and Rudolf Mosis, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistichen Gesichtswerkes* (Freiburger Theologische Studien, Zweiundneunzigster Band; Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 193-94.

Chronicles' Manasseh is the only person in the Bible to encompass and complete the full cycle of wrongdoing, deportation, remedial action, and restoration. The odd notice that the Assyrians take him to Babylon may indicate that he is meant to represent all of Israel, the north as well as the south. Similar events are the capture and return of the Ark of the Covenant in Samuel (1 Sam 4-7.2; 2 Sam 6) and the capture and return of the Judahites by the Israelites in 2 Chr 28.8-15, but neither accord with the ideal paradigm in which the one in exile repents. In the first case, God allows the ark to be taken because of Israel's sins, but the impetus for its return is the suffering the Ark inflicts on its captors. In the second case, the captors, not the captives, have transgressed and make amends.

[117] Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 474; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1003; Wilhelm Rudolph, *Esra und Nehemia* (HAT 20; Tübingen: Mohr, 1949), 317.

Manasseh and Josiah in Chronicles and Kings

The Chronicler established important connections and contrasts between Manasseh and Josiah to drive home the point that God rewards the pious and punishes the disobedient, even—or especially—when they are monarchs. If Manasseh's long reign and peaceful end prompted the Chronicler to revise his tale, then Kings' report on Josiah also instigated a new narrative, one that would account for his untimely and violent death.

In some ways, Chronicles' Josiah is even more devout than the Josiah of Kings. He explicitly begins to seek God at age sixteen and commences his reforms at twenty, prior to the discovery of the book of the Law (2 Chr 34.3-7). In Kings, the discovery marks the start of his reforms, when Josiah is twenty-six (2 Kgs 22.3-13). Also, Chronicles expands the account of Josiah's celebration of the Passover. Kings covers the event in three verses (2 Kgs 23.21-23). By contrast, Chronicles' report continues for nineteen verses and offers a detailed description of the ritual, highlighting the ruler's devotion to God (Chr 35.1-19).

The Chronicler draws on Josiah's renowned piety to elevate Manasseh, and here, too, Chronicles presents an important contrast to Kings. Chronicles likens the devoutness of Chronicles' Manasseh to that of Chronicles' Josiah, whereas Kings strongly contrasts Manasseh's wickedness with Josiah's righteousness. In Chronicles, Manasseh and Josiah both go to extra lengths to humble themselves before God. Manasseh humbles himself "greatly" (כנע מאד) (2 Chr 33.12). Chronicles' Josiah shows equal fervor. The prophetess Huldah proclaims that because the king has humbled himself (כנע) before the Lord, God has heard him (2 Chr 34.27a//2 Kgs 22.19), and then repeats that God has heard him because he has humbled himself (2 Chr 34.27b). This repetition is lacking in the parallel verse in Kings. Moreover, in Chronicles, both Manasseh and Josiah remove idols in order to restore proper worship (2 Chr 33.15, 34.3-4).

Kings, however, is emphatic: the two kings stand in opposition to each other, with Manasseh's evil outmatching Josiah's good. The text states that not even Josiah's exemplary piety could turn aside the divine ire that Manasseh has provoked (2 Kgs 23.26).

For the Chronicler, however, Josiah's piety becomes a stumbling block. In both Kings and Chronicles, Huldah prophesies that God will recompense Josiah for his extraordinary penance by granting him a peaceful death (2 Kgs 22.20//2 Chr 34.28). Nevertheless, according to Kings, he is slain by the Egyptian ruler Neco on the battlefield (2 Kgs 23.29). The Chronicler expands the narrative in order to account for this seeming contradiction between God's word and deed, which also happens to contradict the principle that the upright die well. In Chronicles' account, Neco is passing through to wage war against another country on the command of God. He tells Josiah, "Stop opposing God, who is with me, so that he will not destroy you" (2 Chr 35.21)." Josiah disregards the warning, joins the battle, and is mortally wounded. His death is directly linked to his failure to heed "the words of Neco from the mouth of God" (2 Chr 35.22). Josiah's end is just punishment for his disobedience. In the Chronicler's revision of Kings, therefore, both Josiah and Manasseh bear out the dictum that God favors righteous rulers.

Early Receptions of Chronicles' King Manasseh

Textual evidence from the first centuries before and after the start of the common era indicates that interpretation of Chronicles' King Manasseh simultaneously began to move in two different directions. One strand of tradition privileged Chronicles and expanded on the ruler's reformation. Another subordinated Chronicles to Kings by adding to Manasseh's wicked acts and denying that he ever reformed.

Chronicles' King Manasseh in the Septuagint[118]

Originating sometime in the second century BCE,[119] Septuagint Chronicles (LXX Chr) occupied something of a middle ground within the transmission of the Manasseh traditions. Its ending blamed Manasseh for the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, while its word choice elevated Manasseh's contrition to the level of the Psalmist.

LXX Chr does not differ significantly from the MT in its rendition of Manasseh's life: the wicked king repents and subsequently leads an exemplary life.[120] The same cannot be said for the concluding chapters of LXX Chr, however, which describe the events leading up to Judah's fall.[121] Here LXX Chr blames Manasseh for the exile:

> Nevertheless, the Lord did not turn away from the anger of his great rage with which the Lord was angry with rage against Judah for all the provocations with which Manasseh provoked him to anger. LXX 2 Chr 35.19c

> Nevertheless, the Lord's rage was upon Judah, in order to remove it from his presence on account of the sins of Manasseh in all that he did… LXX 2 Chr 36.5c

These verses present a powerful alternative to MT Chr's narrative: God punishes Israel for Manasseh's abominations *despite* his repentance. Though there is a consensus among

[118] Following the recommendation of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, I use A. Rahlfs' *Septuaginta, id est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935).

[119] The general consensus is that the LXX Chr's *terminus ad quem* is Eupolemos' citation of LXX Chr in the second century BCE. Leslie C. Allen, *The Greek Chronicles: The Relation of the Septuagint of I and II Chronicles to the Massoretic Text, Part I: The Translator's Craft* (VTSup 25; Leiden: Brill, 1974), 22; Emanuel Tov, "The Septuagint," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. M. Jan Mulder; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 162-64.

[120] LXX Chr's omissions all occur in chapter one: LXX 1 Chr (Codex Vaticanus: Unical B) lacks 1 Chr 1.11-16, 17b-24a, and 27b.

[121] LXX Chr adds 2 Chr 35.19 a-d; 36. 2 a-c, 5 a-d.

scholars that these verses were not part of the original translation,[122] there continues to be some debate over their source. Ralph Klein thinks it likely that the translator took them from LXX Kgs.[123] Leslie Allen argues that these verses originally supplemented a Hebrew version of Chronicles, which then became the source of LXX Chr.[124] In either case, LXX Chr appears to be harmonizing Chronicles with Kings. Manasseh repents but he is still accountable for the deportation of Judah.

Also, LXX Chr does not reproduce MT Chr's linguistic links tying Chronicles' Manasseh's piety to the piety of the Josiah of Kings. LXX Chr employs the aorist passive of ταπεινόω to describe the king's self-abasement (ἐταπεινώθη σφόδρα, "he humbled himself greatly," LXX 2 Chr 33.12), which links Manasseh's humbling to the Josiah of LXX Chr (LXX 2 Chr 34.27) but not to the Josiah of LXX Kings. In that book, Josiah feels ashamed before the Lord (καὶ ἐνετράπης ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου) (4 Kgdms 22.19). The verb here is the aorist passive of ἐντρέπω.

LXX Chr's choice of ταπεινόω, however, creates an association between Manasseh and the Psalmist. Of the sixteen instances of the aorist indicative passive of this verb outside of LXX Chr, twelve are expressions of self-abasement from the psalms.[125] The psalms also contain the

---

[122] Knoppers says that the additions at the end of LXX Chr (LXX Chr 35.19a-d; 36.2a-c, 5a-d) "differ from MT Chronicles and only resemble LXX Chronicles in part." Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9*, 56.

[123] Klein, *2 Chronicles*, 530. Klein argues that the source of the supplements is LXX Kgs (and primarily from a proto-Lucianic recension of Kgs LXX).

[124] "It has not been realized hitherto that in a large part of this section it is not a case of the *Vorlage*'s having been adapted to Ki[ngs] piecemeal. Rather, [Chr] 36.1-8 has been abandoned, and II Ki[ngs] 23.30b-24.6 taken over *en bloc*….It is not insignificant that the material taken over from Ki[ngs] would amount to one whole column: this factor serves to confirm the Heb origin of the assimilation." Leslie C. Allen, *The Greek Chronicles*, 216.

[125] LXX Ps 37.9 (MT Ps 38.8); Ps 38.3 (MT Ps 39.2); Ps 43.26 (MT Ps 44.25); Ps 87.16 (MT Ps 88.15); Ps 105.42, 43 (MT Ps 106.42 [כנע], 43); Ps 106.12 (MT Ps 107.12 [כנע], 17); Ps 114.6 (MT Ps 116.6); Ps 115.1 (MT Ps 116.10); 118.107 (MT Ps 119.107); 141.7 (MT Ps 142.6). See

only other references to humbling oneself "greatly" (ταπεινόω σφόδρα): LXX Ps 37.9 (MT Ps 38.8), 115.1 (MT Ps 116.10), 118.107 (MT Ps 119.107), and 141.7 (MT Ps 142.6). In the LXX, Manasseh's humbling of himself is more akin to the contrition of the Psalmist than to that of anyone else.[126]

Two Prayers of Manasseh

Two independent compositions from the ancient period purported to be the "Prayer of Manasseh" and both attest to a rich interpretive tradition of filling gaps. What exactly did Chronicles' King Manasseh say in his entreaty to have prompted such an immediate and favorable response from God? Both expansions embrace and reinforce Chronicles' account over and against that of Kings.

The oldest surviving reconstruction of Manasseh's prayer comes from Qumran (4Q381). Among the Dead Sea scrolls, there is a poorly preserved prayer with a superscription attributing it to Chronicles' King Manasseh—"The prayer of Manasseh, King of Judah when the King of Assyria imprisoned him."[127] The speaker declares that he has sinned and awaits God's deliverance. The text is fragmented and breaks off after fourteen lines.[128] It is part of two (also

---

also LXX Isa 2.9, 3.8, 57.9; 1 Macc 12.15. In LXX Chr: 2 Chr 13.18 (the Israelites were humbled by Judah); 32.26 (Hezekiah humbled himself); 33.12 (Manasseh); 33.23 (Manasseh twice) (Amon, who did not humble himself, and Manasseh, who did); 34.27 (Josiah twice).

[126] For a general overview of the semantic differences between MT 2 Chr 33 and LXX 2 Chr 33, see Kenneth G. Stenstrup, "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity: A Consideration of Text, Context and Hermeneutics in Portrayals of King Manasseh in Jewish and Christian Scripture and Related Literature Prior to the Mid-Fifth Century C.E." (PhD diss., Claremont Graduate University, 2000), 159-63. Stenstrup, however, does not discuss 2 Chr 33.12.

[127] Translation by Eileen M. Schuller, *Non-Canonical Psalms From Qumran: A Pseudipigraphic Collection* (Harvard Semitic Studies 28; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 151.

[128] For a reconstructed translation, see Schuller, *Non-Canonical Psalms from Qumran*, 151 and Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (revised edition; London: Penguin Books, 2004), 324. See also Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea*

fragmented) manuscripts of Hebrew poetry. The collection as a whole dates from the first century BCE,[129] but the time of the composition of the superscription and prayer remains unclear. Eileen Schuller proposes that the superscription is a later addition to the prayer, reflecting the prayer's association with Manasseh, once Chronicles' version began to circulate.[130] Alternatively William Schiedewind speculates that the prayer was an extrabiblical witness to Manasseh's turn and became the source for the Chronicler's revision.[131] In this case, the prayer would predate Chronicles' composition.

Another composition, with different content, also claims by virtue of its superscription to be the "Prayer of Manasseh" and may also have been written during the first century BCE.[132] Of the two prayers attributed to Manasseh, this one alone has endured in reception. It is a complete, well-crafted document consisting of fifteen verses, preserved in Syriac and Greek. Its association with Chronicles' king stems in part from the speaker's assertion that he is shackled, calling to mind the fetters of Chronicles' Manasseh as he is led to Babylonia. It begins with a description of God's attributes, highlighting forgiveness of atoning sinners, followed by a confession of wrongdoing and present distress. There is a plea for mercy, and then rejoicing over the salvation that is close at hand. Whether the work has a Jewish or Christian origin is disputed.[133]

Scrolls: A New Translation (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 436. Wise, Abegg, and Cook consider Fragment 45 also to be part of the prayer.

[129] Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 319.

[130] Schuller, *Non-Canonical Psalms from Qumran*, 162.

[131] William M. Schniedewind, "The Source Citations of King Manasseh: King Manasseh in History and Homily," 460.

[132] James Sanders' introduction to The Prayer of Manasseh in the *NRSV*, 1568. Pieter van der Horst and Judith Newman tentatively date it to the first or second centuries BCE. Pieter W. van der Horst and Judith H. Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 155.

[133] James H. Charlesworth asserts, "The author was obviously a Jew, as almost all specialists today recognize." "Prayer of Manasseh," *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols; Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1985), 2:628. So too van der Horst and Newman "make

The prayer is an ardent appeal is for personal salvation:

> Therefore you, O Lord, God of the righteous, have not constituted repentance (μετάνοιαν) for the righteous… but you have constituted repentance for me, who am a sinner (vs 8).
> I beg, beseeching you: forgive me, Lord, forgive me! Do not destroy me with my lawless deeds…
> For you, O Lord, are the God of those who repent….[134]
> (ὅτι σὺ εἶ κύριε ὁ θεὸς τῶν μετανοούντων) (vs 13).

As depicted in this reception, Manasseh is a lonely penitent beseeching God from the depths of his own individual suffering.

"The Prayer of Manasseh" first appeared in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, a Syrian composition dating from the third century CE and then again in the *Apostolic Constitutions* (3.22:4-14), a fourth-century CE work that imported the *Didascalia*'s rendition of Manasseh's history.[135] The *Didascalia* is an important ancient witness to Christian reception of Chronicles' Manasseh because it was a formative guide for both clergy and lay members of the early Church.

In retelling Manasseh's life, the *Didascalia* placed Kings in the service of Chronicles. In

---

the tentative assumption that the Prayer of Manasseh played a [liturgical] role in early Judaism before being incorporated into the Christian tradition." van der Horst and Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek*, 148. James Davila makes a convincing argument for favoring Christian authorship, though he does not rule out the possibility of Jewish origins. James R. Davila, "Is the Prayer of Manasseh a Jewish Work?" in *Heavenly Tablets: Interpretation, Identity and Tradition* (eds. Lynn LiDonnici and Andrea Lieber; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 75-85.

[134] All quotations of "The Prayer of Manasseh" are from the translation by Pieter W. van der Horst and Judith H. Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek*, 165-66.

[135] van der Horst and Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek*, 151-54. Its other witnesses from this early period are a fragmented Greek text from the fourth century and a Latin palimpsest from the fifth century. For the date of the *Didascalia*, see Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *The Didascalia apostolorum: An English Version with Introduction and Annotation* (Studia Traditionis Theologiae: Explorations in Early and Medieval Theology; Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2009), 54. For the date of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, see Davila, "Is the Prayer of Manasseh a Jewish Work?," 77-78, 85. See also van der Horst and Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek*, 148, 151. Other early Syriac witnesses to "The Prayer of Manasseh" include "a biblical manuscript, a Melchite Psalter…as well as numerous Horologia, liturgical books." van der Horst and Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek*, 157-58.

chapter seven, the author exhorts bishops to compare the sinners in their charge to Manasseh so that they may be more forgiving to their parishioners. The text describes God's determination to destroy Israel on account of Manasseh having shed innocent blood (2 Kgs 21.16), but then relates that God punishes the king personally by sending the Assyrians to take him captive (2 Chr 33.14). The imprisoned king humbles himself greatly before God and prays (2 Chr 33.15-16), uttering "The Prayer of Manasseh." The narrative seamlessly resumes with details of Manasseh's liberation from bondage, some of which are absent from Chronicles. Its synopsis of the remainder of the king's life borrows language from Deuteronomy (Deut 6.4-5[136]) and from the record of his end in Chronicles (2 Chr 33.13-20).

> And the Lord listened to the voice of Manasses, and had mercy on him. A flame of fire was formed around him, and the iron around him was melted. And he delivered Manasses from his afflictions, and restored him to his Kingdom in Jerusalem. And Manasses acknowledged the Lord saying: "He alone is the Lord God." And he served the Lord God with all his heart and with all his soul all the days of his life, and was accounted just. And he slept in peace with his fathers. And Amon, his son, reigned in his place.[137]

The text concludes: "Dearest children, you have heard how the Lord forgave Manasses, who was an idolater and slew the innocent, yet repented. Surely there is no sin worse than idolatry, but there is room for repentance."[138] For the author of the *Didascalia*, Chronicles' Manasseh should have inspired bishops to show forbearance to even the worst of their congregants.

The inclusion of "The Prayer of Manasseh" among the Odes of the fifth-century Codex

[136] Deut 6.4-5: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." The invocation of Deut 6.4-5 also recalls Matt 22.37-40; Mk 12.30, and Lk 10.27.
[137] DA 2.22.15-16. All translations of the DA are from Stewart-Sykes, *The Didascalia apostolorum*.
[138] DA 2.23.1.

Alexandrinus attests to its canonical status within the community that produced this Bible.[139] The Odes appear after the Psalter as an independent collection of poetry and are songs or prayers by biblical figures (with the exception of the concluding doxology). "The Prayer of Manasseh" is the eighth Ode. It follows a prayer of Hezekiah and precedes a prayer of Azariah, reflecting chronological order. Significantly, it is the only Ode attributed to a biblical character that is not itself a part of scripture.[140] The prayer was on equal footing with such poetic passages as the two songs of Moses (Ex 15.1-19 and Deut 32.1-43) and Mary's song of praise (Lk 1.46-55). Its incorporation within this Bible marked the growing influence of the "pro-Manasseh" strand within the early Christian community.

Josephus

The Jewish historian Josephus (37-c. 100 CE) also favored Chronicles' account of Manasseh over that of Kings, and he made unique expansions in his reception of Chronicles, adding psychological depth to his portrait. In *Jewish Antiquities* (*JA*, written 93/94 CE), an apologetic history of Israel directed to both Jews and Greeks,[141] Josephus drew on Chronicles in

[139] Codex Alexandrinus is also the first record of the prayer's transmission in Greek.

[140] The fourteen Odes are: Song of Moses in Exodus (Ex 15.1-19), Song of Moses in Deuteronomy (Deut 32.1-43), Hannah's prayer (1 Sam 2.1-10), Hezekiah's prayer (Isa 26.9-20), Jonah's prayer (Jonah 2.3-10), Habakkuk's prayer (Hab 3.2-19), Manasseh's prayer, Azariah's prayer (LXX Dan 3.26-45), Hymn of the Fathers (LXX Dan 3.52-88), Mariam the Theotokos's prayer (Lk 1.46-55), Symeon's prayer (Lk 2.29-32), Zacharias's prayer (Lk 1.68-79), and the Gloria (the Dawn Hymn).

[141] *JA* is both rewritten scripture and apologetic historiography. It covers the history of the Jews from the beginning of time to Josephus's near present, and is written in Greek for both a Gentile and Jewish audience. (Josephus explains the significance of the Sabbath, of Hebrew weights and measures, and Jewish ritual practice, indicating a Gentile audience [*JA*, 3.6.6]. However, he also addresses his fellow Jews, as when he apologizes to "my own countrymen" for altering the order of the narrative regarding the giving of the law to Moses on Sinai [*JA*, 4.8.4]). All quotations of *Jewish Antiquities* are from Christopher T. Begg and Paul Spilsbury, *Flavius Josephus: Judean Antiquities Books 8-10* (Flavius Josephus, Translation and Commentary, vol. 5; Leiden: Brill, 2005).

his description of Manasseh's reign. The ramifications of Josephus's reception were extensive, as *JA* was enormously influential for the Fathers of the early Church.[142]

In *JA*, Josephus' Manasseh throws a light on the human response to suffering and to divine approbation. According to Josephus, when Manasseh was imprisoned, he prayed that God would "make the enemy humane and merciful to him."[143] When God heard his plea and returned the king to Jerusalem, Manasseh hastened to "change his mind" (ὧν μεταβουλεύειν) and "exhibited such a change (μεταβολῆ) that, for as long as he continued to live, he was regarded as most blessed and enviable…"[144] Josephus's expansion gave his readers more information on the private and public effects of Manasseh's plight and repentance.

Josephus heightened the drama by amplifying the king's wrongful acts leading up to his captivity. He blackened Manasseh's record beyond the report in Kings or Chronicles, and thereby made Manasseh's turn that much more remarkable. *JA*'s description of the king's initial contempt for God cites his lawlessness and impiety (reflecting Kings and Chronicles), and further reports that Manasseh murdered prophets: it was their blood that filled Jerusalem from end to end.[145] When forced to face the consequences of his wrongdoing, however, Josephus's Manasseh illuminates the process—and power—of inner transformation.

The Ascension of Isaiah and 2 Baruch

Emerging alongside and running counter to the embrace of Chronicles in the pair of

[142] "Josephus occupies a place in Christian literature second only to the Bible itself in importance. For the Church, the Jewish historian has been *the* extra-biblical historical authority for the biblical and intertestamental periods as well as the history spanning the life of Jesus and the early Christian community." Michael E. Hartwick, *Josephus As an Historical Source in Patristic Literature Through Eusebius* (Brown Judaic Studies, 128; Atlanta: Scholars' Press, 1989), 1.
[143] *JA*, 10.41.
[144] *JA*, 10.42-45.
[145] *JA*, 10.38.

prayers of Manasseh and Josephus's *JA* were two other textual witnesses: the description of Isaiah's martyrdom in the first five chapters of *The Ascension of Isaiah*[146] (extant in Ethiopic with early attestations in Greek and Latin) and *2 Baruch* (extant in Syriac with an early attestation in Greek). They indicate that by the first and second centuries CE an influential anti-Manasseh strand of Jewish tradition had hardened and deepened.[147]

The Ascension of Isaiah expanded Manasseh's impious acts to include the murder of Isaiah. In the opening chapter, Isaiah tells King Hezekiah of his son's wickedness even before the child is born (1.9). Indeed, when Manasseh becomes king, he abandons the Lord to serve the

---

[146] I exclude the Testament of Hezekiah (3.13-4.22), which is considered by scholars to be a later Christian intrusion. Louis Ginzberg states, "The Jewish sources contain nothing about the ascension of Isaiah, and accordingly the Jewish part of the Ascension of Isaiah is very likely limited to Isaiah's martyrdom, the rest being of Christian origin." Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (trans. Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin; 2nd ed.; 2 vols.; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2003), 2:1058 n. 103.

[147] For the dating of the final form of the Ascension of Isaiah to the first century/second century CE, see Robert G. Hall, "The Ascension of Isaiah: Community Situation, Date, and Place in Early Christianity," *JBL* 109 (1990), 306; Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Volume 1, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 99; Justo L. González, *A History of Christian Thought, Volume 1, From the Beginning to the Council of Chalcedon AD 451* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 91.

Michael Knibb considers the account of Isaiah's martyrdom to be a first-century composition. He argues that the tradition of Isaiah's martyrdom at the hands of Manasseh originated in the second century BCE and that its first transmission was in Hebrew. Michael Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah (Second Century B.C.-Fourth Century A.D.: A New Translation and Introduction)," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Volume 2* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), 144-49. C. Detlef G. Müller also asserts a Jewish origin for the tradition, and speculates that it may come from "the circles of the Qumran community." He dates the final composition of the whole text to the second half of the second century. C. Detlef G. Müller, "The Ascension of Isaiah," in *New Testament Apocrypha: Writings Related to the Apostles, Apocalypses, and Related Subjects* (ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; trans. R. McL. Wilson; 2nd ed; Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 604-605.

David M. Gurtner dates 2 Baruch to 95 CE. David M. Gurtner, "'The Twenty-Fifth Year of Jeconiah' and the Date of 2 Baruch," *JSP* 18 (2008): 23–32. A. F. J. Klijn dates it to the first decades of the second century and argues for its original transmission in Hebrew. A. F. J. Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch, a new Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:616-7.

powers of evil (2.2). Isaiah flees to a desert mountain (2.7-9) where eventually he is discovered (3.1). Manasseh condemns Isaiah to death on the charge of being a false prophet,[148] and the king himself performs the execution, sawing Isaiah in half with a wood saw (5.1). Chronicles' report of Manasseh's repentance and divine reward are missing from the narrative.[149]

In *2 Baruch,* Chronicles was not ignored—it was repudiated. Its reception of Manasseh elaborated on his bad acts and raised resistance to exonerating the king to a new level. Though *2 Baruch* purports to be a record of the visions of Jeremiah's friend and scribe Baruch following the Babylonian exile, it was written in the wake of the destruction of the Second Temple.[150] As the text explores the reasons for Israel's suffering, it perpetuated the charge that Manasseh is to blame.

Baruch's vision of six black waters alternating with six bright waters (each corresponding to bad or good figures in Israel's history) identifies Manasseh as the ninth (black) water and adds to the list of his crimes.[151] His abominations now include the marriage of women "violently polluted" and the expulsion of priests.[152] Kings and Chronicles mention that Manasseh carved his own idol (2 Kgs 21.7//2 Chr 33.7). *2 Baruch* provided the details: It had four faces pointed to the four winds, plus a fifth face on top "as an opponent against the zeal of the Mighty One" (64.3).[153]

---

[148] In this work, the Samaritan Belkira accuses Isaiah of predicting that Judah and its king will be taken captive and of claiming to have seen God, contradicting Moses's statement that none can do so and live (Ex. 33.20) (3.6-10).
[149] For an English translation, see Michael Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah," 156-76.
[150] Both Gurtner and Klijn assign it a post-Second Temple date. See n. 147.
[151] The only other Israelite monarch to be a dark water is Jeroboam. He is the seventh water.
[152] All English translations are from Daniel M. Gurtner, *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text With Greek and Latin Fragments, English Translation, Introduction, and Concordances* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009). Gurtner, *Second Baruch*, 107.
[153] Gurtner, *Second Baruch*, 109.

Manasseh's wickedness was so great that God's "glory" left the sanctuary (64.6).[154]

Most importantly, the text took direct aim at the reverence accorded Manasseh's prayer. Expanding on Chronicles' account of Manasseh's captivity, it reported that the king was imprisoned in a bronze horse, which was then melted. While enduring this torture, the king prayed and his entreaty was indeed heard by God. His reprieve, however, was nothing more than a sign of future punishment (64.7). In *2 Baruch*, those who do not have a share in the world to come are doomed to the fire (44.15), and the text stated that this will also be Manasseh's "final abode" (64.9). In *2 Baruch*'s reception, Manasseh's prayer was a desperate appeal by a villain whose everlasting torment had merely been postponed.[155] Its portrait of Chronicles' Manasseh opposed the depiction of the king in Josephus and the "prayers" of Manasseh.

The Reception of Chronicles' Manasseh in Early Rabbinic Literature

The issue of whether Chronicles' Manasseh has a share of the world to come was of utmost importance to early Jewish exegetes. Building on biblical ideas of resurrection, eternal reward and punishment, and collective redemption,[156] the notion of having a share in the world to come meant having a part in the corporate afterlife of Israel.[157] The question of Manasseh's

[154] Gurtner, *Second Baruch*, 109.
[155] See also the Peshitta of 2 Chr 33.7, which records a similar tradition. The date of the translation of the Peshitta Old Testament is second to third century CE. Sebastian P. Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press LLC, 2006), 17.
[156] Isa 26.19, Ezek 37.1-13, Dan 12.1-2.
[157] Jon Levenson gives a good summary of the corporate and national character of the restoration of Jews in the world to come: "According to halakhah, converts to Judaism acquire not only new religious practices and beliefs but also a new ethnic identity; they acquire new parents, Abraham and Sarah, and become members of the unique natural family with a supernatural assignment that is the Jewish people." Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 22. Later in this same work, he states, "Here I refer again to the collective or national character of that promise in the Hebrew Bible: it is the people of Israel and not individual Israelites who are granted the eternal covenant…" Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 176.

standing arose in formative texts of rabbinic Judaism (the Mishnah, the Tosefta, the Yerushalmi, and the Bavli), and their answers varied. The ambivalence may indicate that, for the Rabbis, there was a limit to how much individual repentance could compensate for evil deeds when the collective composition of eternal Israel was at stake.

The Mishnah (200 CE) closely paralleled *2 Baruch* in its reception—and rejection—of Chronicles' Manasseh. Tractate *Sanhedrin* records a discussion about the ultimate fate of Israelites, which begins with the claim that all Israelites have a share in the world to come (כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא).[158] This statement is amended first to exclude certain classes of people and then specific individuals, including the idolatrous kings Jeroboam, Ahab, and Manasseh. R. Judah disagrees, citing 2 Chr 33.13 in which God hears Manasseh's entreaty and restores him to Jerusalem and his kingdom. The others reply, "He [God] restored him to his kingdom, but he did not restore him to the life of the world to come" (למלכותו השיבו ולא השיבו לחיי העולם הבא).[159] According to these Rabbis, whatever transpired between Manasseh and God, it did not convey permanent standing to the king.

The Tosefta's reception of the Manasseh tradition revealed, however, that the question of Manasseh's fate was far from settled. Emerging at roughly the same time as the Mishnah, it

---

In *Jesus and Judaism,* Sanders observes that the corporate character of salvation was not part of Jesus' proclamation, and this represented a significant difference with the Jews of his day: "We are now considering Jesus against the backdrop of standard Jewish expectations and hopes for restoration. In this connection I am arguing (1) that there is no firm tradition which shows that he issued a call for national repentance in view of the coming end, as did John the Baptist; (2) that 'forgiveness' in the message of Jesus does not take on the tone of eschatological restoration; (3) but that, if Jesus had called for national repentance, or if he had promised national forgiveness, he would fit quite comfortably into the category of a prophet of Jewish restoration." E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 112.

See also Simcha Paull Raphael's discussion in the chapter "Biblical Roots of Jewish Views of the Afterlife" in his *Jewish Views of the Afterlife* (2nd edition; Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 41-75.

[158] *m. Sanh.* 10:1.

[159] *m. Sanh.* 10:2.

recorded a nearly identical dispute. It identifies four kings who have no share in the world to come, adding Ahaz to the Mishnah's three, and here, too, Manasseh is listed. R. Judah disagrees and quotes 2 Chr 33.19, which says that Manasseh's prayer, God's entreatment by him, and his bad acts prior to his humbling of himself are recorded in the book of the Seer. The Tosefta concluded, "This teaches that he [God] was entreated by him [Manasseh] and he restored him to the world to come" (מלמד שנעתר לו והביאו לחיי העולם הבא).[160] In the Tosefta, God's restoration applies to both the present and the future.[161]

The Yerushalmi (400 CE), however, countered R. Judah's defense of Manasseh with the observation that God will not pardon Manasseh's murder of Isaiah, whom the Yerushalmi likened to Moses.[162] The text described the circumstances surrounding the king's prayer in captivity. As in *2 Baruch*, the Assyrians place the king in a bronze mule over a fire. The Yerushalmi records that in his suffering, he called upon all the idols in the world and then finally remembered the God of his father Hezekiah: "I shall call upon him. If he answers me, good—and if not, all ways are alike [that is, equally useless]" (הרי אני קורא אותו אם עונה אותי מוטב ואם לאו הא כל אפייא שוין). The angels attempt to prevent his prayer from reaching God, citing his idolatry,

---

[160] *t. Sanh.* 12:11.

[161] In the same vein, *Ruth Rab.* 5.6 understands the phrase "Dip your morsel in the vinegar" (Ruth 2.14a) to mean that her descendant would be Manasseh, whose evil deeds stained like vinegar (מעשיו כחומץ ממעשים רעים). However, it goes on to interpret "She ate until she was satisfied and she had some left over" (Ruth 2.14b) to mean that Manasseh would have a place both in this world and the world to come. According to Hans-Jurgen Becker, *Ruth Rabbah* dates to the fifth or sixth century CE. Hans-Jurgen Becker, "Ruth Rabbah," n.p. [cited 11 June 2013]. Online: http://brillonline.nl/entries/ religion-past-and-present/ruth-rabbah_SIM_025123.

[162] *y. Sanh.* 10.2. Moreover, according to the Yerushalmi, Hezekiah had married the prophet's daughter, which means that Manasseh murdered his grandfather.

For the Hebrew text and an English translation of the Yerushalmi, see *The Jerusalem Talmud Fourth Order: Neziqin, Tractates Sanhedrin, Makkot, and Horaiot* (ed. and trans. Heinrich W. Guggenheimer; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000). See also *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation: Volume 31, Sanhedrin and Makkot* (trans. Jacob Neusner; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982).

and ask God, "Are you going to accept him as a penitent?" (אתה מקבלו בתשובה). God replies that if he does not, he will be locking the door on "all penitents" (כל בעלי תשובה). God therefore digs a tunnel under the throne of glory in order to receive Manasseh's supplication. Upon his return to Jerusalem, Manasseh said, "There is judgment and there is a judge" (אית דין ואית דיין), indicating that Manasseh accepted God's sovereignty.[163]

In the end, the Yerushalmi neither definitively affirmed nor denied Manasseh's share in the world to come. It established that Manasseh committed the most heinous of crimes, and that his appeal to God worked only because of God's concern for other penitents. In the end, however, Manasseh became a believer and mercy prevailed. What these events portended for the king's ultimate disposition was never determined.

The Bavli (600 CE), in its reception of Chronicles' Manasseh, also commented on the Mishnah's debate over the king's fate and also came to no definitive resolution. It nicely summed up the conundrum of Manasseh in a discussion of Jer 15.4 ("I will set them forth as a horror for all the kingdoms of the earth because of Manasseh [בגלל מנשה] son of Hezekiah king of Judah on account of what he did in Jerusalem"). The Bavli asserted that everything depends on

[163] *y. Sanh.* 10.2. In *Deuteronomy Rabbah*, Manasseh is thrown into a bronze mule (*Deut. Rab.* 2.20) and in *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana* it is a bronze pot (*Pesq. Rab. Kah.* 24), with a fire below. In these two works, Manasseh, after praying to all the other gods, says that if God does not receive his prayer, he will consider all gods equal. God is angry but accepts it for the sake of true penitents. The angels try to block it, and God makes an opening to receive it. *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana* dates from the end of the fifth century. William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein, *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana: R. Kahan's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days* (2nd ed; Dulles, Va.: Jewish Publication Society, 2002), xi. In *Ruth Rabba*, the Assyrians make Manasseh sit on a bronze mule before lighting a fire beneath it (*Ruth Rab.* 5.6). In *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*, he is placed in a pan over a fire and calls on other gods before praying to the God of his fathers (*Pirqe R. El.* 43). In these works, Manasseh makes no threat concerning what he will do if his prayer goes unanswered. See Gerald Friedlander's translation in *Pirḳê de Rabbi Eliezer* (2nd ed.; New York, Hermon Press, 1965), 339-40. *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer* dates from the eighth century CE, according to Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011), 237.

the meaning of "because of Manasseh": "A scholar says, 'because of Manasseh': [because] he made repentance and they [the people] did not. A[nother] scholar says, 'because of Manasseh': [because] he did not make repentance" (מר סבר בגלל מנשה שעשה תשובה ואינהו לא עבוד ומר סבר בגלל מנשה דלא עבד תשובבה).[164] Manasseh is either the repentant whom the people failed to follow or the idolater who led them astray, depending on which book a scholar privileges: Chronicles or Kings.

The Bavli heaped on Manasseh new abominations: he slept with his sister,[165] cut the divine name out of the Torah,[166] expounded reproachful interpretations,[167] and made a four-faced idol to provoke the Shekinah.[168] There are two ways to understand the notice that he shed innocent blood: in Babylonia, it refers to Isaiah's death, and in Palestine to the 1,000 men who died every day either from carrying the idol he made or as sacrifices to it.[169] His very name (which includes the root consonants for the verb "to forget," נשה) either means that he forgot

---

[164] *b. Sanh.*102b-103a. Perhaps the Bavli here had *Targum Jeremiah* (*Tg. Jer*) in view. *Tg. Jer* is an early witness (fourth century CE) to an unqualified acceptance of the king's repentance. Its translation of Jer 15.4 leaves no room for ambiguity: "And I will make them [Judah] a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, because *they have not repented like* Manasseh the son of Hezekiah…." For the date of composition, see Robert Hayward, *The Targum of Jeremiah: Translated, with Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes* (The Aramaic Bible: The Targums, 12; Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1987), 34-35. The translation is from Hayward, *The Targum of Jeremiah*, 92-93. Italics indicate the Targum's additions to the biblical text.

[165] *b. Sanh.*103b.

[166] *b. Sanh.*102b and 103b.

[167] *b. Sanh.* 99b.

[168] The Peshitta of 2 Chr 33.7 and *Deut. Rab.* 2.20 also state that Manasseh's idol had four faces. According to H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, the date of *Deuteronomy Rabbah*'s final compilation is around 900 CE. *Midrash Rabbah* (trans. and eds. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon; 3rd ed.; London: The Soncino Press, 1961), vii.

For an exploration of which came first, the five-faced idol of *2 Baruch* or the four-faced idol in Jewish aggadot, see David Phillips, "The Reception of Peshitta Chronicles: Some Elements for Investigation" in *Peshitta: Its Uses in Literature and Liturgy: Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium* (ed. R. B. Ter Haar Romeny; Boston: Brill, 2007), 274.

[169] *b. Sanh.* 103b.

God or that he caused the people to forget.[170]

Moreover, in the Bavli's reception of Manasseh, his repentance competes against—but never fully overcomes—his sinful record in both Chronicles and Kings. R. Akiva says Chronicles' description of the king's ordeal and repentance teaches "that chastisements are precious" (שחביבין יסורין), since they succeeded where Manasseh's knowledge of the law failed.[171] R. Yohanan makes an argument similar to that of the Yerushalmi: whoever says that Manasseh does not have a share in the world to come "weakens (literally, "makes lax") the hands of penitents" (מרפה ידהן של בעלי תשובה). He also recounts that God made an opening in the firmament to receive the repentant Manasseh in order to circumvent the judgment of justice (מפני מדת הדין).[172] As in the Yerushalmi, God accepted Manasseh out of regard for others, even though what the repentant king truly deserved was punishment.

Ultimately, the place of Manasseh in eternal Israel remained unclear in the Bavli. There was no doubt that self-humbling and entreaty of God were acts of repentance and merited

---

[170] *b. Sanh.* 102b. *b. Sanhedrin* also likens Manasseh to the Sodomites. The latter sinned "exceedingly" (Gen 13.13), just as Manasseh shed blood "exceedingly" (2 Kgs 21.16). The linking of the king to the doomed residents of Sodom relies on Kings' history, not Chronicles, and constitutes the last word on the monarch in this tractate. *b. Sanh.* 109b.

See also the discussion in *b. Baba Batra* about the suspended nun in Josh 18.30. It alters the name of the grandfather of the idolatrous priest Jonathan from Moses to Manasseh (*b. Bat.* 109b). The early Greek Christian Bibles offer independent evidence of the change: Codex Alexandrinus has Moses (υἱοῦ Μωυσῆ), whereas Codex Vaticanus lists Manasseh (υἱὸς Μανασση). In *Song Rab.* II. 5, 3, the suspended nun indicates suspended judgment: if Jonathan is good, he is the son of Moses; if bad, the son of Manasseh. *Song of Songs Rabbah* dates to the fifth or sixth century CE. Jacob Neusner, *A Theological Commentary to the Midrash: Song of Songs Rabbah* (3 vols; Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 2001), 1:xxx.

Other negative references to Manasseh in the Bavli include *b. Sanh.* 109b; *b. Šabb.*113b; *b. Yoma* 9b, 23a, 23b; *b. Ḥag.*15b; *b. Yebam*. 49b; *b. Zebaḥ.* 61b.

[171] Akiva asserts that Manasseh was learned in Torah because surely his father Hezekiah would not have failed to teach him. *b. Sanh.* 101b. See also *Sifre Deuteronomy*, piska 32. According to Marc Hirshman, *Sifre Deuteronomy* dates from the Tannaitic period (70-200 CE). Marc Hirshman, *The Stablization of Rabbinic Culture, 100 C.E.-350 C.E.: Texts on Education and Their Late Antique Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 31.

[172] *b. Sanh.* 103a.

approval. However, the repentant king was never fully and enthusiastically embraced in the work that eventually became the most authoritative text of the Oral Law for mainstream Judaism.

The Bavli's equivocation suggested that every individual affected the character of Israel's collective identity and that the collective had priority over the individual. Some members of greater Israel had sinned and were definitely excluded from the world to come (e.g., Jeroboam and Ahab, the other two idolatrous kings whose fates are not up for debate in the Mishnah); and there are those who had sinned, repented, and had been included (e.g., David[173]). The dispute over Manasseh indicated that, for the early Rabbis, there may have been a limit to the abominations a Jew could perform and still have standing within the body of Israel, even if he, as an individual, successfully begged forgiveness from on high. In this particular instance, the integrity of Israel as an elect body appeared to take priority over Manasseh's private reconciliation with God. Indeed, from the corporate perspective, the transformation of Chronicles' Manasseh begged the question: What was the purpose of the king's repentance and deliverance if his people were not included?

It is possible to infer that the solitary character of Manasseh's repentance was a contributing factor in the debate over his status by comparing his actions to those of the king of Nineveh. The Bavli notes that the book of Jonah was the haftarah for the afternoon prayer service on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement (*b. Meg* 31b) (as it continues to be to this day). In Jonah, the king of Ninevah leads his subjects in a communal act of repentance, which includes ritual fasting and the wearing of sackcloth and ashes, even for the animals. They atone as a nation and are saved as a nation (Jonah 3). (The verb used to describe their actions is directly associated with repentance ([נחם]). In Chronicles, Manasseh utters an individual prayer (2 Chr

[173] For David's repentance and God's forgiveness, see *b. Šabb.*30a and *b. Sanh.*107b.

33.12-13) and upon his return to Jerusalem, he fails to persuade others to abandon their worship on the high places (2 Chr 33.17).

Within this welter of ambivalence, *Targum Chronicles* (*Tg. Chr*) struck a clear note. The translation of Chronicles into Aramaic affirmed the heartfelt contrition of Manasseh. As a relatively late work (eighth century CE[174]), *Tg. Chr* had a vast pool of interpretations and commentary to draw upon, and the translator could have introduced the checks and reservations found in other accounts of Manasseh's life.[175] However, *Tg. Chr* took elements that elsewhere form the basis of criticism of the king and turned them to Manasseh's advantage.

The longest addition describes Manasseh's torture and prayer. It begins inauspiciously, as it reproduces the traditions that are most critical of the king. The Assyrians place him in a bronze mule and light a fire beneath it. The king calls first on all the idols he had made, and, when no aid comes, he prays to God (*Tg. Chr* 33.12). Manasseh's change of heart is due to duress, but he does not threaten God nor does God receive his entreaty grudgingly.[176] The angels rush to block his prayer from heaven, compelling God to make a hole to receive it. In this contest between justice and divine mercy, however, mercy is the celebrated victor. Manasseh's initial waffling and the angels' opposition are overshadowed by the eagerness of God to receive the king's

[174] McIvor, *The Targum of Chronicles*,17-18.

[175] Flesher and Chilton consider *Tg. Chr* to be is a distillation of many traditions--including those preserved in the Bavli, *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*, the *pesiqtas*, various midrashim, Targum Jonathan of the Former Prophets, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Targum Onquelos, and the Targums of Ruth and the Song of Songs. Flesher and Chilton, *The Targums*, 257. McIvor, *The Targum of Chronicles*, 15-16,18. McIvor states, "…in reading through Tg. Chr, one often has a sense of 'lateness,' a feeling that we are dealing with the last term in the series."

[176] Compare with *y. Sanh.* 10.2, *Pesq. Rab. Kah.* 24, and *Deut. Rab.* 2.20, in which Manasseh gives God an ultimatum: Either deliver me or I will consider you on par with the other (useless) gods.

entreaty and the transformative power of divine deliverance.[177]

This positive reception of Chronicles' Manasseh, however, did not have much of an afterlife. *Tg. Chr* quickly faded into oblivion, as no medieval Jewish exegete seemed to have been aware of its existence.[178]

The Early Church Fathers' Reception of Chronicles' King Manasseh

Perhaps it is no accident that the language of *Tg. Chr*'s concluding description of Manasseh ("He returned with all his heart before the Lord and forsook all the idols and no longer served them"[179]) found a closer parallel in the *Didascalia* than in the Bavli. Like the Targumist, the overwhelming majority of early Church Fathers accepted Manasseh's repentance without reservation. Their reception of Chronicles' Manasseh indicates that they conceived of redemption as an interior event of independent individual transformation, a private matter that is in immediate effect. This conception of redemption stood in sharp contrast to the rabbinic notion

[177] "He [Manasseh] prayed *before* him [God]. *Immediately all the angels who had been put in charge of the entrances to the gates of prayer which are in heaven went forth and, because of him, closed all the entrances to the gates of prayer which are in heaven, and all windows and openings of heaven, so that his prayer would not be accepted. But immediately the mercy of the Lord of the universe prevailed, whose right hand is stretched out to receive the sinners who return to his fear and who break the inclination of their heart by repentance, and he made an opening and a gap in the heavens beneath the throne of his glory.* He heard his prayer, he accepted his request, *he shook the universe by his Memra, the mule was shattered, and he came out from there. Then there went forth a wind from beneath the wings of the cherubim; it blew him by the decree of the Memra of the Lord,* and *he returned* to Jerusalem to his kingdom. And Manasseh knew that the Lord was God, *who had worked with him these signs and wonders. He returned with all his heart before the Lord and forsook all the idols and no longer served them*." Translation of *Tg. Chr* 33.13 from McIvor, *The Targum of Chronicles*. Italics indicate additions to the biblical text.

[178] Isaac Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature: A Historical Journey* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 157, 175.

[179] Translation of *Tg. Chr* 33.13 from McIvor, *The Targum of Chronicles*.

of a public and national restoration.[180] For these exegetes, Manasseh's story was the perfect narrative for teaching that God and the Church receive all true penitents, no matter how much they have sinned.

Another factor contributing to Manasseh's stature as a penitent may have been the consonance of Manasseh's self-abasement in LXX Chr with the language of contrition in the psalms. The LXX established linguistic parallels between Manasseh's repentance and that of the Psalmist that are missing in the MT and may have also been missing from its *Vorlage*. Most of the early Church Fathers relied on the LXX for their Bible.

The treatment of Manasseh in the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Jerusalem, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Jerome offer a good overview of the king's place in the nascent Church. The first three illustrate the unqualified adoption of Manasseh as a positive example for all Christians and are the most representative.[181] Theodoret and Jerome, however,

---

[180] "Judaism, in all of its forms and manifestations, has always maintained a concept of redemption as an event which takes place publically, on the stage of history and within the community. It is an occurrence which takes place in the visible world and which cannot be conceived apart from such a visible appearance. In contrast, Christianity conceives of redemption as an event in the spiritual and unseen realm, an event which is reflected in the soul, in the private world of each individual, which effects an inner transformation which need not respond to anything outside. Even the *civitas dei* of Augustine, which within the confines of Christian dogmatics and in the interest of the Church has made the most far-reaching attempt both to retain and to reinterpret the Jewish categories of redemption, is a community of the mysteriously redeemed within an unredeemed world." Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism: And Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), 1.

[181] Other early Christian exegetes who consider Manasseh to be the model penitent include: Anastasius Sinaita, *Anastasii Sinaitae Questiones et Responsiones* (eds. Marcel Richard and Joseph A. Munitiz; CCSG 59; Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 141-42; Athanasius, *Synopsis scripturae sacrae* (PG 28:679-686); Pseudo-Basil the Great (Eusebius Emesenus), *Homilia de paenitentia* (PG 31:1480); Caesarius of Arles, *Sermones* (CPL 1008); Constantinus VII Porphyrogenitus, *Excerpta Historica Iussu Imp. Constantini Porphyrogeniti Confecta, volumen II: Excerpta de Virtutibus et Vitiis* (eds. Theodorus Büttner-Wobst and Antonius Gerardus Roos; vol. 2, pt. 1; Berlin: Weidmann, 1906), 70-71; Epiphanius, *Epiphanius II: Panarion haer. 34-64* (ed. Karl Holl; *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 31; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1980),

were inconsistent in their reception of Chronicles' Manasseh, sometimes preferring to adopt Kings' version. They demonstrate that Christian interpreters did not always favor Chronicles in their exegesis.

Gregory of Nazianzus (~329-389 CE) mentioned King Manasseh in three orations. He delivered the first, Oration 13, in honor of the consecration of a bishop. It opened with an exhortation to Gregory's listeners to accept his homily even though it was not equal to the demands of the occasion. He cited God's ability to balance mercy with fairness, and introduced examples:

> For He [God] accepts that which is planted by Paul because it is Paul's, but also Apollos's irrigation, and the widow's two small coins and the publican's abasement and Manasseh's confession. Accept my newly created homily for a newly created pastor.[182]

He cited the same examples in an address on tax reassessment: Manasseh joins Paul, Apollos, the widow, and the publican as proof that God accepts gifts of the heart, no matter how simple they may be.[183]

In a homily celebrating the Feast of the Holy Lights (marking Jesus' baptism), Gregory singled out Manasseh as emblematic of a particular kind of baptism. Gregory began by listing

---

372; Georgius Monachus, *Georgii monachi chronicon* (ed. C. de Boor; 2 vols.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1904), 1:235-36; Georgius Syncellus, *Georgii Syncelli, Ecloga chronographica* (ed. Alden A. Mosshammer; Leipzig: Teubner, 1984), 254; Gregentios of Taphar, *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar: Introduction, Critical Edition and Translation* (ed. Albrecht Berger; Millennium-Studien/Millennium Studies 7; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 606-607; Joannes Damascenus, *Commentarii in epistulas Pauli* (PG 95:500); Procopius, *Commentarii in Isaiam* (PG 87.2:2448); Michael Pseullus, *Michaelis Pselli orationes panegyricae* (ed. George T. Dennis; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1994), 35; Symeon Neotheologus, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Traités théologiques et éthiques* (ed. Jean Darrouzès; SC 129; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967), 21; Theodorus Studites, *Santi Patris Nostri et Confessoris Theodori Studitis Praepositi Parva Catechesis* (ed. Emmanuel Auvray; Paris: n.p., 1891), 74; Victor Cartennensis, *De paenitentia* (CPL 0854).

[182] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 13* (PG 35: 852-53).

[183] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 19* (PG 35: 1052).

four: Moses represented baptism by water; John the Baptist represented baptism by water plus repentance; Jesus represented baptism in the spirit; and martyrs illustrated baptism through dying for Christ. Manasseh signified the fifth type: baptism through tears, which is, Gregory said,

> more toilsome, since it is the one who every night bathes his bed and bedding with tears, whose weals stink from wickedness and who goes about grieving and of sad countenance, and who imitates the conversion of Manasseh and the self-abasement of the Ninevites having received divine mercy.[184]

Lastly, Gregory brought up Manasseh in a letter to Theodore of Tyana. Theodore was angry over recent events: vandals had mounted an assault on Gregory's church in Anastasia, and they had even attempted to harm Gregory himself. In response, Gregory argued for the superiority of mercy over revenge:

> Look also at the following: the inhabitants of Nineveh were threatened with destruction, but their tears redeemed their sins. Manasseh was the most unlawful of kings, but also the most notable among those saved by their laments.[185]

Here Manasseh is a celebrated penitent, and the severity of his crimes served to highlight the unconditional nature of God's forgiveness. Moreover, the Ninevites stood on equal footing with the Judean king. For Gregory, contrition leveled all distinctions.

John Chrysostom (c. 347-407 CE), like Gregory, raised the significance of Manasseh's turn to God to the highest level, considering it to be on par with that of Paul, the Ninevites, David, and Peter.[186] Also like Gregory, Chrysostom emphasized the heinous nature of Manasseh's sins in order to demonstrate that nothing bars a return to God. In Ad Theodorum

---

[184] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 39* (PG 36: 356). For Isidore of Seville, Manasseh's tears represent the third baptism. Isidore of Seville, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* (CPL 1207).
[185] Gregory of Nazianzus, Letter 77 in *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze, Lettres* (ed. P. Gallay; 2 vols.; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1964), 1:96.
[186] John Chrysostom , Homily 13, *In epistulam ad Romanos* (PG 60:516). See also Homily 77, *In Matthaem* (PG 58:637).

lapsum, a letter addressed to a friend who had abandoned his celibate life as a monk, Chrysostom invoked Manasseh, who

> having surpassed all in madness and tyranny, and having subverted the lawful form of service, and having filled up the temple with idols, and having made deceit flourish, and having become more impious than all who had gone before, when he later repented, he was appointed to the friends of God. But if he, having looked at the greatness of his own transgressions, despaired of return and repentance, he would have been deprived of all which afterwards he gained. But now, after having seen in place of his surpassing sin the infinitude of God's mercy, and after having broken the bonds of the devil, he rose up and contended and finished the good race. [187]

In detailing Manasseh's wicked deeds, Chrysostom could have been drawing on either Kings or Chronicles, but for the story's denouement, only Chronicles was in view.

For Chrysostom, Chronicles' Manasseh not only revealed the workings of divine forgiveness but also the proper exercise of human reason. In a homily on Matthew, Chrysostom ascribed Manasseh's ability to cleanse himself of the sins of idolatry and murder to "repentance and judgment" (μετανοίᾳ καὶ γνώμῃ).[188] Chrysostom credited the king's turn both to the power of grace and to Manasseh's recognition and understanding of his own failings. The emphasis on the human response to God's punishment and reward probably reflected Josephus' account.[189]

In the eyes of most of these early Christian exegetes, nothing that Manasseh did rendered him ineligible for redemption once he repented, including the murder of Isaiah. For Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313-386 CE), the commission of that crime simply added proof that God's mercy was boundless: "If the one who sawed the prophet in half was saved by repentance, will you,

[187] Jean Dumortier, *Jean Chrysostome. A Théodore* (SC 117; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966), 108.
[188] John Chrysostom , Homily 22, *In Matthaem* (PG 57:305).
[189] John Chrysostom read Josephus, as he cites Josephus in Homily 13 on the Gospel of John. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of Saint John* (NPNF[1] 14:93).

having done no such wickedness, not be saved?"[190] In Cyril's reception of Manasseh, the king demonstrated that the greater the crime, the more awesome—and all-encompassing—became God's pardon.[191]

A few important early Christian interpreters were not always full of praise, however. Theodoret of Cyrus (c. 393-457 CE) alternated between lauding and condemning the king. In his commentary on Chronicles (the only commentary of the book extant from the ancient period), Theodoret recounted Manasseh's contrition while captive in Babylonia and (like R. Akiva) noted the benefits of his chastisement: "For the things that he did not have when ruling are the things that he obtained for himself as a slave."[192] Yet Theodoret took a different tack in his commentaries on Kings, Jeremiah, the Song of Songs, and the minor prophets. In these works he described Manasseh's wickedness in the course of relating Israel's history without any reference to subsequent repentance.[193] Indeed, in Theodoret's exegesis on the Song of Songs, he accused Manasseh, "whose wickedness eclipsed all who came before or after him," of burning

[190] Cyril of Jerusalem, chapter 14 of the second catechetical lecture, *Cyrilli Hierosolymorum archiepiscopi opera quae supersunt Omnia* (eds. Wilhelm Carl Reischl and Joseph Rupp; 2 vols.; Munich: Lentner, 1848), 1:56. See also Georgius Monachus, *Georgii monachi chronicon* (ed. C. de Boor; 2 vols.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1904), 1:235-36. The notable exception to this rule is Augustine. At the conclusion of book 18, chapter 24 of *City of God*, Augustine speaks of "Manasseh, an impious king and, according to tradition, the murderer of the prophet Isaiah." Augustine, *Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans* (trans. Henry Bettenson; Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972), 793. I believe this is Augustine's only reference to King Manasseh.
[191] See also *The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, 2.22 (ANF 7.406-407).
[192] Theodoret of Cyrus, *Quaestiones in libros Regnorum et Paralipomenon* (PG 80:887). In his commentary on Ezekiel, Theodoret contrasts Manasseh's turn to repentance and salvation with his father Hezekiah's perpetual piety and his son Amon's perpetual impiety without appearing to pass any judgment. Theodoret of Cyrus, *Interpretatio in Ezechielem* (PG 81:977). See also his commentary on Zephaniah, *Interpretatio in xii prophetas minores* (PG 81:1837).
[193] Theodoret of Cyrus, *Quaestiones in libros Regnorum et Paralipomenon* (PG 80:796); *Interpretatio in Jeremiam* (PG 81:496, 554); *Explanatio in Canticum canticorum* (PG 81.29); *Interpretatio in xii prophetas minors* (PG 81:1837).

Scripture.[194] In this instance, Theodoret expanded Manasseh's wrongdoings beyond the biblical account and ignored Chronicles altogether.

Jerome (c. 347-420 CE), among the most influential of Christian exegetes, was the one who definitively called Manasseh's turn to God an act of penance.[195] The Vulgate, Jerome's translation of the Hebrew Bible into Latin, did away with Manasseh's self-abasement and entreaty as well as with any doubt concerning what those acts signified. Rather, the king begins "a great repentance" (*paenitentiam valde*) (Vulg. 2 Chr 33.12). This development is important because the Vulgate, not the LXX, became the Bible of the Church in the Middle Ages, and is the base text for the Glossa Ordinaria, a major tradent of Christian exegetical tradition.[196]

In the same vein, Jerome affirmed the king's repentance in his commentary on Zephaniah;[197] and in his letter to Oceanus, he claimed Manasseh was the recipient of divine forgiveness.[198] Also, it is worth pointing out that the Vulgate did not include LXX 2 Chr's blame of Manasseh for the fall of Judah in chapters 35 and 36 (LXX 2 Chr 35.19c and 36.5), verses that were part of the Old Latin translations of the Bible.

Elsewhere, however, Jerome appeared to disregard Chronicles' account. Jerome frequently described Manasseh as evil and either omitted mention of his repentance or inferred

---

[194] Theodoret of Cyrus, *Explanatio in Canticum canticorum* (PG 81.29).
[195] For a comprehensive discussion of Jerome's reception of Manasseh, see Stenstrup, "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity," 262-307.
[196] "…[T]he *Glossa Ordinaria* grew to become the most important exegetical tool of the Middle Ages and beyond." David A. Salomon, *An Introduction to the Glossa Ordinaria as Medieval Hyptertext* (Religion and Culture in the Middle Ages; Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), 12.
[197] See Jerome's Commentary on Zephaniah (PL 26:1404), cited and translated in Stenstrup, "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity," 297.
[198] See Jerome's Letter to Oceanus, *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome* (NPNF^2 6:159).

that the king remained wicked even after his captivity and restoration. [199] In his commentary on Ecclesiastes, Jerome cited Manasseh as the evildoer who lives long in his wickedness (in contrast to the righteous who die in their righteousness, cf. Eccl 7.15): "And they say impious Manasseh lived for a long time in his evil, who after his captivity, was restored in his kingdom and lived successively for a long time."[200] Later in the commentary, Jerome illustrated life's lack of justice (cf. Eccl 8.14) by contrasting Aaron, who died while sacrificing, with Manasseh who "after so much evil and captivity was restored to his kingdom."[201] Finally, in his exegesis of Jeremiah's condemnation of Manasseh (Jer 15.4), Jerome appeared to follow the lead of the LXX: he allowed that Manasseh repented, but still blamed him for the destruction of Judah.[202]

Later Reception of Chronicles' Manasseh in Jewish Interpretation

Amidst the manuscripts recovered from the Cairo Geniza is "The Prayer of Manasseh" in Hebrew. Linguistic evidence reveals that the text is an adapted translation from Christian

---

[199] See Jerome's Treatise Against Jovinianus, *Jerome: The Principal Works of St. Jerome* (NPNF^2 6:347). See also Jerome's Commentary on the Book of Isaiah (PL 24:567-568) and Jerome's Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel (PL 26:76), cited and translated in Stenstrup, "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity," 300-301.

Those who never refer to Chronicles' King Manasseh but only to the Manasseh of Kings include Cyril of Alexandria (see his comments in *Commentarius in xii prophetas minors*, P.E. Pusey, *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in xii prophetas* [2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1868], 1:426-7, 2:169-170; *Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam* (PG 70:1013, 1016) and Lucifer of Cagliari (*De regibus apostaticis* [CPL 0113, chapters 8-9]).

[200] Translation by Stenstrup, "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity," 294.

[201] Translation by Stenstrup, "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity," 295.

[202] See Jerome's Commentary on the Book of Jeremiah (PL 25:805), cited and translated in Stenstrup, "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity," 304.

In similar fashion, the author of the sixth-century CE Jewish-Christian dialogue "Timothy and Aquila" holds up Manasseh as the model penitent as well as the cause of Israel's exile. See William Varner, *Ancient Jewish-Christian Dialogues: Athanasius And Zacchaeus, Simon And Theophilus, Timothy And Aquila: Introductions, Texts and Translations* (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005), 159 and 245.

sources, dependent on Greek and Syriac, and probably dates from the tenth century.[203] Of particular interest is one phrase that appears to be the translator's own interjection.[204] Whereas in the Greek and Syriac versions, Manasseh begs God, "Do not remember my wicked actions forever in your anger…" (vs. 12), in the Hebrew version Manasseh adds, "And your wrath may not be upon me in (this) world, and do not bring my sins before me (in view of) the world to come."[205] The (re-)appropriation of this (by then) Christian prayer for a Jewish audience includes an attempt to fend off the entrenched challenges to Manasseh's ultimate redemption. It is a testament to a slender but persistent thread of support within Judaism for Chronicles' king.

Chronicles' Manasseh surfaced a few more times within the vast sea of Jewish tradition. One variant of *Aggadat Bereshit*, a tenth-century midrashic text, claimed that God accepted Manasseh's prayer because "the Holy One does not want to drive out a creature from the world empty handed, but waits until he repents…"[206] In a section of *Numbers Rabbah* that dates from the twelfth century CE, Manasseh testifies against those who claim their repentance has been rejected by God.[207] In the medieval texts *Rabbi Joshua ben Levi and the Seven Compartments of Gan Eden* and *Seder Gan Eden*, Manasseh presides over penitents in the afterlife.[208]

The influential exegete Pseudo-Rashi, however, was decidedly unsympathetic to

---

[203] Reimund Leicht, "A Newly Discovered Hebrew Version of the Apocryphal 'Prayer of Manasseh,'" in *JSQ* 3 (1996): 359-69 (365, 369).
[204] Leicht calls it a "clearly interpretative translation." Leicht, "A Newly Discovered Hebrew Version of the Apocryphal 'Prayer of Manasseh,'" 366.
[205] Leicht, "A Newly Discovered Hebrew Version of the Apocryphal 'Prayer of Manasseh,'" 373.
[206] Lieve M. Teugels, *Aggadat Bereshit* (Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 32.
[207] *Num Rab.* 14.1. The first part of Numbers Rabbah (1-14) was compiled around the twelfth century in Provence. Marc Bregman, "Midrash Rabbah and the Medieval Collector Mentality," in *Anthology in Jewish Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 197.
[208] Raphael, *Jewish Views of the Afterlife*, 191, 198.

Chronicles' king. In his commentary on Chronicles, also dating from the twelfth century,[209] he blamed Manasseh for the *current* exile of the Jews. Furthermore, God's acceptance of his prayer and the king's return (2 Chr 33.19) only meant that God returned him to his kingdom (and not to the world to come). Lastly, Manasseh was buried in his house (2 Chr 33.20) because he did not deserve to be interred with his ancestors.[210] Pseudo-Rashi has the last word, as there appears to be no further mention of Chronicles' repentant king among major Jewish interpreters.

In the modern era, when Jewish historians began to write popular accounts of Israel, Chronicles' King Manasseh also suffered neglect. Henrich Hirsch Graetz (1817-1891) was among the first to write a history of Jews from a Jewish perspective. In his *History of the Jews* (originally published in 1891 by the Jewish Publication Society), he states that Manasseh's bad character did not change after his return from Babylon.[211]

Today Chronicles' Manasseh has no role in Judaism even though the issues he raises remain relevant. A discussion of Manasseh would be apt, for instance, in the debate over divine election between Michael Wyschogrod (who contends that all Jews are part of eternal Israel) and David Novak (who argues that Jews' covenant with God is conditional on their adherence to the Law).[212] However, Chronicles' king is absent. Nor did Manasseh have a role in a famous Israeli court case, *Oswald Rufeisen v. Ministry of Interior*, that gripped the nation in the early 1960s. Oswald Rufeisen, better known as Brother Daniel, was a Jewish convert to Catholicism who

---

[209] For date, see Saltman's introduction to Langton, *Commentary on the Book of Chronicles*, 38.
[210] The commentary of (Pseudo-) Rashi on 2 Chr 33.13, מקראות גדולות (Israel: Shiloh, 1969), 171b. See also http://www.chabad.org/library/ bible_cdo/ aid/16582#showrashi=true.
[211] Henrich Hirsch Graetz, *History of the Jews: Vol. 1, From the earliest Period to the Death of Simon the Macabees (135 B.C.E.)* (Elibron Classics; n.p.: Adamant Media Corporation, 2000), 284-85.
[212] Michael Wyschogrod, *The Body of Faith: Judaism as Corporeal Election* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1983) and David Novak, *The Election of Israel: The idea of the chosen people* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

applied for Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return. After his application was denied by the state, Brother Daniel appealed. The case appeared to test the limits of what actions one could take and still remain a Jew. In 1962, Israel's High Court of Justice upheld the state's denial of his request. Though various rabbinic texts were brought to bear on the case, none mentioned Manasseh.[213]

It is probable that the lack of clarity concerning his standing within the covenant of Israel proved to be the undoing of Chronicles' Manasseh. Jewish tradition had other exemplars of repentance at hand, so there was no pressing need to retain one that was so fraught. In the end, it seems that the game was not worth the candle. Living up to the Hebrew meaning of his name, the king was forgotten.

Later Reception of Chronicles' Manasseh in Christian Interpretation

Later reception of Chronicles' King Manasseh within the Christian community was, and continues to be, largely dependent on the favorable interpretations of the early Church Fathers. The two most notable medieval commentators to discuss Chronicles' king, Rabanus Maurus (c. 776-856 CE) and Stephen Langton (1150-1228 CE), transmit the tradition they inherited: Manasseh teaches that no one should despair of God's mercy because repentance brings pardon, no matter how great the sinner.[214] In the Glossa Ordinaria, the glossing of the Vulgate that

[213] Supreme Court Decision 72/62, *Oswald Rufeisen v. Ministry of Interior* (1962). For an English translation, see *Selected Judgments of the Supreme Court of Israel: Special Volume*, ed. Asher Felix Landau (Jerusalem: Ministry of Justice, 1971). http://www.heinonline.org.proxy.its.virginia.edu/.HOL/Page?handle=hein.ilawr/israellr0016&id=1&collection=ilawr&index=#1. Accessed on October 28, 2013.

[214] Rabanus Maurus, *Commentaria in libros duos Paralipomenon* (PL 109: 525-27); Stephen Langton, *Commentary on the Book of Chronicles* (ed. Avrom Saltman; Jerusalem: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1978), 238.

became the major transmission of the Church Fathers' interpretations, Rabanus's commentary on wicked Manasseh in 2 Kgs 24 is nearly identical to his commentary on the Manasseh of 2 Chr 33. In both, the king demonstrates the rewards of repentance.[215] The Kings' narrative has been completely overtaken by Chronicles.

The same holds true in sermons spanning the centuries, especially among Protestant preachers, for whom biblical exegesis was a primary focus. To offer but the most cursory survey, Martin Luther (1483-1546 CE) cited Manasseh as an example of someone who had faith in the promise that God forgives sinners;[216] the seventeenth-century Nonconformist English cleric Isaac Ambrose (1604-1663/64 CE) cited Manasseh as evidence that the most hellish creatures may partake of heaven through God's mercy;[217] for John Bunyan (1628-1688 CE), author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, Manasseh provides proof of God's free grace;[218] and Manasseh is an example of reform by affliction for the English Dissenter Stephen Addington (1729-1796 CE).[219] The popular nineteenth-century English preacher Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892 CE) delivered several sermons on Manasseh, including one entitled "Pardon for the Greatest Guilt."[220]

Among later interpreters, one notable exception to the positive reception of Chronicles' version was John Calvin. In his commentary on Jer 15.4, Calvin seemed to be correcting

---

[215] *Glossa Ordinaria* (PL 113, 626).
[216] John Nicholas Lenker, ed. and trans., *Sermons by Martin Luther, Volume 2: Sermons on Gospel Texts for Epiphany, Lent, and Easter* (Minneapolis: Lutherans in All Lands, 1906), 127. Luther cites Manasseh in a sermon for the second Sunday in Lent.
[217] Isaac Ambrose, "War with the Devil" (Berwick: n.p.,1797), 77.
[218] John Bunyan, *The Whole Works of John Bunyan* (ed. George Offor; London: Blackie & Son,1862), 338, 348, 536, 538, 543, 704. See also Bunyan's sermon, "The Jerusalem sinner saved, or, Good news for the vilest of men" (Glasgow: n.p., 1792), 43.
[219] Stephen Addington, "A practical treatise on afflictions" (Market Harborough: n.p. 1779), 34.
[220] Charles Spurgeon, "Pardon for the Greatest Guilt: 2 Chr 33.13" (No. 2378), *Spurgeon's Sermons, Volume 40:1894*, n.p. [cited 27 November 2013]. Online: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons40.xxxvii.html. See also his homily "Manasseh: 2 Chr 33.13" in C. H. Spurgeon, *Sermons of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon* (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman and company, 1857), 311-327.

Jerome's exegesis of this verse. Jerome maintained that Manasseh repented but still instigated the exile. Calvin claimed that the king only pretended to atone and the people of Judah also never changed. For this reason God punished them, even though it appeared God had forgiven the king and his people.[221]

For the overwhelming majority of Christian exegetes through the ages, however, the story of the king ends in his repentance; that is, Chronicles, not Kings, provided the primary history. This fact was due in part to "The Prayer of Manasseh," which found a place in Christian liturgy and literature subsequent to its inclusion in Codex Alexandrinus. It was included in the canon of the Geneva Bible, one of the most popular Bibles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, appearing after Second Chronicles. In the Ethiopic Bible it is part of Second Chronicles, following the verse describing Manasseh's turn (2 Chr 33.12). Today it is also canonized in Greek and Slavonic Bibles,[222] and "The Prayer of Manasseh" is recited during the Great Compline, a penitential office of the Orthodox Church.[223]

The prayer's success, however, was itself due to the perception by influential Christian exegetes that Chronicles' Manasseh was perfectly consonant with Christian doctrine: he was the solitary sinner who cried to God in the midst of his tribulation and received divine mercy. For these interpreters, his standing as the king of Judah and the terrible character of his sins added to the drama. Ultimately, however, he was like anyone else gone astray—no different than the widow or the publican or the Ninevites—and his return to God was all that truly mattered. For

---

[221] John Calvin, *Commentaries of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and The Lamentations, Volume Second* (trans. John Owen; Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1851), 256-57. Calvin never wrote a commentary on Chronicles.

[222] Since the mid-sixteenth century "The Prayer of Manasseh" also appears in the appendix to the Vulgate, by order of the Council of Trent (1546).

[223] In the Orthodox and Byzantine Catholic service of Great Compline, the priest begins chanting the "Prayer of Manasseh" and then the congregation joins in as both kneel.

many Protestant ministers today, the king's contrition continues to be a blueprint for redemption. The website www.sermoncentral.com lists among its offerings several homilies on Manasseh as the model penitent.[224]

The reception history of Chronicles' Manasseh demonstrates that there is nothing preordained about the afterlife of a particular biblical tale. Early Jews and Christians had to grapple with the same problems in squaring Chronicles' version of the king's reign with that of Kings, and the two communities came to very different resolutions. The discussion of Chronicles' Manasseh in the foundational texts of Judaism revealed that the rewards of repentance were potentially limited by the qualifications for membership in eternal Israel. The debates of the Rabbis show that the posing of a limit was deeply problematic. For the early Christians, by contrast, Chronicles' Manasseh dovetailed nicely with their view of God's unqualified acceptance of penitents. Today Chronicles' Manasseh continues to be a paradigm of repentance in Christian circles. Jewish interpreters, perhaps exhausted by this irresolvable antinomy, allowed him to fall away. Early Jewish and Christian perspectives on corporate and individual salvation played a decisive role in the king's fate, and ensured his preservation in—or erasure from—this world, if not the world to come.

[224] Contemporary sermons on King Manasseh listed on www.sermoncentral.com include "King Manasseh—A Miracle of Grace," by Evie Megginson (Baptist) (2003); "Manasseh, King of Judah: 2 Chronicles 33:1-8, 11-17," by Jeff Simms (Baptist) (2003); and "Manasseh knew God—A Character Study of King Manasseh," by William R. Nabaza (Independent) (2013).

Chapter Three

Epitomes of an Epitome

In the epitomized English Christian Bibles of the eighteenth century, non-clerics summarized scripture for a vast popular audience, and many of these authors fashioned from Chronicles' *Sondergut* their interpretive key for evaluating Israel's history. The theological judgments that the Chronicler derived from his revision of Genesis-Kings provided these exegetes with their own opportunity to formulate that history's moral instruction. The reception of Chronicles had far-reaching effects in an era of increased literacy. Unlike the large (and expensive) family Bibles, with learned commentary by prelates, these epitomized Bibles (the generic term for Thumb Bibles, picture Bibles, and Bibles in verse) were affordable to purchase and produce, and were easily portable. Many were designed to engage and entertain young readers, with the aim of assisting in their religious formation. The multiple editions of these works that appeared throughout the century attest to their wide appeal within the general populace of England and the nascent United States.

Eighteenth-century epitomized Bibles have received scant attention from modern scholars.[225] Interest in them appears to be largely limited to students of children's literature, and

[225] See, for example, Bruce Metzger, "Curious Bibles," in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (eds. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael David Coogan; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 143-44; David Norton, *A History of the English Bible as Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 125-26; Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 293. These works treat the epitomes as curiosities in adult literature and make no assessment of their import or content.

even by this group they are often neglected.[226] Among those who do treat the epitomes, it appears that none give a detailed analysis of their contents. [227]

These epitomes, however, are important in the study of Chronicles reception. The history leading up to their publication shows Chronicles' role in the production of vernacular Bibles and commentary. Through the Middle Ages, interpretations of Chronicles pitted the established authorities of Church and State against those who fought for universal access to scripture. Surveying these events reveals that, in the course of its reception, Chronicles served as a handbook for kings and a revolutionary tract for champions of the Bible in English before it became a primer for the children of Britain and America.

A close reading of these epitomes also shows the important work the exegesis of Chronicles performed in shaping their tone and content. The epitomizing of Chronicles provided the authors an opportunity to interpret the whole of Israel's sacred history in a page or two, as

[226] See, for example, Matthew Grenby, *Children's Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008); Deborah A. Wooten, "The Bible in Children's Literature," in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (ed. Diane Goetz Person; New York: Continuum, 2005), 80-83; Jan de Maeyer et al., eds., *Religion, Children's Literature, and Modernity in Western Europe, 1750-2000* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005; F. J. Harvey Darton, *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958); William Targ, *Bibliophile in the Nursery: A Bookman's Treasury of Collectors' Lore on Old and Rare Children's Books* (n.p.: The World Publishing Company, 1957); Bettina Hürlimann, *Three Centuries of Children's Books in Europe* (trans. and ed. Brian W. Alderson; New York: The World Publishing Company, 1968); Rosalie V. Halsey, *Forgotten Books of the American Nursery: A History of the Development of the American Story-Book* (Boston: Charles E. Goodspeed and Co., 1911).

[227] Metzger, "Curious Bibles," 143-44; Ruth B. Bottigheimer, "Catechistical, devotional and biblical writing," in *International Companion Encylopedia of Children's Literature* (ed. Peter Hunt; vol. 1; New York: Routledge, 2012 (299-305); Ruth Bottigheimer, *The Bible for Children From the Age of Gutenberg to the Present* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 43-48; Warren W. Wooden, *Children's Literature of the English Renaissance* (Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 128; Ruth Elizabeth Adomeit, *Three Centuries of Thumb Bibles: A Checklist* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1980), xiii-xix.

well as to adjust the moral tone of Samuel and Kings. As it turned out, the epitomizing of a biblical epitome created an exquisite distillation of scripture—on the exegete's terms.

In light of these facts, the eighteenth-century English Bible epitomes deserve the attention of students of Chronicles' reception. In this chapter, therefore, my intent is to fill a gap in contemporary scholarship by demonstrating the influence of Chronicles on the key events leading up to the publication of epitomized English Bibles in the eighteenth century, and by analyzing the reception of Chronicles within the works themselves.

Ecclesiastic Control Over Exegesis: Loosening the Grip

In the late medieval period, Chronicles played a critical role in loosening the clerical hold on exegesis. In the centuries leading up to this time, there were changes in the presentation of scripture that are important to note, even though they do not always directly involve Chronicles itself.

Before the turn of the first millennium in the Common Era, lay Christian readers faced two obstacles in gaining access to scripture: the Bible was in Latin and its interpretation was thought to require the assistance of the clergy. This state of affairs is well illustrated by an exchange between a king and one of the most preeminent exegetes of the age, an exchange that concerned Chronicles.

Rabanus Maurus (c. 780-856[228]) is among the first to have interpreted Chronicles explicitly as a manual for good civic governance. The biblical scholar and monk—who, at his death, was archbishop of Mainz—provided exegesis of the historical books for royalty, often upon request. In 834 he sent King Louis the German (806-876) a commentary on Chronicles,

[228] All dates in this chapter are from the Common Era.

along with this message:

> It used to be the custom that a most Christian king, much occupied with divine precepts, was offered the history of the kings of Judah, that is, of the confessors, with some explanation of its spiritual meaning. Because your noble prudence rules over a Christian people [*populis ecclesiasticus*] redeemed by the precious blood of God's son and most accustomed to profess God's name, it suits a pious prince, that is to say, the *rector* of the members of the true king Christ, God's only son, to have and practice the right form of government which is in accordance with Scripture….[229]

Rabanus considered Chronicles' history to be of immediate relevance to Louis. The prelate also believed that the king had to depend on others to grasp that relevance. In the Carolingian courts it was common for professional scribes and *lectors* to read the Vulgate and Latin commentaries to the ruler as well as to debate their explication.[230] The practice indicated the high priority the Carolingian kings placed on biblical exegesis, beginning with Charlemagne himself (c. 742-814).[231] According to Rabanus, the king's access to the political teachings of the book—the ones that would guide him in practicing "the right form of government which is in accordance with Scripture"—required the Archbishop's mediation, which meant that he, as a religious authority, in some sense oversaw the conduct of the king.

Almost four hundred years later, a thirteenth-century royal Bible from France attests to the initial steps toward the relaxation of the Church's monopoly over interpretation. Codex

---

[229] Rabanus, *Epistolae*, 18, 423, II. 1-8, quoted in Mayke de Jong, "The empire as ecclesia: Hrabanus Maurus and biblical historia for rulers," in *The Uses of the past in the early Middle Ages* (eds. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 204-205.

[230] de Jong, 196-97.

[231] Ibid., 200.

Some scholars maintain that the emphasis Charlemagne placed on cultivating knowledge of scripture provided the necessary impetus for the production of pandects (single-volume copies of the entire Bible), which began at the close of the eighth century. Lawrence Nees, "Problems of Form and Function in Early Medieval Illustrated Bibles From Northwest Europe" in *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible* (ed. John Williams; University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999),138. This development is important for the reception of Chronicles because other volumes of scripture (before and after) did not always include Chronicles.

Vindobonensis 2554 (hereafter Codex 2554), a picture Bible for royalty produced by Parisian clerics, was among the first vernacular Bibles. It was also a pioneering work in the epitomizing of scripture through illustration. Even though it did not include Chronicles in its corpus,[232] Chronicles' reception is present nonetheless. The Codex is thus also important for understanding the often-understated, albeit pervasive, character of Chronicles' influence. For these reasons, Codex 2554 deserves treatment here.

Codex 2554 is one of seven rare French *Bibles moralisées* (moralized Bibles) and dates from c. 1215/30.[233] These lavishly illuminated Bibles paired images of biblical events with illustrated commentary, an innovative form of epitome.[234] Of the extant moralized Bibles, Codex 2554 was the only one written exclusively in French,[235] and its owner was most likely a member of the Capetian court.[236] (At least one historian has even suggested that it was the property of a Capetian king.[237]) At any rate, the Codex's loose paraphrasing of scripture, textual inaccuracies, and reliance on pictures indicate that it was intended, not for knowledgeable prelates, but for laity.[238]

The commentary of Codex 2554 reveals the determination of the Church to guide lay

---

[232] The extant copy of Codex 2554 most likely never included Chronicles. Codex 2554 contains Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, Ruth and Kings I-IV. The manuscript is incomplete (the text breaks off at IV Kgs 4.8-20), so it is impossible to know whether it contained Chronicles. However, a later three-volume edition of this single-volume Bible includes all the books except Chronicles and Baruch. Guest, *Bible Moraliseé*, 4.
[233] Though there are fifteen manuscripts (dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century) that fall into the category of moralized Bible, only seven fully comply with the traditional format. Guest, *Bible Moralisée*, 2. The first translation of the Bible into French was completed c. 1260. Mary Dove, *The First English Bible: The Text and Context of the Wycliffite Versions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 9.
[234] Guest, *Bible Moralisée*, 1, 18.
[235] Of the six other surviving moralized Bibles, three are in Latin and three in Latin and French. Guest, *Bible Moralisée*, 2. See also 9, 24
[236] Ibid., 4
[237] Ibid., 25-27.
[238] Ibid., 4.

readers in their interpretations of scripture. The selections from well-known and established exegetes (including Augustine, Isidore of Seville, Stephen Langton, and Peter the Chanter[239]) may have been in response to the Waldensians, a heretical sect originating in twelfth-century France. In 1199 a group in Metz challenged the Bishop of Metz's authority based on their unfiltered reading of the Gospels in the vernacular, and Pope Innocent III condemned their translations.[240] It is perhaps no coincidence that the books that most often gave rise to heresies (the Psalms, the Gospels, and the letters of Paul) are missing from the Codex.[241] The biblical depictions and commentaries addressed the proper behavior of kings toward clergy, and in this sense the Codex was also a Church-sponsored *Speculum principis*.[242] Specifically, the pictures and texts applauded the submission of worldly rulers to their clerical confessors and encouraged royal (monetary) tribute to ecclesiastic coffers.[243]

The Codex's illustrations also affirmed orthodox exegesis in the face of local opposition. There are four pairs of roundels to a page, each set tying an Old Testament scene to one from the New Testament, and the marginalia provide a topological interpretation.[244] This affirmation of the Bible's unity countered the claims of Catharism, a dualistic ascetic sect that was on the rise in early thirteenth-century France. The Cathari denigrated the Old Testament in favor of their own account of creation and history. The moralized Bibles, by contrast, demonstrated through pictures that the Old Testament prefigured the New and forged an unbreakable link between them. In Codex 2554, for example, the story of David and Bathsheba is likened to Jesus taking

---

[239] Ibid., 24.
[240] Ibid., 25; David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 69.
[241] Guest suggests that these books were deliberately excluded "to prevent interpretive problems." Guest, *Bible Moralisée*, 24.
[242] Ibid., 18.
[243] Ibid., 34.
[244] Ibid., 4.

the Holy Church as a bride, and Uriah (and the letters David gives him that result in his death) represents the Jews who are killed by the Old Law.[245]

Finally, despite the fact that Chronicles is not part of the Codex, the book's reception by those who produced this Bible nonetheless shows that, though absent from the text, Chronicles still provided an exemplar for royal comportment. In the roundel illustrating the book of Samuel's account of David's transport of the ark to Jerusalem, David dances as the ark processes to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6.14).[246] The commentary states, "David undresses before all the others and takes off his robe as far as his chemise…"[247] In the picture, he is wearing a full-length gown, reflecting Chronicles' description of his attire rather than that of Samuel (1Chr 15.27).[248] In an illustrated Bible for royalty, the producers of the Codex found Chronicles' depiction of David to be the more appropriate choice.

Thus, Codex 2554 marked a transitional period. Its use of the vernacular and its

---

[245] 45rCc, 45rDd, and 45vBb. For text commentary, see Guest, *Bible Moralisée*, 123-24. See also the discussion of the use of typology in Biblia Pauperum to thwart Catharism in Soltész, *Biblia Pauperum*, vii.

[246] 44rB.

[247] Guest, *Bible Moralisée*, 121.

[248] It is possible that the long chemise is nothing more than an updating of David's dress to conform to the attire of the day. However, in this passage, David's clothing—or lack of it—is a key element. Michal's rebuke of David for his dance before the ark in Samuel implies that David's ephod provided insufficient cover (2 Sam 6.20). David's response appears to affirm his exposure, as he says that his humiliation will bring him honor (2 Sam 6.21-22). It is the only passage in the Bible in which David's nakedness is an issue. Chronicles' assertion that he was dressed in a robe (1 Chr 15.27) obviates any criticism. See also the comparison of the Vivian Bible and Codex 2554 with respect to David's clothing in the appendix to this dissertation.

In addition, the Codex draws on Chronicles in its illustration of God's punishment of David for conducting the census in Samuel (48rC.). It shows an angel cutting up the people with a sword. Only in Chronicles' account is the angel armed with such a weapon (1 Chr 21.15-27; cf. 2 Sam 24.16-17). It is possible that Chronicles is also influencing the Codex's depiction of the tenth plague in Exodus (Ex 12.29) (20vD). This roundel shows a sword-wielding angel passing over the Israelites and slaying Pharaoh's son. In the Exodus account, it is God who strikes down all the firstborn, including Pharaoh's (Ex 12.1-32), and there is no mention of a sword. In the Codex, Chronicles has been absorbed into the retelling of these incidents.

epitomizing of scripture popularized the Bible. On the other hand, through illustrations and commentary, the clerics who made the Codex sought to ensure that the lay reader arrived at the "correct"' interpretation.

Two other works from this period attest to the desire among lay readers for greater access to scripture. The thirteenth-century Bible historiale was a French translation of selections from the Vulgate plus a translation of selected portions of the *Historia Scholastica*, a synopsis of the Bible by Peter Comestor (d. c. 1178). It was the work of Guyart des Moulins (1251- c. 1322) who completed it in 1295.[249] The other extremely popular work was Biblia Pauperum (the Bible of the poor[250]), a picture Bible with Latin marginalia that came to the fore in the fourteenth century and was prevalent in German-speaking territories. It was intended as a handbook for preachers to educate their illiterate flock. In the fifteenth century, craftsmen began illustrating Biblia Pauperum with attractive woodcuts and sold their work at fairs for a reasonable price. [251] The readership of these blockbooks expanded beyond clergy to educated laypeople, including commoners, who might or might not have read Latin.[252]

Taken together, Codex 2554, the Bible historiale, and the Biblia Pauperum show the mounting demand among lay readers for access to scripture. They epitomized scripture through image and text, and two were in the vernacular. Not long after their appearance, full translations of scripture proliferated on the Continent. By the early 1500s there were Bibles printed in

---

[249] The Bible historiale had few full-page illustrations, but those few were spectacular. King Charles V (1338-1380) owned fourteen copies. John Lowden, "The Anjou Bible in the Context of Illustrated Bibles," in *The Anjou Bible* (eds. Jan Van der Stock and Lieve Watteeuw; exhibition catalogue, Leuven, 2010), 8.

[250] The "pauper" of the title probably refers to these clerics, either because they were materially impoverished or "spiritually poor" due to their lack of higher education.

[251] There are no Biblia Pauperum extant from French- or English-speaking countries. Elizabeth Soltész, *Biblia Pauperum: Facsimile Edition of the Forty-Leaf Blockbook in the Library of the Esztergom Cathedral* (n.p.: Corvina Press, 1967), v.

[252] Soltész, *Biblia Pauperum*, vii.

German, French, Italian, Catalan, Czech, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese.[253] The striking omission from the list was English, and it was in the fight for scripture in this vernacular that Chronicles' reception played a decisive role.

Chronicles as a Revolutionary Text

If Rabanus Maurus considered Chronicles' history to offer a benevolent guide for King Louis, the book's retributive theology presented champions of the English Bible with grounds for revolution. For the first translator of the Bible into English, Chronicles provided opportunity and criteria for critiquing those in the highest echelons of the Church and State. In response, as translated Bibles spread throughout Continental Europe, religious leaders in England joined with the English monarchy to suppress vernacular scripture. Key interpreters during this period continued to find in Chronicles biblical warrant for resisting the established authorities, and their reception of the book helped bring about the eventual widespread production of the Bible in English.

Chronicles played a leading role in the maelstrom generated by the first English Bible, as its commentary exhorted readers to evaluate England's rulers and clerics by Chronicles' strict standards of conduct. The Wyclif Bible—named after the English theologian John Wyclif (c. 1320-1384), its principal translator—was completed in 1382. Immediately upon its appearance in England, copies proliferated and circulated widely.[254] Later versions (dating from around 1388) included a fifteen-chapter prologue that consisted of synopses of the biblical books and exegesis. Chapter ten, the coda to the synopsis of Chronicles, gave the civil and religious authorities in England a taste of what lay interpreters of Chronicles could glean from the book:

[253] Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 249, 293.
[254] Ibid., 66-67.

> This proces of Paralypomynon in the j. and ij. book shulde stire ’christene kingis and lordis to destroy synne, and loue vertu, and make Goddis lawe to be knowe and kept of her puple, for heere thei mown se, hou sore God punschide yuele kingis, that lyueden yuele, and drowen the puple to idolatrie, either other gret synnes, and hou greetly God preyside, rewardide, and cherischide good kings, that lyuenden wel, and gouernede wel the puple in Goddis lawe, and opin resound, and good conscience. And thouȝ kingis and lordis knewen neuere more of hooly scripture than iij. stories of the ij. Book of Paralypomynon and of Regum, that is, the storie of king Josophat, the storie of king Ezechie, and the storie of king Josie, thei myȝte lerne sufficiently to lyue wel and gouerue wel hire puple bi Goddis lawe, and eschewe al pride, and ydolatrie, and coueitise, and other synnes.
>
> (This process of Paraleipomen in the first and second book should stir Christian kings and lords to destroy sin, and love virtue, and make God’s law to be known and kept by their people, for here they may see, how sorely God punished evil kings, that lived evilly, and drew the people to idolatry, or other great sins, and how greatly God praised, rewarded, and cherished good kings, that lived well, and governed well the people in God’s law, and open reasoning, and good conscience. And though kings and lords knew no more of holy scripture than three stories of the second Book of Paraliepomen and of Kings, that is the story of king Jehoshaphat, the story of king Hezekiah, and the story of king Josiah, they might learn sufficiently to live well and govern well their people by God’s law, and eschew all pride, and idolatry, and avarice, and other sins.) [255]

Chronicles gave the authors of the synopsis a basis for passing judgment on the “kings and lords” of England. By stating at the outset that Chronicles “should stir Christian kings and lords” to right action, the authors of the Prologue implied that their love of virtue was currently lacking. The commentary asserted that the rulers of the land should understand from Chronicles that they are not exempt from God’s judgment; the book shows that God punishes bad rulers and rewards the good. The authors took the opportunity to specify what good governance entails: the cultivation of public knowledge of scripture. The commentators then urged English royals to model their behavior on Chronicles’ and Kings’ depictions of three kings (Jehoshaphat,

[255] I thank Professor Peter Baker of the University of Virginia for his assistance in my translations from Middle English. All errors are my own.

Hezekiah, and Josiah). If they did so, they would abandon "all pride, and idolatry, and avarice, and other sins." For the writers of this commentary, Chronicles made the levelling of such charges against the English nobility possible.

The Wyclif synopsis of Chronicles warned that failure to reform could have disastrous consequences for the nation as a whole. It urged those of England's governing class who are currently "in the formere synnes of Manasses" to repent as he did, and here there is no question that the religious and secular leaders are guilty of the worst acts: "for thei setten idolis in Goddis hous, and exciten men to idolatrie, and scheden innocent blood in many maners, as Manasses dide ("for they have set idols in God's house and excited men to idolatry and have shed innocent blood in many places, as Manasseh did")." The chapter ends with a cautionary prayer:

> But morne we sore for this cursidnesse, and preie we to God with al oure herte, that sithen lordis and prelatis suen Manasses in these opyn synnes, God stire hem to sue Manasses in very penaunce, and make amendis to God and men, lest oure reume be conquerid of aliens, either hethen men, for these opyn synnes and many moo.
>
> (But let us mourn grieviously for this cursedness, and let us pray to God with all our heart, that since lords and prelates follow Manassah in these open sins, God stir them to follow Manasseh in true penance, and make amends to God and men, lest our realm be conquered by aliens, or heathen men, for these open sins and many more.)

Emboldened by Chronicles' theology of divine retribution and reward, the authors of the Prologue assessed the country's current rulers and found them wanting. The authors used Chronicles' Manasseh to urge immediate reform upon the governing class. They appeared to draw on Kings' version of Manasseh's reign, however, in claiming that if the "lords and prelates" did not repent, the land would be subject to enemy invasion—the ending in Kings but not in Chronicles. In making this charge, the commentators were issuing a warning to their readers that their security was also at stake.

In calling for the king's promotion of greater public understanding of scripture in their synopsis of Chronicles, the authors meant that he should endorse Bible translations. Chapter fifteen of the Prologue is devoted to the defense of vernacular scripture, with Jerome serving as an inspirational hero. In that chapter, the authors compare the availability of translated Bibles in England to the number at hand in Europe and bemoan the disparity:

> Also Frenshe men, Beemers, and Britons han the bible, and othere bokis of deuocioun and of exposicioun, translatid in here modir langage; whi shulden not English men haue the same in here modir langage, I can not wite, no but for falsnesse and necgligence of clerkis, either for oure puple is not worthi to haue so greet grace and ȝifte of God, in peyne of here olde synnes.
>
> (Also Frenchmen, Bohemians, and Bretons had the Bible and other books of devotion and of exposition translated into their mother language. Why should not Englishmen have the same in their mother language I cannot tell, no but for the falseness and negligence of the clerics; or perhaps our people are not worthy to have so great grace and gift of God, in punishment of their old sins.)

In this passage, the Prologue takes direct aim at the English clergy, considering them to be equally culprit with the people for inviting divine chastisement. In the synopsis of Chronicles, it is up to the secular authorities—and not the established Church—"to destroy sin, and love virtue, and make God's law to be known and kept by their people."

Opposition by the English Church to the Wyclif Bible was swift and virulent. Thomas Arundel (1353-1414), the Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote in a letter to the Pope in 1411:

> This pestilent and wretched John Wyclif, of cursed memory, that son of the old serpent […] endeavoured by every means to attack the very faith and sacred doctrine of Holy Church, devising—to fill up the measure of his malice—the expedient of a new translation of the Scriptures into the mother tongue.[256]

[256] Quoted by Henry Hargreaves, "The Wycliffite Versions," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: Volume 2, The West From the Fathers to the Restoration* (ed. G. W. H. Lampe;

Another English cleric, the chronicler Henry Knighton (d. c. 1396), wrote:

> Master John Wyclif translated from Latin into the English language—very far from being the language of angels!—the gospel that Christ gave to the clergy and the doctors of the church, for them to administer sweetly as mental nourishment to the laypeople and to the infirm, according to the necessity of the time and the people's need. As a consequence, the gospel has become more common and more open to laymen and even to women who know how to read than it customarily is to moderately well-educated clergy of good intelligence. Thus the pearl of the gospel is scattered abroad and trodden underfoot by swine.[257]

From Knighton's perspective, the first English Bible was a powerful threat. Making the Bible accessible to lay readers divested the clergy of their monopoly over its interpretation and opened the door to heretical readings. Tellingly, Knighton also feared that vernacular scripture would be more understandable to the common folk than the Latin Bible was to the average cleric.[258] The translation of Wyclif should therefore be considered an act of heresy, as it undermined the very foundations for the authority of the Church.

In the wake of the production of the first English Bible, the monarchy joined the church leadership to coordinate efforts to stop the production of vernacular Bibles. In 1401, the Crown authorized bishops to hand over heretics to be burned at the stake, and in 1409 Archbishop Arundel called a Provincial Council that banned all English translations of scripture.[259] In 1536 the Protestant reformer William Tyndale (c. 1494-1536) was executed for publishing his

---

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 388. Also quoted in Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 67.

[257] Dove, *The First English Bible*, 6.

[258] Ibid., 8-10. See also Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 66-68.

[259] Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 75. See also Dove, *The First English Bible*, 35.

translation.[260]

The push for vernacular scripture continued, however, and among the next significant group of interpreters—the creators of the Geneva Bible—Chronicles' moral yardstick for the evaluation of kings once again inspired incendiary commentary. First appearing in 1560, the Geneva Bible was another English translation, the product of prominent English Protestants living in exile in Geneva. In their annotations to Chronicles, the commentators did not hesitate to pass judgment on biblical kings, and they even went so far as to advocate regicide. Such comments did not pass unnoticed. The Geneva Bible's marginalia were a main feature contributing to the book's popular appeal, as lay readers depended on "the spectacles of those Genevan annotations" to "see into the sense of Scripture."[261] Alongside the verse reporting that Athaliah, the wife of king Jehoram and the mother of King Ahaziah, was put to death by the sword (2 Chr 23.21), the note reads: "For where a tyrant & an idolater reigneth, there can be no quietness: for ye [the] plagues of God are euer amog such people." The note to the parallel account in 2 Kgs 11.20 makes no mention of tyrants. It reads, "Which by her crueltie & persecution had vexed ye [the] whole land before." For the commentators, Chronicles offered a better platform than Kings for generalizations about the evil consequences of tyranny.

In another note, the translators criticized King Asa for merely demoting his mother from "queen mother" status for the crime of idolatry rather than killing her. The annotation on 2 Chr 15.16 in its entirety reads:

[260] Two years after his death, the ban was lifted. Naomi Tadmor, *The Social Universe of the English Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3, 6 n.10.
[261] Berry, *The Geneva Bible*, 23.

> Or gradmother: & herein he shewed þe lacked zeale: for she ought to haue dyed bothe by the couenant, and by the Lawe of God: but he gaue place to foolish pitie, & wold also seme after a sort to falsify the Lawe.
>
> (Or grandmother: and herein he showed that he lacked zeal, for she ought to have died both by the covenant and by the Law of God: but he gave place to foolish pity, and would also seem after a sort to falsify the Law.)

The commentary on the parallel verse in Kings advocates punishment of the queen, but makes no mention of putting her to death.[262] Chronicles, not Kings, set the tone for strict accounting of monarchs who violate the Law.

From the moment the Geneva Bible began to circulate, it was a tremendous success. Eventually it became the most popular Bible in the land, and appeared in at least 140 editions. David Daniell, author of the comprehensive *The Bible in English*, emphasizes its great impact:

> The influence of the Geneva Bible is incalculable….Early in the seventeenth century the Geneva Bible was taken back to Europe, to Amsterdam and the other Netherlands Separatist centres, and from there to America, where, as successive waves of colonists landed, it flourished mightily. It was the Bible of the Elizabethan and Jacobean poets and prose writers, including Shakespeare.[263]

Daniell's description fails to mention, however, the great turn of events that stemmed directly from the Geneva Bible's reception of Chronicles: the publication of the King James Version (KJV). The side commentary in Chronicles urging the execution of the Queen Mother was one of two glosses that prompted King James (1566-1625) to commission his own

---

[262] The commentary on the parallel verse in 1 Kgs 15.13 reads, "Nether kinred nor autoritie ought to be regarded, when they blaspheme God & become idolaters, but must be punished."
[263] Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 295. See also Tadmor, *The Social Universe of the English Bible*, 6-7, 7 n.12. The Geneva Bible most likely arrived in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, and the Pilgrims brought it to Plymouth, Massachusetts on the *Mayflower* in 1620. From Lloyd Berry's introduction to *The Geneva Bible: A facsimile of the 1560 edition* (ed. Lloyd E. Berry; Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 22.

translation of scripture without annotation or marginalia.[264] The first edition of the KJV appeared in 1611 CE. Though it eventually crowded out the Geneva Bible (its last printing was in 1644[265]), the desire for commentary persisted. There were eight printings of the KJV with Geneva annotations, the last one as late as 1715.[266] What is most important to note, however, is that with the publication of the KJV, the English Bible was an accomplished fact.

The Role of Chronicles' Epitomes

The epitomized English Bibles that emerged in the eighteenth century showed that the lessons of Chronicles that served monarchs and would-be revolutionaries worked just as well for the molding of the obedient individual. Most epitomized Bibles of this period were authored by non-clerics who wished to improve their fellow citizens through the inculcation of values held dear within the community at large. Many adapted Chronicles' strict standards of behavior to promote individual character formation, particularly of the young. With these epitomes, the arena of Chronicles' reception moved from the court of kings and secret meeting places to the family home and the kitchen table.

Before turning to the role and reach of Chronicles in these works, it is necessary first to say a word about the status of vernacular Bibles in eighteenth-century England. From 1660-

[264] The other note declared the Hebrew midwives' disobedience of Pharaoh to be lawful (Ex 1.19). David Norton, *A History of the English Bible as Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 61.
[265] A. S. Herbert, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of The English Bible 1525-1961* (London: The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968), 192, entry 579.
[266] Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence*, 457. Most of these Bibles were printed in Amsterdam. Herbert, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of The English Bible 1525-1961*, 189 (entry 564); 192 (entry 579); 212 (entry 708); 216 (entry 741); 222 (entry 782); 238 (entry 897); 243 (entry 936).

1710, the KJV was the only Bible reprinted in England (the Crown controlled the patent), [267] and in such numbers that it marked the collapse of resistance to translated scripture in this country. Between 1710 and 1759, two hundred and twenty editions of the Bible in English were published (mostly the KJV and including the first Irish KJV, published in 1710).[268]

With the availability of English Bibles, attitudes changed. The reading of translated scripture, now no longer a secret and dangerous enterprise, became *de rigueur* for the literate.[269] One and all were expected to take up the Good Book and make themselves conversant with its contents. It appeared, however, that not everyone complied. The preface to the miniaturized Bible *Biblia* bemoans the general level of religious education, despite the widespread dissemination of scripture: "Tis a melancholy Reflection that in a Country, where all have the Bible in their hands, so many should be ignorant of the first Principles of the Oracles of God."[270] In like manner, the acclaimed author and diarist James Boswell (1740-1795) wrote in his journal:

> This forenoon I read the history of Joseph and his brethren, which melted my heart and drew tears from my eyes. It is simply and beautifully told in the Sacred Writings. It is a strange thing that the Bible is so little read.[271]

---

[267] "After the last regular printing of the Geneva Bible in 1644, to buy a Bible was to buy a KJV…The triumph of KJV was entirely due to the commercial interests of the owners of the monopoly on the text, the King's Printers, with Cambridge University Press, which also…claimed the right to print the text." Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 457. Hill points out that the KJV was much cheaper to publish than the Geneva Bible "with its copious notes, illustrations and other accessories." Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution*, 435. See also Scott Mandelbrote, "The English Bible and its Readers in the Eighteenth Century," in *Books and Their Readers in 18th Century England: New Essays* (ed. Isabel Rivers; London: Continuum International Publishing, 2003), 46-47, 51.

[268] Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 499.

[269] Hill also notes that, with the publication of vernacular editions, the Bible "was no longer the secret sacred book of the educated élite." Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution*, 39.

[270] *Biblia; or a Practical Summary of the Old and New Testaments* (London: R. Wilkin, 1727), n.p.

[271] James Boswell, *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-1763* (ed. Frederick A. Pottle; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950), 196. Cf. Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 516.

Biblical commentary returned to help improve religious literacy, and its audience widened to include middle- and lower-class families. The first Bibles annotated specifically for families emerged in the 1730s and enjoyed great success.[272] Bibles were also available to the poor, thanks to the efforts of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.[273] The Reverend Alexander Fortescu acknowledged both audiences in his preface to *The Holy Family Bible*. He expressed his concern that families were reading Bibles marred by printing errors (which his version corrected) and declared that readers of scripture now included the "Unlearned, the Aged, and the Christian Poor." Of particular interest is his objection that "*common* Bibles" had "no Illustrations to explain the dark and obscure Texts of Scripture…."[274] Difficult passages required qualified mediators who did all the hard work of interpretation and rendered it in an easily digested fashion. Accordingly, almost all of the English family Bibles of the era contained commentary by clergy.[275]

---

[272] Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 516.

[273] The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was closely tied to the Church of England. Between 1720 and 1750, it gave away approximately 27,000 Bibles; between 1750 and 1760, it dispersed about 30,000. The price of paper and labor increased after the French Revolution. Accordingly, in the 1790s only 5,000 Bibles were distributed. Mandelbrote, "The English Bible and its Readers in the Eighteenth Century," 48.

[274] Alexander Fortescu, *The holy family Bible, containing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and the Apocrypha at large: with concise explanatory notes, on all the Difficult Texts of Scripture, Wherein the objections of Infidels are obviated, and the obscure Passages explained to the meanest Capacity* (Winchester: John Wilkes, 1774), A 2. Italics are in the original.

[275] English family Bibles with commentary by clergy include *The complete family Bible* (London: Cooke, 1762), commentary by Rev. Francis Fawkes; *The Family Testament, and Scholar's Assistant* (London: T. Luckman, 1766), commentary by Rev. Joseph Brown; *The elegant family Bible* (London: S. Bladon, 1767), commentary by Rev. Samuel Rogers; *The Christian's family Bible* (London: Robinson and Roberts, 1770), commentary by Rev. W. Rider; *The Holy Family Bible* (Winchester: John Wilkes, 1774), commentary by Rev. Alexander Fortescu; *The New Family Bible, or divine library* (Shrewsbury: T. Wood, 1777), commentary by "the most celebrated orthodox commentators"; *The Protestant's Family Bible* (London: Harrison, 1780), commentary by a Society of Protestant Divines; *The complete British family*

The epitomized English Bibles of the period were a less expensive and more entertaining counterpart, reducing the Bible to pictures and synopses (either in prose or verse), and it was in these works that receptions of Chronicles exerted greatest influence. The fact that epitomes were *of* scripture and not Bibles themselves (and therefore not subject to patent restrictions), and that they were easier and cheaper to print than Bibles, opened the door to composition and production by anyone with the means and desire to do so. Middle-class lay exegetes were able to assume the role of interpreter for other lay readers, who included, but were not restricted to, children.

The authors of some of the most widely read epitomized Bibles of the day used synopses of Chronicles to make their own assessments of selective scriptural accounts. They include *Verbum Sempiternum*; *The Holy Bible, done in verse*; *The Holy Bible Abridged*; and *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible, in easy verse*. A close reading of these distillations of scripture brings to light the power of Chronicles' reception, even when—or especially when—it occurs in abbreviated form.

Verbum Sempiternum

For John Taylor (1580-1653), author of the Thumb Bible[276] *Verbum Sempiternum* (*VS*),

---

Bible (London: Hogg, 1781), commentary by Rev. Paul Wright; *The Christian's new and complete family Bible* (London: C. Cooke, 1787), commentary by Rev. Thomas Bankes; and *The Christian's Complete Family Bible* (Manchester: H. Harrop, 1789), commentary by "several eminent Divines of the Church of England."

The first American Bible, Robert Aitkin's reissue of the KJV, was printed in 1777. Family Bibles did not emerge until much later: "Yet that part of the account of the English Bible which is especially American has to be, for the middle decades of the nineteenth century, about the avalanche of giant, heavily bound Family Bibles, all of them KJVs, full of pictures and massive extra matter, sold in colossal numbers right across the States as an essential piece of furniture in the American home." Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 580-81.

[276] Thumb Bibles were tiny, no more than two or three inches high, and offered a paraphrase of scripture through words or Images. *An Agnus Dei* is the earliest extant Thumb Bible, published in 1601, by the poet (and student of tomb monuments) John Weever (1576-1632). *An Agnus Dei* told the life of Jesus in rhyme. Chronicles had no part in its summary. The name "Thumb Bible"

Chronicles afforded him the opportunity to distinguish the parts of Israel's history that prefigured Christ from those that prefigured Judaism. His epitome was an early example of popularized biblical interpretation and showed the enormous appeal of such texts. First issued in 1630, *VS* was still being reprinted in the 1800s.[277] Moreover, Taylor was a lay exegete. He was a London waterman and a tavern keeper with a penchant for writing verse.[278] In *VS*, he gave a synopsis of the Old and New Testaments composed in pentameter. Today scholars often categorize this work as children's literature, and it may well have been intended for use by children.[279] However, Taylor's introduction (from the 1771 edition) is simply addressed "To the Reader":

> With care and pains out of the Sacred book,
> This little Abstract I for thee have took:
> And with great reverence have I cull'd for thence,
> All things that are of greatest consequence.
> And all I beg, when thou tak'st it in hand,
> Before thou judge be sure to understand:
> And tho' the Volume, and the Work be small,
> Yet it contains the sum of All in All.[280]
>
> The Author

There is no indication that Taylor considered the value of the work to be limited to the instruction of the young.

---

is a late moniker, first used in 1849. Ruth Elizabeth Adomeit, *Three Centuries of Thumb Bibles: A Checklist* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1980), xiii.

[277] Charles L. Nichols, "The Holy Bible in Verse," in *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 36 (1926): 78. *Verbum Sempiternum* first appeared in colonial America in 1693. Bottigheimer, *The Bible for Children From the Age of Gutenberg to the Present*, 45. In 1786 the first edition was published in the United States with the label "The Twelvth Edition, with Amendments." Its dimensions were 2.5 inches by 1.5 inches. Bruce M. Metzger, "Curious Bibles" in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (eds. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 144.

[278] Taylor entitled his self-published collection *All the Works of John Taylor, the Water Poet, being 63 in number*. Adomeit, *Three Centuries of Thumb Bibles*, xvi.

[279] See, for example, Adomeit, *Three Centuries of Thumb Bibles*, xiv; Bottigheimer, *The Bible for Children From the Age of Gutenberg to the Present*, 45.

[280] John Taylor, *A New History of the Old and New Testament, in a short, easy and instructive manner* (London: n.p., 1771), A 1-2.

In *VS,* Taylor's reception of Chronicles differentiated historical Israel from eternal Israel. *VS* covers the entire biblical corpus, proceeding book by book. Though Taylor allocated much more space to Samuel and Kings than he did to Chronicles, Chronicles provided the interpretative key to those books. In seventy-two verses *VS* recounted the events in Samuel and Kings, touching on Samuel; Eli; the Ark; Saul's rise and failings; David and Goliath; David's marriage to Michal ("the king's fair daughter"); Saul's attempts on his life and Jonathan's help; Saul and the witch of Endor; Mephibosheth; Bathsheeba ("Uriah's wife") and Uriah's murder; Nathan's rebuke and David's repentance; the rape of Tamar; Absolom's rebellion and death; Ahitophel's suicide; the census and plague; Solomon; the deaths of Adonijah, Joab, Shimei at David's behest; the building of the temple; Solomon's idolatry; Rehoboam; the division of the kingdoms; Elijah; the fall of Israel and Judah; and Nebuchadnezzar.[281]

Taylor allocated First and Second Chronicles just four verses each, but in them, the lay exegete summed up for the reader the lessons to be learned from the historical record of Israel.

1 Chronicles

> Here every Tribe is numbered by their names,
> To their memorial, and immortal fames.
> And *David*'s acts t' instruct misguided Men,
> Are briefly here recorded all again.

2 Chronicles

> The state of *Israel*, *Judah*, and their Kings,
> This Book again to our remembrance brings:
> Their doom of Plague, of Famine, Slavery, Sword,
> For their contemning Heavn's all-saving word.[282]

In Taylor's synopsis of First Chronicles, the book has something positive to teach its readers: the tribes of Israel are famed and David is an important model for those in need of

[281] Taylor, *A New History of the Old and New Testament,* 33-50.
[282] Taylor, *A New History of the Old and New Testament,* n.p. Italics in the original.

guidance. The lesson of Second Chronicles, however, is negative: Israel, Judah, and all their rulers are doomed to suffer for condemning God's word. *VS* distinguishes between David and the tribes of Israel, on the one hand, and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, on the other. David and the tribes are good, universal, and timeless exemplars; the political entities of Israel and Judah, by contrast, are bad and suffer a specific and final demise. In these verses, *VS* posits a strong dichotomy between the two books and their histories.

Taylor created this contrast in order to distinguish the part of Chronicles that he believed prefigured Christ (First Chronicles) from the part that did not (Second Chronicles). His synopsis of the Gospel according to Matthew, the first book of the New Testament, indicated the strong connection Taylor made between Jesus and David, and his belief that the figures in the Old Testament were types that foreshadowed figures in the New Testament:

> Lo here the blessed Son of God and Man,
> New born, who was before all Worlds began.
> Of heavn'ly Seed th' eternal Living Rock,
> Of human Race, of kingly *David*'s Stock.
> Our blest Redeemer, whom the Prophets old,
> In their true preachings had so oft foretold,
> In Figures, Ceremonies, Types, and Tropes:
> He here fulfils their Words, confirms their Hopes.[283]

In Taylor's reception of Second Chronicles, by contrast, the fate of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah prefigure that of Jews. Taylor's antipathy toward Jews is clear from his other work. In an essay on his travels in Germany, Taylor wrote:

> …by the way [towards Hamburg] I noted some twenty men, women, and children in divers places of Altonagh, all deformed, some with one eye, some with hare-lips, crooked-backed, splay-footed, half-nosed, or one blemish or other. I admiring at them, was told they were Jews, wherein I perceived the judgment of the High Judge of all, that had permitted nature to deform their forms, whose graceless minds were so much misshapen through

[283] Taylor, *A New History of the Old and New Testament*, 90-91. Italics in the original.

want of grace.[284]

Further evidence that Taylor intended Second Chronicles to be a negative lesson concerning Jews is that he does not include King Manasseh in that book's list of Judah's kings. Instead, he treated the king separately in his verses dedicated to "Manasseh's Prayer":

> Manasseh almost drown'd in black despair,
> Gains Mercy by Repentence, and by Prayer.[285]

There is nothing in this synopsis that connects Manasseh to the rulers of Judah. Rather, Taylor's reception of Manasseh renders him another timeless positive example, the verses' tone and teaching having more in common with the verses dedicated to First Chronicles than to those of Second Chronicles. Taylor's depiction of the king is in keeping with orthodox Christian descriptions of Manasseh as a paradigm for penitent sinners.[286]

The Holy Bible, done in verse for the benefit of weak Memories

VS's strong separation between the first and second books of Chronicles is absent from another equally popular Thumb Bible, *The Holy Bible, done in verse for the benefit of weak Memories*. Authored by the English journalist and publisher Benjamin Harris (d. c. 1716),[287] *The*

---

[284] John Taylor, "Three Weeks, Three Days, and Three Hours Observations and Travels from London to Hamburg, amongst Jews and Gentiles, with Descriptions of Towns and Towers, Castles and Citadels; Artificial Gallowses, and Natural Hangmen. And dedicated for the present, to the absent Odcombian Knight Errant, Sir Thomas Coriat, Great Britain's Error and the World's Mirror," in *Early Prose and Poetical Works of John Taylor, the Water Poet (1580-1653)* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1888), 135.
[285] Taylor, *A New History of the Old and New Testament*, D 3.
[286] See the discussion of the reception of Manasseh in chapter two of this dissertation.
[287] Benjamin Harris came to the American colonies after having been imprisoned and pilloried in England for printing a seditious book. He was an Anabaptist and vehemently anti-Catholic. He brought to the American colonies his *The Protestant Primer*, retitled it *The New England Primer*, and began printing it as early as 1683. It became the only elementary school textbook in America and sold more than 5 million copies until it was replaced by Noah Webster's *Blue Book Speller*. It remained in print until the turn of the twentieth century. Tim Thorton, *Prophecy, Politics and the People in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, Eng.: Boydell & Brwer Ltd, 2006), 95;

Holy Bible, done in verse appeared in England in 1699 and was published in America in 1729.[288] It joined *VS* in dominating the market for children's Bibles during the first half of the seventeenth century on both sides of the Atlantic.[289]

The formal similarities between the two works belied Harris's alternative interpretation of Chronicles. *The Holy Bible, done in verse* also epitomized the Bible on a book-by-book basis, and its epitome of Samuel and Kings, consisting of eighty-two rhymed verses, covered much of the same ground as Taylor's work.[290] As in *VS*, the synopsis of Chronicles took up no more than eight lines. Harris's epitome of Chronicles, however, had its own distinct character and tone:

Chronicles

The Tribes *which from old Adam came*
Are Numbred to immortal Fame.
And *Davids* Acts recorded are,
[Th]at misled men may take more care.
This Book *unto remembrance* brings
The state of Israel's [and] Judah's kings

James D. Hart, *The Oxford Companion to American Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 465; Fred Blevens, "Publishers," in *American Journalism: History, Principles, Practices* (eds. William David Sloan and Lisa Mullikin Parcell; Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co. Inc., 2007), 98. Edward Janak offers a critical analysis of the primer's content and says the "explicit purpose of the Primer was to teach the Puritanic definition of religion." Edward A. Janak, "Remembering the Present is the Past Writ Large: An Examination of the Politics of the Dominant Texts in the United States, 1700s-1900s," in *The New Politics of the Textbook: Critical Analysis in the Core Content Areas* (eds. Heather Hickman and Brad J. Porfilio; Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2012), 236-37 (236).

[288] Nichols, "The Holy Bible in Verse," 79.

[289] *The Holy Bible, done in verse* was first published in 1698 in England and made its American debut in 1717. Ruth Bottigheimer, *The Bible for Children From the Age of Gutenberg to the Present* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 45. Harris lived in Boston from 1686 to 1685 before returning to London.

[290] There are some differences. Harris adds mention of Hannah, David's dance before the ark, the story of Solomon's judgment in the case of two women claiming the same child, and the story of "the wicked children" eaten by bears for jeering Elisha. Also, Harris's versified Bible contains many more lines per page than *VS*.

And how Manasses in despair,
Finds Mercy in a hearty Pray'r.[291]

The first four lines essentially replicate the synopsis of First Chronicles in *VS*, covering the same topics in language that is a close parallel, but thereafter *The Holy Bible, done in verse* took a different tack. Unlike *VS*, Harris treated the book as a whole, and he did not criticize the rulers who followed David. Nor are Manasseh's prayer and God's favorable response segregated from the history of Israel; rather, they are an integral part of the kingdom of Judah's record. Harris's uninterrupted presentation of Chronicles allowed David to be more closely aligned with the other kings, whereas a great gap separated him from his fellow Judahites in *VS*. Moreover, in Harris's synopsis the tribes and Manasseh are both recipients of something positive: the first gains fame and the second finds mercy. David and the other monarchs, by contrast, give rather than receive, as collectively their deeds serve as reminders to others. Taken altogether, in this synopsis earlier and later Israel are closely intertwined.

The Holy Bible Abridged: or, the History of the Old and New Testament

In John Newbery's popular prose Thumb Bible, *The Holy Bible Abridged: or, the History of the Old and New Testament*, Chronicles' influence also correlated with its author's interest in gleaning moral instruction from Israel's history.[292] It was first published in 1757 and went through numerous editions in both England and the United States. Dedicated to the "Parents,

[291] *The Holy Bible, done in verse for the benefit of weak Memories* (London: B. Harris, 1715), n.p.

[292] Another popular prose Thumb Bible, published in 1727, stood in sharp contrast to *The Holy Bible Abridged*. Chronicles did not appear to leave any imprint upon the author of *Biblia; or a Practical Summary of the Old and New Testaments* (later retitled *The Bible in Miniature*). *Biblia* reduced its account of Israel's monarchy to a recitation of names and dates and offered minimal assessment of that history. *Biblia*'s failure to receive Chronicles supports the argument that the book best served those who wished to articulate their own evaluations.

Guardians, and Governesses, of Great Britain and Ireland"[293] (and, in the American editions, to the "Parents, Guardians, and Governesses of America"[294]), Newbery intended the book to be a means of engaging children in the study of scripture. In his preface he declared that his retelling of the Bible was both

> *instructive* and *entertaining*; such as will not only feed the Fancy, but mend the Heart, and establish in the Mind those unalterable Laws of the DEITY, which lead us to the Knowledge of Himself, which cement us together in Society, and on which our Happiness both in this Life and the next must absolutely depend.[295]

For Newbery, attainment of biblical literacy was a civic goal.

At first glance, it would appear that Chronicles is absent from *The Holy Bible Abridged*. Newbery devoted a little over seven pages to the reign of David, the details of which are drawn from the books of Samuel. Four and a half of these pages relate David's contest with Goliath. The account omits any mention of Bathsheba and Uriah, but includes the story of Absalom (with a picture of his hanging by his hair from a tree[296]). However, Chronicles' influence is evident in the concluding section on David, where Newbery includes the important phrase "he [David] died in good old Age":

> [David] was a Prince of extraordinary Valor and Wisdom, a prophet, and an excellent poet, the greatest part of the Psalms being of his composing. He subdued the Philistines, the Moabites, the Syrians, and other nations; and defeated some dangerous conspiracies that formed against him, particularly that of his own son Absalom…In a Word, having reigned forty years, and triumphed over his foreign and domestic enemies, he died in good old Age, leaving his Crown and

---

[293] *The Holy Bible Abridged: or, the History of the Old and New Testament Illustrated With Notes, and adorned with Cuts, For the Use of Children* (London: T. Carnan and F. Newbery, 1775), n.p.
[294] *The Holy Bible Abridged* (Boston : Robert Hodge, 1782), n.p.
[295] *The Holy Bible Abridged* (London: T. Carnan and F. Newbery, 1775), v-vi.
[296] *The Holy Bible Abridged*, 85.

Kingdom to his son Solomon.[297]

Newbery's description that David "died in good old Age" draws from the King James Bible, where Chronicles' summary of David's life reads:

> Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.
> And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years;
> seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three
> years reigned he in Jerusalem. And he died in a good old age,
> full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son
> reigned in his stead. 1 Chr 29.26-29 (KJV)

A close reading of the end of David's life in *The Holy Bible Abridged* in light of the verses from Chronicles reveals that the spirit of Chronicles infused Newbery's portrait of the king. The book of Kings' notice of David's death also gives the length of his reign in Hebron and Jerusalem (1 Kgs 2.10-12), but only Chronicles reports that he died "in good old age." Accordingly, in his conclusion Newbery interpreted the events of Samuel in light of Chronicles. David's famous victory over Goliath (so appealing to children) is part and parcel of his victories over other foreign enemies. The mention of his son's rebellion, which could point to David's failure as a father or leader, emphasizes instead the danger David overcame within his own borders. The elements of David's character that make him "a Prince of extraordinary Valor and Wisdom, a prophet, and an excellent poet"—the qualities of David that are emphasized in Chronicles but often muted in the Samuel narrative—are highlighted here.[298]

---

[297] *The Holy Bible Abridged*, 51-52.

[298] *The Holy Bible Abridged*'s depiction of Solomon follows the same pattern. It begins with a description of the king's unparalleled wisdom, relates his most famous judgment (in the case of the two prostitutes who claim the same baby), and then devotes several pages to describing his construction of the Temple, his oversight of the bearing of the ark into the Holy of Holies, and concludes with his dedication of the Temple. There is no mention of his fall into idolatry. *The Holy Bible Abridged*, 86-90.

A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible, in easy verse

In *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible, in easy verse*, an anonymous eighteenth-century work from the renowned English publisher John Marshall, Chronicles also provided its author with a didactic frame for the interpretations of events. In terms of content and presentation, *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible* occupied a middle ground between Taylor's *VS* and Harris's *The Holy Bible done in verse*. In this synopsis, the first and second books of Chronicles are separated (as in *VS*) but Manasseh is included (as in *The Holy Bible done in verse*). The author also expanded Chronicles' list of important figures to include the Levitical singers and Josiah. Doing so allowed the author to laud ritual practice and royal piety.

The opening verses of *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible*'s epitome of First Chronicles make the same observations as its rhymed Thumb Bible counterparts. Rather than restricting its synopsis of the first book to four lines, however, it added four more:

> The First Book of Chronicles.
>
> Here *Adam*'s offspring and their names
> Recorded are unto their fames;
> And *David*'s acts set down again,
> As patterns for the sons of men.
> How *Levi*'s sons their order take,
> And who they are sweet music make.
> What mighty riches there were giv'n
> To build a house to th' God of heav'n.[299]

This crystallization of the first book highlights the first man (and the genealogies) and holds up David as archetype of righteous behavior, and then goes on to praise the Levites as well as the amassing of treasure to build the Temple. The expansion celebrated ritualized worship and sacred space. When the passage is read as a whole, it honors acts in the worldly realm (the first

[299] *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible, in easy verse. Containing the Old and New Testaments. With the Apochrypha* (London: printed and sold by John Marshall and Co., [1785?]), 18-19. Italics in the original.

four lines) and those in the religious sphere (the last four lines). This interpretation of Chronicles thus underscores obedience (to examples and to orders) bookended by earthly fame and heavenly glory.

The summary of Second Chronicles made the same point through its description of the disobedience of Israel's and Judah's kings, the piety of Manasseh and Josiah, and the eventual exile of the Jews:

> The Second Book of Chronicles
>
> What *Israel* did, and *Judah*'s Kings,
> This book to our remembrance brings
> Their many plagues it doth record,
> For not obeying of God's word.
> And how *Manasseh* mercy found,
> By pray'r, altho' in prison bound.
> Pious *Josiah*'s happy reign,
> Who was by *Pharoah Necho* slain
> But being to his fathers gone,
> The *Jews* were sent to Babylon.[300]

The opening lines reproduced virtually verbatim the four verses that comprised *VS*'s epitome of Second Chronicles, emphasizing the terrible consequences for the monarchs' defiance of the Law. The next lines, however, singled out two of Judah's kings for their exceptional devotion to God: Manasseh, who received mercy, and Josiah, a pious king with a happy reign. Like Harris's *The Holy Bible done in verse*, *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible* chose a mix of moral exemplars for the reader from among the successors to David and balanced the report of the bad kings with notice of the good.

A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible

In the other epitomized Bibles discussed thus far, Chronicles' own concise recapitulation

[300] *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible*, 19. Italics in the original.

of history provided their authors with a platform for assessing the events of Samuel and Kings; in *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible,* Chronicles' unique theology allowed the author to highlight the interior life of faith, and to present biblical figures from the inside out.

Hieroglyphic Bibles were so called because they reproduced select biblical verses in a combination of words and pictures, with the verse spelled out in full at the bottom of the page. The most popular by far was the anonymously authored *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible*.[301] It first appeared in England in 1783, then five years later in the United States, and by 1812 it had been through twenty editions.[302] Like Newbery's *Holy Bible Abridged*, it, too, was inscribed to the "Parents, Guardians, and Governesses of Great Britain and Ireland"[303] (and, in the American edition, to the same in the United States[304]). Its preface stated that it was intended as an amusing and instructive introduction to scripture for youth. Its selection of biblical passages by and large followed the order of the canon, "beginning with the Creation, and finished with the Redemption of Mankind, annexing some select moral Doctrines, and of all this we have quoted some of the most important Places in the *Old* and *New Testament*."[305]

The reduction of each book to, at the most, a few verses (sometimes in paraphrase), and

---

[301] Its full title is *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible; or Select Passages in the Old and New Testaments, represented with emblematical figures, for the amusement of youth: designed chiefly to familiarize tender Age, in a pleasing and diverting Manner, with early Ideas of the Holy Scriptures. To which are subjoined, A short Account of the Lives of the Evangelists, and other Pieces, illustrated with Cuts.* It was printed by and for T. Hodgson in London.
[302] Mandelbrote, "The English Bible and its Readers in the Eighteenth Century," 71 n.83. See also Charles Lemuel Nichols, *Isaiah Thomas: Printer, Writer & Collector, A Paper read April 12, 1911, before The Club of Odd Volumes, With a Bibliography of the Books printed by Isaiah Thomas* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1912), 87-88.
[303] *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible* (London: T. Hodgson, 1784).
[304] *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible* (Worcester, Mass.: Isaiah Thomas, 1788).
[305] *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible* (London: T. Hodgson, 1784), n.p.

at the least, a single verse, made *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible* a stringent epitomizer.[306] Other epitomes offered a miniaturized retelling in their authors' own words of the biblical narrative in prose or rhyme. The hieroglyphic Bible, by contrast, relied on actual scripture for its text. It was also more staccato in pace and tone, capturing the essence of each book through a lively mixture of words and images.

In terms of allotment of pages, the author of *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible* placed Chronicles on equal footing with Kings: First and Second Kings and First and Second Chronicles had one page each. First Samuel had two and Second Samuel one. In terms of content, however, Samuel and Chronicles overall had more in common with each other than either had with Kings.

The verses from Kings appear to have been chosen for their dramatic effect. First Kings is represented by "The Ships of Solomon came once in *three* Years, and brought *Gold* and *Silver*, *Ivory*, and *Apes* and *Peacocks*"[307] (1 Kgs 10.22). In place of the word "ship," there is a picture of a three-masted schooner afloat on the sea with long banners waving from the top of the two highest masts. "Three" is the number 3. "Gold" is a round disc and "silver" is a crescent; "ivory" is represented by an elephant's tusk, and three monkeys, spanning the width of the page, take the place of "apes." The bottom picture is equally large and depicts two peacocks, one with its tail

[306] The verses from the Old Testament accorded a page in *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible*, in order, are: Ps 90.2, Gen 1.1-2; 2 Esd 6.45; Gen 2.7; Gen 2.8, 16-17; Gen 2. 18, 21-22; Gen 3.4, 6; Gen 3.17-19; Gen 4.3-5, 8; 1 Pet 3.20; Gen 8.10-11; Gen 9.8, 13, 15; Gen 11.4; Gen 22.9-10; Gen 24.35; Gen 28.12; Gen 37.28; Gen 45.4,14-15; Ex 2.1-9; Ex 3.2; Ex 23-25; Ps 77.20; Ex 13.21; Ex 15.19; Ex 34.29; Heb 9.2; Heb 9.4; Lev 16.15; Lev 23.3; Num 20.11; Num 21.6, 8; Deut 6.5; Josh 1.8; Josh 4.9; Josh 6.20; Josh 10.12-13; Judg 15.15; Ruth 2.15-17; Ps 128.3; 1 Sam 16.7; 1 Sam 17.49-50; 2 Sam 24.14; 1 Kgs 10.22; 1 Kgs 2.11; 1 Chr 29.17; 2 Chr 16.9; Ezra 3.10; Neh 4.16 ff; Esth 8.7; Job 29.14-15; Ps 98.5-6; Prov 6.17-18; Prov 16.31; Prov 23.19-21; Eccl 12.1-2; Song 8.6; Isa 40.11; Isa 40.30-31; Jer 8.7; Lam 5.16-17; Ezek 5.1;Dan 4.33; Dan 6.22;Hos 4.3; Joel 2.1;Amos 4.13; Obad 1.3-4; Jonah 1.15, 2.1, 10; Mic 4.3-4; Nah 1.15; Hab 1.8; Zeph 1.12; Hag 2.22; Zech 9.9; Mal 3.1. The New Testament is also epitomized.

[307] This is the verse as it appears at the bottom of the page. Italics indicate which words are replaced with figures.

fully displayed and the other a profile view of the bird and its crown, its tail closed, pecking in the grass.

Second Kings is "As *Elijah* and *Elisha* went on and talked, and behold, there appeared a *Chariot* and Horses of Fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a Whirlwind into *Heaven*" (2 Kgs 2.11). Elijah and Elisha are pictured, as are the chariot and a pair of horses, radiating flames. At the bottom of the page, Elijah, looking up with his hands clasped and raised, rides the horse-drawn chariot skyward.

These verses from Kings afforded ample opportunity for displaying a pleasing array of hieroglyphics, depicting exotic beasts and dramatic action. Neither selection emphasized a theological point. Rather, their aim appears to have been to elicit amusement and wonder.

The same is true for the second of the two pages that epitomize First Samuel. It recounts David's slaying of Goliath: "*David* smote the *Philistine* in his Forehead with a Stone, and he fell upon his *Face*. Then David ran and stood upon the *Philistine*, and took his Sword and cut off his Head therewith" (1 Sam 17.49-50). The images consist of David, a shepherd's crook in his left hand and a sling in his right; Goliath, first holding his spear and shield, then lying face-down on the ground; and finally David atop the giant body, his sword raised over Goliath's neck. It is hard to imagine a Bible for children—or anyone—omitting David's famous exploit.

The verse from the lead page of First Samuel, and the verses selected to represent Second Samuel, First Chronicles, and Second Chronicles, however, strove more for inspiration and instruction than entertainment. All described God's relationship to the individual: "*Man* seeth with his *Eyes* the outward Appearance; but the *Lord* looketh on the Heart" (1 Sam 16.7); "David said, I am in a great Strait: Let us fall now into the *Hand* of the *Lord* (for his Mercies are great) and let me not fall into the *Hand* of *Man*" (2 Sam 14.4); "David said, I know, my *God*, that thou

triest the *Heart*, and hast Pleasure in Uprightness" (1 Chr 29.17); and "The *Eyes* of the *Lord* run to and fro throughout the whole *Earth*, to show himself strong in the Behalf of them whose *Heart* is perfect towards him " (2 Chr 16.9).

Turning first to the hieroglyphics in these pages, they are universally emblematic rather than tailored to a specific event. The images for the heart are simple and delicate. They are the same for 1 Sam 16.7 and 1 Chr 29.17: a large heart encircled by two tendrils, one on each side with their bottom stems crossed and their tips touching above, adorned with berries and leaves. The heart of 2 Chr 16.9 stands alone, without decoration. God's hieroglyphic is also striking. For 1 Sam 16.7, 2 Sam 14.4, and 2 Chr 16.9, it is the Hebrew spelling for "Lord" (yod hey vav hey) framed by points radiating away from the letters like rays of the sun. In 1 Chr 29.17, it is another Hebrew spelling of God (yod yod), framed by a triangle, which is itself framed by three nested ovals, each with a different border.

With respect to content, 1 Sam 16.7, 1 Chr 29.17, and 2 Chr 16.9 all speak of God's ability to assess the heart of each individual. In these verses, one's interior condition, rather than deeds, attracts God's attention. First Samuel 16.7 matches the selections from Chronicles perfectly. Chronicles possibly influenced the author's choice of 1 Sam 16.7, as God's immediate vigilance over every life is more a refrain of Chronicles than of Samuel.

The depiction of David that emerges from these verses is that of a wise, reflective, and upright man who, though he singlehandedly slew a giant, depends entirely on God. In 2 Sam 24.24, David seeks God's mercy at the time of his distress; and in 1 Chr 29.17, David affirms God's testing of the righteous. These verses stress his piety, which is his primary characteristic in Chronicles and a secondary one in Second Samuel. Here the author's reception of Chronicles defined the lesson he imparted to his reader from Samuel: God's judgment of every human being

is ongoing, and the rewards enjoyed by the one whose heart is perfect are great.

The interpretations of Chronicles within these epitomes gave lay exegetes a chance to instruct readers. For the authors of *Verbum Sempiternum*; *The Holy Bible, done in verse*; *The Holy Bible Abridged*; and *A compleat abstract of the Holy Bible, in easy verse*, Chronicles is at heart a book of memories to inspire proper conduct. It brings to mind the deeds of the good and bad, and holds them up as models to emulate or reject. These books draw on Chronicles' uniquely synthetic and comprehensive rendition of sacred history. In *A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible*, Chronicles' theology comes to the fore as an explanation of events, revealing that invisible life of the spirit, both human and divine.

Appreciation of epitomized English Bibles more broadly depends both on recognizing their place in the fight for universal access to scripture, and on understanding the importance of Chronicles' reception among key interpreters in that fight. The epitomes represented the culmination of a combination of forces that were building for centuries: the clamor for greater access to scripture through translation, the desire to guide biblical interpretation, and the impulse to render the Bible through the visual and literary arts. The most learned prelate of the ninth century wrote his commentary on Chronicles to instruct a king. By the 1700s, a London waterman's rhymed rendition of the book was in the pocket of anyone willing to spend a sixpence.[308]

The role of Chronicles, however, remained remarkably constant. It provided an interpretive key for Israel's history, filtering events through a didactic lens. Whether that key was applied or ignored, and what proscriptions came from it—a turning out toward the world of

[308] The only Thumb Bible for which I could determine a price was *Biblia*. The 1795 edition cost sixpence. Adomeit, *Three Centuries of Thumb Bibles*, 234.

action or a turning in toward the soul—varied with the reader. But the opportunity to make an assessment did not change. The reception of Chronicles within these epitomes helps us see the latent power of its "supplementary" history of the Bible.

Chapter Four

Julius Wellhausen's Use and Abuse of Chronicles' History

For Julius Wellhausen, the foremost biblical scholar of the nineteenth century, Chronicles was the signature work of the Second Temple priestly class. Through pioneering use of source criticism, he claimed to show that these ecclesiastic scribes freely rewrote Israel's history to remove the narratives that placed David in a negative light. According to Wellhausen, therefore, it was not possible that there could be any verses remaining that were critical of the king. Today his perspective continues to shape Chronicles scholarship, as modern exegetes seek to harmonize every potential textual irritant regarding David in the book. As a result, we are left with a curious paradox. The man who used Chronicles to launch historical criticism in order to overthrow pre-modern readings of the Bible is also responsible for the fact that Chronicles is usually read today in what has become itself a pre-modern way.

Wellhausen presented his view of Chronicles in his pathbreaking book, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*. In composing this work, Wellhausen, had a dual purpose. The first was methodological: to provide an authoritative formulation of the Documentary Hypothesis, which entailed a definitive ordering of the three main biblical sources of the major narrative. His second objective was theological: to identify—and by identifying to elevate—an ancient and vital form of worship. The two purposes are closely related. According to Wellhausen, source criticism allowed one to apprehend the native individual impulse to commune directly with God and to

understand the elements in the Bible that work against that impulse.[309]

This chapter also has a two-fold objective. One is to challenge Wellhausen's claim to have proven, through source criticism, that Chronicles is a post-biblical text disconnected from the oldest Yahwist traditions. The other is to show that Wellhausen's interpretation of Chronicles, which dominates modern scholarship, caused him and continues to cause others to overlook or misrepresent certain features of the book that do not fit his paradigm.

Chronicles in Wellhausen's Prolegomena

As depicted in *Prolegomena*, Wellhausen compared the author of Chronicles to the mapmaker who fills the blank spaces of unknown territory with fanciful lands. In like manner, the Chronicler rewrote Israel's history according to a theocratic ideal, confident that no one could or would contradict him.[310] Absent any constraint, he gave "free flight" (*freien Flüge*) to his "law-enthralled imagination" (*gesetzesseligen Phantasie*) in the creation of a thoroughly inauthentic account.[311] Examples include attributing to David the founding of the Temple cult and the creation of illustrious bloodlines for the post-exilic community through imaginary genealogical lists. When the Chronicler presented a different version of history than that found in the older books, he altered the sources to reflect current, not ancient, circumstances and sensibilities.[312] He "spun" or falsified the record. Wellhausen noted, for instance, that Chronicles

[309] Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), 411-12; rep. of *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (trans. J. Sutherland Black and A. Enzies, with preface by W. Roberrtson Smith; Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1885); trans. of *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, Band 1 (2nd ed.; Berlin: G. Reimer, 1883). Most of the Wellhausen quotations in this chapter are from the English translation, sometimes with minor modifications. When I quote directly from the German, the translation is my own and I give both the German and English citations.
[310] Ibid. 161 [Ger. 159].
[311] Ibid., 195 [Ger. 194]. See also 38, 223.
[312] Ibid., 182, 211.

largely followed Kings in its description of Joash's emergence from his hiding place in the temple, but it then had the Levites guard the king's son and not, as in Samuel, palace mercenaries of questionable origin. As Wellhausen put it, in Chronicles "the legend [lit., cult-story] will be purified by the cultic law…" (*Die Kultussage wird durch das Kultusgesetz purificirt*).[313]

Wellhausen's understanding of the Chronicler as a single-minded free agent working with a tabula rasa led to his distorted interpretations of certain problematic verses in Chronicles. In his view, nothing in Chronicles' narrative was truly negative or contradictory.[314] Everything worked in concert towards the same end. Wellhausen's P—the author of Chronicles—knew nothing of textual irritants. To sustain this position, Wellhausen went to great lengths to ignore or manipulate contradictory evidence.

A critique of Wellhausen's presentation of Chronicles requires placing it in its historical and ideological context. In *Prolegomena*, published in 1878, Wellhausen proposed a new chronological order of the three main sources. First came J (for the Yahwist), next D (for Deuteronomy), and lastly P (for the Priestly Code). Previous scholars had placed P earlier than D. Wellhausen's new order had important implications for understanding Judaism, which Wellhausen saw developing after the exile. In positing P as the last, or the most recent, of the three sources, Wellhausen denied that Judaism received and preserved the much older Mosaic Law. Rather, the Law is a relatively recent addition to the corpus of Scripture and a product of Judaism.[315]

[313] Ibid. 341 [Ger. 345].
[314] Ibid., 161.
[315] Ibid., 2-4.

Wellhausen's view of the Law is one of his most important and controversial positions. In the opening of *Prolegomena,* he says he intuited the intrusiveness of the Law from the very beginning of his studies:

> In my early student days I was attracted by the stories of Saul and David, Ahab and Elijah; the discourses of Amos and Isaiah laid strong hold on me, and I read myself well into the prophetic and historical books of the Old Testament. Thanks to such aids as were accessible to me, I even considered that I understood them tolerably, but at the same time was troubled with a bad conscience, as if I were beginning with the roof instead of the foundation; for I had no thorough acquaintance with the Law of which I was accustomed to be told that it was the basis and postulate of the whole literature. At last I took courage and made my way through Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and even through Knobel's *Commentary* to these books. But it was in vain that I looked for the light which was to be shed from this source on the historical and prophetical books. On the contrary, my enjoyment of the latter was marred by the Law; it did not bring them any nearer to me, but intruded itself uneasily, like a ghost that makes a noise indeed, but is not visible and really effects nothing.[316]

Wellhausen further disputed that P was linked in some natural way to J and D. In his scheme, the exile represented a decisive and unbridgeable rupture in the continuum of tradition. On one side of the chasm stood the earlier J and D sources. They were intimately bound together and preserved remnants of genuine history. On the other were Judaism and its creation, the P source. P was not an outgrowth of either J or D, but a later parasitic addition that overlaid them:

> Like ivy it overspreads the dead trunk with extraneous life, blending old and new in a strange combination. It is a high estimate of tradition that leads to its being thus modernized; but in the process it is twisted and perverted, and set off with foreign accretions in the most arbitrary way.[317]

In brief, the spirit of Wellhausen's reading was to consider J and D as transmitters of authentic

[316] Ibid., 3.
[317] Ibid., 227.

tradition and P as the would-be resuscitator of that tradition whose attempts failed miserably.

Jon Levenson, in his book *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism*, discusses the role that Wellhausen's Lutheran background played in his understanding of the Old Testament. Wellhausen's chronological ordering of the three sources corresponded to a Pauline view of sacred history: "righteousness without the Torah (Abraham), sin and death through the Torah (Moses, Sinai), and the restoration of righteousness without the Torah (participation in Christ)." Wellhausen's innovation was that he "historicized Paul's exegesis." For Paul, the biblical figures of Abraham and Moses were representative of individuals. Wellhausen transformed them into "historical categories." Levenson argues that in doing so, Wellhausen appropriated the sanctity traditionally accorded to the Bible and ascribed it to the historical process that produced scripture.[318]

According to Wellhausen, J was an expression of the oldest and the most spontaneous and heartfelt worship practices. These ritual acts revealed "the uncommon freshness and naturalness"[319] of the ancient Israelite impulses, particularly in comparison to what followed:

> One may compare the cultus in the olden time to the green tree which grows up out of the soil as it will and can; later it becomes the regularly hewn timber (*zurecht gehauenes Holz*), ever more artificially reshaped (*künstlicher ausgestaltet wird*) with square and compass.[320]

Wellhausen's evident preference for the J source also reveals the extent to which he was a child of German Romanticism.[321] The Romantics believed that modernity had degraded human

---

[318] Jon D. Levenson, *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism: Jews and Christians in Biblical Studies* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 14-15.
[319] *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, 412.
[320] Ibid., 81.
[321] As noted by John W. Wright, "Beyond Transcendence and Immanence: The Characterization of the Presence and Activity of God in the Book of Chronicles" in M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie and Gary N. Knoppers eds., *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph*

existence, causing man to lose touch with the pulse of the earth and with his primal roots. Revealingly, Wellhausen invoked Goethe, one of the great figures of Romanticism, several times in *Prolegomena*.[322] At the opening of the discussion on the oral and written Law, Wellhausen credited Goethe with the observation that the oral tradition was the prized possession of ancient Israel, citing the introductory poem of Goethe's *West-Oestlicher Divan*.[323] It reads:

> North and West and South up-breaking!
> Thrones are shattering, Empires quaking;
> Fly thou to the untroubled East,
> There the patriarchs' air to taste!
> What with love and wine and song
> Chiser's fount will make thee young.
> There, 'mid things pure and just and true,
> The race of man I would pursue
> Back to the well-head primitive,
> Where still from God did they receive
> Heavenly lore in earthly speech,
> Nor beat the brain to pass their reach.
> Where ancestors were held in awe,
> Each alien worship banned by law;
> In nonage-bounds I am gladly caught
> Broad faith be mine and narrow thought;
> As when the word held sway, and stirred

W. Klein (London: T&T Clark International, 2003), 240-67 (241). See also Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Prophecy and Canon: A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins* (University of Notre Dame, Center for the Study of Judaism and Christianity in Antiquity, 3; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 20; Bernard M. Levinson, "Goethe's Analysis of Exodus 34 and Its Influence on Wellhausen: The *Pfropfung* of the Documentary Hypothesis," ZAW 114 (2002): 212-23 (222 n. 36).

Susanne L. Marchand characterizes Wellhausen's era as "antiromantic": "We have to do, here, with not just a postromantic but even an antiromantic generation, one which for professing scientific theology meant to have one's philological ducks in order—especially at a time in which fundamental questions about the integrity and chronology of biblical texts were being debated more intensively and extensively than ever before." Susanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (New York: Cambridge University Press and Washington, D.C.: German Historical Society, 2009), 179.

[322] *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, 302, 342, 392. Wellhausen reported that his father, a Lutheran pastor, was the only one among his friends and neighbors to possess Goethe's works. Rudolf Smend, *From Astruc to Zimmerli: Old Testament Scholarship in Three Centuries* (trans. Margaret Kohl; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 91.

[323] *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, 392.

> Because it was a spoken word.[324]

The poem asserts that in the time of the patriarchs "earthly speech" tapped into the "well-head primitive" and allowed for direct communion with God. Where "the spoken word" reigned, there one found reverence for the old, protection of the indigenous, and all things "pure and just and true." These are the constituent elements of the Edenic age.

Wellhausen fully embraced this view and transposed it to his understanding of the Old Testament. He drew a distinction between the power of living custom, on the one hand (or J), and its ossification in written law, on the other (or P and Judaism).[325]

> When it is recognized that *the canon* is what distinguishes Judaism from ancient Israel, it is recognized at the same time that what distinguishes Judaism from ancient Israel is *the written Torah*. The water which in old times rose from a spring, the Epigoni stored up in cisterns.[326]

Whereas Goethe's poem exhorted its readers to "fly" eastward and drink from the fountain of youth, Wellhausen holds that the living waters of ancient Israel had ceased to flow and were no longer recoverable in their original vital state.

Deuteronomy, for Wellhausen, was the first attempt to promulgate a written law, and as such it represented the initial step away from instinctive and "pure" expressions of veneration: "With the appearance of the law came to an end the old freedom, not only in the sphere of worship, now restricted to Jerusalem, but in the sphere of the religious spirit as well."[327] D promoted—and may well have been the propagandist for—the great religious reforms of King

---

[324] Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *West-Eastern Divan in Twelve Books*. Translated by Edward Dowden. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1914. Online: http://archive.org/stream/westeasterndivan00goetuoft/westeasterndivan00goetuoft_djvu.txt (accessed 12/6/12).
[325] *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, 392-410; see also 302, 342.
[326] Ibid., 410.
[327] Ibid., 402. See also 409.

Josiah, who reigned shortly before the exile. These reforms targeted Yahwistic practices, in particular localistic worship, and commanded the centralization of the cult. Sacrifices were no longer to be offered whenever and wherever the spirit so moved. Sacrifices were permitted, as Deuteronomy states, "only in the place which the Lord will choose" (Dtr 12.13-14).

Wellhausen believed that the strenuousness and specificity of D's attempts to change the old ways were in and of themselves an indication of the intimate connection between D and J:

> A law so living, which stands at every point in immediate contact with reality, which is at war with traditional custom, and which proceeds with constant reference to the demands of practical life, is no mere velleity, no mere cobweb of an idle brain, but has as certainly arisen out of historical occasions as it is designed to operate powerfully on the course of the subsequent history.[328]

Accordingly, D, like J, revealed something real about ancient Israel.

Wellhausen argued, however, that D's reformed practices were ultimately doomed to fail. They were too radical for the people to bear, as they broke with the most sacred of the received traditions. Jeremiah spoke of the return of the "high places" (the *Bamoth*) in Judah in the wake of Josiah's death (Jer 19.5, 32.35). In the regular course of events, Josiah's reforms should have been relegated to the dustbin of history, and they would have been—had it not been for the exile.

> Had the people of Judah remained in peaceful possession of their land, the reformation of Josiah would hardly have penetrated to the masses; the threads uniting the present with the past were too strong. To induce the people to regard as idolatrous and heretical centres of iniquity the Bamoth, with which from ancestral times the holiest memories were associated, and some of which, like Hebron and Beersheba, had been set up by Abraham and Isaac in person, required a complete breaking-off of the natural tradition of life, a total severance of all connection with inherited conditions. This was accomplished by means of the Babylonian exile….[329]

[328] Ibid., 34. See also 27, 38.
[329] Ibid., 27-28.

The exile for Wellhausen was, to use modern parlance, a "game changer." The violent uprooting of the Israelites from their homeland accomplished what the reforms could not: they obliterated the indigenous culture. Judah's plate was wiped clean. The returning exiles were an ardent religious sect that had resisted assimilation in Babylon. They embraced Josiah's project and set out to establish a new religious community. In Wellhausen's account, the exiles' appropriation of D was in tension with D itself. While D placed the Law in the mouth of Moses to give it historical coloring, it assumed that the enactment of the Law would occur sometime in the future, when the Israelites are at peace. By contrast, the zealots who repopulated Judah fabricated a history in which the Law was in effect as far back as the time of Noah.[330]

The scribal school responsible for creating this new narrative was P. P appropriated D's centralization of cultic practice and advanced the "spiritualization of worship" (*Vergeistlichung des Gottesdienstes*) by entering into the realm of the abstract and moving away from the natural Nothing separated ancient Israel from its God.[331] In post-exilic Judah, however, the priests made a profession of interjecting themselves. "The consequences for the future were momentous," Wellhausen wrote. "The Mosaic 'congregation' is the mother of the Christian church; the Jews were the creators of the idea." Here Wellhausen made no distinction between Judaism and Christianity—any mediated worship was really no worship at all.[332]

P's idealized story of Israel was entirely artificial. Instead of transmitting something genuine about Israel's past, P proceeded deductively, constructing an account that it believed was most befitting for the history of God's chosen people:

> What in the common view appears to be the specific character

[330] Ibid., 37-38, 51, 54.
[331] Ibid., 417.
[332] Ibid., 81.

> of Israelite history, and has chiefly led to its being called *sacred* history, rests for the most part on a later re-painting of the original picture. The discoloring influences begin early. I do not reckon among these the entrance of mythical elements, such as are not wanting even in the first beginnings to which we can trace the course of the tradition, nor the inevitable local color, which is quite a different thing from tendency. I think only of that uniform stamp impressed on the tradition by men who regarded history exclusively from the point of view of their own principles.[333]

This history was sanitized. In P, the patriarchs, David, and Solomon neither engaged in morally objectionable acts nor randomly offered up gifts to God out of sheer enthusiasm. Rather, they demonstrated that accurate performance of rites at the proper time and at the proper place was what pleased God.

For Wellhausen, Chronicles was P's signature work. Chronicles' recasting of history was different from that of D in both degree and kind. D's revisions, he contended, were limited in scope and grounded in reality, whereas Chronicles engaged in a wholesale mutilation of the past in a vain effort to lay claim to it.[334] The result was, for Wellhausen, that no pre-exilic tradition survived intact in Chronicles.[335]

Prolegomena's Chronicles Critiqued

Wellhausen's schema influenced his assessment of Chronicles in *Prolegomena*. To begin, Wellhausen exaggerated Chronicles' uniqueness. By his own criteria, the recasting of the past in the book of Deuteronomy was more radical than that of Chronicles. As he himself noted, Chronicles was simply carrying forward what Deuteronomy already started, whereas Deuteronomy wholly changed the character of Israelite religion. Deuteronomy, not Chronicles,

[333] Ibid., 293.
[334] Ibid., 38, 169.
[335] Ibid., 222.

was the first to revise the history of Israel to comport with an ideology. Deuteronomy's institution of a centralized cult was revolutionary, affecting all aspects of worship. Wellhausen obscured Deuteronomy's radicalism by turning the reader's attention to its uneven acceptance in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings. But Deuteronomy's pride of place as idealized history was independent of the speed with which the Josianic reforms took hold.

To express this in formulaic fashion, Deuteronomy was further from J than Chronicles was from Deuteronomy. The greatest break in the Bible, according to Wellhausen—only he never put it this way—occurred with D.

Nor does the evidence support Wellhausen's charge that Chronicles offered a more spiritualized, or abstract, perspective than the concrete, this-worldly views of J. The Chronicler preserved intact the prophet Micaiah's vision of God seated on a throne conversing with the host of heaven flanking him on either side (2 Chr 18.18-22). The only anthropomorphic detail missing from this passage is the description of God's feet (Ex 24.10). Also, Chronicles' rendition of David's sacrifice on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite depicted intense and immediate engagement with the deity through worship in the most vivid terms (1 Chr 21.26-27; cf. 2 Sam 24.25).

As for the idealization of David, Wellhausen viewed it as being entirely a project of Chronicles. Chronicles' transformation of David from a gritty man of arms and founder of a kingdom into a "holy figure, misted over by a cloud of incense"[336] was the prime example of the book's unbridled revisionism. However, select passages in Samuel also highlight David's piety. In a poetic section at the end of Second Samuel, David says, "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me…I was

[336] "…einem matten Heiligenbilde, umnebelt von einer Wolke von Weihrach." *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels,* 182 [Eng. 182].

blameless before him, and I kept myself from guilt (2 Sam 22.21, 24a//Ps 18.20; 23)."[337] The trend toward the idealization of David was in progress well before Chronicles.

There is no denying that, to a far greater extent than the David of the books of Samuel and Kings, Chronicles' David was an ideal sovereign and model religious leader in the Temple cult. Nevertheless, there are several narratives in Chronicles that give a contrary depiction of David. They act as textual irritants and their purpose or effect is to counter this flattering portrait of David. The most revealing irritants are all from First Chronicles: the questionable character of David's ancestry, Michal's disdain for the king, and the notice that David is a bloodshedder.

David's Genealogy in Chronicles

Turning to the first of these passages, David's genealogy in chapter four of First Chronicles connects him to the union of Judah and Tamar as described in Genesis 38:

> The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah; these three
> the Canaanite woman Bat-Shua bore to him. Now Er,
> Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord,
> and he put him to death. His daughter-in-law Tamar also
> bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.
> 1 Chr 2.3-4

Chronicles then lists the descendants of Judah, with David part of Perez's line.

In his treatment of David's genealogy, Wellhausen passes over in silence its troublesome aspects. Chronicles and the book of Ruth bestowed upon David patriarchal lineage (1 Chr 2.9-15; cf. Ruth 4.18-22)—in Samuel he is simply the son of Jesse. However, David's new-found pride of pedigree comes with potential baggage. He is the product of incest, and as if that were not enough, he is the offspring of a man who married a Canaanite. It is even possible that David

[337] Kyle McCarter speculates that David's association with Psalm 18 is quite old, and that "it had a traditional association with David surpassing that of the pseudepigraphical David songs in the Psalter." P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., *II Samuel* (AB 9; Garden City: Doubleday, 1984), 475

himself is assigned Canaanite ancestry, given that the text tells us nothing about Tamar's background. Wellhausen repeatedly charges Chronicles with shying away from embarrassing details, but that is certainly not the case here.

Wellhausen had two choices. Either David's descent from Judah and Tamar was a kernel of genuine tradition or it was a post-exilic fiction of P. Wellhausen opted for the latter: David's pedigree was a fake. The choice of Salma as David's ancestor was determinative. Wellhausen contended that Chronicles put Salma in the genealogy because of his identification with Bethlehem, Jesse's hometown, but the textual evidence indicated that the connection was a post-exilic fabrication. Moreover, the book of Samuel dutifully records Saul's genealogy. The fact that David's bloodline is missing can only mean that the information was lacking. Once one took all these factors into consideration, it was obvious that David's pedigree in Chronicles is a fake.[338]

Wellhausen referred readers desiring further details regarding the historical value of Judah's genealogy to his dissertation, *De Gentibus Et Familiis Judaeis*, and a look at that work casts light on his argument in *Prolegomena*.[339] In the dissertation, he speculated that at the time of Chronicles' composition, the ancestry of David was known only as far back as Boaz. Chronicles set about filling in the blanks in a manner that would redound to the glory of both David and Judah. The first fictive act was to assign a father to Boaz. Since the book of Samuel has preserved the tradition that Jesse was an Ephrathite of Bethlehem (1 Sam 17.12), Chronicles picked Salma, the "father of Bethlehem" (1 Chr 2.54). However, Wellhausen determined—based on evidence he garnered from Chronicles' own genealogies—that the identification was post-exilic. The Calebites, Salma's line, were originally from the south, but upon their return to the

[338] Ibid., 217-18.
[339] Ibid., 216.

land after the exile, they resettled in the north.[340] The second fictive act was to make Salma the son of Nashon, who was one of the princes of Judah (1 Chr 2.11; cf. 2.50-51, in which he is the son of Hur). The result is that Judah got to bask retrospectively in the glory of having produced David—and not only Judah, but also all of his descendants who just happened to make up a good proportion of the Yehud community of the Chronicler's day.

But if, as Wellhausen asserted, David's ancestry was artificially contrived, then Chronicles' presentation of David's origins seems to contradict Wellhausen's contention about P, that P purified the legend. Deuteronomy prohibits marriage to a Canaanite woman (Deut 7.3; see also Ex 34.16 and Josh 23.12), and Leviticus forbids sexual relations with one's daughter-in law (Lev 18.15). Chronicles lays bare Judah's guilt on both counts.

Furthermore, the Chronicler may also have created parallels between Judah and David that were intended to be oblique references to David's troubles in Samuel. To begin, Judah and David are married to women with identical names. In Genesis 38, Judah takes the daughter (in Hebrew, *bat*) of the Canaanite Shua. Chronicles omits any mention of the father and speaks only of Bat-Shua, the Canaanite woman (1 Chr 2.3). On the one hand, Chronicles is offering no more or less information than Genesis 38—after all, who is Bat-Shua but the daughter of Shua?[341]—but on the other hand, the name sounds very much like Bat-Sheba, David's wife in Samuel. Chronicles seals the association. In chapter three of First Chronicles, the wife of David who bears him Solomon is also called Bat-Shua (1 Chr 3.5). Judah's wife is a Canaanite; in Samuel, David's wife was first married to a Hittite. It is highly speculative, but nonetheless possible, that by using one name for the wives of both Judah and David, the Chronicler meant to remind the

[340] Julius Wellhausen, *De Gentibus Et Familiis Judaeis Quae I. Chr. 2. 4. Enumerantur* (Diss.; Göttingen: Officina Academica Dieterichiana, 1870), 17, 39-41. In addition, Wellhausen contends that during David's time, the Calebites were not considered Judeans.
[341] She is also so identified later in the chapter (Gen 38.12).

reader of the story of Bat-Sheba in Samuel.

In the same vein, Judah's sexual union with his daughter-in-law also called to mind another Tamar who had intercourse with a close family member: David's daughter Tamar, who was raped by her half-brother Amnon (2 Sam 13). At best, the incident revealed dissention within David's family, and at worst it pointed to David's flaws in dealing with his children. Here, too, Chronicles appeared to go out of its way to allow for an indirect reference to this tale. When Second Samuel lists David's progeny, it only mentions his boys (2 Sam 3.2-5). Chronicles names the sons and then adds this notice: "and Tamar was their sister" (1 Chr 3.9).

Chronicles' genealogy contradicted Wellhausen's contention that P knew nothing but "cultus and torah" (*den Kultus und die Thora*).[342] Contrary to Wellhausen's view, the genealogy not only tapped earlier traditions, it invoked negative elements in its depiction of David that go beyond anything found in Samuel and Kings.

Chronicles' Michal

The second textual irritant showing that Chronicles' idealization of David did not go unchecked is Chronicles' representation of Michal, the daughter of King Saul. In Samuel, she contributes to an ambiguous portrait of David. She is described as being in love with David (1 Sam 18.20), but we hear nothing of his feelings for her. She helps David escape Saul, but tells her father she did so because David threatened to kill her (19.11-17). Later in the narrative, she is compelled to return to David, and as she is being taken away, her second husband follows after her, weeping in her wake (2 Sam 3.14-16).

The final and most important encounter between Michal and David in Samuel opens with Michal looking from her window as the ark returns to Jerusalem. She sees David, barely clad,

[342] Ibid., 182 [Ger. 181].

exposing himself in the vigor of his extravagant dancing and she despises him in her heart (2 Sam 6.16). She then goes out to meet him, and they have a bitter exchange (6.20-22). Michal chastises David for behavior inappropriate for a king, and David makes equally clear that her opinion does not count. Samuel's account closes with this verse: "Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death" (6.23). It is uncertain whether the notice of Michal's childlessness was meant to indicate divine retribution or whether its purpose was to affirm that Saul's house will play no role in the Davidic kingdom. What *is* certain is that the romance between the king's daughter and the shepherd boy who slew a giant to win her hand was definitely at an end.

Chronicles' depiction of Michal presents a striking contrast. Here she has no backstory. She pops up out of nowhere in the narrative relating David's return of the ark to Jerusalem. Michal's reaction to him, however, has not changed: "As the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came into the city of David, Michal, the daughter of Saul, looked out the window and saw King David skipping and making merry, and she despised him in her heart (1 Chr 15.29)." This one verse is the sum total of Michal's story in Chronicles—it begins and ends here. Unlike her denouement in Samuel, there is no afterword telling us of her childlessness.

The changes in Chronicles are significant. The truncated story produces an entirely different effect. Without an introduction or conclusion, Michal remains forever frozen at her window. To speak in cinematic terms, it is a still shot rather than a moving frame. The narrative inserts her without incorporating her: it flows around her like a stream around a rock.

Chronicles' David in this scene is also different—he is clothed in a long robe, implying that someone thought Samuel's Michal had a point. Moreover, his dancing has changed. In Samuel, David "leaps" and "whirls" "before the Lord" (2 Sam 6.16). The verbs used to describe

his dance are rare,[343] and suggest that something uncommon is occurring.[344] In Chronicles, by contrast, David is not acting "before the Lord," and his dance is not extraordinary. Rather than "leaping and whirling," David is "skipping and making merry" (1 Chr 15.29). These verbs are relatively common in the biblical text.[345]

In Wellhausen's analysis, Chronicles' Michal provided yet another example of P's idealization of David. Wellhausen emphasized that, in contrast to Samuel's account, Chronicles' Michal never rebukes David. Priestly sensibilities would not have tolerated a woman speaking that way to David.[346]

The major question that Wellhausen fails to address, however, is why Michal is here in the first place. In a narrative universe where so many unpleasant details of David's life are expunged, how is it that Michal is allowed to remain? Wellhausen provides no answer.

This single verse in Chronicles is in some ways more hostile to David than the account in Samuel. In Chronicles, Michal suffers no consequences for her contempt. If one were a Second Temple priest searching for some indication of divine punishment for disrespecting David, dying

---

[343] The verbs *me-faz-zaz* and *me-khar-cair* (מְפַזֵּז וּמְכַרְכֵּר), are rare: the first is a hapax and the second only occurs one other time: it describes the remarkable dexterity of Joseph's arms in Genesis 49 (Gen 49.24).

[344] Evidence from other sources associates erotic acrobatic dances with Akkadian and Egyptian cultic practices. David P. Wright, "Music and Dance in 2 Samuel 6," *JBL* 121/2 (2002): 221-3. Wright observes that "the type of dance David engaged in was not entirely unprecedented or extraordinary" in light of the fact that "energetic dance was common in the ancient Near East" (222). He therefore thinks Michal criticizes David, not for the uniqueness of the dance, but for drawing attention to himself (223). However, it is precisely this similarity with pagan practices that Michal would find objectionable. See also Bruce Rosenstock, "David's play: fertility rituals and the glory of God in 2 Samuel 6" in *JSOT* 31(2006): 63-80; and C. L. Seow, *Myth, Drama, and the Politics of David's Dance* (HSM 44; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989).

[345] These verbs—*me-rak-kaid* and *me-śa-ḥaik*—are more run-of the mill. The verb "to skip" (רקד) appears multiple times and applies to humans both young and old, mountains, and chariots. The verb "to make merry" (שׂחק) occurs even more often and describes people and animals playing.

[346] "—ein Weib durfte dem David nicht so etwas bieten." *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, 174 [Eng. 176].

without issue would suffice. Yet Chronicles omits Samuel's notice that Michal dies childless. The sole conclusion that one must draw is that the Chronicler has allowed Michal's contempt to stand unchallenged.

This stance is significant, given that a distinctive feature of Chronicles is its retribution theology, a great theme that Wellhausen is universally credited with first noting. In *Prolegomena* he said Chronicles displayed "an astonishing accord between inner worth and outward condition. Never does sin lack punishment, and never where misfortune occurs is guilt wanting."[347] Here Wellhausen contradicts his own charge that the Chronicler offered only mediated communion with the Deity. Though Wellhausen did not spell out the details, in Chronicles it is God who determines each individual's just desserts and acts accordingly. God is attuned to every deed and thought (2 Chr 15.2), searching each individual heart (1 Chr. 28.9, 29.17, and 2 Chr 6.30; cf. 2 Chr 16.9) in order to reward the faithful: "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the entire earth, to strengthen those whose heart is true to him" (2 Chr 16.9). The fact that Michal despised David in her heart, rather than in words, did not exempt her from God's judgment.

In addition, Wellhausen fails to mention that one of Chronicles' first examples of just punishment is King Saul, and his death has significance for assessing the text's treatment of Michal. Chronicles specifically credits God with putting the king to death for his unfaithfulness (1 Chr 10.14). Yet that man's daughter sits at her window and despises P's precious King David without sanction, even though P had one ready at hand. It is, as Shakespeare's Othello might say, passing strange, yet Wellhausen has nothing to say on the matter.

In sum, Chronicles omitted the explanation for Michal's contempt for David that she

[347] "…ein ganz wunderbarer Einklang zwischen innerem Wert and äusserem Ergehn. Nie bleibt auf die Sünde die Strafe aus und nie mangelt dem Unglück die Schuld." *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, 203 [Eng. 203].

herself offers in Samuel, removed the grounds that Samuel's Michal cited for her disdain by altering David's dress and dance, and then offered no explanation of its own. All who read or heard this verse were therefore free to supply their own reasons out of a communal storehouse of memories.

Chronicles' David as a Shedder of Blood

Finally we come to the last textual irritant challenging Wellhausen's contention that Chronicles' David has been thoroughly sanitized: Chronicles' two references to David as a shedder of blood. In chapter twenty-two, David tells Solomon:

> My son, I had planned to build a house to the name of the Lord my God. But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed much blood in my sight on the earth…" 1 Chr 22.8

When David informs the people that Solomon will be the one to build the Temple, he tells them of his own initial intention to do so, but then adds:

> …But God said to me, "You shall not build a house for my name, for you are a man of wars and have shed blood." 1 Chr 28.3

In the parallel passage in Samuel, there is no mention of David's disqualification as a Temple builder. God speaks through the prophet Nathan to say that instead of David building a house for the Lord, the Lord will make *him*—that is David—a house (2 Sam 7.1-11). This account absolves David of any responsibility for building the Temple. In Kings, by contrast, Solomon says David would have built the Temple if circumstances had permitted him to do so. In a letter to King Hiram of Tyre, Solomon says, "You know that my father David was not able to build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the warfare with which his enemies

surrounded him…" (1 Kgs 5.17; Eng. 5.3). It is unclear from this verse whether Solomon says that David's harassment by his enemies left him with no reprieve for such an undertaking, or whether there is something intrinsic to the conduct of warfare that renders him unfit.[348]

For Wellhausen, the references in Chronicles to David's disqualifications as a Temple-builder had less to do with the Temple than with countering the image of the feeble and elderly David that was found in Kings. In Kings, David in his weakened condition is subject to manipulation in designating the heir to his throne. In Chronicles, according to Wellhausen, David at the time of Solomon's accession is in full command of his faculties. The description of David as a bloodshedder and warrior served as proof of his vitality. This description, meant as a compliment, then turned into the grounds for David's disqualification. For Wellhausen, under the priestly code the taking a life, even in Yahweh's war, was grounds for excluding David from performing the holy task of building the temple. In Wellhausen's view, P had a different understanding of the moral implications of warfare than the earlier sources, demonstrating once again P's disconnection from the older tradition.

Wellhausen's argument, however, does not stand up to a close reading of the verses in question. He implied that Chronicles uses the term bloodshedding to refer to any and all killing, including in war. But this is not what the text says. Chronicles cites two separate reasons for David's disqualification: shedding blood and being a warrior. Chronicles here maintains the

[348] The verb יכל may be translated as either "to be able" or "are permitted." See for example Deut 17.15: "…you *shall not* set over yourselves a foreigner…" So Kings could be translated: "You know that David my father *was not permitted* to build a house to the name of the Lord his God because of the war(s) that surrounded him until the Lord set them under the soles of his feet."

The commentary attributed to a student of Sa'adia Gaon from the eleventh century picks up this thread and argues that Chronicles "absolves David not only of wrongdoing but of any unfavorable association with killing: The reason David could not build the Temple was merely that he was *worn out* from his involvement in wars." Yitzhak Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles: A Translation With Introduction And Supercommentary* (Brown Judaic Studies 345; Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 2007), 159.

distinction found throughout the Bible. Shedding blood in the Bible always takes place outside the context of war, and is something akin to murder. There are over thirty verses that speak of bloodshedding, spanning all the sources, and in each instance it is condemned.[349] The classic formulation of the prohibition to shed blood is God's stipulation to Noah following the flood: "Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed" (Gen 9.9). The deed often involves the wanton murder of the defenseless. Moreover, in Kings, David condemns Joab because "he made blood of war in a time of peace"—that is, Joab killed his military foes after the fighting was over (1 Kgs 2.5). This verse is further proof that within the Bible there was a difference between the taking of life on the battlefield and the taking of life in peacetime.

There is only one blood-shedding king besides David in the canon, and that is Manasseh as depicted in Second Kings where he makes his son pass through fire and fills Jerusalem from end to end with the blood of innocents (2 Kgs 21.6, 16). The repercussions in this case are beyond calculation. The fall of Judah is God's retribution for the guiltless blood that Manasseh spilled (2 Kgs 24.4). Also, of all who have shed blood, only David and Manasseh have shed "much" blood (1 Chr 22.8; 2 Kgs 21.16).[350]

When biblical narratives wish to describe the taking of life in battle, they never use the

[349] Gen 9.6; 37.22; Num 35.33; Lev 17.4; Dtr 21.7; 1 Sam 25.31; 1 Kgs 2.31; 18.28; 2 Kgs 21.16; 24.4; Ps 79.3; Pr 1.16; 6.17; Jer 22.3; 17.3; La 4.13; Ez 16.38; 22.4, 6, 9, 12, 27; 18.10; 22.3-4; 23.45; 33.25; 36.18;1 Chr 22.8; 28.3.

Also, in 1 Kgs 2.5, David condemns Joab because "he made blood of war in a time of peace"—that is, Joab killed his military foes after the fighting was over. This verse distinguishes the taking of life in battle from the taking of life in peace.

[350] Manasseh spills "very much blood" (2 Kgs 21.16) whereas David sheds "much blood." The words to describe this "muchness" all derive from the same root consonants: resh bet bet. We find no mention of Manasseh's shedding of blood in Chronicles' account of his reign because Chronicles does not offer a parallel to the passages in Kings in which this act is mentioned.

phrase "shed blood," but other verbs—usually variations on "smite" or "strike."[351] Moreover, nowhere in the Bible are righteous wars a cause for dishonor. In Chronicles, as elsewhere in the canon, victory is evidence of God's favor. David fights on God's command and God repeatedly delivers the enemy into his hand (1 Chr 14.10, 14-17; 18.6, 13). When David identifies himself as a bloodshedder in Chronicles, it seems unlikely that he is referring to his activities as a warrior. If anything his words call to mind those of Shimei in Samuel: "Out! Out, O man of blood and worthless man! The Lord has requited you for all the blood of the house of Saul…See, you are in your own misery, for you are a man of blood" (2 Sam 16.7b-8).

It would appear that the whole point of Wellhausen's expansive interpretation of the meaning of bloodshedding was to avoid discussion of the seriousness of the charge that Chronicles levels against David. To repeat, the text in Chronicles gives two grounds for why David does not build the temple: he is a man of wars, and he is a bloodshedder. On the first count, it is not clear whether David's role as a warrior disqualified him from building the temple on moral grounds, or whether, because of his constant battles, David simply did not have the requisite leisure. On the second count, there is no ambiguity: bloodshedding is by itself a moral ground for exclusion—indeed, one would be hard pressed to think of any that is more severe. Chronicles may present a favorable picture of David overall, but it does not exonerate him of all of his failings. It does not —it cannot—cover up the whole story.

For Wellhausen, however, the possibility that Chronicles could have added something so decidedly negative to the account of David is inconceivable. And here we reach the crux of the matter. According to *Prolegomena*, Chronicles is a monolithically ideological text written by Second Temple scribes who either made things up or changed events, whichever tactic best

[351] Verbs with the root consonants of nun khaf heh, nun gimmel peh, nun gimmel ayin, and peh gimmel ayin.

suited their agenda. Wellhausen had a grander purpose in promoting this view. It allowed him to distinguish between Israel and Judaism, between biblical and proto-rabbinic texts, and between authentic and inauthentic communion with the Deity. In order to make Chronicles conform to his paradigm, he overstates its uniqueness and understates its ties to the past.

The Enduring Influence of Wellhausen's View of Chronicles in Modern Scholarship

Wellhausen's paradigm continues to shape modern Chronicles scholarship. However much Chronicles scholars disagree on the exact theme of the book, virtually all of them accept Wellhausen's premise that whoever wrote Chronicles—usually dubbed The Chronicler—had both a free hand and consistent agenda in retelling of the story of Israel. Nothing in the narrative goes against the grain. The result is an exegetical Procrustean bed in which everything fits the purpose of a single author or scribal school.

The possible exception to the rule is Sara Japhet. In *Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, Japhet cites three depictions of David in Chronicles that are less than ideal: the story of the census (1 Chr 21), the botched transfer of the ark (1 Chr 13; 15.1-16.38), and the prohibition of David's building the Temple (1 Chr 22.7-8; 28.3). In her analysis of the first two accounts, Japhet convincingly argues that the Chronicler sacrificed David's image in order to rehabilitate that of God. According to Japhet, the Chronicler found God's incitement of David to count the people (2 Sam 24.1) and the deity's outburst against Uzzah (2 Sam 6.7) unacceptable, so the Chronicler shifted the blame to David, a less unacceptable alternative.[352] Since these negative portrayals of David occurred in the service of making appear God in a better light, they do not qualify as textual irritants. Rather, God's portrayal in Samuel was the irritant—for the

[352] Japhet, *Ideology in the Book of Chronicles*, 473-75. According to Japhet, another reason for the retention of the census account was because it was a "hieros logos" for the Temple in Jerusalem.

Chronicler—and David was the remedy. Japhet's third example, David's disqualification as a temple builder, does qualify as a textual irritant, however, and her harmonization of this passage is discussed below.

A few examples from recent works on bible formation give a general sense of Wellhausen's influence. Tremper Longman and Raymond Dillard, in their *Introduction to the Old Testament*, state, "The Chronicler has not recorded incidents that would in any way tarnish the image of David or Solomon."[353] In *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction*, David Carr remarks: "…Chronicles emphasizes the founding of the monarchy and Jerusalem temple under David and Solomon, while omitting traditions about David and Solomon that are unflattering…."[354] These books treat the whole Bible, and therefore cannot be expected to address every nuance within the text of Chronicles. However, the overall impression is that the Chronicler operated under no constraints in his transmission of stories concerning David and Solomon.

More revealing are the commentaries on Chronicles, as they must engage the text on a verse-by-verse basis. In the most important commentaries today—those of Sara Japhet for The Old Testament Library (1993),[355] Gary Knoppers for Anchor Bible (2004),[356] Ralph Klein for Hermeneia (2006),[357] Steven Tuell for Interpretation (2001),[358] and Isaac Kalimi's *The*

---

[353] Tremper Longman III and Raymond B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Second Edition* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006), 197.
[354] David Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction*, 197. See also 73-78. See also Japhet: "It is well known that every story that might damage David's image has been left out…." *Ideology of the Book of Chronicles*, 469.
[355] Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles* (The Old Testament Library; Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox, 1993).
[356] Gary Knoppers, *I Chronicles1-9* and *I Chronicles 10-29* (2 vols.; AB 12 and 12A; New York: Doubleday, 2004).
[357] Ralph S. Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006).

Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles (2005)[359]—the effort is towards harmonization.

Most commentaries follow Wellhausen in ignoring the potential negative implications of tracing David's genealogy back to Judah and Tamar. One exception is Japhet, yet here, too, the influence of Wellhausen's paradigm is evident. She argues that the reference to Judah and Tamar, while potentially damaging, is in fact entirely positive. By highlighting that Judah took a Canaanite wife and slept with his daughter-in-law, the Chronicler, according to Japhet, demonstrates both ethnic inclusiveness and God's mercy towards repentant sinners.[360] She notes that the names of Bat-Shua and Tamar are associated with both Judah and David, but she draws no conclusions from this fact.[361]

Another exception is Isaac Kalimi. Kalimi expresses bewilderment over the Chronicler's mention of the liaison between Judah and Tamar, given the prohibition against such a union in

---

[358] Steven S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox Press, 2001).

[359] Isaac Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2005).

[360] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 74. Steven McKenzie, in his commentary on Chronicles for Abington Old Testament Commentaries, follows Japhet: "By noting the Canaanite origin of Judah's wife he [the Chronicler] openly acknowledges the indigenous roots of the tribe and nation of Judah. The wickedness and death of Er reflect the doctrine of immediate retribution. It is less clear why he mentions Judah's fathering children through his daughter-in-law, though some scholars have found here an allusion to divine mercy despite human frailty." Steven McKenzie, *1-2 Chronicles* (Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 69. Michael Wilcock made a similar observation about inclusiveness in Chronicles' genealogy of Judah in his 1989 commentary: "…the Chronicler shows an openness to relationships between Israel and other nations which adds to his practicality and his piety an evangelistic breadth of vision." Wilcock, however, says nothing about Judah and Tamar. Wilcock, *The Message of Chronicles*, 34.

[361] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 96. James Sparks credits Japhet with noting a parallel between Judah and David. The Chronicler purposefully constructs this parallel, Sparks argues, to highlight two possible remedies to evil. The first is the monarchy (represented by David's genealogy) and the second is faithfulness (represented by Jabez, a descendant of Judah). James T. Sparks, *The Chronicler's Genealogies: Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1-9* (SBL Academia Biblica 28; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 242.

Leviticus (Lev 18.15 and 20.12): "The Chronicler for some reason let this disharmony stand."[362] For Kalimi, the anomalous verse is an example of the Chronicler's inconsistency in harmonizing his sources with his own theology. It should therefore serve as a caution to modern exegetes who hold biblical authors to "Greek/Western criteria" of "completeness."[363] Kalimi, for whom the Chronicler is a redactor and author *extraordinaire*,[364] does not appear to consider the possibility that Chronicles intended to convey something negative by linking David to Judah and Tamar. In his own way, therefore, Kalimi also takes his cues from Wellhausen here.

In the case of Michal, modern commentators follow Wellhausen in seeking harmonization and go even further: Michal continues the comparison between David (who seeks God's guidance) and Saul (who does not).[365] The following is a sampling from commentaries published in the last two decades.[366]

Ralph Klein states that her presence "continues to draw a moral contrast between the first two kings."[367] Gary Knoppers claims that Michal's contempt is "consistent with her father's earlier posture towards the Ark" and thus "reflects badly on her and the fallen Saulide house she represents."[368] Paul Hooker argues that, because she is identified as the daughter of Saul, her antipathy is "political rather than personal," meaning, "she shares the antipathy of her father

---

[362] Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles,* 381.
[363] Ibid., 411.
[364] Ibid.
[365] According to 1 Chr 10.13-14, Chronicles cites Saul's failure to seek guidance from the Lord as one of the reasons for his death.
[366] Kalimi discusses 1 Chr 15.29 in the context of changes made by the Chronicler that introduced inconsistencies. According to Kalimi, when the Chronicler amended 1 Sam 31.6 (which says Saul and his three sons died) to 1 Chr 10.6b (which says Saul's entire house died), it contradicts 1 Chr 15.29, as Michal is still very much alive. But Kalimi has nothing to say about the function of this verse in and of itself. Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, 389.
[367] Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary*, 357.
[368] Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 626.

toward his successor."[369] For William Johnstone, Michal represents "the sour dismissive intransigence of the deposed royal house, who maintain their disdain of such vehicles of resorting to the LORD as the ark."[370] In her commentary, Japhet writes, "Michal's attitude in this matter reflects the traditional position of the house of Saul: a negative stand toward the ark of the Lord…in contrast to David, who does whatever is in his power to 'seek God.'"[371] Peter Ackroyd states, "…the members of the house of Saul show themselves unable to recognize the true meaning of events; they are typical of unfaith."[372] These strained interpretations have been adopted to confirm the conclusion these commentators have already reached.[373]

There is also a near-consensus today that David's bloodshedding is war-related and does not refer to iniquitous acts.[374] Steven McKenzie offers a succinct summation: "For the

[369] Paul K. Hooker, *First and Second Chronicles* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2001), 71.
[370] William Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles, Volume 1: 1 Chronicles 1-2 Chronicles 9, Israel's Place among the Nations* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 188.
[371] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 308.
[372] Peter R. Ackroyd, *The Chronicler in His Age* (JSOTSup 101; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), n1, 319-20.
[373] For similar interpretations, see Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 64; H. P. Mathys, "I and 2 Chronicles" in *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (trans. Benjamin Liebelt; eds. John Barton and John Muddiman; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 276; Jacob M. Meyers, *1 Chronicles* (AB; Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), 119; Wilcock, *The Message of Chronicles*, 70; William Rudolph, *Chronikbücher* (HAT, 21; Tübingen: Mohr, 1955), 120.
[374] For example, see Donald F. Murray, "Under YHWH's Veto: David as Shedder of Blood in Chronicles," *Biblia* 82 (2002): 457-76; Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 92; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 397-98; Wilcock, *The Message of Chronicles*, 94; Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 397; H.G.M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (The New Century Bible Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 154; William Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 151. Knoppers provides an historical overview of the interpretation of this verse and settles on equating bloodshed with warfare: "The issue was neither a matter of time management nor a moral lapse on David's part. David's many military campaigns, fought in the name of Yhwh, had left him ritually unfit to build the Temple of Yhwh…" Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 772-75 (774). In *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, Kalimi takes no stand on this point. Rather he refers the reader to Dirksen and Kelly. Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*, 39. However, in answer to a question posed from the audience at the 2013 annual Society of Biblical Literature

Chronicler, warfare becomes bloodshed, and Yahweh prohibits David from building the temple because of the blood on his hands."[375] Japhet elaborates: "…however necessary these wars may have been for the fulfillment of God's plan for Israel, the objective fact remains that blood was shed; this, according to Chronicles, was David's paradoxical and tragic flaw."[376]

A few scholars offer deviating interpretations. Piet Dirksen and Ingeborg Gabriel argue that the bloodshedding refers to the people who died as a result of David conducting the census.[377] Brian Kelly agrees that the bloodshedding refers to the census but differs on this one point: he thinks the victims of the census are also victims of war, since David's intent was to muster the people for battle.[378] These arguments do not find wide acceptance.[379]

Rosemarie Micheel is even more explicit than Dirksen, Gabriel, and Kelly. She concludes that the term "bloodshedding" is an indirect reference to David's war-related actions in Kings that cast him in a suspicious light. These deeds may even include David causing the death of an innocent man. Micheel maintains that David's contamination by this blood renders him ritually impure.[380] Japhet rejects this view: "…we cannot accept Micheel's harmonizing claim that the

---

convention, Kalimi stated that the Chronicler's designation of David as a bloodshedder referred to the blood the king shed in war.

[375] McKenzie, *1-2 Chronicles*, 181.

[376] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 397-98.

[377] Piet B. Dirksen, "Why Was David Disqualified as Temple Builder? The Meaning of 1 Chronicles 22," *JSOT* 70 (1996): 51-56; Ingeborg Gabriel, *Friede über Israel* (ÖBS 10; Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990), 67-72.

[378] Brian E. Kelly, "David's Disqualification in 1 Chronicles 22:8: A Response to Piet B. Dirksen," *JSOT* 80 (1998) 53-61 (59-60).

[379] However, Klein is persuaded by Kelly. Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary*, 436. But see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 773.

[380] "Die Wendung 'Blutvergiessen' führt der Chronist offensichtlich ein, um damit indireckt auf die kriegerischen Auseinandersetzungen und Taten Davids hinzuweisen, die er aus seiner Vorlage nicht übernommen hat. Diese Vorkommnisse, in denen David in einem zwielchtigen Licht erscheint, ja sogar sie Tötung eines unschuldigen Mannes bewirkt, fasst m. E. der Chronist in dem allgemeinen Ausdruck 'Blutvergiessen' zusammen. David hat sich mit Blut verunreinigt und ist daher kultunfähig. Deswegen ist ihm auch nach Ansicht des Chronisten das Bauen des

Chronicler regards David as shedding 'clean blood'. The Davidic wars were waged at God's command, with his explicit help and blessing."[381] Knoppers also considers Micheel's position untenable: "The Chronicler never accuses David of incurring bloodguilt (Num 35:33-34) or of committing accidental or intentional homicide (Deut 19:10-13; 21:8-9; 2 Kgs 34:4; Jer 7:6)."[382]

In the definitive monograph on bloodshedding, *Blutvergiessen im Alten Testament*, Hieronymus Christ proves that bloodshedding always involves the murder of innocents. And yet Christ makes a single exception to his own rule, showing once again the powerful influence of Julius Wellhausen. The exception is David, because Chronicles' David is "untadelig"—that is, blameless.[383] Again, preconceptions, not evidence, drive the conclusion.

Tempels durch Jahwe verwehrt worden." Rosemarie Micheel, *Die Seher- und Propheten-Überlieferungen in der Chronik* (BBET 18: Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1983), 16. See also 90 n. 52, 53, 54.

Pre-modern interpreters such as the early Christian church father Jerome (NPNF 2 6:363) and the medieval Jewish biblical commentator R. David Kimchi say that David's bloodshedding refers to the murder of Uriah (Kimchi's comment on 1 Chr 22.8).

[381] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 397. In a footnote to Japhet's discussion of this verse in *Ideology and the Book of Chronicles*, she quotes a midrash from Yalkut Shimoni, a medieval compilation of rabbinic commentary. In that midrash, God reassures David that the blood he has shed is akin to animal sacrifice. When David asks why the bloodshedding therefore prevents him from building the Temple, God replies, "If you were to build the Temple, it would last forever and never be destroyed." Japhet, *Ideology and the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (trans. Anna Barber; Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1989), 477 n.87.

[382] Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 773.

[383] "In Chr 22,8 und 28,3, liegt ein Gebrauch von שפך דמים vor, der ohne Analogie ist und den wir wegen seines späten Auftretens nicht als Ausgangspunkt wählen konnten. Mit der bisher ermittelten Bedeutung 'Blutschuld' ist nicht weiterzukommen… Hier aber bezeichnet 'Blutvergiessen' keine Handlung, sondern Davids Leben und Wesen als Ganzes. Der Chronist wirft ihm keine Taten vor, aber er gibt ihm eine Qualifikation. Er will nämlich begründen, warum nicht schon David den Tempel gebaut hat. Für den Chronisten ist David untadelig. Es kann nicht an bestimmten Verfehlungen gelegen haben, sondern an der grundsätzlich andern Funktion, die David gegenüber Salomo innehatte. Sicher will der Chronist alles andere eher als das Schuldhafte in Davids Leben, as sonst sorgsam unterdrückt wird, in diesem Passus hervorheben…Wenn also der Chronist דמים im Zusammenhang mit dem Kriegführen gebraucht, dann nicht, um die Schuldhaftigkeit des Krieges, sondern um die kultische Beeinträchtigung durch diesen hervorzuheben." Hieronymus Christ, *Blutvergiessen im Alten Testament: Der gewaltsame Tod des Menschen untersucht am hebräischen Wort däm* (Theologische

A close reading of Chronicles shows that, contrary to Wellhausen's argument, the Chronicler chose to acknowledge and preserve important counter-traditions and conflicting perspectives handed down from the past. In doing so, he acted no differently than Wellhausen's description of D and that source's retention of elements from J in its account. When today's historical critics are confronted with potential irritants in the book, however, they seek to reconcile inconsistencies with no less fervor than orthodox canonical readers. For latter-day Wellhausians, it is not possible that there could be competing traditions wrestling within this text. The Chronicler is incapable of being at odds with himself.

The historical critical method has evolved since Julius Wellhausen wrote *Prolegomena*. His prejudices, alleged or real, have been expunged from the discipline. Yet *Prolegomena* still holds sway over interpreters of Chronicles. Like the spellbound sleeper of another German folktale, we need someone to come and wake us up.

Dissertationen 12, Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag, 1977), 55-57. See also 171, n. 231.

Chapter Five

Chronicles in the Twenty-First Century

Two of the most influential interpreters of Chronicles in the twenty-first century—Bruce Wilkinson, author of *The Prayer of Jabez,* and Graham Power, founder of the Global Day of Prayer movement—claim to have come to their particular receptions of Chronicles de novo. Wilkinson tells his readers that, after having heard a seminary chaplain mention a figure from Chronicles' genealogy named Jabez (1 Chr 4.9-10), he sat down, read his Bible, and produced an interpretation of Jabez that eventually became one of the best-selling books of all time.[384] Power, in his book *Not by Might nor by Power,* relates that he began his initiative to hold an annual day of repentance, which in 2005 drew 500 million participants,[385] after having had a vision based on a verse from Chronicles that called for healing prayers (2 Chr 7.14).

Both men speak of their insights as surprising and unique, and, in one sense they are correct. Nothing quite like *The Prayer of Jabez* and the Global Day of Prayer movement has been seen before their twenty-first century debut. A look at the reception history of their Chronicle verses, however, reveals that, in another sense, Wilkinson and Power are not so exceptional, but rather stand at the end of a long chain of interpretation. It is unclear whether or to what extent these men are aware of this fact themselves. Regardless, comparing them to their ancient and medieval counterparts shows that Wilkinson's understanding of Jabez's prayer as a request for material goods has been highly contested by other exegetes. It also shows that

---

[384] Bruce Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2000), 9-11.

[385] Cindy Gunther Brown, "From Tent Meetings and Store-front Healing Rooms to Walmarts and the Internet: Healing Spaces in the United States, the Americas, and the World, 1906-2006," in *Church History*, 75 (2006): 644.

Power's interpretation of 2 Chr 7.14 echoes English Puritans in relocating Israel to another country but also innovates by encouraging the simultaneous existence of multiple Israels. Once *The Prayer of Jabez* and the Global Day of Prayer are viewed in the context of their respective streams of tradition, it is possible to see why their adaptations of Chronicles made such a deep impression in the modern age. Both discover toeholds in the globalized and (partly) secularized world through their exegesis of Chronicles. They bring the mysteriousness of the divine into the practical order of existence, fulfilling people's desire for personal well-being and world peace.

The Prayer of Jabez

It is difficult to identify a more powerful present-day reception of Chronicles than *The Prayer of Jabez*. Published in April of 2000, this slim book of no more than 93 pages sold 8.3 million copies by the end of 2001. That year *Publishers Weekly* speculated that it might be "the fastest selling book of all time."[386] In December of 2005, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that *The Prayer of Jabez* and its variants (including the leather-bound edition and *The Prayer of Jabez For Teens*) has sales totaling more than 22 million.[387]

Bruce Wilkinson, an evangelical Christian,[388] argues that Chronicles shows that it is acceptable, and indeed desirable, for people to ask for blessing in the form of material gain and to expect God's immediate response to their requests.[389] He urges his readers to recite this verse

[386] "Setting a New Record," *Publishers Weekly*, Nov. 5, 2001. Vol 248, issue 25. http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/print/20011105/22087-setting-a-new-record.html. Accessed on 8/26/13.
[387] "In Swaziland, U.S. Preacher Sees His Dream Vanish," *The Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 18, 2005, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB113495910699726095.html. Accessed on 8/26/13.
[388] Wilkinson taught at Multnomah School of the Bible and is a graduate of Northeastern Bible College, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Western Conservative Baptist Seminary.
[389] Bruce Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* (Sisters, Ore.: Mulinomah Publishers, Inc., 2000), 90.

on a daily basis:

The Jabez Prayer
And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying,
"Oh, that You would bless me indeed,
and enlarge my territory,
that Your hand would be with me,
and that You would keep me from evil,
that I may not cause pain!"
So God granted him what he requested.
1 Chronicles 4:10 (NKJV)[390]

Through his exegesis of this passage, Wilkinson sought to allay the fears of "earnest Christians" who think it is "impolite or greedy" to be "selfish" in their prayers.[391] Wilkinson makes no mention that others in the past have interpreted Chronicles' Jabez quite differently, nor that some previous exegetes strenuously resisted the very teaching he derives from the prayer. An examination of the shape of the text and its historical reception will help us better understand what is at stake in the modern interpretation of Jabez's prayer.

Jabez in Biblical Context

Chronicles is the only book in the canon to mention Jabez. He makes his appearance within the opening list of genealogies in chapter four of First Chronicles where he is listed as one of the descendants of Judah in a recitation characteristic of the bloodlines of the other tribes of Israel. Roughly halfway through, the cascade of birth notices is abruptly interrupted by a narrative:

וַיְהִי יַעְבֵּץ נִכְבָּד מֵאֶחָיו וְאִמּוֹ קָרְאָה שְׁמוֹ יַעְבֵּץ לֵאמֹר
כִּי יָלַדְתִּי בְּעֹצֶב: וַיִּקְרָא יַעְבֵּץ לֵאלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר
אִם־בָּרֵךְ תְּבָרְכֵנִי וְהִרְבִּיתָ אֶת־גְּבוּלִי וְהָיְתָה יָדְךָ עִמִּי
וְעָשִׂיתָ מֵרָעָה לְבִלְתִּי עָצְבִּי וַיָּבֵא אֱלֹהִים אֵת אֲשֶׁר־שָׁאָל:
1 Chr 4.9-10

[390] Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez*, 92.
[391] Ibid., 19.

> Jabez was heavier than his brothers;[392] and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I gave birth in pain."[393] Jabez called to the God of Israel: "Oh that you would indeed bless me and enlarge my territory and your hand would be with me and you would keep me from evil so that I not be in pain!"[394] And God granted what he requested. 1 Chr 4.9-10

This brief story captures an important element of Chronicles' greater refrain: God is attentive to every individual and responds immediately and positively to all who call upon heaven. Jabez appeals to God to bless him so that his name does not determine his fate. He further specifies what it would mean for God to bless him: the enlargement of his territory and divine assistance as well as protection. Apparently God grants him everything without stipulation or hesitation.

A Brief Survey of Past Interpretations of Jabez

Early Jewish reception of Jabez indicates that Jabez's relative anonymity was a problem. Interpretation of these verses sought to fill the gap between Jabez's astonishing response from God and the lack of any reason for why this otherwise unknown figure merited such a response. In Tractate T'murah of the Babylonian Talmud (Bavli), Jabez is identified with his descendant

[392] The niphal form of the verb כבד may be translated either "was honored" or "was heavy." The majority of translations (including the Septuagint and Vulgate) render this phrase "Jabez was honored more than his brothers." I chose "was heavy," following a suggestion of Gary Knoppers, because Jabez's bulk would best explain why his mother experienced such extraordinary pain in giving birth to him. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9,* 339.

[393] The name Jabez and the verb "to have pain" share the same root consonants: עבץ.

[394] The phrase וְעָשִׂיתָ מֵרָעָה לְבִלְתִּי עָצְבִּי is variously translated: "and that you would keep me from hurt and harm!" (NRSV); "and make me not suffer pain from misfortune!" (New JPS); "and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain" (NIV); "and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" (NKJV). The verb עָצְבִּי is the Qal infinitive construct. The only other use of this verb in the active Qal also conveys a passive sense: "His father had not pained him..." (1 Kgs 1.6).

Othniel (1 Chr 4.13), who was so named because God answered him.[395] Othniel was credited with restoring the teachings that were lost during the period of mourning for Moses,[396] and therefore the prayer of Othniel *qua* Jabez is a request for the attainment of instruction. Jabez's concern with the material is transformed into desire for the immaterial or spiritual, an exegetical approach for centuries to come. "Oh that you would indeed bless me!" was Jabez's cry to God to be blessed with Torah. In asking that his borders be enlarged, he meant that he desired students. His plea that God's hand be with him was to ensure that he would not forget what he had learned, and asking God to keep him from evil was a request that he would meet friends like himself. Lastly, Jabez's appeal to God to safeguard him from pain was a petition that the evil inclination not keep him from study.[397] The early medieval midrash *Tanna Debe Eliyahu* explicitly stated that God gave Jabez all that he requested because he traveled throughout Israel teaching Torah. The midrash signaled its own estimation of the incredible exchange between Jabez and God. In this work, Jabez's post-blessing state prefigured the life that the righteous will have in the world to come.[398]

The Jewish interpreters Pseudo-Rashi and Kimchi were also concerned with establishing that Jabez had done something to merit his blessing, but Pseudo-Rashi and Kimchi posited that Jabez's meritorious action followed rather than preceded God's response. Their interpretation

---

[395] *b.Ter*. 16a. Presumably the Rabbis discerned the root letters for "God" (אל) and "answer" (ענה) in the name Othniel (עתניאל).
[396] *b.Ter*. 16a.
[397] *b. Ter.*16a. Rabbi Nathan likened God's response to Jabez to an interaction between a student and teacher. Rabbi Judah, however, likened it to a poor man asking a rich man for alms. In Rabbi Judah's interpretation, Jabez asked for children, success in business, health, and the opportunity to pursue his studies.
[398] *Tana Debe Eliyyahu: The Lore of the School of Elijah* (trans. William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1981), 31. The text dates to the 7th to 11th century CE. Lennart Lehmhaus, "Eliyahu's Literary Strategies in the Context of Late Midrash," in *Approaches to Literary Readings of Ancient Jewish Writings* (eds. Klaas Smelik and Karolien Vermeulen; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 217.

was shaped by the grammatical form of the verse. They read the opening words of Jabez's prayer (אִם־בָּרֵךְ תְּבָרְכֵנִי) as the protasis of an oath ("If you will indeed bless me…") even though the apodosis, stating what Jabez promised do in return, was missing. Kimchi referred to the vows of Jacob (Gen 28.20) and of the people of Israel (Num 21.2) as other examples of oaths missing an apodosis.[399] For Pseudo-Rashi, the fact that Jabez paid his vow, even though he never actually made a vow, taught that people should make charitable donations without publically swearing to do so.[400]

Rabanus Maurus was among the first Christian exegetes to comment on Jabez, and, like his Jewish counterparts, he sought to account for Jabez's extraordinary standing with God by identifying him with someone whose merits were already established. In Rabanus' interpretation, Jabez deserved God's favorable response by virtue of being a representation of Christ. Accordingly, God's blessing was the multiplication of Jesus' children through the Church by means of baptism. The expansion of borders signified that God had given Jesus the inheritance of all the nations and extended his possessions to the ends of the earth. God's hand was manifest through Jesus' divinity, by which he performed miracles. He was immune from harm because the devil has no power over him. Thus God gave Jabez, as Jesus, all power in heaven and in earth.[401]

In the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries in England, when vernacular Bibles proliferated and anyone who could read was gaining access to Chronicles, Christian interpreters wrestled with whether and to what degree Jabez had prayed for material benefits. For the lay-exegete Lady Anne Halkett (1623-1699), Jabez's exceptional rewards were tied to his

[399] Berger points out, however, that Kimchi's examples are extremely problematic. Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 63-64.
[400] For Pseudo-Rashi's commentary on Chr 4.9-10, see http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/ aid/16582#showrashi=true.
[401] Rabanus Maurus, PL 109, 303-304.

exceptional devotion; his successful petition for temporal blessings was therefore not to be imitated:

> …he [Jabez] is called more Honourable than his Bretheren, not so much, on the account of his noble exploits, as his eminent Piety; that appears in this his Prayer, which, in so far as it seems mainly to be made for Temporal Blessings, is not to be a rule for any, absolutely to ask Temporal things, no more than the Thief on the Cross, should be encouragement to any to delay seeking Mercy & Pardon, until they can Sin no more. Both, its true, had a grant of their requests, but neither is to be imitated, in what was singular and extraordinary: Yet both are recorded in Holy Scripture, to shew how prevalent faith is, when placed on the right object.[402]

Though in the passage above Halkett appeared to acknowledge that Jabez requested temporal blessings, she attempted to spiritualize those requests. When Jabez petitioned for the enlargement of his territory, he was actually praying for "the enlargement of God's Kingdom,"[403] and asking that God's hand be with him was no different than requesting one's daily bread in the Lord's Prayer.[404] The essential point of Jabez's prayer, Halkett maintained, was to demonstrate the utter dependence of humans upon Heaven.

The Baptist preacher Daniel Turner (1710-1798) marks a turning point by leaving open the possibility, without qualification, that Jabez's gains were material goods. In his exegesis of 1 Chr 4.9-10, Turner, too, establishes that Jabez merited God's benefaction upon request:

> About Jabez himself we know little, if any thing, except what is here told. It is said he was more honourable than his brethren; either that he had more eminently distinguished himself in a military capacity; had obtained some high civil distinction, or what seems more probable, only because of a piece with his prayer, superior to his brethren; that is, tribe in general, or family in particular, on account of his shining virtues, and

[402] Lady Anne Halkett, "Meditations upon Jabez his Request, I. Chron. iv.10," (Edinburgh, n.p.: 1702), 28.
[403] Lady Anne Halkett, "Meditations upon Jabez his Request, I. Chron. iv.10," (Edinburgh, n.p.: 1702), 34.
[404] Ibid.

singular piety.[405]

Turner speculated further that the report that Jabez called on "the God of Israel" might be contrasting Jabez with others who prayed to idols. Perhaps Jabez was like Abraham who worshipped only the true deity.[406] With Jabez's exceptional piety duly noted, Turner proceeded to affirm that Jabez's request for expanded territory was indeed a prayer for material benefits. Turner offered a defense for Jabez doing so: "Though the glory of God is our chief end, and our immortal concerns of the greatest consequence, yet a limited and prudent care about our situation in life, is also requisite."[407] Turner thus cautiously sanctioned the spread before God of "temporal, as well as spiritual wants,...provided we keep them in their proper place."[408] He continued,

> The curious question of theology, Whether it be lawful to desire more than we posses [sic], if our necessary wants are supplied? Or if, having daily bread, we may be justified in desiring more? is what here I shall not discuss, but rest contented with observing, that from the conduct of the pious Jabez, the devout man may discern the propriety of repairing to God in all possible emergencies, or distress….[409]

In Turner's exegesis, Jabez's exceptionalism should not preclude others from following his lead in praying for material benefits.

One hundred years later one of the most renowned preachers of the English clergy, Charles Spurgeon (the "Prince of Preachers"[410]), inveighed against the notion that Jabez asked for temporal gifts. In 1871, he delivered a sermon on Jabez, and he limited its lemma to "Oh that

---

[405] Reverend Daniel Turner, "Sermon II, 1 Chron. iv—9, 10" delivered before the Society of Ancient Free Masons, 1788, 37.
[406] Ibid., 38.
[407] Ibid., 44.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Turner, "Sermon II, 1 Chron. iv—9, 10," page 47.
[410] Lewis A. Drummond, *Spurgeon: The Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1992), 76.

you would bless me indeed!" According to his reading, those words were the full extent of Jabez's prayer. Spurgeon reviewed the most common transient goods people desired—wealth, fame, health, and home—and warned his congregants against asking for these or any other specific benefits, lest there be unforeseen and undesirable consequences. God alone was the best judge of what blessings to bestow, not humans. To drive home the point, he told the story of a woman who insisted that her minister omit "If it by thy will" from his prayer for the healing of her sick boy. The child lived, only later to be hung from the gallows as a criminal before his mother's eyes. Much better, Spurgeon said, to ask for God's blessing—period.[411] In doing so, Spurgeon deemphasized Jabez's exceptionalism. The prayer was indeed worthy of imitation, so long as it was properly understood.

Bruce Wilkinson's Jabez

Tracing the exegetical thread of previous interpretations of Jabez and his prayer allows us to appreciate the extent to which Wilkinson is both an inheritor of received tradition and an innovator in defiance of it. With the publication of *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* in 2000, Wilkinson weighed in on the key questions posed by 1 Chr 4.9-10. He argues that Jabez did not do anything extraordinary to merit God's favor. Moreover, he determines that the prayer included a request for material benefit.

From the start, Wilkinson heightened the potential significance of Jabez by stressing the obscurity of Chronicles—something the previous interpreters surveyed failed to do. The effect of this move is to create a heightened sense of drama for his audience. In his preface, Wilkinson states that he is able to offer a miraculous prayer based on his discovery of a difficult-to-locate

[411] Charles Spurgeon, "The Prayer of Jabez," delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, 1871.

biblical passage.

> Dear Reader,
>
> I want to teach you how to pray a daring prayer that God always answers. It is brief—only one sentence with four parts—and tucked away in the Bible, but I believe it contains the key to a life of extraordinary favor with God.
>
> This petition has radically changed what I expect from God and what I experience every day by His power. In fact, thousands of believers who are applying its truths are seeing miracles happen on a regular basis.
>
> Will you join me for a personal exploration of Jabez?
>
> I hope you will!
>
> *Bruce H. Wilkinson*[412]

In this initial presentation of Jabez, the biblical figure's claim on the reader's attention rests, not on Jabez's piety, but on the incongruity of uncovering something of great value in an obscure passage of an obscure book. Wilkinson adds: "You could think of him [Jabez] as the Prodigy of the Genealogy, or maybe the Bible's Little Big Man. You'll find him hiding in the least-read section of one of the least-read books of the Bible."[413] The discovery of Jabez is part of the fun and mystery that awaits the reader. Jabez's unfamiliarity, not his virtue, constitutes his appeal.

Like previous exegetes, Wilkinson feels the need to fill in the gaps in Chronicles' account, and here he strives to make Jabez's problems identical to those of contemporary readers. To accomplish this objective, he gives Jabez a vivid backstory with a distinctly modern cast. Why did Jabez's mother call her son a name that means "He will cause pain" (יַעְבֵּץ)? Perhaps her delivery was difficult; perhaps she was abandoned by the child's father while

[412] Bruce Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* (Sisters, Ore.: Mulinomah Publishers, Inc., 2000), 7.
[413] Ibid., 12.

pregnant; perhaps the family was already in deep in debt and the prospect of another child was too daunting. Whatever the reason, Jabez's name was a great burden to the young boy, and he endured bullying and insults because of it. But Jabez knew that God had rescued his ancestors from slavery and delivered them to a land of abundance. Having faith in God's ability to work miracles, he prayed an "improbable" prayer.[414] Wilkinson continued:

> In my mind's eye, I picture Jabez standing before a massive gate recessed into a sky-high wall. Weighed down by the sorrow of his past and the dreariness of his present, he sees before him only impossibility—a future shut off. But raising his hands to heaven, he cries out, "Father, oh, Father! Please bless me! And what I really mean is…bless me a lot!"
>
> With the last word, the transformation begins. He hears a tremendous crack. Then a groan. Then a rumble as the huge gate swings away from him in a wide arc. There, stretching to the horizon, are fields of blessings.
>
> And Jabez steps forward into another life.[415]

In Wilkinson's depiction, Jabez received divine benefaction because of his desperate need. Wilkinson pictures his readers in the same situation ("Perhaps you think that your name is just another word for pain or trouble…"[416]) and urges them to petition God as Jabez did, beginning with "Oh, that you would bless me indeed!" Jabez proves it is not wrong to ask for divine favor for oneself. In fact, he demonstrates the opposite: the error lies in *not* doing so. People who fail to ask deprive themselves of the fullness of God's riches, riches that God is just waiting to bestow. According to Wilkinson, there are some blessings that come only upon request.[417]

Wilkinson understands the next part of the prayer ("Oh, that You would enlarge my territory!") to be an entreaty for material enrichment. Jabez was probably a farmer, in which case

[414] Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez*, 20-22.
[415] Ibid., 22-23.
[416] Ibid., 27.
[417] Ibid., 27.

he would have been hoping for an expansion of his fields and pastures. If, however, Jabez were a modern-day Wall Street businessman,

> he might have prayed, "Lord, increase the value of my investment portfolios." When I talk to presidents of companies, I often talk to them about this particular mind-set. When Christian executives ask me, "Is it right for me to ask God for more business?" my response is, "Absolutely! If you're doing your business God's way, it's not only right to ask for more, but He is wanting for you to ask. Your business is the territory God has entrusted to you. He wants you to accept it as a significant opportunity to touch individual lives, the business community, and the larger world for His glory. Asking Him to enlarge that opportunity brings Him only delight.[418]

Furthermore, were Jabez a modern-day married woman, the prayer would be: "Lord, add to my family, favor my key relationships, multiply for Your glory the influence of my household."[419] When one asks God for expansion of territory, Wilkinson wrote, "heaven sends angels, resources, strength, and the people you need….You'll have a front-row seat in a life of miracles."[420] Wilkinson maintains that God will always grant such a prayer, no matter what.

In making this argument, Wilkinson paradoxically rendered exceptionalism nonexceptional. For Wilkinson, utterance of the prayer itself sets Jabez above his brothers. The ready answer Jabez received indicates God's preference for those who are bold enough to ask for blessings over those who are not:

> Do you think God has favorites? Certainly God makes His love available to all, and Jesus came to earth so that "whosoever" might call on His name and be saved.
>
> But Jabez, whose prayer earned him a "more honorable" award from God, might have made the case that God does have favorites. What happened to some of the others named along with him in Chronicles? Idbash, Hazelelponi, and Anub, for example. What honors and awards did they get from God?
>
> Simply put, God favors those who ask. He holds back nothing

[418] Ibid., 31-32.
[419] Ibid., 32.
[420] Ibid., 44.

> from those who want and earnestly long for what He wants.
>
> To say that you want to be "more honorable" in God's eyes is not arrogance or self-centeredness. "More honorable" describes what God thinks; it's not credit we take for ourselves. You would be giving in to a carnal impulse if you were trying to outdo someone else, but you are living in the Spirit when you strive to receive God's highest reward.[421]

In this interpretation, Jabez's exceptional rank stems not from an extraordinary demonstrations of devotion (such as teaching Torah throughout Israel or worshipping God in a time of idolatry) but simply from petitioning Heaven—an act well within anyone's capabilities.

To prove that Jabez's prayer remained effective in the twenty-first century, Wilkinson drew on an incident in his own life. He described being stuck in Atlanta traffic on the way to catching a plane for an important speaking engagement. He prayed that the plane would be delayed, and when he arrived he found that the flight was postponed. This chance occurrence enabled him to meet a fellow passenger while waiting to board. The passenger was a woman having difficulties in her marriage, and despite being assigned separate seats, they wound up sitting together—allowing Wilkinson to continue ministering to her. All these events happened, Wilkinson said, because he prayed: "Lord, please make my flight late so I can catch it."[422] God is like "any loving dad" waiting for the opportunity to exercise His "supernatural power" when asked.[423]

Wilkinson's assertion that daily repetition of Jabez's prayer over the course of thirty days will produce guaranteed results sets him apart from the exegetes who preceded him.[424] His innovation, however, did not spring up from nowhere. Rather, his formulaic presentation reflected Chronicles' retributive theology—God rewards good people in their own lifetimes, and

[421] Ibid., 76-77.
[422] Ibid., 78-82.
[423] Ibid., 60.
[424] Ibid., 86-87.

this happens every day in ordinary affairs. For Wilkinson, Jabez's tale is an epitome of the bigger narrative of Chronicles, minus Chronicles' threat of punishment for the bad. The absence of divine sanction in *The Prayer of Jabez* has led some to consider it part of the "prosperity gospel."[425]

In the end, reading Wilkinson as part of a chain of interpretation gives some understanding of the current need his work met. Like other exegetes in the past, Wilkinson attempted to fill in Chronicles' missing information regarding Jabez and the content of his prayer. In filling those gaps, he downplayed exceptionalism and made no sharp distinction between spiritual and material benefits. Most importantly, the promise of immediate manifestations of divine benefaction on demand offered individuals control over their own lives. Perhaps this is the key to *The Prayer of Jabez*'s success in what many consider to be an age of secularism and consumerism: The modern Jabez commands his own earthly rewards.

The Global Day of Prayer

Another important twenty-first century reception of Chronicles, the Global Day of Prayer, also purports—and is purported by others—to be a relatively recent development. Since 2001, Christians around the world pray annually on Pentecost for "the healing of the nations," and in 2005, half a billion people in 198 countries participated.[426] Their impetus is a vision by the South African entrepreneur Graham Power that involved 2 Chr 7.14: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their

[425] Kate Bowler, *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 228; Andrew Chase Baker, "Gain, No Pain," *Religion in the News*, Fall (2001): 21-22.
[426] Brown, "From Tent Meetings and Store-front Healing Rooms to Walmarts and the Internet: Healing Spaces in the United States, the Americas, and the World, 1906-2006," 644.

wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." [427]

In fact the roots of Power's exegesis extend back to the Reformation. Religious ethnographer Candy Brown already noticed the connection to Pentacostal revivals of the early 1900s,[428] and speaks of the Global Day of Prayer as but one of a number of revival initiatives within "a global Christian community."[429] The connection, however, goes back further still. An examination of the biblical context of 2 Chr 7.14 and the history of its exegesis reveals deeper aspects of the connection between particular nations within the new global Christian community.

2 Chr 7.14 in Biblical Context

In Chronicles, the verse is part of a theophany following Solomon's dedication of the temple. Both Kings and Chronicles record Solomon's prayer that when there is drought, famine, and sickness, God will hear the supplication of Israel (1 Kgs 8.35-40/2 Chr 6.28-32). Afterward both books relate that God appeared to Solomon to describe the rewards for obedience as well as the punishment for disobedience (1 Kgs 9.1-9; 2 Chr 7.12-22). For the most part, Chronicles closely parallels Kings' account. However, at the opening of God's address to Solomon, following the divine announcement "I have heard your prayer…," Chronicles conveys information that is missing from Kings:

שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־תְּפִלָּתֶךָ וּבָחַרְתִּי בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה לִי לְבֵית זָבַח׃
הֵן אֶעֱצֹר הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מָטָר וְהֵן־אֲצַוֶּה עַל־חָגָב לֶאֱכֹל

[427] http://www.globaldayofprayer.com/

[428] Brown, "From Tent Meetings and Store-front Healing Rooms to Walmarts and the Internet: Healing Spaces in the United States, the Americas, and the World, 1906-2006," 644. Power himself claimed that his vision was part of a series of revelations dating back to 1910. Graham Power and Diane Verooten, *Not by Might, Nor by Power: The Account of the Global Day of Prayer, The largest prayer movement in all recorded history* (Lake Mary, Florida: Creation House, 2009), 4.

[429] Cindy Gunther Brown, "From Tent Meetings and Store-front Healing Rooms to Walmarts and the Internet: Healing Spaces in the United States, the Americas, and the World, 1906-2006," in *Church History*, 75 (2006): 642-47.

הָאָרֶץ וְאִם־אֲשַׁלַּח דֶּבֶר בְּעַמִּי: וְיִכָּנְעוּ עַמִּי אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא־שְׁמִי עֲלֵיהֶם
וְיִתְפַּלְלוּ וְיבַקְשׁוּ פָנַי וְיָשֻׁבוּ מִדַּרְכֵיהֶם הָרָעִים וַאֲנִי אֶשְׁמַע מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם
וְאֶסְלַח לְחַטָּאתָם וְאֶרְפָּא אֶת־אַרְצָם: עַתָּה עֵינַי יִהְיוּ פְתֻחוֹת וְאָזְנַי
קַשֻּׁבוֹת לִתְפִלַּת הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה:

> I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself to be a house of sacrifice. If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, and if I send pestilence among my people, then if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven and I will forgive their sin and heal their land. Now my eyes will be opened and my ears attentive to the prayer of this place.
>
> 2 Chr 7.12b-15

In this passage, unique to Chronicles, God indicates his positive response to everything Solomon asked for in Kings and Chronicles, and the language mirrors Solomon's prayer. However, God also promises something over and above the king's request. Not only will God forgive the people their sin, God will also heal their land. Chronicles' notice of this additional benefit, the healing of the land, is therefore "doubly" unique.

Moreover, 2 Chr 7.14 is the only instance in the Bible in which God promises to heal land.[430] In the vast majority of verses that speak of God's "healing" (רפא), people are the recipients.[431] There are a few exceptions, but none have the same import as Chronicles. The psalmist implores God to heal the breaches of the earth (Ps 60.4 [Eng 60.2]). It is an expression of human hope. Jeremiah declares that neither Jerusalem nor its inhabitants (Jer 19.11) nor

[430] Deut 29.21-22 are the only verses in the Bible that refers to God making the land sick (חלה Piel): "The next generation, your children who arise after you and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, will look at the plagues and diseases of that land through which the Lord made it sick—brimstone and salt and a burning of all the land which will not be sown nor will it allow anything to sprout and nothing green will rise up from it, just like the overthrow of Sodom and Gemorrah, Admah and Zevoim that the Lord overthrew in his anger and wrath…"

[431] Gen 20.17; Ex 15.26; Num 12.13; 1 Sam 6.3; 2 Kgs 20.5, 8; Hos 6.1, 7.1; 11.3, 14.5; Isa 6.10, 19.22; 30.26, 57.18,19; Jer 3.22, 17.14, 30.17, 33.6; Job 5.18; Ps 6.3 (Eng 6.4), 30.3 (Eng 30.4), 41.5 (Eng 41.4), 102.3 (Eng 103.3), 107.20, 147.3 (Eng 146.3); and 2 Chr 30.20. In Deut 32.39, God declares, "I heal" (וַאֲנִי אֶרְפָּא) but there is no specific object.

Babylon (Jer 51.9) can be healed. Here a city and country are mentioned, but it is God who inflicts the injury and proclaims they cannot be mended. The closest parallel is Elisha's healing of the water in 2 Kings, which he does as an agent of God: "Thus says the Lord, I have healed these waters. No longer shall death or miscarriage come from them" (2 Kgs 2.21-22). The verse is important because it gives a sense of what God's healing of land might entail. However, the prophet's transformation of a spring does not have the same scope or significance as God's direct promise to heal the land of the people who are called by God's name.

The Reception History of 2 Chr 7.14

The divine pledge to heal the land in 2 Chr 7.14 did not draw the attention of ancient and early medieval commentators, Jewish or Christian. In the first centuries, both communities loosened their ties to the geographic Israel of their day. For Jews, the catastrophic events of 70 CE led to a reformulation of how to maintain a relationship with God minus the temple and outside Israel's borders. According to Yaakov Ariel, in the accommodation to the new realities of Jewish existence, "messianic time and the fulfillment of biblical prophecy were postponed to an unspecified, almost theoretical future."[432] To the extent that the notice of the hope for the healing of the land may have been tied to the restoration of Israel, it may not have had any special resonance with Jewish exegetes during these periods.

Similarly, the lack of Christian exegesis on this verse may have been due to the "spiritualizing" of the meaning of Israel in the centuries following the advent of Christ. The move was part of the Church's effort to reinterpret New Testament predictions of the world's imminent end. In the second and third centuries of the Common Era, several important

[432] Yaakov Ariel, "Radical Millennial Movements in Contemporary Israel" in *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism* (ed. Catherine Wessinger; Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2001), 669.

interpreters anticipated that the climatic events would occur in Jerusalem in the near future, including Tertullian (c. 160-c. 225), Justin Martyr (c. 100-c. 165), and Irenaeus (d.c. 202).[433] Robert Wilken is one of several scholars to credit Origen (184/85-253/54) with the tamping down of these chiliastic views of the early Church through disengaging the heavenly Jerusalem and Israel from the actual city and land. As evidence, he quotes a passage from *Contra Celsum*:

> Judaea and Jerusalem are to be taken symbolically as shadows of the pure land which is good and large and lies in a pure heaven in which is the heavenly Jerusalem. The apostle, as one who is risen with Christ, who seeks the things that are above, and has found a meaning not contained by a Jewish mythological interpretation, discusses this land when he says "But you have come to Mount Sion and to the heavenly Jerusalem the city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels."(C. Cel.7.29)[434]

From this perspective, 2 Chr 7.14 does not refer to healing the land of Israel in a literal sense, but rather points to the spiritual repair that ultimately leads a soul closer to heaven.[435]

With the Reformation, however, Chronicles' record of the divine promise took on massive significance—particularly in England beginning in the middle of the sixteenth century. English Presbyterians reclaimed the belief that God's purpose is unfolding in the temporal world

---

[433] Peter Toon, "Introduction," in *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Purtian Eschatology 1600 to1660* (Peter Toon, ed.; Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd, 1970), 10-13.
[434] Robert Wilken, "Early Christian Chiliasm, Jewish Messianism, and the Idea of the Holy Land," in *The Harvard Theological Review*, 79 (1986): 303.
[435] The Church's anti-chiliastic turn led to the expurgation of the chapters of Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses* describing the earthly events leading up to and following the Second Coming of Christ. These chapters came to light with the discovery of an unexpurgated manuscript in 1575. Toon, "Introduction," 17. According to Ernest Tuveson, millennialism "fell into a disfavor so complete that for more than a thousand years it had almost no part in the main stream of Christian thought." Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Millennium and Utopia* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1949), 14. Outside the mainstream, millennialism never died. For a comprehensive study of millenarianism among the poor of medieval Western Europe, see Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

and, assuming their pivotal role in salvation history, they relocated Israel to the British Isles. One scholar of the period sets out the scope of the paradigm shift:

> The idea that England was the new Israel where something unique and divine was about to occur dated from this time. The Marian exile, John Foxe, for example, in his *Actes and Monuments* (first published in 1554), declared that all of history was subsumed in the struggle of the faithful against the Antichrist [i.e., the papacy], and that in this struggle, England was the true champion of the faithful. The notion that "God is English," as John Aylmer, Bishop of London, asserted in 1559, was to be echoed consistently by Cromwell 100 years later in the battle against the patently ungodly Charles I.[436]

The wording of 2 Chr 7.14 was consonant with the portability of the identity of Israel, as God's act of grace was to be directed toward the land of the people who were called by God's name. Whatever land the faithful inhabited, that was the ground to be healed.

Just as Jabez in some sense epitomized Chronicles' retributive theology for Wilkinson, for the English Presbyterians, 2 Chr 7.14 distilled Chronicles' blending of the civic and the religious spheres. In Chronicles, David was both the leader of the people and the chief priest of the temple cult. The fortunes of Judah's king rose and fell, according to their observance of the Law. English Presbyterians embraced Chronicles' view that righteous living extended to all spheres, and that failing to adhere to one's beliefs had political consequences. For the Presbyterians, 2 Chr 7.14 crystallized Chronicles' teaching that the political and material well-being of a nation was intimately tied to its spiritual health.

Accordingly, for all English Presbyterians, but especially for the Puritans, the coupling of divine forgiveness of the people with God's merciful attention to the land in 2 Chr 7.14 reinforced their belief in the importance of national as well as individual repentance. The

---

[436] Jack Fruchtman, Jr., *The Apocalyptic Politics of Richard Price and Joseph Priestley: A Study in Late Eighteenth-Century English Republican Millennialism* (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 73, 1983), 10-11.

conception of England as the true Israel presupposed "a strong, organic connection between self and society."[437] One notable Puritan, Thomas Cartwright (c. 1535-1603), even refused to distinguish between the elect and nonelect, calling the English "a people blessed of the Lord, and beloved of the Lord" and the Church of England an "Israell [sic] of God."[438]

The phenomenon of Fast Sermons highlighted the role of national repentance and brought 2 Chr 7.14 to the fore as an important text for the redemption of England. In the 1570s, the practice of collective humiliation and fasting began and slowly took hold; by 1624, Fast Days were convened as a matter of course.[439] An eighteenth-century preacher's directory lists 2 Chr 7.14 among the designated verses for Fast Sermons,[440] and several Fast Sermons from that period based on this verse survive. In each discourse, the minister warns of a dire threat against the nation, either from outside England's borders (the rebellion of the American colonies[441] and the French Revolution[442]) or from within (earthquakes[443] and the immorality of the citizenry[444]). The

---

[437] Theodore Dwight Bozeman, "Federal Theology and the 'National Covenant': An Elizabethan Presbyterian Case Study" in *Church History* (vol. 61, 1992), 399.
[438] Quoted in Bozeman, "Federal Theology and the 'National Covenant,'" 400.
[439] Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*, 79-81.
[440] *The preacher's directory; or a series of subjects proper for public discourses, with texts under each head: to which is added a supplement, containing select passages from the Apocrypha* (London: printed for Joseph Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1771), 130.
The second of the first two Fast Sermons preached to Parliament on November 17, 1640 drew on 2 Chr 15.2. Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*, 86.
[441] *Sermon I. on the Advantages of National Repentance, Preached to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation of Ballyhalbert, December 13th, 1776, Being a Day appointed, by Government, as a General Fast* by William Steel Dickson (Belfast: Printed by James Magee, at the Bible and Crown, in Bridge-Street, 1776), 18-19.
[442] *A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of St. Michael, Lewes, on Friday, the 28th of February, 1794, being the day appointed for a General Fast and Humilation, by the Rev. H. Poole, LL.B.* (Lewes: Printed for Arthur Lee, 1794), 13-15.
[443] *National Virtue, the Condition of National Happiness: A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Monks Kirby, in the county of Warwick, on Friday, the 11th of February, 1757 by James Ancell, Curate* (London: Printed, and sold by R. Balwin in Pater-noster-Row, 1757), 13.
[444] *National Repentance, the only way to prevent the ruin of a Sinful People. A Sermon preached at Kingston on Thames, November 25th, 1741, the Day appointed by Proclamation for a general*

remedy is an act of penitence that inextricably links the redemption of each citizen to the redemption of the nation. One sermon concludes with this exhortation: "And, as nothing can really sanctify a national Fast, but national Amendment, let every one thus *humble himself under the mighty Hand of God*, and we shall have the surest Confidence, that *he will exalt us in due time.*"[445]

As an extension of this belief, 2 Chr 7.14 was also the basis for sermons celebrating the successful defense of the nation. Following Lord Nelson's victory over the French fleet in 1798, there was a national day of general thanksgiving. A sermon preached before General George Cornwallis (1738-1805) in honor of the occasion invoked 2 Chr 7.14 as its theme verse.[446]

The assignment of "the land" to a place other than geographic Israel was a pivotal moment in the reception history of 2 Chr 7.14.[447] Once biblical interpreters of the verse declared England to be the intended beneficiary of God's healing, the door was open for transferring that designation to other countries, too. Once again, the Puritans led the way. At the close of the seventeenth century, Puritans reacted to restrictions on their religious observance in England by emigrating to America. Their persecution and exile spawned a reevaluation of where to place the

---

Fast and Humiliation before Almighty God, Etc. By George Wightwicke, M.A.(London: Printed for J. Noon, at the White-Hart in Cheapside, near Mercer's-Chapel, 1741), 24.

[445] *National Virtue, the Condition of National Happiness*, 22-23. Italics are in the original.

[446] *A Sermon preached before his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, on Thursday the 29th November, 1798, being the day appointed for a General Thanksgiving, to Almighty God, for the late glorious victory obtained by Lord Neilson, over the French fleet, and for the other recent interpositions of his good providence, towards the effectual deliverance of these kingdoms from foreign invastion and intestine commotion by the Hon. And Right Rev. William Knox, Lord Bishop of Killaloe* (Dublin: Printed for Wm. Watson and Son, Capel Street, 1798).

[447] This shift was facilitated by the metaphorization of exile within the Bible itself. Martien A. Halvorson-Taylor, *Enduring Exile: The Metaphorization of Exile in the Hebrew Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

locus of sacred history. They viewed their journey and transplantation as an exodus, and identified their new home as the true Israel.[448]

The Modern Reception of 2 Chr 7.14

The practice of invoking 2 Chr 7.14 for the healing of a specific land continues in the modern era, including in the United States. The verse has figured in intercessory prayers for America for a variety of reasons. On the tenth anniversary of the 2001 terrorist attack on America, the National Highway of Prayer sponsored "9/11/11… TEN YEARS LATER," a twelve-hour national Christian prayer meeting via a conference call devoted to 2 Chr 7.14.[449] In 2000, *Charisma Magazine* reported that a group of African-Americans were urging the recitation of 2 Chr 7.14 as part of a congressionally issued national apology for slavery.[450] It has been the spur for calling for repentance on the Fourth of July.[451] In 2012, a group called America For Jesus held a prayer rally forty days before the presidential election, citing 2 Chr 7.14 as its inspiration. Prior to the event, one of the organizers said,

---

[448] "We have heard with our Ears, and our Fathers have told us how God inclin'd the hearts of our Ancestors to leave their Native Soil and come into this Jerusalem…How he led them through the Deep upon the rude Waves, swelling Surges & foaming Billows of the wide Atlantick, and Landed them on this *American* Continent; this then was a howling Wilderness, a Land that was not Sown; how he planted them a Noble Vine, wholly a right Seed; and what special Care he took of the same, how he Hedg'd it about, Watch'd and Water'd it every Moment, and kept it Night and Day. And how he caus'd this Vine to take deep Root, to grow and flourish till it has filled the Land...." Issac Stiles, "A Prospect of the City of Jerusalem, in it's spiritual Building, Beauty and Glory. Shewed in a Sermon Preach'd at Harford in His Majesty's Colony of Connecticut, May 13th, 1742" in *Connecticut and Massachusetts Election Sermons* (The Puritan Sermon in America, 1630-1750, vol. 2; (Delmar, New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1978), 223-24.

[449] As cited on SermonIndex.net, http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=40289&forum=16&1. Accessed on 21 September 2013.

[450] Vivian Lowe, "The History America Chose to Forget," *Charisma Magazine*, November 2000, 1.

[451] Jeffery Anselmi, "Redirecting A Nation," July 2008, http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/redirecting-a-nation-08-jeffery-anselmi-sermon-on-independence-day-124230.asp?Page=4. Accessed on 21 September 2013.

> In the midst of a pathetic atmosphere full of moral relativism, spiritual apathy and cultural decadence, the church of Jesus Christ stands poised to usher in a new awakening. America for Jesus will facilitate a clarion call for prayer, repentance and healing in the spirit of 2 Chronicles 7.14. In this critical year, the followers of Christ will declare that the only solution to our collective crisis lies not in the agenda of the donkey or the elephant. The answer for America is nothing other than the agenda of the Lamb!

The rally was held at Independence Mall in Philadelphia. Over 10,000 people participated in collective prayer for the healing of America.

Today this verse has also been employed countless times for the healing of other lands. To give but a few examples: Jonathan C. Taylor, in his article "The Application of Chronicles 7:13-15," describes an overseas missionary trip by the American-based Christian evangelist Benny Hinn in 2009:

> …when Benny Hinn was in Trinidad and Tobago, he cited 2 Chronicles 7:14 and prayed that that nation would be healed. Nigeria's president Olusegun Obansanjo deployed two representatives to meet Hinn for a revival service. One representative quoted 2 Chronicles 7:14, requesting that Hinn pray an anointing, healing prayer over Nigeria.[452]

The Australian Christian Values Institute held a forty-day period of prayer and fasting to "heal the land" of Australia in 2010, citing 2 Chr 7:14 as its inspiration.[453] In 2012, over 100,000 Indonesians participated in a prayer meeting for Indonesia that took the Chronicles verse as its theme.[454] Lastly, in 2012, the nonprofit organization Transform Kenya asked Kenyans to set aside fifteen minutes every Friday to prayer for their country. Once more, 2 Chr 7.14 was the

[452] Jonathan G. Taylor, "The Application of 2 Chronicles 7:13-15," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 168 (April-June 2011), 152.
[453] "Australia's Call to Prayer and 40-Day Fast for the 'Healing of the Land' Down Under," http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=8012. Accessed on 21 September 2013.
[454] Pete Greig, "Indonesia, 3 Million Pray," http://www.24-7prayer.com/features/1781. Accessed on 21 September 2013.

catalyst for an act of national repentance.[455] Continuing the trend begun by the Puritans, the land of 2 Chr 7.14 in each of these cases becomes a different country, depending on the interpreter's nationality or allegiance.

2 Chr 7.14 and the Global Day of Prayer

It is precisely this question—which is the land that God has promised to heal if its people repent?—that is at the heart of the Global Day of Prayer movement. The answer its founder Graham Power provided retained the political boundaries that were so important in the Puritan's interpretation of 2 Chr 7.14, while simultaneously injecting an element of universality.

By Power's own account, the Global Day of Prayer movement originated in 2000 with a vision that invoked 2 Chr 7.14. At that time God instructed him to call all Christians in Cape Town to gather for a day of repentance and prayer, to request that the other Christians in the country also pray and repent, and urge all Christians in the region of southern Africa to do the same.[456] In March the following year, 45,000 gathered in Cape Town.[457] At its inception, the movement retained a national bias.

In 2002 Power had a second vision in which God revealed that the call for contrition was really directed to the whole continent. Africa was meant to be "a light to the world," and the long-term goal was to extend the invitation to every country on earth to participate in a day of collective repentance.[458] The understanding of "the land" in 2 Chr 7.14 was progressively moving away from any one individual state. Reflecting this shift, the words "community" and "church" now replaced "nation":

---

[455] http://transformkenya.org/konnect/. Accessed on 21 September 2013.
[456] Graham Power and Diane Verooten, *Not by Might, Nor by Power* (Lake Mary, Florida: Creation House, 2009), 32-33.
[457] Ibid., 49.
[458] Ibid., 65-67.

> At the same time, it was clear that different prayer streams from across the globe were flowing in the same direction with a similar vision of community transformation through prayer. God was busy raising up a church of intercession in order to prepare communities for the revelation of His glory.[459]

In that year, Power's message spread to more South African cities, and Christian leaders within nine other nations pledged to join together to promote "Africa for Christ." By 2004, the movement could claim that every country on the continent had observed a Day of Repentance and Prayer for Africa.[460] Meanwhile, the plan to take the movement worldwide moved forward. At a meeting of the International Prayer Council in Malaysia in 2004 the plan solidified and the first Global Day of Prayer occurred on Pentecost Sunday, May 2005. Christians from 156 nations participated.[461]

In October of 2006 Power had another revelation. In this vision God told Power that there would be three waves across Africa, corresponding to the three parts of 2 Chr 7.14. The first part of the verse requires people to humble themselves and seek God's face through prayer, and the second demands that people turn from their evil ways. The last part is God's response—that is, that when the people have prayed and repented, they will receive divine forgiveness and God will heal the land.[462]

The vision lasted three and a half hours, and was very detailed regarding the first two waves. God told Power that the Global Day of Prayer corresponded to the first wave. The movement was the manifestation of a transformative "wave of prayer." Now it was time to

---

[459] "History: His Call, His Story, His Glory," http://www.globaldayofprayer.com/index.php/about-us/history/. Accessed on 22 September 2013.
[460] Power and Verooten, *Not by Might, Nor by Power,* 90.
[461] Ibid., 100.
[462] "Graham Power's Vision of the Three Waves," http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jyyhKHenjI. See also Power and Verooten, *Not by Might, Nor by Power,* 107-109.

advance to the second wave: people had to change their way of living for the better. God outlined instructions for Power to proceed on this front, and the result was the "Unashamedly Ethical" campaign. The "Unashamedly Ethical" initiative urges people to sign forms in which they publically commit to "good values, ethics and clean living." The objective is to root out corruption from every sphere of life. The various categories include individual, youth, sportsperson, health professional, business, government, church, and nonprofit. Those who have signed the pledge are able to access the names of other signatories through the Unashamedly Ethical website. An ombudsman investigates claims of unethical behavior and has the power to reprimand or remove someone from the website list.[463]

In the three-wave revelation, God did not give many specifics regarding the last wave, the one in which God responds to the first two waves by fulfilling the divine promise to forgive the people and heal their land. According to Power, the third wave will be a "tsunami of revival, positive living, transformation, and an awesomely positive experience of living based on God's principles."[464] In contrast to the Puritans' conception of sacred history, Power's view of the future did not emphasize eschatology. There is no direct tie between the third wave and the end of the world. Although there is no specified timeline for the arrival of the third wave, there is also no indication that its appearance heralds a definitive end to existence as we know it.[465]

---

[463] Power and Verooten, *Not by Might, Nor by Power*, 110-111. See also "Unashamedly Ethical," http://www.unashamedlyethical.com/home/about.asp.
[464] Power and Verooten, *Not by Might, Nor by Power*, 108.
[465] Power and Verooten, *Not by Might, Nor by Power*, 119. In anticipation of the next great awakening, Power and his followers wear armbands imprinted with 2 Chr 7.14. "Graham Power's Vision of the Three Waves," http://www.youtube.com/watch? v=0jyyhKHenjI.

On May 31, 2009 the movement met its goal: citizens from every country on earth participated in the Global Day of Prayer.[466] Today the Global Day of Prayer continues to be observed every Pentecost Sunday. The actual "global prayer" is one composed by the organization and its reading is its sole requirement for those who participate in the Global Day of Prayer event:

A Prayer for the World

Almighty God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
We gather with believers all over the world,
to glorify You as Creator of heaven and earth.
You alone are holy and righteous.
We submit to Your authority.
We praise and adore You alone.

Father, we honour You
Lord Jesus Christ, we honour You
Holy Spirit, we honour You

Our Father in heaven,
Thank You for loving the world so much
that You gave Your only Son, Jesus Christ,
to die on the cross for our sins
so that we could be reconciled to You.
Fill us with your love as we faithfully intercede for the lost,
the hopeless, the helpless and the world.

Thank You Father, for adopting us into Your family.

Lord Jesus Christ,
You died on the cross and
redeemed us to the Father by Your blood.
You are Head of the Church
and Lord of all heaven and earth.
Let Your kingdom be established in every nation of the world
bring transformation among peoples of all tribes and languages
so that righteousness and justice will prevail.

[466] "History: His Call, His Story, His Glory," http://www.globaldayofprayer.com/index.php/about-us/history/. Accessed on 22 September 2013.

May Your Name be great, from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Jesus Christ, You are Lord of all.

Father of mercy and grace,
We have sinned.
Our world is gripped by the power of sin.
Our hearts are grieved by injustice, hatred and violence.
We are shamed by oppression, racism and bloodshed in our land.
We mourn all loss of life in murder, war and terrorism.
Our homes are broken and our churches are divided by rebellion and pride.
Our lives are polluted by selfishness, greed, idolatry and sexual sin.

God of mercy, forgive our sins.
Pour out Your grace and heal our land.

Spirit of the living God,
Transform Your Church into the image of Jesus Christ.
Release Your power to bring healing to the sick,
freedom to the oppressed and comfort to those who mourn.
Fill us with compassion
for the homeless and the hungry
for orphans, widows and the elderly.
Give us wisdom and insight for our world's problems
to use the resources of the earth for the well-being of all.

Holy Spirit, guide us and lead us.

Lord Jesus Christ,
You destroyed sin, conquered death and defeated Satan.
Remove the veil of darkness that covers the peoples.
Restrain the evil that promotes violence and death.
Deliver us from demonic oppression.
Break the hold of slavery, tyranny and disease.
Help us to tear down strongholds and ideologies
that resist the knowledge of God.

Almighty God, deliver us from evil.

King of Glory,
Come and finish Your work in our cities, our peoples and our nations.
From all continents and islands we cry:
Lift up your heads, O you gates!
Be lifted up ancient doors
so that the King of glory may come in!

Come fill the earth with the knowledge of Your glory
as the waters cover the sea.

The Spirit and the Bride say:

Amen! Come Lord Jesus![467]

To a great extent, this articulation of Power's vision remains true to its Protestant roots. Power's interpretation of 2 Chr 7.14 did not "spiritualize" Israel. The unit of participation in the Global Day of Prayer remains individual countries. The prayer may be "FOR the world," but geographical boundaries are still germane: "Come and finish Your work in our cities, our peoples and our nations." Political entities retain a role in salvation history. For the Puritans, the cultivation of a nation's righteousness was important preparation for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The global prayer continues to proclaim this belief.

On the other hand, Power's interpretation is an innovation on the Puritans' reception of 2 Chr 7.14: it accepts and encourages the existence of multiple Israels. Accordingly, the Global Day of Prayer sets individual political entities on equal spiritual footing in the unfolding of history. The request to God to "Pour out Your grace and heal our land…" is a universal petition for the healing of individual political states. Since Power's initial vision in 2000, the objective has progressed from the healing of the country of South Africa, to the healing of the states within the region of southern Africa, to all African countries, and finally to every nation across the globe. According to the movement's website, on the Global Day of Prayer "we are all praying WITH the world as we pray FOR the world"[468]—and doing so one country at a time.

[467] http://www.globaldayofprayer.com/index.php/gdop/gdop/. Accessed on 30 October 2013.
[468] "History: His Call, His Story, His Glory," http://www.globaldayofprayer.com/index.php/about-us/history/. Accessed Accessed on 22 September 2013.

Just as *The Prayer of Jabez* reveals something of its time, so, too, does the Global Day of Prayer. Today, with twenty-first-century advancements in communication technology, it is possible to say, along with Disney, that it truly is "a small world." Moreover, Christianity is, by definition, inclusive of Christians, and the "Global" aspect of the Global Day of Prayer is undeniably central to the cause. Yet at the same time the movement acknowledges and preserves national diversity, and this act is also in keeping with current celebrations of difference. In its own way, therefore, the Global Day of Prayer movement defines and reflects the spirit of our age.

An analysis of Wilkinson's *The Prayer of Jabez* and Power's Global Day of Prayer movement in the context of the reception history of Chronicles demonstrates that an understanding of their significance depends on viewing their connection to the biblical text and tracing their exegetical roots. These modern readers of Chronicles interpret their specific verses in order to adapt certain abiding themes of the book. Chronicles' theology of immediate reward and retribution is a key feature in Wilkinson's book. In his description of its operation, Wilkinson democratizes God's beneficiaries and makes the rewards concrete. Power takes Chronicles' blend of the civic and religious as his initiative's platform, and accordingly the Global Day of Prayer combines the particular with the universal. Wilkinson and Power, however, were not the only exegetes to be drawn to their particular Chronicles verses, and a review of past exegesis shows that there is nothing self-evident in these modern interpretations. Viewing the choices of Wilkinson and Power in light of other choices helps us see the stakes in the interpretation of Chronicles, now and in the past.

Conclusion

Why should scholars be interested in the reception history of Chronicles? One could answer by asking another question in turn: Why should scholars be interested in the reception of any biblical book? The usual reply is that an examination of the interpretation history of a book, passage, or verse of scripture gives us insight to the thinking of readers at a particular time and place—so I will begin my answer along those lines.

Chronicles' depiction of God's responsiveness to each individual is one of the hallmarks of the book. The adaptation of this theme by different communities of readers through time tells us how they construed the relationship between the human and the divine. In the ancient period, the debates over Chronicles' Manasseh reveal a seam in the fabric of repentance and salvation in early Judaism—a seam that contemporary reception history scholars appear to have missed. Yet a comparison of the standing of the repentant king among Jews and Christians at this time shows the difference between early Jewish (corporate) and Christian (individual) salvation. It also reveals the tension that possible limits on the rewards of repentance created for the early Rabbis. Their shifting stances towards Chronicles' repentant king indicate the difficulty some of these exegetes had accepting that God's relationship with an individual could conflict with an individual's relationship to collective Israel.

In the late medieval/early modern period, the political implications of the book's theology were important for the growing number of its English readers. For the authors of the Prologue to the Wyclif Bible and the Geneva Bible's commentary, Chronicles taught that unrighteous rulers and clerics did not merit obedience. It was a lesson these authors believed

their fellow citizens should be taught, and to this end they created vernacular scripture. It was a milestone event in the timeline of biblical literacy, revealing a new front in the popular resistance to the English Church and Crown. Chronicles' configuration of the human and divine relationship helped here to reconfigure England's political and clerical landscape. The authors of the eighteenth-century English epitomized Bibles were heir to this development. Their reception of Chronicles also had a civic dimension but with the domesticated aim of cultivating individual citizen virtue.

In the modern era, the reception of Chronicles in *The Prayer of Jabez* turns the table that Chronicles' theology has set and focuses not on what God desires of humans, but on what humans desire from God. In this book, the human side of the relationship with God is ascendant, and Chronicles' claim of immediate divine responsiveness has become a formula for miracles-upon-demand. *The Prayer of Jabez*'s astonishing popularity shows that today there is great interest in equalizing the balance of power, not between monarchs and subjects, but between God and God's subjects. The book holds out the promise of many of the rewards of established religion, but on terms that are individually tailored and encompass material as well as spiritual benefits.

Another modern reception of Chronicles, the Global Day of Prayer movement, reflects a different image. The adaptation of Chronicles by the movement's founder, Graham Power, draws on the book's blend of the civic and religious. Here repentance and national salvation are intimately entwined, but there are many nations in the mix, each with equal standing. Power's interpretation of Chronicles straddles the ancient reception of the early Rabbis and Christians: Salvation is a universal national event. The wide appeal of this reception, with its emphasis on

diversity as well as inclusiveness, particularism as well as universalism, also tells us something about the vast number of people who participate in the annual Global Day of Prayer.

Julius Wellhausen's reception of Chronicles was different than that of the others because he was self-consciously at cross-purposes with the Chronicler. In Wellhausen's reception, the book's theology and outlook became reasons for disqualifying it as part of the received tradition of ancient Israel. Chronicles' consistency enabled his project, for it gave cover to Wellhausen as he ignored or misrepresented irritants in the text that contradicted his thesis. An analysis of these irritants shows that Chronicles retained "countermemories," indicating that it is as connected to the stream of tradition as any other biblical book.

The aim of this dissertation has been in keeping with the overall aim of reception history. It fills gaps in reception scholarship by investigating the influence of Chronicles within eighteenth-century English epitomes, *The Prayer of Jabez*, and the Global Day of Prayer. It corrects inadequate representations in modern scholarship of the reception of Chronicles' King Manasseh by the early Rabbis. It also offers a correction to a Wellhausian bias in current exegesis of Chronicles.

This dissertation also invites reflection on some of the dominant assumptions in the field of biblical hermeneutics today. Specifically, there are two that merit discussion here: that ancient readers read synchronically, meaning that chronology played no role in their interpretations; and that the early Rabbis atomized scripture—that is, they focused on words or phrases to the exclusion of everything else.[469] The Bavli's assertion that "There is no earlier or later in the

[469] James Kugel is a good representative of both positions. In *Traditions of the Bible*, he writes, "[A]ll of Scripture, in their [the rabbis'] view must speak with one voice. By the same logic, any biblical text might illuminate any other." Elsewhere in the same work, he states, "Ancient biblical interpretation is an interpretation of verses, not stories." James L. Kugel, *Traditions of*

Torah" is often cited as proof for this stance.[470] Taken together, these two suppositions depict early rabbinic interpretation as ahistorical and uninterested in biblical narrative. On the basis of this view, Daniel Boyarin can claim that the words of the Bible functioned as nothing more for the Rabbis than "a repertoire of semiotic elements that can be recombined into new discourse."[471]

The study of Chronicles' reception raises the question of whether in some instances the whole story comes into play. The early Rabbis (and Christians) were interested in the narratives of Manasseh and Jabez. In the case of Manasseh, these exegetes strove to determine whether the ruler was irredeemable despite his repentance, a question that can only be raised by comparing his story in Chronicles to his story in Kings. Though these interpreters invoked various verses as they debated Manasseh's fate, the accounts of the king in their totality were at issue. The same holds true for their interpretation of Jabez and his prayer. His tale and its implications as a whole spurred its retelling by early Jewish and Christian commentators.

As for the contention that the Rabbis did not engage in a diachronic reading of scripture, paradoxically both the Bavli and Boyarin provide evidence to the contrary. Tractate Baba Batra

---

the Bible: A Guide to the Bible As It Was at the Start of the Common Era (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 17, 24.

By the same token, Alexander Samely states: "It has been accepted for some time that the rabbis applied their Bible, that they atomized it…." Alexander Samely, *Rabbinic Interpretation of Scripture in the Mishnah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 393. David Stern defines atomization as "interpreting each phrase as an independent hermeneutical item." David Stern, *Midrash and Theory: Ancient Jewish Exegesis and Contemporary Literary Studies* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1996), 20.

Yoseph Yerushalmi also claims the Rabbis ignored the "ordinary barriers of time" as "all ages [were] placed in an ever-fluid dialogue with one another." Yoseph Haim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 17.

[470] b. Pesachim 6b. For example, see Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 23.

[471] Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1990), 28.

acknowledges "earlier" and "later" when it comes to the composition of the books of scripture. It identifies Ezra and Nehemiah as Chronicles' author, thereby dating its origin later than that of Gen-Kgs, in perfect accord with modern historical critics of the Bible.[472] This "lateness" arguably affected its degree of authority from the outset, as the book appears in the category of the Writings, two removes from the Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy) and one remove from the Prophetic works (which include Samuel and Kings). Boyarin acknowledges that the Rabbis' historical ranking of the books was germane to their interpretation, as he contends that the Rabbis considered the "later books" to be "readings of the Torah."[473]

If the ordering of the books represented a spectrum of sanctity, with the Pentateuch at the pinnacle, then Chronicles' position implies it had lesser status than Gen-Kgs. Chronicles' title in the Septuagint ("Things Left Out"), bestowed by Jews sometime in the first few centuries of the Common Era (if not before), presumes the primacy of Gen-Kgs ontologically. This is a logical move if "earlier" confers more authority. It would also account for Ben Sira's and Philo's preference for the Deuteronomistic History over Chronicles in recounting details of Israel's monarchic past.[474] When the Septuagint became the Bible of the Christians, they also received its assessment of Chronicles. For both ancient Jews and Christians, the result would then be the same: Chronicles' revision of sacred history usually had secondary standing among its readers in the ancient period because it was perceived to have actually come second—in time.

In light of this discussion, it would seem that the study of Chronicles' reception history requires a diachronic perspective and approach. The determination that Chronicles' composition

---

[472] *b. B.Bat.* 14b-15a.
[473] Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, 18.
[474] Sir 44.1-49.7. Philo relies on 1 Sam 1.14, 1.28, 2.5, 9.9, 10.22; 1 Kgs 17.10, 17.18. He names "the book of Kings" as the source for the latter two references in "On the Unchangeableness of God," XXIX. He draws on Chronicles once (1 Chr 7.14) for its genealogical information in "The Preliminary Studies," VIII.

post-dates Gen-Kgs is important because it reveals that Chronicles is a revision of earlier texts and, as such, offers alternatives to those texts, both in terms of events and theology. Chronicles' revisions drive the book's afterlife among readers who either prefer or reject them, judgments that potentially bring historical considerations into play. Whenever the date of its composition (accurately determined or not) contributed to its rejection, then Chronicles' inception bears on its reception.

Whether Chronicles represents a unique case is pertinent for the study of reception history. There may be other books (such as Esther) for which historical origins may have been a factor in their reception. In seeking the answer, scholars of reception history would do well to add historical critical tools to their analytic approach.

In closing, it is worth considering a final question. The reception history of Chronicles shows that it failed to replace Genesis-Kings as authoritative scripture, but can we say why? Perhaps the retention of Chronicles as scripture provides a clue. There is one dominant perspective in Chronicles, whereas the books of Genesis through Kings are notably pluralistic. For the canonizers of Israel's sacred history, variance was important. For this reason Chronicles could not be permitted to supplant Genesis-Kings, but it is also a reason for the book to be included alongside. The canonizers, we may speculate, came to a conclusion about Chronicles opposite to that of Julius Wellhausen. Chronicles' revision of history, sounding a note so complete in and of itself, was a welcome addition to the polyphony of scripture. That is why Chronicles was and remains a Bible in the canon.

Appendix

A Historical Survey of Chronicles' Reception

Throughout the ages, Chronicles' distinctive history and outlook have provided its readers with a wide variety of alternatives to the accounts in Genesis-Kings. Sometimes interpreters turn to Chronicles because its themes or stories are more relevant to present circumstances. Sometimes Chronicles adds important information or provides a more useful depiction of particular people. Or the opposite is the case: Chronicles is singled out to demonstrate that other books are more pertinent or interesting. In all instances, the elements that set Chronicles apart within the canon are potential loci of attraction for interpreters.

What follows is a brief overview of Chronicles' reception from the ancient period to the present. It opens with a presentation of Chronicles' titles and the book's placement in the canon lists before turning to specific exegetes. To summarize in the broadest terms, interpretation of Chronicles within the nascent Jewish and Christian communities of the ancient period were foundational for later exegetes. By and large, expounders of scripture in the Middle Ages were devoted to passing on the early patristic and rabbinic understandings of the text. With the Reformation, readers of Chronicles found grounds for challenging authority within the realms of both politics and religion. In the modern era Chronicles' reception has expanded to include academic biblical criticism, while adaptations of the book within the religious sphere continue apace.

Chronicles' Titles

Chronicles was originally one book. In the Septuagint (LXX) it appears as two books and subsequent copies and translations based on the LXX retained this format. Hebrew editions adopted the division in the early fifteenth century.[475]

Chronicles was also anonymously authored and initially without a title.[476] The name given to Chronicles by the early rabbis is *Dibrê hayyamim* ("The words/events of the days"). The Mishnah refers to Chronicles by this title in its list of the books to be read to the High Priest through the evening at the start of the Day of Atonement if he is not himself well-versed in Scripture.[477] Other early rabbinic texts also refer to Chronicles by this name.[478] When Jerome (347-420 CE) notes Chronicles' Hebrew title in his preface to the books of Samuel and Kings, one assumes he is following Jewish precedent.[479]

The rabbis may have taken the name from preexisting biblical titles.[480] For example, in Kings there are references to *sēper dibrê hayyamim lemalkê yiśrā'ēl* and *sēper dibrê hayyamim lemalkê yehŭdâ* ("The book of the words/events of the days of the kings of Israel" and "The book of the words/events of the days of the kings of Judah").[481] Although we have no extant texts by

[475] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 2.
[476] Kim Strübind cites the LXX title for Chronicles ("Things Left Out") as evidence that the book originally lacked a title. Kim Strübind, *Tradition als Interpretation in der Chronik: König Josaphat als Paradigma chronistischer Hermeneutik und Theologie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991), 10.
[477] *m. Yoma* 1:6. The other books were Job and Ezra. One rabbi (Zechariah ben Kubetal) claimed also to have read Daniel to the High Priest at this time.
[478] The other rabbinic texts include *b. Meg.*13a; *b. Qidd.* 30a; *b. B. Bat.* 14b-15a; *Midr. Exod* 38.5; *Midr. Lev* 1.3; and *Midr. Ruth* 2.1.
[479] Jerome, "Praefationes," *Biblia sacra vvlgatae editionis*, xxiv.
[480] Gary N. Knoppers and Paul B. Harvey Jr., "Omitted and Remaining Matters: On the Names Given to the Book of Chronicles in Antiquity," *JBL* 121 (2002), 228.
[481] Citations for *sēper dibrê hayyamim lemalkê yiśrā'ēl* include: 1 Kgs 14.19; 15.31; 16.5, 14, 20, 27; 22.39; 2 Kgs 1.18; 10.34; 13.8, 12; 14.15, 28; 15.11, 15, 21, 31. Citations for *sēper dibrê*

these names (and therefore no way of knowing whether they ever in fact existed), the titles indicate that they represent some sort of historical account of the kings of Israel and Judah.

However, the words *dibrê hayyamim* only occur in the books of Esther and Nehemiah. In Esther, after Mordecai foils the plot to kill the king and the conspirators are punished, the incident is inscribed in *sēper dibrê hayyamim* (the book of the words/events of the days) (Esth 2.23). Later in the story when the king cannot sleep, he has the written account of the affair read to him from *sēper hazzikrōnôt dibrê hayyamim* ("The book of the remembrances, the events/words of the days") (Esth 6.1). If this *sēper* is one and the same as the earlier *sēper* —a reasonable assumption—then the addition of *hazzikrōnôt* to *dibrê hayyamim* indicates that "The book of the words/events of the days" is a collection of memories.

In Nehemiah, the book is a repository of information. Its mention occurs in the context of listing the names of the priests and Levites who returned from exile with Zerubbabel. The text states that the Levites were recorded in the *sēper dibrê hayyamim* until the days of Johanan son of Eliashib (Neh 12.23).

These descriptions of *sēper dibrê hayyamim* in Esther and Nehemiah together capture the two most salient features of Chronicles: lists of people (with special attention to the Levites) and historical narrative. If one brings together all the variants of *sēper dibrê hayyamim* (*sēper hazzikrōnôt dibrê hayyamim* and *sēper dibrê hayyamim lemalkê yiśrā'ēl/yehŭdâ*), the early rabbis' choice of this title for Chronicles seems apt.

The book's Greek appellation in the LXX is *Paraleipomenōn*, which generally translates

---

hayyamim lemalkê yehŭdâ include: 1 Kgs 14.29; 15.7, 23; 22.46; 2 Kgs 8.23; 12.20; 14.18; 15.6, 36; 16.19; 20.20; 21.17, 25; 23.28; 24.5.

as "Things left out" or "Things omitted."[482] No one knows for sure when Septuagint Chronicles (LXX Chr) acquired its name. The translation occurred sometime before the middle of the second century BCE,[483] but our earliest copies of the LXX, complete with book titles, do not appear until the third and fourth century CE.

Chronicles' Greek name provides valuable information regarding the book's reception. For some scholars, the LXX's title indicates the book's low standing among its ancient readers and may reflect the disdain of the original translators themselves.[484] In this view, "Things left

[482] Gary Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9* (AB 12; New York: Doubleday, 2003), 49; Isaac Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature: A Historical Journey* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 87.

[483] The *terminus ad quem* is Eupolemus's dependence on LXX Chr for his history of the kings of Judah (c. 150 BCE). Roger Good, *The Septuagint's Translation of the Hebrew Verbal System in Chronicles* (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 27; Ralph S. Klein, *1 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 27; Gary Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 106; and Leslie Allen, *Greek Chronicles: The Relation of the Septuagint of I and II Chronicles to the Massoretic Text* (VTSup 168; Leiden: Brill, 1974), 23.

For dating the Pentateuch's translation into Greek sometime around mid-to late third century BCE, see *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 3:595. Roger Good dates the translation to around 280 BCE. Roger Good, *The Septuagint's Translation of the Hebrew Verbal System in Chronicles*, 27. Nina Collins asserts the veracity of the *Letter of Aristeas* and dates the LXX to 281 BCE. Nina L. Collins, *The Library in Alexandria and the Bible in Greek* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 56. Paul Larmarche puts the date at around 285 BCE. Paul Larmarche, "The Septuagint: Bible of the Earliest Christians," in *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity* (ed. and trans. Paul M. Blowers; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 15-33.

[484] Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 50. See also Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles*, 87-88. Kalimi offers the date of Chronicles' translation into Greek as further evidence of the book's low status among ancient readers. He claims that there was a significant time-lag between the date of the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek and the translation of Chronicles, and this lag indicates that Chronicles was not esteemed. As additional evidence, he cites the relatively quick translation of the Deuteronomistic History (DH). In my opinion, Kalimi's broad estimate for the translation of the DH (mid-third to early second century BCE)—and his decision to privilege the early side of that range—is colored by his desire to heighten the contrast between his admiration for the book and what he purports to be the lack thereof by others. Were we to take an early second-century BCE date for Kings' translation, then the timing for LXX Chr seems about right—if one were to assume the translations occurred in a certain order. The 150 BCE date for LXX Chr takes for granted that it followed Kings, but there may not have been such a rigid progression. The translation of Chronicles could just as well have overlapped Kings, in which

out" reduces Chronicles to a strictly supplemental work: what Kings (the name in the Septuagint for Samuel/Kings combined) omits, Chronicles supplies.[485] By implication, the book then has no intrinsic value but is instead a perpetual footstool to the throne of Kings. Others further argue that the title indicates lack of appreciation for Chronicles even as an auxiliary text. By lumping the book's non-parallel additions into one catch-all category, the title fails to give "the things omitted" their proper due.[486]

There is, however, another way to view the matter. It is true that the title "Things left out/omitted" not only admits knowledge of other accounts of Israel's history, it defers to them. It indicates that, from the earliest point of reception, the other biblical books have pride of place and occupy the "default" position. The name plainly states that Chronicles supplies information that they lack. The book's value, therefore, is dependent on a comparative reading, and to this extent Chronicles is indeed an ancillary book. However, in this capacity the book is at times a potentially important counterweight.

From this perspective, LXX Chr's title may indicate the high value placed on its inclusion in the canon. 1 Esdras (Esdras A in the LXX) 8.7 states:

> ὁ γὰρ Ἔσδρας πολλὴν ἐπιστήμην περιεῖχεν εἰς τὸ μηδὲν παραλιπεῖν τῶν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου Κυρίου καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐντολῶν διδάξαι πάντα τὸν Ἰσραὴλ δικαιώματα καὶ κρίματα.

---

case LXX Chr could be dated even earlier. Either way, Kalimi's argument on this point does not hold up.

[485] H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (NCBC; Grand Rapids/London: Eerdmans/Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1982), 4. See also Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 50.

[486] According to Knoppers, those who follow the translators' lead in viewing Chronicles as a compilation of addenda include Theodoret of Cyrus, Augustine, and the Peshitta. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 50-51. See also Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles*, 87-88.

> For Ezra possessed great knowledge, so that he omitted nothing from the law of the Lord or the commandments, but taught all Israel the ordinances and judgments.
> 1 Esd 8.7

Aside from the name of Chronicles, this is only one of three verses in which the verb *paraleipō* occurs in the LXX and its only appearance in connection with the Torah.[487] Given the context of this verb's use in 1 Esdras, the title *Paraleipomenōn* points to Chronicles' essential, rather than peripheral, status. Only with Chronicles is the Torah complete.

The English title "Chronicles" owes its origin to Jerome and Martin Luther. Jerome described the book as "a chronicle of all divine history (*Chronicon totius divinae historiae*)."[488] However, Jerome (and others) continued to refer to the book as *Paraleipomenōn*. Chronicles retained this name in the Latin translation of the Bible, the Vulgate, and in the first English Bibles (e.g., the fourteenth-century Wyclif Bible). When Luther named the historical books in his 1524 translation, he was inspired by Jerome to abandon the Greek title in favor of "Die Chronika." Miles Coverdale, following Luther, called the book "Chronicles" in his 1525 English translation.[489] This is now its title in all translations of the Bible, including the Jewish Publication Society's English translation of the Tanakh.[490]

Chronicles' Placement in Canon Lists

In the various lists of biblical books during the formation of the canon, Chronicles is seldom in the most logical position. The doublet that ends Chronicles and begins Ezra (2 Chr

[487] The others verses are 3 Mac 1.19 and 1.20. In these cases the verb refers to brides who "left to one side" bridal chambers and mothers and nurses who "left to one side" newborns in their haste and fervor to join those attempting to avert the desecration of the Temple.
[488] Jerome, "Hieronymi Prologus Galeatus," *Biblia sacra vvlgatae editionis,* viii.
[489] Gary N. Knoppers and Paul B. Harvey Jr., "Omitted and Remaining Matters: On the Names Given to the Book of Chronicles in Antiquity," *JBL* 121 (2002): 241-42.
[490] *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh: The Traditional Hebrew Text and the New JPS Translation* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2003), viii.

36.22-23//Ezra 1.1-3a) should dictate that Chronicles precede Ezra. Yet in Jewish canon lists, Chronicles never leads into Ezra/Nehemiah; in the Christian lists, Chronicles follows Kings but may or may not precede Ezra/Nehemiah.

Another challenge is the age of the material evidence. The oldest complete copy of the Hebrew Bible is the eleventh-century CE Leningrad Codex. The earliest Greek Bibles come from the third and fourth century CE and are all of Christian origin—they may or may not reflect the arrangement of books in their Hebrew originals—and the canon lists are also mostly fourth century CE.

According to Jewish tradition and various medieval manuscripts, Chronicles comes at the beginning or end of the Writings—which means the prophetic books separate it from the Pentateuch—and Ezra/Nehemiah is always second-to-last or last, depending on Chronicles' position.[491] The grouping together of these three works may reflect their perceived joint authorship. The beraita that gives us the order of the books also records that Ezra commenced Chronicles and Nehemiah finished it, whereas the books of Samuel come from the hand of Samuel and the books of Kings from the hand of Jeremiah (*b. B. Bat.* 15a). For this reason Samuel and Kings appear, not with Chronicles in the Writings, but in the prophetic corpus. In any case, the order in the Hebrew Bible links Chronicles to Ezra/Nehemiah rather than to Samuel/Kings.

In the finalized form of the Jewish canon, Chronicles is the last book and follows Ezra/Nehemiah. LXX Chr, by contrast, is not always tethered to 1-2 Esdras but *is* always linked to Kings. In Codex Sinaticus and Codex Vaticanus, Chronicles comes after Kings and before 1-2

[491] In *b. B. Bat.* 14b and the majority of medieval manuscripts, Chronicles comes at the end of the Writings. Codices in which Chronicles comes at the beginning of the Writings include the Aleppo codex (10th century), the Leningrad codex (1009 C.E.), and the Adat Devorim codex (1207 C.E). For a summary of canon lists for the Jewish Bible, see *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 581.

Esdras; in Codex Alexandrinus, it comes after Kings and before Isaiah. (1-2 Esdras is much lower in the order.) The Old Testament lists from the early Eastern and Western churches show the same trend. Chronicles may or may not precede 1-2 Esdras, but it will almost always follow on Kings.[492] The LXX's consistent placement of Chronicles after Kings works hand in hand with its Greek title, "Things Omitted." The book's name and location in the canon—always following on the books that together comprise the greater narrative of Israel's history—indicate that the "default option" to which Chronicles provides an alternative was perceived to be the Genesis/Kings complex.

When the LXX is subsumed into the Christian canon, all the books of the Jewish Bible become supplementary to the New Testament, and Chronicles' status is even more attenuated. In the Christian Bible, Chronicles is three steps removed from the primary account, Samuel/Kings having become secondary to the post-Christ testimonies. The final book in the Christian canon is The Revelation to John. In the broad scheme of Christian salvation history, Chronicles is part of a prelude to a future apocalypse. As the final book of the Jewish canon, however, Chronicles concludes with the edict of Cyrus, and thus anchors the entire epic of creation and of Israel in history.

Select Interpretations in the Ancient Period (200 BCE – 800 CE)

Beginning with Jewish reception in the ancient period, Chronicles' alternative version of sacred history appealed to the historian Josephus (37-100 CE) to the extent that it furthered his

[492] The Old Testament lists in which Chronicles does not precede Esdras include those of Melito, Augustine, the Council of Carthage, and Alexandrinus. *The Canon Debate* (eds. Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 585-88.

Two lists from Epiphanius place Chronicles *before* Kings, and one list, after. In Jerome's preface to the books of Samuel and Kings, he lists Chronicles third to last, before Ezra/Nehemiah and Esther. In *Epistle* 53.8, Jerome lists Chronicles second to last, after Esther and before Ezra/Nehemiah. McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 585-88.

aim in his own retelling of the past. In *Judean Antiquities* (written 93/94 CE) he presented a depiction of Jewish history that he hopes will appeal to a Graeco-Roman audience.[493] To that end, he used Chronicles to supplement Kings' account of the Judean monarchs and occasionally preferred Chronicles over Kings when it suited his purpose. [494]

In this work he also drew on Chronicles to add details that put David in a good light. For instance, in his account of David's purchase of the threshing floor, Josephus largely followed Samuel 24. The owner of the threshing floor is Araunah (2 Sam 24.18), not Ornan (1 Chr 21.18), and David pays him fifty shekels (2 Sam 24.24), not six hundred (1 Chr 21.25). However, Josephus imported into the story Chronicles' identification of the site as the place of Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac. Josephus further added that God had already told David through a prophet that this would be the site of the Temple.[495] Chronicles provides a minor augment to the Samuel account, but its role is significant. Chronicles associates David with Abraham, a figure Josephus claims is celebrated among the Greeks,[496] and provides plausible grounds for Josephus' expansion beyond the biblical account.

In the same vein, Josephus followed Chronicles in designating David as Jesse's seventh son, and the names for David's brothers reflected their listing in Chronicles (only three are

---

[493] Josephus, *Judaean Antiquities,* Preface. See also Gregory E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 298-310, 393.

[494] For example, Josephus follows Chronicles instead of Kings in relating Jehoram's reign (*Judaean Antiquities* 5:95-104). Christopher Begg argues that Josephus' preference reflects "concern with retaining the interest and sympathy of Gentile readers" while also offering instructive advice to Jewish readers. C. Begg, *Josephus' Story of the Later Monarchy (AJ 9,1-10,185)* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 145; Leuven: Leuven University Press and Peeters, 2000), 127.

Josephus also adopts Chronicles' account of King Manasseh (*Judaean Antiquities* 10:37-46). I discuss the importance of this particular instance of reception in chapter two.

[495] Josephus, *Judaean Antiquities*, 7:333.

[496] Josephus, *Judaean Antiquities*, 1:158-60.

named in Samuel) (1 Sam 16.6-11; 1 Chr 2.13-15).[497]

The Dura-Europos Synagogue (completed 244-245 CE) also provides evidence that David's seventh-son status and Chronicles' identification of Mount Moriah with the Temple Mount were of great significance among Jews in the ancient period. The synagogue displays a fresco of Samuel anointing David as the seventh son. In another wall painting, the binding of Isaac takes place in the precincts of the Temple. The visual link reflects Chronicles.

The early Rabbis considered Chronicles to be a text brimming with opportunities for exegesis. In tractate Pesaḥim of the Bavli, Mar Zutra exclaims, "Between Azel [1 Chr 8.38] and Azel [9.44] they were laden with four hundred camels of exegetical interpretations!"[498] The genealogies were especially inviting. Discrepancies between the bloodlines in Chronicles and those found elsewhere in the canon raised questions about Chronicles' account. The Rabbis harmonized the differences, which in turn led them to infer important links. For example, in *b. Soṭah* the Rabbis maintain that the name Azubah (Caleb's wife in 1 Chr 2.18) is another name for Moses's sister Miriam.[499] Elsewhere they argue that Mered (Pharaoh's daughter's husband) in 1 Chr 4.17 is another name for Caleb.[500] The upshot is that, according to the Rabbis, Caleb married both Pharaoh's daughter and Moses' sister Miriam. These connections are now staples of Jewish tradition.[501]

In addition, several midrashim from this period explore the ramifications of identifying Mount Moriah with the Temple Mount (2 Chr 3.1). According to both Samuel and Chronicles, God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem as punishment for David conducting the census (2 Sam

[497] Josephus, *Judaean Antiquities*, 6:161-63.
[498] *b. Pesaḥ.* 62b.
[499] *Exod Rab*. 1.7 and *b. Soṭah* 11b-12a.
[500] *b. Meg.* 13a, *b. Sanh.* 19b, and *Tg. Chr*. 4.18.
[501] Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1954), 469, 480, 641, 861 n. 25.

23.16; 1 Chr 21.15). The *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael* (c. fourth century CE) says that God stayed the hand of the angel as it was about to strike because God saw Isaac's blood.[502] In Jewish and Christian tradition to this day, the two mountains are one and the same.

Chronicles' David figures prominently in early rabbinic texts, and is often conjoined to the David of Samuel/Kings. To provide but one example from the Talmud, tractate Sanhedrin relates that when Solomon attempted to bring the ark into the Temple, the gates of the Temple would not open. Solomon uttered twenty-four prayers and three verses from Psalms, but still the gates remained closed. Only when he recited a line from Chronicles ("O Lord God, do not turn away the face of your anointed: remember the good deeds of David your servant" 2 Chr 6.42) did they open. At that moment all the world knew that God has forgiven David for the sin he committed in taking Bathsheba.[503]

The reception of Chronicles' David in the targumim reveals changes within the Jewish community over the span of the early centuries. *Targum Samuel* (compiled between the first and third century[504]) interprets the description of David's warriors in 2 Sam 23.8 as a reference to David instead: He is a handsome and mighty warrior and a wise judge. *Targum Samuel* represents this verse as a song, and the first letters of three of its lines comprise an acrostic for the word "messiah." *Targum Chronicles* (composed around the eighth century[505]) reproduces *Targum Samuel*'s exposition of this verse, but with deviations. It expands David's accomplishments to include being the most insightful expounder of Torah in the academy and a master singer. However, in doing so it also breaks up the acrostic. One scholar has speculated

[502] *Mekilta de Rabbi Ishmael*, Pisha 7.
[503] *b. Sanh.*107b. See also *b. Mo'ed Qat.*9a and *b. Šabb.* 30a.
[504] J. Stanley McIvor, *The Targum of Chronicles: Translated, with Introduction, Appartatus, and Notes* (The Aramaic Bible, vol. 19; Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 18.
[505] McIvor, *The Targum of Chronicles*,17-18.

that *Targum Chronicles* intentionally downplays the messianism of *Targum Samuel* and emphasizes the depiction of David as Chief Rabbi as a reflection of the values of later Jewish thought.[506]

In the early Church, the reception of Chronicles was not dominated by any one exegete, nor was there any particular passage that overshadowed the rest. Rather, a wide variety of Christian interpreters drew on Chronicles as it suited the occasion, citing verses that, in one way or another, reflected Chronicles' distinctive theology and history.

Chronicles' insistence that ultimately God alone rules the earth is the basis for one of the most important and abiding receptions of Chronicles. In late manuscripts of the Gospel according to Matthew, the Lord's Prayer has this concluding doxology: "For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever" (Matt 6.13). Many scholars believe it is derived from David's blessing of God in Chronicles: "Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord…" (1 Chr 29.11).[507]

In this same Gospel, Chronicles' recapitulation of world history through its genealogies also became an object of reception. Matthew begins his Gospel with Genesis (Matt 1.1),[508] moves on to incorporate names from Chronicles' genealogy (Matt 1.2-11; cf. 1 Chr 1.28, 34; 2.1-15; 3.5-17), and then extends the line to Jesus (Matt 1.12-16). Matthew epitomizes Chronicles' own epitome to indicate that his account represents an updated recapitulation, one that

---

[506] Eveline Van Staalduine-Sulman, *The Targum of Samuel* (Studies in the Aramaic Translation of Scripture, vol. 1; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 684-85.

[507] *The HarperCollins Study Bible* states that 2 Chr 29.11 is indisputably the source for the Lord's Prayer doxology. *The HarperCollins Study Bible* (ed. Harold W. Attridge; San Francisco: HarperOne, 1989), 597. See also Dennis C. Duling, "The Gospel of Matthew," in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament* (ed. David E. Aune; Blackwell Companions to Religion; Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 299-300.

[508] The only other occurrences of "biblos geneseos" are LXX Gen 2.4 and 5.1.

encompasses the advent of Christ.

Among Christian interpreters, Chronicles played a prominent role in the development of Christian views regarding Solomon as a forerunner of Christ. For Theoderet of Cyrus (c. 393-457 CE), David's report that his son, the man of peace who builds God's temple, will also be God's son (1 Chr 22.9-10) means that Solomon is not that man. Solomon did not live long enough nor did his kingdom survive. David is speaking of Jesus, the true man of peace.[509] According to Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 263-339 CE), Solomon himself discerned at the time that David was foretelling the coming of Christ.[510] The interpretation of these verses in Chronicles to establish that Christ is the real firstborn of David proves to be an enduring practice.

Chronicles' distinctive theology spurred reception by the seminal Christian exegete Jerome (c. 347-420 CE). In Second Chronicles, the otherwise unknown prophet Azariah proclaims to King Asa, "The Lord is with you, while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you" (2 Chr 15.2). Jerome cited this verse to warn the baptized to be on guard: the Holy Spirit will protect them if they refrain from sinning, but God will destroy them if they fail.[511] Jerome's interpretation emphasized God's immediate reward or retribution for one's deeds.

Augustine (354-430 CE), on the other hand, derived a different teaching from Chronicles' *pro tem* prophets, viewing the spontaneous exclamations of faith to be indicative of a reciprocal relationship between God and humans. When David is on the run from Saul, the warrior Amasai comes to him and, seized (literally, "clothed") by the spirit of God, makes an ardent declaration of loyalty:

---

[509] Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (PG 81:121).
[510] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, 6.12.
[511] Jerome, *Against the Pelagians*, 3.1.

> We are yours, O David:
> and with you, O son of Jesse!
> Peace, peace to you,
> and peace to the one who helps you!
> For your God is the one who helps you. 1 Chr 12.18

For Augustine, this incident showed the operation of free will inspired by the Holy Spirit.[512] However, he went on to caution against any interpretation that implied individuals could earn God's grace.[513]

The nascent Jewish and Christian communities derived enduring instruction from Chronicles' unique rendition of events. Chronicles tells of the charitable treatment of the Judeans by their Israelite captors following an outbreak of hostilities. The inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom clothed, fed, and anointed their prisoners from the south before returning them to their kin in Jericho (2 Chr 28.8-15). The Mishnah, for its part, took Chronicles' description of the encounter to mean that Jews can expect the opposite treatment if they fall into the hands of enemies.[514] On the Christian side, there are those who trace the origins of the parable of the Good Samaritan in the Gospel according to Luke (Luke 10.30-37) to Chronicles' account.[515] In this parable, a man travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho is attacked by robbers and left for dead. After a priest and a Levite go out of their way to avoid helping him, a Samaritan stops to care for him. He pours oil and wine upon his wounds, and bears him to a safe place to heal. In

---

[512] Augustine, "Scriptural Instances Wherein It is Proved that God Has Men's Wills More in His Power Than They Themselves Have," *A Treatise on Rebuke and Grace* (*NPNF*[1] 5:490).
[513] Augustine, "Other Passages of Scripture Which Pelagians Abuse," *On Grace and Free Will* (*NPNF*[1] 5:448). Here 2 Chr 15.2 ("The Lord is with you if you are with Him…") is the object of Augustine's concern.
[514] *m. Naš.*8:1.
[515] Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, "Jesus and Israel's Scriptures," in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research* (eds. Bruce David Chilton and Craig Alan Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 332. See also *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (eds. James D. G. Dunn and John William Rogerson; Grand Rapids, Mich.: 2003), 307; Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature*, 63-64.

Chronicles, the story affirms the familial connection between the northern and southern kingdoms. In Luke, the story has the opposite purpose: to sharpen the separation between the Samaritan, on the one hand, and the Judean priest and Levite, on the other.

The story in Chronicles concerning the fate of the *pro tem* prophet Zechariah also resonated deeply within both groups. During the apostasy of King Joash, the spirit of God seized Zechariah and he prophesized to the people of Judah, "Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has also forsaken you" (2 Chr 24.20). In response, the people stoned him in the confines of the Temple, on the order of the king. Zechariah's dying words were "May the Lord see and avenge!" (2 Chr 24.22).

The early rabbis explored the repercussions of Zechariah's murder. According to the Bavli, after Nebuzaradan (the captain of Nebuchadnezzar's guards) slaughtered myriads during the destruction of Jerusalem, he saw Zechariah's blood bubbling up from the ground. In an attempt to appease the dead prophet, Nebuzaradan slew the members of the Sanhedrin, young men and women, and schoolchildren. Still the blood seethed. Only after Nebuzaradan asked if Zechariah wished him to destroy everyone did the blood settle. Nebuzaradan was then gripped with fear, for he had seen the penalty for killing just one person. He fled and converted to Judaism.[516]

A variant of this story is preserved in the legends of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. According to the Ethiopian tradition, Zechariah's blood bubbled for seventy years and only

[516] *b. Giṭ* 57b. An almost identical account appears in *b. Sanh.* 96b. In that tractate, Nebuzaradan attempted to appease the prophet's blood by slaying scholars, schoolchildren, and young priests. In *y. Ta'an*. 4.5, eighty thousand young priests are killed.

stopped when Titus killed seven relatives of Herod.[517]

The New Testament established Zechariah as one of the most notable Old Testament martyrs for Christians. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke declared that the current generation was to be held accountable for shedding innocent blood (specifically that of the prophets, in Luke) from the first murder—Abel's death—to the last—Zechariah's stoning in the Temple (Matt 23.35; Luke 11.50-51).[518] Centuries later, in 333 CE, the Bordeaux Pilgrim was shown the blood of Zechariah on the Temple Mount.[519]

Overall, it seems that ancient interpreters, Jewish and Christian, were more interested in drawing on discreet passages of Chronicles rather than in devoting themselves to the book as a whole. Only one Christian commentary survives, that of Theodoret of Cyrus, but even he limited his discussion to particular verses and regarded Chronicles as a supplement to Samuel and Kings.[520] On the Jewish side, there is *Targum Chronicles*. In this case the evidence strongly

---

[517] Roger W. Cowley, "The 'Blood of Zechariah'(Mt 23.35) in Ethiopian Exegetical Tradition," *Studia Patristica 18: Papers of the Ninth International Conference on Patristic Studies 1983* 1 (1986): 293 (293-302).

[518] Matt 23.55 confuses Chronicles' Zechariah, who was the son of Jehoiada, with Zechariah the son of Barachiah (Zech 1.1).

In the *Agrapha*, a pre-Islamic collection of sayings ascribed to Jesus in the Muslim tradition, John the Baptist's blood bubbles until Christ ascends to heaven. Michaël Asin et Palacios, *Logia et Agrapha Domini Jesu apud Moslemicos Scriptores, Asceticos praesertim, Usitata* in *Patrologia Orientales*, 19 (1926): 584-85, quoted in John C. L. Gibson, "John the Baptist in Muslim Writings," *The Muslim World* 45 (1955): 341.

[519] Égerie, *Égerie, Journal de Voyage* (ed. P. Maraval; SC 296; Paris: Cerf, 1982), 73.

[520] Theodoret of Cyrus, Preface, *Quaestiones in libros Regnorum et Paralipomenon* (PG 80). Theodoret's commentary (which remains untranslated) does not appear to have a high standing today. In Robert North's prefatory remarks to Chronicles in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, his reference to Theodoret seems dismissive. He refers to Chronicles as "this dull and forgotten book, on which no Church Father ever commented (except Theodoret)…" North, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 404.

There is also a commentary by Procopius of Gaza (465-528 CE), but it appears to reproduce Theodoret's work: Theodoret's commentary on Kings and Chronicles "is actually the text that critically imbues Procopius' commentary on the same topics." Panayiotis Tzamalikos, *The Real*

suggests that medieval Jewish exegetes were unaware of its existence.[521] Many factors play a role in determining which texts survive and thrive, accident being foremost among them. However, the paucity of commentary on Chronicles may indicate that in the early period the most powerful engagement with the book occurred at the level of individual verses as they were brought in to supplement or replace the standard biblical account.

Select Interpretations in the Middle Ages (800-1500 CE)

In the Middle Ages, commentaries on Chronicles primarily served the purpose of passing on the interpretations of the ancients to the knowledgeable Jewish or Christian exegete. At this time, new developments also arose, including a rationalist perspective to the reading of Chronicles and the understanding of the book as a guide for proper governance. Finally, this period also saw an increase in the production of illustrated Bibles and Bibles in the vernacular, representing an important expansion in Chronicles' reception.

Commentaries from Jewish exegetes included an anonymous short work from North Africa, believed to have been written by a student of Rab Sa'adia Gaon (tenth/eleventh century[522]). It focused on Chronicles' genealogies and its attention to Levitical service.[523] Following the exegetical method of Sa'adia, the work aimed to clarify the literal meaning of

---

Cassian Revisited: Monastic Life, Greek Paideia, and Origenism in the Sixth Century (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 85.

[521] McIvor, *The Targum of Chronicles*, 14. See also Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature*, 157-58; Kai Peltonen, *History Debated: The Historical Reliability of Chronicles in Pre-Critical and Critical Research* (2 vols.; Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 64; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 1996), 1:20-21.

[522] Yitzhak Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles: A Translation With Introduction And Supercommentary* (BJS 345; Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 2007), 4.

[523] *Perush 'al Divrei ha-Yamim Meyuḥas le-Eḥad mi-Talmidei* (ed. Raphael Kirchheim; Frankfurt-am-Main: H. L. Bronner, 1874), cited in Kalimi, *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature*, 194-96.

Chronicles in a peshat (in contrast to midrashic) mode of analysis.[524]

Pseudo-Rashi's commentary, dating from the first half of the twelfth century,[525] is a more comprehensive and important work. It received its name because of its attribution to Rashi (1040-1105 CE), one of the most revered Jewish exegetes. (The general consensus among scholars is that Rashi is not the author of this or any other commentary on Chronicles.[526]) The identification of the text with Rashi ensured its influence over later interpreters.

Pseudo-Rashi asserted that Chronicles' purpose was to set forth David's genealogy as well as to highlight the Levitical offices David established.[527] In the course of his exegesis, Pseudo-Rashi wove in traditional rabbinic commentary. In one passage, he cited Genesis Rabbah to explain why Chronicles had to give abbreviated genealogies of the idolatrous nations as it wound its way to its ultimate goal: like the king who sifted earth for his lost pearl, God sifted through generations and did not stop until coming to Abraham.[528] Pseudo-Rashi later invoked this image again in harmonizing the seventh-son status of Chronicles' David (1 Chr 2.15) with his eighth-son status in Samuel (1 Sam 16.10-11). Pseudo Rashi explained the discrepancy by asserting that when Samuel came to David, he found "the pearl" and did not look any further.[529]

For Pseudo-Rashi, Chronicles was an ancillary work written as a paean to David and his

---

[524] Peltonen, *History Debated*, 1:23.
[525] Ibid., 1:24.
[526] Ibid., 1:24.
[527] Avrom Saltman's Appendix A in *Stephen Langton: Commentary on the Book of Chronicles* (ed. and trans. Avrom Saltman; Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1978), 51.
[528] Ibid.
[529] In his commentary on this verse, Pseudo Rashi also notes that David's name has the plene spelling (with a hireq yod as opposed to the usual hireq), and says the yod was added for David's honor. Pseudo-Rashi may have meant that the plene spelling alone constituted the honor. However, it is also possible that he considered the addition of the yod specifically to be a tribute to David. According to the Talmud, God used the letter yod to create the world to come (*b. Menaḥ* 29b). Cited at http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/16522#showrashi=true. Accessed on 10/17/13.

house, and as such, it was an incomplete record. Although Chronicles details Saul's downfall, Pseudo-Rashi observed that it says nothing of David's missteps.[530] The author also charged that Chronicles omits Michal's rebuke of David because it was dishonorable to be upbraided by a woman.[531] Further evidence that Pseudo-Rashi considered the other biblical books to be the primary source of the history of Israel is his assertion that Manasseh was to blame for the exile of the Jews (up to and including Pseudo-Rashi's own day), privileging Kings' account over that of Chronicles.[532] He also claimed that Chronicles left out mention of certain events because they were already preserved elsewhere in the canon.[533]

Although Pseudo-Rashi largely deferred to the early rabbis, he demonstrated a degree of independence from received tradition. The author ascribed Chronicles' authorship to Ezra, who composed it with the approval of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The Talmud says Ezra and Nehemiah wrote the book.[534] Also, in commenting on Boaz's descent from Salma in chapter two of Chronicles, the author questioned the rabbinic identification of Ibzan (Judg 12.8) with Boaz, given that three centuries separate them.[535]

Another influential commentary of this period was that of Rabbi David Kimchi (1160–

---

[530] Pseudo-Rashi's commentary on 1 Chr 10.1, cited at http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/16530#showrashi=true. Accessed on 10/17/13.
[531] Pseudo-Rashi's commentary on 1 Chr 15.29, cited at http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/16535#showrashi=true. Accessed on 10/17/13.
[532] Pseudo-Rashi's commentary on 2 Chr 33.9, cited at http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/16582#showrashi=true. Accessed on 10/17/13. Cf. 2 Kgs 21.10-15.
[533] See for example Pseudo-Rashi's commentary on 2 Chr 32.25, in which he says Chronicles left out Isaiah's prediction to Hezekiah of Judah's downfall because it is recorded in 2 Kgs 20 and Isa 39. Cited at http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/16581#showrashi=true. Accessed on 10/17/13.
[534] *b. B. Bat*. 15a.
[535] Pseudo-Rashi's commentary on 1 Chr 2.11, cited at http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/16522#showrashi=true. Accessed on 10/17/13. Cf. *b. B. Bat*. 91a.

1235). A skilled philologist, Kimchi was renowned for his dedication to peshat commentary, and in the introduction to his Chronicles commentary he specifically rejected the midrashic approach of his predecessors.[536] He was among the first to read the text from a rationalist perspective.

Like the Rabbis and Pseudo-Rashi, Kimchi was interested in resolving discrepancies between Chronicles and the other biblical accounts, and in elucidating individual verses.[537] He was a tradent of tradition, citing Talmud[538] as well as previous commentators.[539] On the matter of David's seventh-son status, Kimchi rejected one (unknown) commentator's (nonsensical) opinion in support of Ibn Ezra's explanation: Jesse's eighth son was from a different mother and therefore not mentioned in Chronicles' list of Jesse's seven sons.[540]

Kimchi did not accept miracles, and accordingly he rejected David's statement in Chronicles that it was God who told him he was unable to build the Temple because he had shed much blood. Rather, Kimchi said, David was speaking aloud his own thoughts and condemning himself for the killing of innocents such as Uriah, or it was really the prophet Nathan who conveyed the news.[541]

Like Pseudo-Rashi, Kimchi's commitment to rationalism and scientific examination sometimes led to conclusions about Chronicles that were at variance with those of the Rabbis. In his exegesis of 1 Chr 2.18-19, he noted that in *b. Soṭah*, the Rabbis argued that the Caleb

---

[536] Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 26.
[537] For an example of the latter, see Kimchi's reason for David's mistake regarding his first attempt to bear the ark to Jerusalem. Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 126.
[538] See for example Kimchi's commentary on 1 Chr 3.3 in Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 56.
[539] See for example his commentary on 1 Chr 1.13 in Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 32.
[540] Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 40.
[541] Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 159-60. Centuries earlier, Jerome also concluded that the blood David spilled was that of Uriah (Jerome, *Against Jovinianus* 1.24 (*NPNF*^{2} 6:364).

mentioned in these verses is the same Caleb of 1 Chr 4.15, despite the fact that the first Caleb is the son of Hezron, the second Caleb is the son of Jephunneh, and both Num 13.6 and Josh 14.6 also identify Caleb as the son of Jephunneh.[542] Kimchi calculated that, if the two Calebs are one and the same, then Hezron would have had to have been one hundred and forty years old when he begat Caleb. Therefore, the two verses had to refer to different individuals.[543]

These medieval Jewish commentators demonstrate that, in an age of rationalist thought, Chronicles' alternative version of sacred history presented a double-edged sword. Its contrast to the other biblical accounts allowed the thoughtful exegete to generate new and meaningful interpretations. Chronicles' discrepancies, however, also provided grounds for questioning rabbinic authority, as the Rabbis' attempts to harmonize Chronicles with the rest of the biblical corpus came under scrutiny.

On the Christian side, during this period the exegetes who wrote commentaries on Chronicles included Pseudo-Jerome (early ninth century CE), Rabanus Maurus (c. 780-856 CE), Peter the Chanter (d. 1197 CE), Ralph Niger (c. 1140- c. beginning of 13th century CE), Stephen Langton (c. 1150-1228 CE), Hugh of St. Cher (c. 1190-1263 CE), and Nicholas of Lyra (1270-1349 CE). Like their predecessors in the ancient period, they read Chronicles for its insights in light of Christian revelation.

Specifically, Chronicles' version of God's dynastic promise to David played an important role in a debate among some of the most important of these commentators—Rabanus Maurus, Stephen Langton, and Nicholas of Lyra. At issue was the identity of David's offspring in the dynastic promise to David, the one whose throne God intended to establish forever and to whom God promised to be a father (2 Sam 7.12-16; 1 Chr 17.11-14).

---

[542] *b. Soṭah* 11b-12a.
[543] Berger, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles*, 41-42.

Rabanus Maurus was an esteemed biblical scholar, advisor to the Carolingian court, and, at the time of his death, archbishop of Mainz. He wrote the first Christian commentary on Chronicles, and it was eventually incorporated into the *Glossa Ordinaria*, a twelfth-century compilation of interpretation of the Bible for the instruction of clergy. In his commentary, he argued that when God said with respect to David's offspring, "I will be a father to him and he will be a son to me" (2 Sam 7.14a//1 Chr 17.13a), God was speaking of Christ and not Solomon. Rabanus claimed that Solomon could not possibly be the recipient of divine paternity because he was an idol-worshipper. He thus privileged Kings' version of Solomon over that of Chronicles, and used it to supplant Chronicles' account.[544]

Centuries later, Langton, the archbishop of Canterbury, also rejected the idea that God had Solomon in mind when making this promise. Langton came to this conclusion based on his literal interpretation of the Chronicles' verse in which God's declares to David, "I will raise up your offspring *after you*" (1 Chr 7.11). Langton reasoned that Solomon could not be the one intended here, as David was still alive when Solomon attained the throne.[545]

Nicholas of Lyra arrived at a different understanding of this passage through his method of exegesis. Nicholas believed that scripture had a "double literal sense" that encompassed both a historical meaning and a spiritual or figurative interpretation—and it was important to show that the two were meaningfully connected.[546] Nicholas claimed that the son referred to in Chr 17.13 is Solomon, who was adopted by God. Later, however, when Paul in his letter to the Hebrews

---

[544] Rabanus, *Commentaria in libros duos Paralipomenon* (PL 109:364-6).
[545] Langton, *Stephen Langton: Commentary on the Book of Chronicles*, 28, 123.
[546] Nicholas was intent on recovering Scripture's literal sense from the overwhelming tendency to read passages allegorically. Lesley Smith, "Nicholas of Lyra and Old Testament Interpretation," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation, II: From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (ed. Magne Saebo; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht , 2008), 49-57.

quotes an almost identical verse ("I will be his Father, and he will be my son," Ps 2.7) (Heb 1.5), the son is Christ. Nicholas argued that God's word was literally fulfilled in Solomon, but imperfectly. Christ, on the other hand, is the perfect fulfillment because he is a son not by grace but by nature.[547] In contrast to Rabanus and Langton, Nicholas granted Chronicles' account of Solomon more authority than that of Kings.

Another noteworthy development within Christian exegesis of Chronicles in the medieval period is the use of the interpretation of the text to instruct and critique rulers, and not just in ecclesiastic matters but also in the realm of secular affairs.[548] Rabanus was among the first to single out Chronicles as a handbook for monarchs, and he presented his commentary on the book as a gift to King Louis of Germany. Rabanus wrote in the incipit that a good Christian king should "have and practice the right form of government which is in accordance with Scripture…"[549]

Langton also found lessons in Chronicles that were applicable to the governance of his day. In his role as archbishop, he was enmeshed in political struggles at the highest level.[550] His commentary on Chronicles often had current events in view, evidenced by his exegesis of the passage that describes King Amaziah's battle against the Edomites. At the outset of his campaign, Amaziah is rebuked by a man of God for supplementing his forces with hired

[547] James G. Kiecker, "Luther's Preface to His *First Lectures on the Psalms* (1513): The Historical Background to Luther's Biblical Hermeneutic," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, 85 (1988): 2.
[548] For a general discussion of the phenomenon, not restricted to Chronicles, see Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, 1952; repr. 1983), 372.
[549] As quoted in Mayke De Jong, "The empire as ecclesia: Hrabanus Maurus and biblical historia for rulers," in *The Uses of the past in the early Middle Ages* (eds. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 204-5.
[550] Langton was part of the faction that crafted the Magna Carta and forced King John (1166-1216) to sign it.

mercenaries from the northern kingdom. Amaziah sends them away and then leads his own people to victory (2 Chr 25). Langton perceived a parallel with the practice of the monarchs of his day who employed particularly ruthless brigands known as the *Coterelli*. In his commentary, Langton urged rulers to consider the Chronicles' account an exemplar for right behavior and eschew the recruitment of bloodthirsty heretics.[551]

With the publication of the first English Bible, the Wyclif Bible (completed c. 1382) and its Prologue (composed in 1397 after John Wyclif's death in 1384), Chronicles was no longer just a handbook for kings—it was also a cautionary tale. The Prologue invokes Chronicles to condemn England's lords and prelates: they do not follow the example of Chronicles' Jehoshaphat, who sent emissaries to teach God's law openly to the general population (2 Chr 17.7-9). Instead, these rulers are idolaters, fostering perverted preaching and persecuting those who attempt to teach true religion. The author of the Prologue urges them to follow the example of (Chronicles') Manasseh and repent, lest the nation be conquered by heathens as punishment for their sins.[552] In 1407, Archbishop Arundel banned any Bible translated without the approval of the Church, and reaction against the Wyclif Bible stultified the rendering of Scriptures into the vernacular for over a hundred years.[553] The Prologue's judgment of religious and secular authority against the yardstick of Chronicles' good kings played a significant role in the turn of

[551] Saltman, *Stephen Langton: Commentary on the Book of Chronicles*, 41-42.
[552] The Wyclif Bible, chapter ten of the Prologue in *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books, in the earliest English versions made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his followers* (eds. Josiah Forshall and Frederic Madden; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1850), 29-34. Cited 30 November 2013. Online: https://archive.org/details/holybiblecontain01wycluoft
[553] Henry Wansbrough, "History and Impact of English Bible Translations," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation, Volume II, From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, 541.

these events.[554]

The medieval illuminated Bibles also provided vivid examples of the powerful effect of Chronicles. In one particular instance, the initial absence of its reception attests to its impact in art of a later period. One of the earliest illustrated Bibles is the ninth-century Vivian Bible (also known as the First Bible of Charles the Bald).[555] Its full-page Psalms frontispiece depicts David playing a lyre naked, save for the loose drape of a shroud. It is a visual link to the account in Samuel in which David answers Michal's rebuke for his lack of dress by coupling his abasement before the female slaves of his slaves with God's selection of him to be king (2 Sam 6.21-2). At the time of the Vivian Bible's composition, David's response to Michal was considered to be an exemplar for royal humility.[556]

In the vast majority of subsequent illuminated Bibles, however, the depiction of David in the book of Samuel dancing before the ark shows the king clothed in a full-length tunic, following Chronicles description (1 Chr 15.27). The grip of Chronicles on illustrations of this passage in Samuel is best demonstrated by a thirteenth-century Bible moralisée known as Codex Vindobonensis 2554. Its commentary for this scene explains that the Christian counterpart to David's dancing is Christ "who celebrated the Holy Church and included the poor and the simple and showed great humility…" (44rB), indicating that the connection between David's nakedness and Christ's humility still stands. But in the accompanying image, David is fully clothed.[557]

---

[554] Chapter three of this dissertation ("Epitomes of an Epitome") contains a more detailed discussion of Chronicles' role in the emergence of vernacular Bibles in England.
[555] A book of poetry and biblical illuminations commissioned by the lay abbot of Saint-Martin at Tours, Count Vivian, it was presented to the young monarch in 845 CE as a Christmas gift.
[556] Paul Edward Dutton and Hebert L. Kessler, *The Poetry and Paintings of the First Bible of Charles the Bald* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 82-83.
[557] Gerry Guest, *Bible Moraliseé: Vienna, Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Vind. 2554 (Manuscripts in Miniature)* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1995), 121.

Select Interpretations from the Reformation to the Modern Period (1500-1800 CE)

Martin Luther (1483-1546 CE), the man credited with launching the Reformation, found in Chronicles support for certain themes of his theology. Specifically, his understanding of the dynastic promise (2 Sam 7//1 Chr 17) affirmed the strict separation of the Jews and their Mosaic law from Christians and God's grace.

Like Rabanus and Langton before him (and decidedly *contra* Nicholas of Lyra), Luther rejected any reading that posited Solomon as the recipient of God's parentage or of the Temple as the true house of God. In Samuel, God says that one of David's offspring, "who shall come forth from your body," will be the one to build God's house, have an eternal throne, and be God's son (2 Sam 12-14a). In Chronicles, however, God tells David, "I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons" and he is the one who will build God's abode and be the beneficiary of God's promises (1 Chr 17.11-12). Luther noted that Chronicles omits any reference to bodily descent from David and went on to argue that, since no mortal was capable of building God's house, David's immortal offspring Christ is meant here.

As further evidence for maintaining that God is referring to Christ and not to Solomon, Luther quoted a line, unique to Chronicles, from David's prayer in response to the dynastic promise. The Hebrew of the second half of this verse is difficult (1 Chr 17.17b).[558] Luther remarked that other Hebraists had given it a far different meaning, but insists that only his

---

Within illuminated Bibles from the medieval period to the present, the most frequent images from Chronicles are David dancing fully clothed before the ark as it is transported into Jerusalem (usually appearing as an illustration of the account in Samuel), David with the Temple musicians, and the angel of destruction whom God sends as punishment for David's census, hovering over Jerusalem wielding a sword. (In Samuel, the angel bears no weapon.)

[558] וּרְאִיתַנִי כְּתָוֹר הָאָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים: (1 Chr 17.17b). The NRSV notes that the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. It renders it, "You regard me as someone of high rank, O Lord God!"

translation is true: "Thou hast regarded me as in the form of a Man who is God the Lord on high." David's words, for Luther, reveal that David knew all along that his true son, the son whom God intended to raise up, was Jesus rather than Solomon.[559]

Chronicles was also formative for Lutheran liturgy. Luther considered Jehoshaphat's supplication in Chronicles when faced with the overwhelming force of his enemies to be an exemplary prayer (2 Chr 20.5-12). Ending with "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (20.12), it was an unmediated and heartfelt expression of an absolute dependence on God. Jehoshaphat's prayer figures prominently in the first Lutheran prayerbooks and helped shape Lutheran worship practices.[560]

During this period, Chronicles played a significant role in debates over liturgical music among Protestants. On one side of the spectrum were the Puritans, who found in Chronicles a warrant for unadorned song. In the preface of the Bay Psalm Book, the first book printed in any English-speaking colony (1640 CE), John Cotton (1584-1652 CE) defended the somewhat inelegant style of the psalter's translators. He contended that their use of plain English words and meter—devoid of poetic flourishes and paraphrase—best complied with the standard set forth in Chronicles: "King Hezekiah and the officials commanded the Levites to sing praises to the Lord with the words of David and of the seer Asaph (2 Chr 29.30)."[561] Nothing extrinsic to the psalms was to be added.

On the other side of the spectrum was the Lutheran Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750

---

[559] Martin Luther, "Treatise on the Last Words of David," in *Luther's Works, Vol. 15: Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and The Last Words of David* (ed. Jaroslav Pelikan; vol. 15 of *Luther's Works*; Saint Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing, 1995), 270-349 (286). In Luther's translation, יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים is not a vocative but rather part of the description of the form of the man.
[560] Mary Jane Haemig, "Jehoshaphat and His Prayer among Sixteenth-Century Lutherans," *Church History* 73 (2004): 522-35.
[561] *The Bay Psalm Book: being a facsimile reprint of the first edition printed by Stephen Daye at Cambridge, in New England in 1640* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1903), **2-**3.

CE). In his day, a forceful faction within the church, influenced by Pietism, rejected playing musical instruments in worship. Bach, however, believed they were divinely sanctioned, based on his reading of Chronicles.[562] In the margin of his Bible, alongside Chapter 25 of First Chronicles describing the cymbals, harps, and lyres with which the Temple musicians performed their sacred service, Bach wrote, "NB. Dieses Capital ist das wahre Fundament aller gottfälliger Kirchen Music (N.B. This chapter is the true foundation of all God-pleasing church music)."[563] Beside 1 Chr 28.21, in which David tells Solomon that the priests and Levites will do all that is needful for the service of the Temple, Bach wrote: "NB. Ein herrlicher Beweiss, dass neben anderen Anstalten des Gottesdienstes, besonders auch die Musica von Gottes Geist durch David mit angeordnet worden (Splendid proof that, besides other arrangements of the service of worship, music too was instituted by the Spirit of God through David)."[564]

For Bach, as for Luther, Jehoshaphat's prayer was inspirational. He composed a chorale prelude from a hymn by Paul Eber (1511-1569 CE), based on Jehoshaphat's acknowledgement of dependence on God: *Wenn wir in hochsten Nöthen sein*. Bach included it in his *Orgelbüchlein*, a collection of preludes he wrote between1708-1717. Bach reworked the piece just prior to his death. It is the last of the Great Eighteen Chorale Preludes.[565]

Most importantly, the value Chronicles placed on instrumental liturgical music shaped

---

[562] John W. Kleinig, "Bach, Chronicles and Church Music," *Logia* 9 (2001): 7-10. See also Robin A. Leaver, *J. S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1985), 94.
[563] Leaver, *J. S. Bach and Scripture*, 93.
[564] Leaver, *J. S. Bach and Scripture*, 95.
[565] "The foundation of the movement is the earlier Prelude in the *Orgelbuchlein* [*Wenn wir in hochsten Nöthen sein*]. In the present movement [*Vor deinen Thron tret' ich*], however, the four lines of the *cantus* are separated and the elaborate embroidery of the *canto fermo* is discarded. The new material is in the interludes." Charles Sanford Terry, *Bach's Chorals. Part III: The Hymns and Hymn Melodies of the Organ Works* (3 vols.; Cambridge University Press, 1915-1921) 3: Prefatory Note. Cited 21 October 2013. Online: hhttp://oll.libertyfund. org/title/2057/197525.

Bach's understanding of his own vocation. He noted this verse from Second Chronicles:

> It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud. 2 Chr 5.13

Alongside he wrote, "NB. Bey einer andächtig Musig ist allezeit Gott mit seiner Gnaden Gegenwart (NB. Where there is devotional music, God with His grace is always present)."[566] Based on Chronicles, Bach understood his work to be a sacred calling.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also saw the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings in England and Europe under attack, and here, too, Chronicles had a role to play. The proliferation of vernacular Bibles contributed greatly to its influential reception.[567] The British monarch King James (1566-1625) was not slow to appreciate the dangers of widespread access to Scripture. He took umbrage at the commentary of the Geneva Bible (completed in 1560) on Chronicles' King Asa (2 Chr 15.16), criticizing the king for giving way to pity in sparing the life of the idolatrous queen mother.[568] Other marginal notes approved the deaths of the monarchs Amaziah (2 Chr 22.9) and Athaliah (2 Chr 23.15), and its comment alongside the description of Jehoram's end (2 Chr 21.20) stated that the king was deposed on account of his wickedness.[569] When James commissioned his own translation, he specified that there be no annotations to the biblical text.[570]

---

[566] Leaver, *J. S. Bach and Scripture*, 97.
[567] For a discussion of the emergence of vernacular Bibles in England, see chapter three of this dissertation.
[568] Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* (London: The Penguin Press, 1993), 60.
[569] *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 edition* (Madison, Wis.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).
[570] Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*, 21.

Chronicles' illustration of good and bad behavior on the part of rulers, combined with its depiction of the immediacy of return for that behavior, made the book a potent weapon in the political contests of the day—and one that either side could wield. Presbyterian clerics loyal to the crown invoked Chronicles to rally support for their sovereign as the guardian of the faith. Passages such as Jahaziel's exhortation to Jehoshaphat on the eve of battle (2 Chr 20.13-17) inspired sermons urging citizens to stand by their king against threats ranging from internal sectarian divisions to foreign incursions.[571]

By the same token, would-be challengers to monarchs also found ample ammunition in Chronicles. The French Protestant theologian Theodore Beza's treatise *De jure magistratuum* (On the Rights of Magistrates) emphasized the partnership between the people and their kings, finding in Chronicles one of his prime examples: Chronicles' Solomon, though appointed by God, still underwent a popular election (1 Chr 29.22). The king thus assumed a "two-fold obligation…ecclesiastical and political."[572] Using similar evidence, the Scottish Presbyterian theologian Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661) in *Lex, Rex* interpreted Chronicles as a warrant for rebellion, noting that the people's collaboration was necessary for David's ascension to rule (1 Chr 11.3) and that David's resistance against Saul was divinely sanctioned (1 Chr 12.22, which says David's army was "like an army of God").[573]

---

[571] E.g, Thomas Lynford, "A Sermon preached before the right honourable the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Londaon at the Guild-Hall Chappel" (London: Printed for Walter Kettilby,1679); and L. H. Halloran, "A Sermon for the 19th Day of December, 1797, being the day appointed for a General Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the signal victories obtained by His Majesty's arms, in three great naval engagements, over the respective belligerent powers, united against this country" (London: Sampson Low, 1797).

[572] David W. Hall, *The Genevan Reformation and the American Founding* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2005), 178-79. For an English translation of the treatise, see http://www.constitution.org/cmt/beza/magistrates.htm#notes5.

[573] Samuel Rutherford, *Lex, Rex or The Law and the Prince* (London: Printed for John Field, 1644; repr. Colorado Springs, Colo.: Portage Publications, 2009), 99, 330. For a discussion of

In the New World, Chronicles' alternative version of sacred history served the influential Puritan ministers Cotton Mather (1663-1728 CE) and Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758 CE), in both cases to bolster the established authority of the church. Mather's interpretation of a Chronicles' verse provided him justification for the church's unequal treatment of women. He argued that David's appointment of female singers (1 Chr 25.5-6) did not mean that women should be given the same prerogatives as men. Rather, David's actions indicated that women will have a role in the Hereafter.[574] Edwards, for his part, used his exegesis of Chronicles to curb the excesses of the Great Awakening. In a popular sermon, he ascribed David's initial failure to return the ark to Jerusalem to the Israelites' unchecked exuberance. He urged his congregation to be like the Levites who successfully bore the ark (1 Chr 15.15) and to see in the priests' restraint a model for their own obedience.[575]

Select Interpretations in the Modern Period (1800 CE-present)

The reception of Chronicles in the modern period occurred (and continues to occur) on two fronts. Its alternative history provided fodder for the creation of historical criticism, a school of analysis that ultimately led to secular critiques of the Bible. On the other hand, Chronicles' alternative theology—with its insistence on God's immediacy at all times and places—offered resistance to the forces of secularization. Ongoing advances in literacy and technology (of print production and computers) further the proliferation of interpretations of Chronicles, be it in the

---

the republicanism of Scottish Calvinism, see Richard Rex, "Humanism and Reformation in England and Scotland," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation, Volume II, From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, 528-29.

[574] Cotton Mather, *The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather: An Edition of "Triparadisus"* (ed. Reiner Smolinski; Athens, Ga: The University of Georgia Press, 1995), 266.

[575] Jonathan Edwards, "Bringing the Ark to Zion a Second Time," in *Sermons and Discourses 1739-1742* (eds. Harry S. Stout and Nathan O. Hatch; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 248-261. See also the editors' preface to this sermon, 245-47.

form of sermons, homilies, art, scholarly literature, or web-based content.

In the nineteenth century, Chronicles played an important role in the development of the Documentary Hypothesis as articulated by Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918). Wellhausen's analysis of the Bible led to his rejection of Chronicles as a reliable historical record. Although the book purports to be a true rendition of the past, Wellhausen argued that in fact it is a post-exilic creation intended to promote the interests of the priests of the Second Temple. As such, it is an artificial history with no authentic connection to biblical Israel. The Documentary Hypothesis is the cornerstone of historical biblical criticism, and Wellhausen's views on Chronicles remain influential today.[576]

In the same century, Chronicles' alternative theology found expression in Transcendental thought. As a young preacher, the great American transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson used 2 Chr 20.20 ("Believe in the Lord your God and you shall be established") as the lemma for a sermon on the transience of life and the intransience of faith.[577] In this address, which he preached thirteen times,[578] Emerson emphasized to his listeners their dependence on their creator and their nearness to God. His selection of the Chronicles verse was a deliberative choice, as he initially had another verse from the Psalms in mind (Ps 112.7: "They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord"). Second Chronicles 20.20 served as the prooftext for his assertion that faith allows human souls to rise to a transcendental plane of

[576] Chapter four of this dissertation discusses Wellhausen and his legacy in Chronicles scholarship.
[577] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Complete Sermons of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (ed. Albert J. von Frank; Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 93-99.
[578] "Preached thirteen times: July 8, 1827, at the First Church, Boston; July 22, Concord, Mass; October 7 in Deerfield; October 14 in Northampton; November 11 in New Bedford…; November 25 in Harvard, Mass…; December 9 in Watertown; December 30 in Concord, N.H.; January 27, 1828, at the Federal Street Church; February 10 in Waltham, April 6 in Lexington; August 10 at the Second Church, Boston; and April 11, 1830, again at the Second Church." Emerson, *The Complete Sermons of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 93.

existence.[579]

The establishment of the Salt Lake City temple was a momentous event in Mormon history, and here, too, Chronicles' reception is evident. On the occasion of the laying of the cornerstone (April 6, 1853), Brigham Young (1801-1877) gave a speech in which he reviewed the Mormon history of temple-building. Joseph Smith had laid the cornerstones of three other temples (the first in Kirtland, Ohio; the second in Zion, Missouri; and the third in Nauvoo, Illinois). Since the other three had been defiled and disowned by God and Christ, the Salt Lake City temple would be the only true house of God.[580] In his oration, Young invoked Chronicles' representation of the building of the first Temple. However, Young did not strictly adhere to Chronicles, but also added information from Kings:

> David was not permitted to build the house which he was commanded to build, because he was 'a man of blood,' that is, he was beset by enemies on every hand, and had to spend his days in war and bloodshed to save Israel (much as the Latter-day Saints have done, only he had the privilege to defend himself and people from mobocrats and murderers, while we have hitherto been denied that privilege), and consequently, he had no time to build a house unto the Lord but commanded his son Solomon, who succeeded him on the throne, to erect the Temple at Jerusalem, which God had required at his hands.[581]

Young's summary changes the biblical account. Chronicles' David says that he is prohibited from building the Temple because he has shed blood (1 Chr 22.8, 27.3). However, Chronicles also states that God specified that David would *not* build a temple (1 Chr 22.8).[582] Although Chronicles does indeed relate that David charged Solomon with the task (1 Chr 22.6),

---

[579] Ibid., 96-97.
[580] Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*: *Second President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* (ed. John A. Widtsoe; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1926) 636, 638-40.
[581] Ibid., 634.
[582] No reason is given in Nathan's oracle for God not choosing David to build the Temple, nor is there any specific negative injunction (2 Sam 7.4-17).

both Samuel and Chronicles report that all along God expected that Solomon would execute the construction (2 Sam 7.13; 2 Chr 22.10, 28.6).

In Young's retelling, David received the command and only the necessity to protect himself and his people prevented him from obeying. Solomon carries out what was originally his father's obligation. Here Young appears to be referring to 1 Kgs 5:2-6, in which Solomon explains to King Hiram of Tyre that David was unable to build the Temple because he was beset by foes. To complicate the matter further, Young cites Chronicles' explanation for why David is prohibited from building the Temple, but he does not employ Chronicles' language. Instead he turns to another book, the book of Samuel, and quotes the words of David's adversary Shimei—"you are a man of blood"—words Shimei shouted as he attempted to stone David (2 Sam 16.8).

The effect of Young's reception of Chronicles was to raise his own stature as leader of the Mormon church. In drawing a parallel between David's persecution and the persecution suffered by the Latter-day Saints and Joseph Smith, Young also created a parallel between himself and Solomon. Just as Solomon built the temple his father should and would have completed, Young laid the cornerstone of God's house in Salt Lake City, executing Smith's plan.

During this period Chronicles continued to be a mirror for princes. The Archbishop of London used the description of Josiah's public vow to obey God's laws as the lemma for his sermon at the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1838 (2 Chr 34.31).[583] It differs from its parallel verse in 2 Kings (2 Kgs 22.3) in being more generic with respect to space: in Chronicles, the

[583] Charles James Blomfield, "Sermon preached at the coronation of her most excellent majesty Queen Victoria in the Abbey Church of Westminster" (London: B. Fellowes, 1838).
Chronicles also continued to offer models of behavior for individuals of every station, including children educated by the charity schools of London in the early part of the nineteenth century. James Hook, "A Sermon preached in the cathedral church of St. Paul on Thursday, June 18,1818; being the time of the yearly meeting of the children educated in the charity schools in and about the cities of London and Westminster," (London: Printed for F.C. and J. Rivington, 1819).

king "stood upon his spot" to enact the covenant before God, whereas in 2 Kings he "stood by the pillar." More significantly, in 2 Kings, not only does the monarch pledge to keep the covenant, so do the people. In Chr 34.31, there is no mention of the people. The focus is solely on the king's obligation.

Turning to Chronicles' reception in biblical studies, a dominant focus of Chronicles scholars in the twentieth century was the question of the reliability of the book's alternative version of history.[584] The critical consensus that emerged by the century's end was that it is a "generally unreliable work,"[585] essentially affirming Wellhausen's views but doing so without his anti-Jewish sentiments. There were important caveats and challenges, however. Israeli archaeologists claimed that Chronicles was important for reconstructing the geography of pre-exilic Israel.[586] Among biblical scholars, Japhet has argued that it is a mistake to assume Chronicles is void of historical value.[587] The current trend is to move away from questions of factual accuracy and to focus instead on the book's "literary shape and function."[588]

Today Chronicles leaves its imprint on modern ritual practices and liturgical texts. To begin, Chronicles reception is evident in the celebration of Epiphany in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. According to the *Kebra Nagast* (Book of the Glory of the Kings), an ancient foundational text, the ark of the covenant was brought from Jerusalem to Ethiopia by Menelik,

[584] For an overview of the status of Chronicles as an historical work among scholars post-Wellhausen to 1996, see Peltonen, *History Debated*, 1:245-422; 2:423-798.
[585] Peltonen, *History Debated*, 2:793.
[586] Peltonen, *History Debated*, 2:768. Peltonen cites the work of B. Mazar and Y. Aharoni.
[587] For instance, Japhet argued that the specificity of Chronicles' account of Jehoshaphat's battle against the Ammonites and the Moabites indicates the book's reliance on a source independent of the Deuteronomistic history. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 344.
[588] Duke, "Recent Research in Chronicles," *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 2 (1994), 43.

the son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.[589] It remains under guard in a stone temple beside St. Mary of Zion church in Aksum. Replicas of the sacred ark (called tabots) reside in every church, and once a year they are brought out as part of the celebration of Christ's baptism. The highest ranking priests carry the tablets, covered with silk fabrics, on their heads. They are followed by lesser-ranking priests in long robes who move with a distinctive rhythm as they slowly accelerate.[590] The step is said to have been handed down from David.[591] The practice is a modified reenactment of David's transport of the ark to Jerusalem, with the priests as ark bearers (reflecting Chronicles).

In the Jewish siddur, a selection from Chronicles opens and closes the collection of psalms that comprise the part of the morning blessings called Pesukei de-Zimra ("Verses of Praise"). The initial Chronicles passage is the song sung by Asaph and the Levites to celebrate the transport of the ark (1 Chr 16.8-36). According to tradition, David taught it to Asaph and the other singers.[592] The four verses from Chronicles that follow the concluding psalm of Pesukei de-Zimra open David's public blessing of God marking his successful collection of the necessary materials for building the temple (1 Chr 29.10-13). It is the custom of some congregations to put

---

[589] *The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek (Kebra Nagast)* (trans. E. A. Wallis Budge; Cambridge, Ontario: In parentheses Publications/Ethiopian Series, 2000), iv.

According to Budge, *Kebra Nagast* first appeared in Coptic in the sixth century CE, was subsequently translated into Arabic, and then was translated into Ethiopic sometime between 1314 and 1344 CE. Budge, *The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek*, iii.

[590] The two classes of prelates in the Ethiopian priesthood parallel the division between the priests and the Levites in Chronicles. Edward Ullendorff, *Ethiopia and the Bible* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 91.

[591] James C. McKinley Jr., "Aksum Journal; Found in Ethiopia: Keepers of the Lost Ark," *New York Times*, January 27, 1998. Cited 20 October 2013. Online: http://www.nytimes.com/1998/01/27/world/aksum-journal-found-in-ethiopia-keepers-of-the-lost-ark.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.

[592] Rabbi Nosson Scherman, *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur: Weekday/Sabbath/Festival* (3rd ed.; New York: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 2004), 58.

aside contributions to charity when reciting these lines.[593]

In the Passover Haggadah, Chronicles' angel of destruction has been absorbed into the story of the exodus. In the recitation of the critical events leading up to Israel's deliverance, the Haggadah declares, "And the Lord brought us from Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror, and signs and wonders."[594] The text then explains the phrase "…and with an outstretched arm" by reference to Chronicles' description of the angel of destruction: "...and his drawn sword was in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem" (1 Chr 21.16b). In this retelling of Passover, God wields the angel's weapon.[595]

Among Catholics and Episcopalians, verses from the passage in Chronicles detailing the fall of Jerusalem, Israel's exile, and the proclamation of Cyrus (2 Chr 36.14-16, 19-23) are part of the reading on the fourth Sunday of Lent every three years. Prior to 1998, the reading also included the verse describing the Chaldeans' indiscriminate slaughter of the Judeans that preceded the destruction of the temple (2 Chr 36.17).

Chronicles' description of the bearing of the ark to Jerusalem by the Levites is one of the readings for the Catholic vigil mass commemorating the assumption of the Virgin Mary (1 Chr 15.3-4, 15-16; 16.1-2). Verses from the Song of David (1 Chr 29.10-13) are part of Monday Lauds. Chronicles' account of the stoning of Zechariah also makes up part of the Catholic common prayer of martyrs (2 Chr 24.18-22), and several passages from Chronicles concerning the construction and dedication of the temple comprise part of the common prayer for the

[593] Scherman, *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur,* 76.
[594] *Deluxe Edition, Passover Haggadah* (n.p.: Kraft General Foods, Inc., 1995), 18.
[595] The transference of Chronicles' angel of destruction (whom God summons to punish the people for David's census) to the exodus story also appears in illuminated Bibles. I discuss one example in the fourth chapter ("Epitomes of an Epitome").

anniversary of the dedication of a church (1 Chr 29.10-12; 2 Chr 5.6-10, 13-6.2; 2 Chr 7.16).[596]

The Lutheran church also includes Chronicles' record of Zechariah's stoning in its readings commemorating the martyrdom of Saint Stephen (who was also stoned) (2 Chr 24.17-22). On the first Sunday of Lent, Lutherans read Chronicles' version of David's census, in which he is incited by Satan to count the people (1 Chr 21.1-17), and on the second Sunday of Lent, they read Jehoshaphat's ardent supplication to God in Israel's time of need and God's positive response to his prayer (2 Chr 20.1-22).

In the Book of Common Prayer, the verse from Chronicles that includes the concluding doxology of the Lord's Prayer is one of the options for offertory sentences during communion (1 Chr 29.11). The Book of Common Prayer also assigns the reading of Chronicles' Zechariah on Saint Stephan's feast day (2 Chr 24.17-22), and as well Solomon's dedicatory prayer for the temple on the feast day of Saint Joseph (2 Chr 6.12-17). There are no readings from Chronicles in the Revised Common Lectionary, a calendar of readings for use in Protestant churches.

Finally, Chronicles continues to play a role in debates over music in houses of worship. In Judaism, by and large there was no playing of instruments on Shabbat and other holidays following the destruction of the Temple until the development of the Reform movement in the nineteenth century.[597] Today Reform synagogues often cite the Levitical musicians performing in

[596] The priest reads 2 Chr 5.6-10, 13-6.2; the congregation responds with 1 Chr 29.10-12; and then the reading before the Gospel is 2 Chr 7.16.

[597] A mishnah in *b. Beṣah* 36b prohibits clapping, slapping, and dance on Shabbat and festivals. The accompanying gemara says this is to prevent someone from repairing musical instruments. From this Rashi deduced there had to be a ban on the playing of instruments. Also, *b. Giṭ.* 7a states that in the wake of the destruction of the Temple, no musical instruments are permitted. See "Jewish Music, §1. Introduction in Oxford Music Online," n.p. [cited 22 October 2013]. Online:http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.its.virginia.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/41322?q=Jewish+music&search=quick&source=omo_gmo&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit.

the Temple as warrant for their use of modern instrumental music.[598]

Among Christians, Chronicles is sometimes invoked to inveigh against the playing of electric guitars and similar instruments during services. The African musicologist Yomi Daramola takes as his standard Chronicles' description of the professional musicians Herman, Asaph and Jeduthun, applies it to "so-called" Christian musicians in Nigerian churches today, and finds them grossly wanting.[599] Yet in some Nigerian churches, Chronicles provides biblical warrant for the use of instruments in worship. Anthony O. Nkwoka relates that Igbo Christian youth pointed to David's designation of individuals to sing and play before the Lord as justification for introducing music and dance to their worship services.[600]

In the twenty-first-century, scholarship on Chronicles abounds. In addition to the steady supply of articles and books published by academic journals and presses, each year the conference of the Society of Biblical Literature holds a panel devoted to the study of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Recent studies of Chronicles include an Irigarayan analysis, [601] and among

[598] See for example Temple Emanuel of Greater New Haven's newsletter of March 9, 2012, tracing the synagogue's use of instruments during worship to "the Levites who sang the Psalms and played instruments on the steps leading to the Temple in Jerusalem," n.p. [cited 22 October 2013]. Online: http://templeemanuel-gnh.org/music-to-our-ears.

[599] Yomi Daramola, "Christian Music as a Discipline: A Religious Appraisal of Christian Music in Nigeria Today," *Cyber Journals for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 17, 2008. Cited 22 October 2013. Online: http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/.

[600] Anthony O. Nkwoka, "The Bible in Igbo Christianity of Nigeria," in *The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories, and Trends* (eds. Gerald O. West and Musa W. Dube; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 332.

[601] Julie Kelso reads Chronicles through "the double lens of feminism and psychoanalysis." She argues that Chronicles' male-dominated genealogical lists and narratives effectively silence women, and are evidence of the "repressed status of the maternal body" within the text." Julie Kelso, *O Mother, Where Art Thou?: An Irigarayan Reading of the Book of Chronicles* (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2007), 15, 213.

the new approaches is a proposal to read Chronicles as an example of utopian literature.[602]

Chronicles also remains a force within the religious realm. For Jewish and Catholic readers of Chronicles, rabbinic and patristic commentaries continue to be valuable guides for deriving relevancy from the text. Twenty-first-century Protestant interpretations have yielded two important receptions of the book—the Prayer of Jabez and the Global Day of Prayer—and demonstrate that innovative exegesis of the book continues today. [603]

[602] In this interpretation, Chronicles critiques the status quo by pointing to a better version of reality. Steven Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, 442; New York: T&T Clark International, 2007).
[603] These receptions are the subject of chapter five of this dissertation.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Bible Versions

A Compleat Abstract of the Holy Bible, in easy verse
A Curious Hieroglyphick Bible
Biblia; or a Practical Summary of the Old and New Testaments
Bible Historiale
Biblia Pauperum
Codex Vindobonensis 2554
Geneva Bible
Glossa Ordinaria
King James Version
New Revised Standard Version
Septuagint
Tanakh
Targum Chronicles
The Holy Bible Abridged: or, the History of the Old and New Testament
The Holy Bible, done in verse for the benefit of weak Memories
Verbum Sempiternum
Vulgate
Wyclif Bible

Dead Sea Scrolls

4QSam[a]
4QChr (=4Q118)
4Q381

Pseudepigrapha

2 Baruch
Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah
Prayer of Manasseh

Early Jewish Sources

Bavli (Babylonian Talmud)
Deuteronomy Rabbah
Dura-Europos Synagogue
Exodus Rabbah
Josephus
Mekilta de Rabbi Ishmael
Mishnah

Numbers Rabbah
Pesiqta Rabbati
Pesiqta de Rab Kahana
Ruth Rabbah
Targum Chronicles
Targum Samuel
Tosefta
Yerushalmi (Jerusalem Talmud)

Early Christian Sources

Augustine
Cyril of Jerusalem
Didascalia
Eusebius of Caesarea
Gregory of Nazianzus
Jerome
John Chrysostom
Origen
Theodoret of Cyrus

Medieval Sources

Hugh of St. Cher
Kimchi, David
Langton, Stephen
Nicholas of Lyra
Niger, Ralph
Peter the Chanter
Pseudo-Jerome
Pseudo-Rashi
Rabanus Maurus

Reformation to the Present

Addington, Stephen
Ambrose, Isaac
Bach, Johann Sebastian
Beza, Theodore
Boswell, James
Bunyan, John
Calvin, John
Cotton, John
Edwards, Jonathan
Emerson, Ralph Waldo
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang

Graetz, Henrich Hirsch
Halkett, Anne
Luther, Martin
Mather, Cotton
Novak, David
Power, Graham
Rutherford, Samuel
Sermons from Eighteenth Century Collections Online
Spurgeon, Charles
The Bay Psalm Book
Turner, Daniel
Young, Brigham
Wellhausen, Julius
Wilkinson, Bruce
Wyschogrod, Michael

Secondary Sources

Ackroyd, Peter R. *The Chronicler in His Age*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 101. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

_____. *I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah.* London: SCM Press, 1973.

Ackroyd, P.R. and C.F. Evans, eds. *The Cambridge History of the Bible*. 3 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1969-1970.

Addington, Stephen. "A practical treatise on afflictions." Market Harborough: n.p. 1779.

Adomeit, Ruth Elizabeth. *Three Centuries of Thumb Bibles: A Checklist*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1980.

Albertz, Rainer. *A History of Religion in the Old Testament Period*. Old Testament Library. Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox, 1994.

Alexander, Philip S. "Retelling the Old Testament." Pages 99-121 in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars SSF*. Edited by D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Allen, Leslie C. *The Greek Chronicles: The Relation of the Septuagint of I and II Chronicles to the Massoretic Text, Part I: The Translator's Craft*. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 25. Leiden: Brill, 1974.

Ambrose, Isaac. "War with the Devil." Berwick: n.p.,1797.

Amit, Yairah. "The Role of Prophecy and Prophets in the Chronicler's World." Pages 80-101 in *Prophets, Prophecy and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism*. Edited by M. H. Floyd and R. L. Haak. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 427. London: T&T Clark International, 2006.

Anastasius Sinaita. *Anastasii Sinaitae Questiones et Responsiones*. Edited by Marcel Richard and Joseph A. Munitiz. Corpus Christianorum: Series graeca 59; Turnhout: Brepols, 2006.

Anselmi, Jeffery. "Redirecting A Nation." No pages. Cited on 9 September 2013. On line: http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/redirecting-a-nation-08-jeffery-anselmi-sermon-on-independence-day-124230.asp?Page=4.

Ariel, Yaakov. “Radical Millennial Movements in Contemporary Israel.” Pages 667-87 in *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism*. Edited by Catherine Wessinger. Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2001.
Athanasius. *Synopsis scripturae sacrae*. Vol. 28 in Patrologia graeca. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857-1886.
Augustine. *Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans*. Translated by Henry Bettenson. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972.
Auld, A. Graeme. *Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible’s Kings*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994.
Baker, Andrew Chase. “Gain, No Pain,” *Religion in the News* (Fall 2001): 21-22.
Barrera, Julio Trebolle. “First and Second Books of Chronicles,” in *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Editors Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Becker, Hans-Jurgen. "Ruth Rabbah," n.p. [cited 11 June 2013]. Online: http://brillonline.nl/ entries/religion-past-and-present/ruth-rabbah_SIM_025123.
Becker, Joachim. *1 Chronik*. Neue Echter Bibel 18. Wurzburg: Echter, 1986.
Begg, Christopher. *Josephus’ Story of the Later Monarchy (AJ 9,1-10,185)*. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 145. Leuven: Leuven University Press and Peeters, 2000.
Begg, Christopher T. and Paul Spilsbury. *Flavius Josephus: Judean Antiquities Books 8-10*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
Ben Zvi, Ehud. “The Authority of 1-2 Chronicles in the Late Second Temple Period,” *JSP* 3 (1988): 59-88.
_____. *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles*. London: Equinox, 2006.
_____. “One Size Does Not Fit All: Observations on the Different Ways That Chronicles Dealt with the Authoritative Literature of Its Time.” Pages 13-35 in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* Editors Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
Berenbaum, Michael and Fred Skolnik, eds. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. 2nd edition. 22 vols. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA.
Berger, Yitzhak. *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimḥi to Chronicles: A Translation With Introduction And Supercommentary*. Brown Judaic Studies 345. Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 2007.
Berry, Lloyd E.. Introduction to *The Geneva Bible: A facsimile of the 1560 edition*. Edited by Lloyd E. Berry. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969.
Blenkinsopp, Joseph. “Ideology and Utopia in 1-2 Chronicles.” Pages 89-104 in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* Editors Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
_____. *Judaism: The First Phase*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009.
_____. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988.
_____. *Prophecy and Canon: A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins*. University of Notre Dame, Center for the Study of Judaism and Christianity in Antiquity 3. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977.
Bosco, Ronald A., ed. *Connecticut and Massachusetts Election Sermons*. The Puritan Sermon in America, 1630-1750, vol. 2. Delmar, N.Y.: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1978.

Boswell, James. *Boswell's London Journal, 1762-1763*. Edited by Frederick A. Pottle. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1950.
Bottigheimer, Ruth B. "Catechistical, devotional and biblical writing." Pages 299-305 in *International Companion Encylopedia of Children's Literature*. Edited by Peter Hunt. Vol. 1. New York: Routledge, 2012.
_____. *The Bible for Children From the Age of Gutenberg to the Present*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
Bowler, Kate. *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
Boyarin, Daniel. *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1990.
Bozeman, Theodore Dwight. "Federal Theology and the 'National Covenant': An Elizabethan Presbyterian Case Study." *Church History* 61 (1992): 394-407.
Braude, William G. and Israel J. Kapstein. *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana: R. Kahan's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days*. Second edition. Dulles, Va.: Jewish Publication Society, 2002.
_____. *Tana Debe Eliyyahu: The Lore of the School of Elijah*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1981.
Braun, Roddy L. "Cyrus in Second and Third Isaiah, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah." Pages 146-164 in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein*. Edited by M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie, and Gary N. Knoppers. Journal for the Studies of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 371. London: T&T Clark International, 2003.
_____. "A Reconsideration of the Chronicler's Attitude toward the North." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 96 (1986): 59-62.
Bregman, Marc. "Midrash Rabbah and the Medieval Collector Mentality." Pages 196-210 in *Anthology in Jewish Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
Brock, Sebastian P. *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition*. Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press LLC, 2006.
Brooke, George J. "Rewritten Bible." Pages 777-81 in volume two of *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam. Two volumes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Brown, Cindy Gunther. "From Tent Meetings and Store-front Healing Rooms to Walmarts and the Internet: Healing Spaces in the United States, the Americas, and the World, 1906-2006." *Church History* 75 (2006): 631-47.
Brown, Robert E. *Jonathan Edwards and the Bible*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2002.
Budge, E. A. Wallis, trans. *The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek (Kebra Nagast)*. Cambridge, Ontario: In parentheses Publications/Ethiopian Series, 2000.
Bunyan, John. *The Whole Works of John Bunyan*. Edited by George Offor. London: Blackie & Son,1862.
_____. "The Jerusalem sinner saved, or, Good news for the vilest of men." Glasgow: n.p., 1792.
Caesarius of Arles. *Sermones*. *Clavis partum latinorum*. Edited by E. Dekkers. 2nd ed. Steenbrugis, 1961.
Calvin, John. *Commentaries of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and The Lamentations, Volume Second.* Translated by John Owen. Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1851.

Carmichael, Calum M. "Some Sayings in Genesis 49." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 435-444.
Carr, David. *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
Charlesworth, James H. "Prayer of Manasseh." Pages 625-37 in vol. 2 of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1983, 1985.
Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1979.
Chilton, Bruce and Craig A. Evans. "Jesus and Israel's Scriptures." Pages 281-336 in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*. Edited by Bruce David Chilton and Craig Alan Evans. Leiden: Brill, 1998.
Christ, Hieronymus. *Blutvergiessen im Alten Testament: Der gewaltsame Tod des Menschen untersucht am hebräischen Wort däm.*Theologische Dissertationen 12. Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag, 1977.
Coggins, Richard J. Review of A. Graeme Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings*. *Theology* 98 (1995), 383.
Coggins, R. J. and J. L. Houlden, eds. *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. London: SCM Press, 1990.
Cohn, Norman. *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.
Constantinus VII Porphyrogenitus. *Excerpta Historica Iussu Imp. Constantini Porphyrogeniti Confecta, volumen II: Excerpta de Virtutibus et Vitiis*. Edited by Theodorus Büttner-Wobst and Antonius Gerardus Roos. Vol. 2, pt. 1. Berlin: Weidmann, 1906.
Conti, Marco, ed. *1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*. Volume 5 of *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*. Edited by Thomas C. Oden. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2008.
Cowley, Roger W. "The 'Blood of Zechariah'(Mt 23.35) in Ethiopian Exegetical Tradition." *Studia Patristica 18: Papers of the Ninth International Conference on Patristic Studies 1983* 1 (1986): 293-302.
Cyril of Alexandria. *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in xii prophetas*. Edited by P.E. Pusey.2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1868.
_____. *Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam*. Vol. 70 in Patrologia graeca. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857-1886.
Cyril of Jerusalem. *Cyrilli Hierosolymorum archiepiscopi opera quae supersunt Omnia*. Edited by Wilhelm Carl Reischl and Joseph Rupp. 2 vols. Munich: Lentner, 1848.
Daniell, David. *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
Daramola, Yomi. "Christian Music as a Discipline: A Religious Appraisal of Christian Music in Nigeria Today." *Cyber Journals for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 17, 2008. Cited 22 October 2013. Online: http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/.
Darton, F. J. Harvey. *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958.
Davila, James R. "Is the Prayer of Manasseh a Jewish Work?" Pages 75-85 in *Heavenly Tablets: Interpretation, Identity and Tradition*. Edited by Lynn LiDonnici and Andrea Lieber. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

de Jong, Mayke. "The empire as ecclesia: Hrabanus Maurus and biblical historia for rulers." Pages 191-226 in *The Uses of the past in the early Middle Ages*. Edited by Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
de Maeyer, Jan, et al., eds. *Religion, Children's Literature, and Modernity in Western Europe, 1750-2000*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005.
Dirksen, Piet B. "Why Was David Disqualified as Temple Builder? The Meaning of 1 Chronicles 22.8." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 70 (1996): 51-56.
Dove, Mary. *The First English Bible: The Text and Context of the Wycliffite Versions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
Drummond, Lewis A. *Spurgeon: The Prince of Preachers*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1992.
Duke, Rodney K. "Recent Research in Chronicles." *Currents in Biblical Research* (2009): 10-50.
_____. "A Rhetorical Approach to Appreciating the Books of Chronicles." Pages 100-135 in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 263. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
Duling, Dennis C. "The Gospel of Matthew." Pages 296-318 in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament*. Edited by David E. Aune. Blackwell Companions to Religion. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
Dumortier, Jean. *Jean Chrysostome. A Théodore*. Sources chrétiennes 117. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966.
Dunn, James D. G. and John William Rogerson, eds. *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: 2003.
Dutton, Paul Edward and Hebert L. Kessler. *The Poetry and Paintings of the First Bible of Charles the Bald*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997.
Dyck, Jonathan E. *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler.* Volume 33 of the Biblical Interpretation Series. Leiden: Brill, 1998.
Edwards, Jonathan. "Bringing the Ark to Zion a Second Time." Pages 248-61in *Sermons and Discourses 1739-1742*. Edited by Harry S. Stout and Nathan O. Hatch. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003.
Égerie. *Égerie, Journal de Voyage*. Edited by P. Maraval. Sources chrétiennes 296. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1982.
Elbogen, Ismar. *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History*. Trans. Raymond P. Scheindlin. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1993.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The Complete Sermons of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Edited by Albert J. von Frank. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1989.
Epiphanius. *Epiphanius II: Panarion haer. 34-64*. Edited by Karl Holl; *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1980.
Finkelstein, Israel and Neil Asher Silberman. *David and Solomon: In Search of the Bible's Sacred Kings and the Roots of the Western Tradition*. New York: Free Press, 2006.
Fishbane, Michael. *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*. New York: Oxford, 1988.
Flesher, Paul V. M. and Bruce Chilton. *The Targums: A Critical Introduction*. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011.
Fortescu, Alexander. *The holy family Bible, containing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and the Apocrypha at large: with concise explanatory notes, on all the*

Difficult Texts of Scripture, Wherein the objections of Infidels are obviated, and the obscure Passages explained to the meanest Capacity. Winchester: John Wilkes, 1774.
Foster, Charles. *The Story of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Told in Simple Language Adapted to all Ages, But especially to the Young.* Philadelphia: Charles Foster Publishing Co., 1901.
Freedman, David Noel. "The Chronicler's Purpose," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 23 (1963), 436-442.
Freedman, H. and Maurice Simon, eds. and trans. *Midrash Rabbah*. Third edition. London: The Soncino Press, 1961.
Friedlander, Gerald, trans. *Pirḳê de Rabbi Eliezer*. 2nd ed. New York, Hermon Press, 1965.
Frontain, Raymond-Jean and Jan Wojcik, eds. *The David Myth in Western Literature*. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1980.
Fruchtman, Jr., Jack. *The Apocalyptic Politics of Richard Price and Joseph Priestley: A Study in Late Eighteenth-Century English Republican Millennialism*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 73. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society: 1983.
Gabriel, Ingeborg. *Friede über Israel*. Österreichische biblische Studien 10. Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990.
Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*. Trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.
Georgius Monachus. *Georgii monachi chronicon*. Edited by C. de Boor. 2 vols. Leipzig: Teubner, 1904.
Georgius Syncellus. *Georgii Syncelli, Ecloga chronographica*. Edited by Alden A. Mosshammer. Leipzig: Teubner, 1984.
Gibson, John C. L. "John the Baptist in Muslim Writings." *The Muslim World* 45 (1955): 334-45.
Ginzberg, Louis, ed. *Legends of the Jews*. Translated by Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin. Second edition. Two vols. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2003.
Glossa Ordinaria. Vol. 113 in Patrologia latina. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 217 vols. Paris, 1844-1864.
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *West-Eastern Divan in Twelve Books*. Translated by Edward Dowden. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1914.
González, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought, Volume 1, From the Beginning to the Council of Chalcedon AD 451*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970.
Good, Roger. *The Septuagint's Translation of the Hebrew Verbal System in Chronicles*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
Gosselin, Edward A. *The King's Progress to Jerusalem: Some Interpretations of David During the Reformation Period and Their Patristic and Medieval Background*. Human Civilitas, Sources and Studies Relating to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Vol. 2. Malibu, Calif.: Unidena Publications, 1976.
Graetz, Henrich Hirsch. *History of the Jews: Vol. 1, From the earliest Period to the Death of Simon the Macabees (135 B.C.E.)*. Elibron Classics. Adamant Media Corporation, 2000.
Graham, M. Patrick, Seven L. McKenzie, and Gary N. Knoppers, eds. *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein*. London: T&T Clark International, 2003.
Graham, M. Patrick, and Steven L. McKenzie, eds. *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text*

And Texture. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 263. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
Graham, M. Patrick, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven L. McKenzie, eds. *The Chronicler as Historian*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 238. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
Gregentios of Taphar. *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar: Introduction, Critical Edition and Translation*. Edited by Albrecht Berger. Millennium-Studien/Millennium Studies 7. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006.
Greig, Pete. "Indonesia, 3 Million Pray," No pages. Cited 21 September 2013. Online: http://www.24-7prayer.com/features/1781.
Guest, Gerry. *Bible Moraliseé: Vienna, Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Vind. 2554 (Manuscripts in Miniature)*. London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1995.
Guggenheimer, Heinrich W., ed. and trans. *The Jerusalem Talmud Fourth Order: Neziqin, Tractates Sanhedrin, Makkot, and Horaiot.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000.
Gurtner, David M. *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text With Greek and Latin Fragments, English Translation, Introduction, and Concordances*. New York: T&T Clark, 2009.
_____. "'The Twenty-Fifth Year of Jeconiah' and the Date of 2 Baruch." *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 18 (2008): 23–32.
Haemig, Mary Jane. "Jehoshaphat and His Prayer among Sixteenth-Century Lutherans." *Church History* 73 (2004): 522-535.
Halkett, Anne. "Meditations upon Jabez his Request, I. Chron. iv.10." Edinburgh, n.p.: 1702.
Hall, David. W. *The Genevan Reformation and the American Founding.* Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2005.
Hall, Robert G. "The Ascension of Isaiah: Community Situation, Date, and Place in Early Christianity." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (1990): 289-306.
Halpern, Baruch. *David's Secret Demons: Messiah Murderer Traitor King*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001.
Halsey, Rosalie V. *Forgotten Books of the American Nursery: A History of the Development of the American Story-Book*. Boston: Charles E. Goodspeed and Co., 1911.
Halvorson-Taylor, Martien A. *Enduring Exile: The Metaphorization of Exile in the Hebrew Bible* Leiden: Brill, 2011.
Hargreaves, Henry. "The Wycliffite Versions." Pages 387-415 in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: Volume 2, The West From the Fathers to the Restoration*. Edited by G. W. H. Lampe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
Hartwick, Michael E. *Josephus As an Historical Source in Patristic Literature Through Eusebius*. Brown Judaic Studies 128. Atlanta: Scholars' Press, 1989.
Hauser, Alan J. and Duane F. Watson, eds. *A History of Biblical Interpretation: Volume 1: The Ancient Period*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003.
Hayward, C. T. R. "Rewritten Bible." Pages 596-98 in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. Edited by R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden. London: SCM Press, 1990.
Hayward, Robert. *The Targum of Jeremiah: Translated, with Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes*. The Aramaic Bible: The Targums 12.Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1987.
Hendel, Ronald. *Remembering Abraham: Culture, Memory, and History in the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Herbert, A. S. *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of The English Bible 1525-1961*. London: The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968.
Hetzenauer, Michael, ed. *Biblia sacra vvlgatae editionis: ex ipsis exemplaribvs vaticanis inter se atqve cvm indice errorvm corrigendorvm cellatis*. Oeniponte: svmtibvs Librariae academicae wagnerianae, 1906.
Hill, Christopher. *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*. London: The Penguin Press, 1993.
Hill, Robert. *Reading the Old Testament in Antioch*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
Hirshman, Marc. *The Stablization of Rabbinic Culture, 100 C.E.-350 C.E.: Texts on Education and Their Late Antique Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
Hoffman, Lawrence. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol.4—Seder K'riat Hatorah (The Torah Service)*. Woodstock, Vt: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000.
_____. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol.3—P'sukei D'zimrah (Morning Psalms)*. Woodstock, Vt: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1999.
Hoffman, Lawrence A. and David Arnow, eds. *My People's Passover Haggadah, Volume I: Traditional Texts, Modern Commentaries.* Woodstock, Vt: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2008.
_____. *My People's Passover Haggadah, Volume II: Traditional Texts, Modern Commentaries.* Woodstock, Vt: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2008.
Hoglund, Kenneth G. "The Chronicler as Historian: A Comparativist Perspective." Pages 19-29 in *The Chronicler as Historian*. Edited by M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 238. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
Hooker, Paul K. *First and Second Chronicles*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2001.
Hürlimann, Bettina. *Three Centuries of Children's Books in Europe*. Translated and edited by Brian W. Alderson. New York: The World Publishing Company, 1968.
Isidore of Seville. *De ecclesiasticis officiis*. *Clavis partum latinorum*. Edited by E. Dekkers. 2nd ed. Steenbrugis, 1961.
Japhet, Sara. *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*. Trans. A. Barber. Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des Antiken Judentums 9. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1989; reprinted, Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009.
_____. *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Highlands of Judah: Collected Studies on the Restoration Period*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006.
_____. *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox, 1993.
_____. "The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew." *Vetus Testamentum* 18 (1968): 330-71.
Joannes Damascenus. *Commentarii in epistulas Pauli*. Vol. 95 in Patrologia graeca. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857-1886.
John Chrysostom. *Homilies on the Gospel of Saint John*. In vol. 14 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Philip Schaff. 1886-1889. 14 vols. Repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1996.

Johnstone, William. *1 and 2 Chronicles: Volume 1, 1 Chronicles 1 to 2 Chronicles 9: Israel's Place among the Nations*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 253. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
Joyce, Paul M. and Diana Lipton, *Lamentations Through the Centuries*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.
Kalimi, Isaac. *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature: A Historical Journey.* Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009.
_____. *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005.
Kelly, Brian E. "'Retribution' Revisited: Covenant, Grace and Restoration." Pages 206-27 in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein*. Edited by M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie, and Gary N. Knoppers. London: T&T Clark International, 2003.
_____. "David's Disqualification in 1 Chronicles 22:8: A Response to Piet B. Dirksen." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 80 (1998): 53-61.
_____. *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 211. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
Kelso, Julie. *O Mother, Where Art Thou? An Irigarayan Reading of the Book of Chronicles.* London: Equinox, 2007.
Kiecker, James G. "Luther's Preface to His *First Lectures on the Psalms* (1513): The Historical Background to Luther's Biblical Hermeneutic." *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, 85 (1988): 287. Cited on 14 September 2013. Online: http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCYQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.wlsessays.net%2Ffiles%2FKieckerLuther.rtf&ei=v_PnUpj9EeissQTU6IGQBg&usg=AFQjCNH1TaC1SWNtVc9a9LpHoSLvodnY1w&bvm=bv.60157871,d.cWc.
Kisch, Guido. *Sachsenspiegel and Bible: researches in the source history of the Sachsenspiegel and the influence of the Bible on mediaeval German law.* Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1941.
Klein, Ralph W. *2 Chronicles: A Commentary*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.
_____. *1 Chronicles: A Commentary*. Hermenia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006.
_____. Introduction and notes to "I Chronicles" and "2 Chronicles." Pages 560-645 in *The HarperCollins Study Bible Fully Revised and Updated: New Revised Standard Version, with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books.* Edited by Harold W. Attridge et al. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989.
Kleinig, John W. *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 156. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.
Klijn, A. F. J. "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch, a new Translation and Introduction." Pages 615-52 in vol. 1 of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by J. H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: 1983, 1985.
Knibb, Michael. "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah (Second Century B.C.-Fourth Century A.D.: A New Translation and Introduction)." Pages 143-76 in vol. 1 of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Garden City, N.Y.: 1983, 1985.
Knoppers, Gary N. "Democratizing Revelation? Prophets, Seers and Visionaries in Chronicles." Pages 391-409 in *Prophecy and Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford*

Old Testament Seminar. Edited by John Day. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 531. London: T&T Clark, 2010.
_____. *I Chronicles 1-9.* Anchor Bible 12A. Garden City: Doubleday, 2003.
_____. *I Chronicles 10-29.* Anchor Bible 12B. Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 2003.
_____. "History and Historiography: The Royal Reforms." Pages 178-203 in *The Chronicler as Historian*. Edited by M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 238. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
Knoppers, Gary N. and Paul B. Harvey Jr. "Omitted and Remaining Matters: On the Names Given to the Book of Chronicles in Antiquity." *Journal of Biblical Literature*. 121 (2002): 227-43.
Kugel, James L. *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible As It Was at the Start of the Common Era*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.
Larmarche, Paul. "The Septuagint: Bible of the Earliest Christians." Pages 15-33 in *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*. Edited and translated by Paul M. Blowers. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997.
Landau, Asher Felix, ed. *Selected Judgments of the Supreme Court of Israel: Special Volume*. Jerusalem: Ministry of Justice, 1971.
Langton, Stephen. *Commentary on the Book of Chronicles*. Edited by Avrom Saltman. Jerusalem: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1978.
Leaver, Robin A. *J. S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary*. St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1985.
Lehmhaus, Lennart. "Eliyahu's Literary Strategies in the Context of Late Midrash." Pages 211-242 in *Approaches to Literary Readings of Ancient Jewish Writings*. Edited by Klaas Smelik and Karolien Vermeulen. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
Leicht, Reimund. "A Newly Discovered Hebrew Version of the Apocryphal 'Prayer of Manasseh.'" *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 3 (1996): 359-69.
Leneman, Helen. "Portrayals of Power in the Stories of Delilah and Bathsheba: Seductions in Song." Pages 139-55 in *Culture, Entertainment and the Bible*. Edited by George Aichele; JSOT 309; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.
Lenker, John Nicholas ed. and trans. *Sermons by Martin Luther, Volume 2: Sermons on Gospel Texts for Epiphany, Lent, and Easter*. Minneapolis: Lutherans in All Lands, 1906.
Leuchter, Mark. "Genesis 38 in Social and Historical Perspective." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132 (2013): 209-27.
_____. "Rethinking the 'Jeremiah' Doublet in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles." Pages 183-200 in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* Edited by Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
Levenson, Jon D. *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
_____. *Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.
_____. *The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism: Jews and Christians in Biblical Studies*. Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.
Levinson, Bernard M. "Goethe's Analysis of Exodus 34 and Its Influence on Wellhausen: The *Pfropfung* of the Documentary Hypothesis." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 114 (2002): 212-23.

Linafelt, Tod, Claudia V. Camp, and Timothy Beal, eds. *The Fate of King David: The Past and Present of a Biblical Icon*. Library of Hebrew Bible/ Old Testament Studies 500. New York: T&T Clark, 2010.
Longman III, Tremper and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Second Edition*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006.
Lowden, John. "The Anjou Bible in the Context of Illustrated Bibles." Pages 1-25 in *The Anjou Bible*. Edited by Jan Van der Stock and Lieve Watteeuw. Exhibition catalogue, Leuven, 2010.
Lowe, Vivian. "The History America Chose to Forget," *Charisma Magazine*, November 2000.
Lucifer of Cagliari. *De regibus apostaticis*. *Clavis partum latinorum*. Edited by E. Dekkers. 2nd ed. Steenbrugis, 1961.
Mandelbrote, Scott. "The English Bible and its Readers in the Eighteenth Century." Pages 35-78 in *Books and Their Readers in 18th Century England: New Essays.* Edited by Isabel Rivers. London: Continuum International Publishing, 2003.
Marchand, Susanne L. *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship*. New York: Cambridge University Press and Washington, D.C.: German Historical Society, 2009.
Maryles, Daisy. "Setting a New Record." *Publishers Weekly*, vol. 248, issue 25 (November 5, 2001). Cited 26 August 2013. Online: http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/print/20011105/22087-setting-a new-record.html.
Mather, Cotton. *The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather: An Edition of "Triparadisus."* Edited by Reiner Smolinski. Athens, Ga.: The University of Georgia Press, 1995.
Mathys, H. P. "I and 2 Chronicles." Pages 267-308 in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*. Translated by Benjamin Liebelt. Edited by John Barton and John Muddiman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
McCarter, Jr., P. Kyle. *II Samuel*. Anchor Bible 9. Garden City: Doubleday, 1984.
McDonald, Lee Martin and James A. Sanders, eds. *The Canon Debate*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002.
McIvor, J. Stanley. *The Targum of Chronicles: Translated, with Introduction, Appartatus, and Notes*. The Aramaic Bible 19. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1994.
McKenzie, Steven. *1-2 Chronicles*. Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004.
McKinley Jr., James C. "Aksum Journal; Found in Ethiopia: Keepers of the Lost Ark." *New York Times*, January 27, 1998. Cited 20 October 2013. Online: http://www.nytimes.com/1998/01/27/world/askum-journal-found-in-ethiopia-keepers-of the-lost-ark.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.
Metzger, Bruce. "Curious Bibles." Pages 143-44 in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*. Edited by Bruce M. Metzger and Michael David Coogan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
Meyers, Jacob M. *1 Chronicles*. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965.
Michael Pseullus. *Michaelis Pselli orationes panegyricae*. Edited by George T. Dennis. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1994.
Micheel, Rosemarie. *Die Seher- und Propheten-Überlieferungen in der Chronik*. Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie 18. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1983.
Momigliano, Arnaldo. *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography*. Berkeley:

University of California Press, 1990.
Mosis, Rudolf. *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistichen Gesichtswerkes*. Freiburger Theologische Studien. Zweiundneunzigster Band. Freiburg: Herder, 1973.
Müller, C. Detlef G. "The Ascension of Isaiah." Pages 603-20 in *New Testament Apocrypha: Writings Related to the Apostles, Apocalypses, and Related Subjects*. Edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher. Translator R. McL. Wilson. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992.
Murray, Donald F. "Under YHWH's Veto: David as Shedder of Blood in Chronicles." *Biblia* 82 (2002): 457-76.
Nees, Lawrence. "Problems of Form and Function in Early Medieval Illustrated Bibles From Northwest Europe." Pages 121-77 in *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible*. Edited by John Williams. University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.
Neusner, Jacob. *A Theological Commentary to the Midrash: Song of Songs Rabbah* . 3 vols. Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 2001.
Neusner, Jacob, trans. *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation: Volume 31, Sandedrin and Makkot*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.
Nichols, Charles L. "The Holy Bible in Verse." *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 36 (1926): 71-82.
Nkwoka, O. Anthony. "The Bible in Igbo Christianity of Nigeria." Pages 326-335 in *The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories, and Trends*. Edited by Gerald O. West and Musa W. Dube. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
North, Robert. "The Chronicler: 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah." Pages 402-438 in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Edited by Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, and Roland E. Murphy. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968.
_____. "Theology of the Chronicler," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82 (1963): 369-81.
Norton, David. *A History of the English Bible as Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
Noth, Martin. *The Chronicler's History*. Translated by H. G. M. Williamson. German original 1943. Journal of the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 50. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987.
Novak, David. *The Election of Israel: The idea of the chosen people*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
Pelikan, Jaroslav, ed. *Luther's Works, Vol. 15: Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and The Last Words of David*. Volume 15 of *Luther's Works*. Saint Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing, 1995.
_____. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Volume 1, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.
Peltonen, Kai. *History Debated: The Historical Reliability of Chronicles in Pre-Critical and Critical Research*. 2 vols. Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 64. Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 1996.
Person, Raymond F. Jr. *The Deuteronomic History and the Book of Chronicles.* Ancient Israel and Its Literature. Edited by Steven L. McKenzie. Number 6. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010.

Pfeiffer, Robert H. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948.
Phillips, David. "The Reception of Peshitta Chronicles: Some Elements for Investigation." Pages 259-95 in *Peshitta: Its Uses in Literature and Liturgy: Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium*. Edited by R. B. Ter Haar Romeny; Boston: Brill, 2007.
Phillips, Michael M. "In Swaziland, U.S. Preacher Sees His Dream Vanish." *The Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 18, 2005. Cited on 26 August 2013. Online: http://online.wsf.com/article/SB113495910699726095.html.
Power, Graham. "Graham Power's Vision of the Three Waves." No pages. Online: http://www.Youtube.com/watch?v=0jyyhKHenjI.
Power, Graham and Diane Verooten. *Not by Might, Nor by Power: The Account of the Global Day of Prayer, The largest prayer movement in all recorded history*. Lake Mary, Florida: Creation House, 2009.
Procopius. *Commentarii in Isaiam*. Vol. 87 in Patrologia graeca. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857-1886.
Pseudo-Basil the Great (Eusebius Emesenus). *Homilia de paenitentia*. Vol. 31 in Patrologia graeca. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857-1886.
Rahlfs, A. *Septuaginta, id est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX interpretes*. Two volumes. Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935.
Raphael, Simcha Paull. *Jewish Views of the Afterlife*. 2 ed. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009.
Redditt, Paul L. "The Dependence of Ezra-Nehemiah on 1 and 2 Chronicles." Pages 217-40 in *Unity and Disunity in Ezra-Nehemiah: Redaction, Rhetoric and Reader*. Edited by Mark J. Boda and Paul L. Redditt. Hebrew Bible Monograph 17. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008.
Rex, Richard. "Humanism and Reformation in England and Scotland." Pages 528-29 in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation, Volume II, From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Edited by Magne Saebo. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht , 2008.
Riley, W. *King and Cultus in Chronicles: Worship and the Reinterpretation of History*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 160. Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press, 1992.
Robinson, J. C. "Gadamer, Hans-Georg," *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism*. Editor Stanley E. Porter. New York: Routledge, 2007.
Rosenstock, Bruce. "David's play: fertility rituals and the glory of God in 2 Samuel 6." *Journal For The Study Of The Old Testament* 31(2006): 63-80.
Rudolph, Wilhelm. *Chronikbücher*. Handbuch zum Alten Testament 21. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1955.
_____. *Esra und Nehemia*. Handbuch zum Alten Testament 20. Tübingen: Mohr, 1949.
Rutherford, Samuel. *Lex, Rex or The Law and the Prince*. London: Printed for John Field, 1644. Repr., Colorado Springs, Colo.: Portage Publications, 2009.
Ryrie, Alec. *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
Salmen, Walter. *König David—eine Symbolfigur in der Musik*. Issue 4. Wolfgang Stammler Gastprofessur für Germanische Philologie Vorträge (Universitè de Fribourg). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995.

Salomon, David A. *An Introduction to the Glossa Ordinaria as Medieval Hyptertext*. Religion and Culture in the Middle Ages. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012.
Samely, Alexander. *Rabbinic Interpretation of Scripture in the Mishnah*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
Sanders, E. P. *Jesus and Judaism*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.
Sanders, James A. "The Stabilization of the Tanak." Pages 225-52 in *The History of Biblical Interpretation: Volume 1, The Ancient Period*. Edited by Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003.
_____. "The Prayer of Manasseh." Page 1568-69 in *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 1989.
Sarna, Nahum M. et al. "Bible." *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Edited by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik. Volume 3, second edition. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007, 572-679.
Sawyer, John F. A. *A Concise Dictionary of the Bible and Its Reception*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2009.
Schaff, Philip, ed. *Jerome: The Principal Work of St. Jerome*. Volume VI of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*: *Second Series*. Edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and Philip Schaff. Translated by M.A. Freemantle. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995.
_____, ed. *Augustine: Anti-Pelagian Writings.* Volume V of *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Translated by Peter Holms. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1984.
Scherman, Nosson. *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur: Weekday/Sabbath/Festival*. 3rd ed. New York: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 2004.
Schmid, Konrad. *The Old Testament: A Literary History*. Trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.
_____. *Genesis and the Moses Story: Israel's Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible*. Translated by James D. Nogalski. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010.
Schniedewind, William M. "The Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture." Pages 158-80 in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*. Edited by M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 263. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
_____. "Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles." Pages 204-24 in *The Chronicler as Historian*. Edited by M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 238. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
_____. "The Source Citations of King Manasseh: King Manasseh in History and Homily." *Vetus Testamentum* 91 (1991): 450-61.
Scholem, Gershom. *The Messianic Idea in Judaism: And Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality*. New York: Schocken Books, 1971.
Schuller, Eileen M. *Non-Canonical Psalms From Qumran: A Pseudipigraphic Collection*. Harvard Semitic Studies 28. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.
Schweitzer, Steven James. *Reading Utopia In Chronicles*. New York: T & T Clark, 2007.
Selman, Martin J. *1 Chronicles: An Introduction & Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 10a. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994.
Seow, C. L. *Myth, Drama, and the Politics of David's Dance.* Harvard Semitic Monographs 44.

Atlanta: Scholars, 1989.
Seroussi, Edwin, et al. Grove Music Online. "Jewish Music, §1. Introduction in Oxford Music Online." No pages. Cited 22 October 2013. Online: http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.its.virginia.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/41322?q=Jewish+music&search=quick&source=omo_gmo&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit.
Smalley, Beryl. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publishers Limited, 1952.
Smend, Rudolph. *From Astruc to Zimmerli: Old Testament Scholarship in Three Centuries*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.
Smith, Lesley. "Nicholas of Lyra and Old Testament Interpretation." Pages 49-57 in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation, II: From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Edited by Magne Saebo. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht , 2008.
Smith, Mark S. *The Memoirs of God: History, Memory, and the Experience of the Divine in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.
Smolinski, Reiner, ed. *The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather: An Edition of "Triparadisus."* Athens, Ga: The University of Georgia Press, 1995.
Soltész, Elizabeth. *Biblia Pauperum: Facsimile Edition of the Forty-Leaf Blockbook in the Library of the Esztergom Cathedral*. Corvina Press, 1967
Sommer, Benjamin. "Dating Pentateuchal Texts and the Perils of Pseudo-Historicism." Pages 85-108 in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research.* Edited by Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz. Forschungen zum Alten Testament 78. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
_____. *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.
Sparks, James T. *The Chronicler's Genealogies: Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1-9*. Society of Biblical Literature Academia Biblica 28. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.
Spinoza, Baruch. *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. Translated by Samuel Shirley. Leiden: Brill, 1991.
Spurgeon, Charles. "Pardon for the Greatest Guilt: 2 Chr 33.13." No. 2378. *Spurgeon's Sermons, Volume 40:1894*, n.p. [cited 27 November 2013]. Online: hhtp://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons40.xxxvii.html.
_____. "The Prayer of Jabez," delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, 1871.
_____. "Manasseh: 2 Chr 33.13." Pages 311-27 in *Sermons of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon*. New York: Sheldon, Blakeman and company, 1857.
Stavrakopoulou, Francesca. *King Manasseh and Child Sacrifice: Biblical Distortions of Historical Realities*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 338. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004.
Stenstrup, Kenneth G. "King Manasseh in Early Judaism and Christianity: A Consideration of Text, Context and Hermeneutics in Portrayals of King Manasseh in Jewish and Christian Scripture and Related Literature Prior to the Mid-Fifth Century C.E." PhD diss., Claremont Graduate University, 2000.
Sterling, Gregory E. *Historiography and Self Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography*. Leiden: Brill, 1992.
Stern, David. *Midrash and Theory: Ancient Jewish Exegesis and Contemporary Literary Studies*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1996.

Stewart-Sykes, Alistair. *The Didascalia apostolorum: An English Version with Introduction and Annotation*. Studia Traditionis Theologiae: Explorations in Early and Medieval Theology. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2009.
Strübind, Kim. *Tradition als Interpretation in der Chronik: König Josaphat als Paradigma chronistischer Hermeneutik und Theologie*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991.
Symeon Neotheologus. *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Traités théologiques et éthiques*. Edited by Jean Darrouzès. Sources chrétiennes129. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967.
Tadmor, Naomi. *The Social Universe of the English Bible*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
Targ, William. *Bibliophile in the Nursery: A Bookman's Treasury of Collectors' Lore on Old and Rare Children's Books*. The World Publishing Company, 1957
Taylor, John. *All the Works of John Taylor, the Water Poet, being 63 in number*. London: 1630.
_____. "Three Weeks, Three Days, and Three Hours Observations and Travels from London to Hamburg, amongst Jews and Gentiles, with Descriptions of Towns and Towers, Castles and Citadels; Artificial Gallowses, and Natural Hangmen. And dedicated for the present, to the absent Odcombian Knight Errant, Sir Thomas Coriat, Great Britain's Error and the World's Mirror." Pages 131-57 in *Early Prose and Poetical Works of John Taylor, the Water Poet (1580-1653)*. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1888.
Taylor, Jonathan G. "The Application of 2 Chronicles 7:13-15." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 168 (April-June 2011): 146-61.
Telushkin, Joseph. *Biblical Literacy: The Most Important People, Events, and Ideas of the Hebrew Bible*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1997.
Terry, Charles Sanford. *Bach's Chorals. Part III: The Hymns and Hymn Melodies of the Organ Works*. 3 vols. Cambridge University Press, 1915-1921. Cited 21 October 2013. Online: hhttp://oll.libertyfund. org/title/2057/197525.
Teugels, Lieve M. *Aggadat Bereshit*. Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
Theodorus Studites. *Santi Patris Nostri et Confessoris Theodori Studitis Praepositi Parva Catechesis*. Edited by Emmanuel Auvray. Paris: n.p., 1891.
Toon, Peter. "Introduction." Pages 8-22 in *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Purtian Eschatology 1600 to1660*. Edited by Peter Toon. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd, 1970.
Torrey, Charles C. *The Chronicler's History of Israel: Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah Restored to its Original Form*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954.
Tov, Emmanuel. "The Septuagint." Pages 161-88 in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. Edited by M. Jan Mulder. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.
Tuell, Steven S. *First and Second Chronicles*. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2001.
Turner, Daniel. "Sermon II, 1 Chron. iv—9, 10." Eighteenth Century Collections Online, 1788.
Tuveson, Ernest Lee. *Millennium and Utopia*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1949.
Tzamalikos, Panayiotis. *The Real Cassian Revisited: Monastic Life, Greek Paideia, and Origenism in the Sixth Century*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
Ullendorff, Edward. *Ethiopia and the Bible*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.
Ulrich, Eugene C. *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*. HSM 19; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978.

van der Horst, Pieter W. and Judith H. Newman. *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008.
Van Staalduine-Sulman, Eveline. *The Targum of Samuel*. Studies in the Aramaic Translation of Scripture 1. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
Varner, William. *Ancient Jewish-Christian Dialogues: Athanasius And Zacchaeus, Simon And Theophilus, Timothy And Aquila: Introductions, Texts and Translations. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity*. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005.
Vermes, Geza. The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English. Revised edition. London: Penguin Books, 2004.
Victor Cartennensis. *De paenitentia*. *Clavis partum latinorum*. Edited by E. Dekkers. 2nd ed. Steenbrugis, 1961.
von Rad, Gerhard. *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays*. Translated by E. W. Trueman Dicken. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1966.
Walzer, Michael. *In God's Shadow: Politics in the Hebrew Bible*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.
Wansbrough, Henry. "History and Impact of English Bible Translations." Pages 536-52 in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation, Volume II, From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Edited by Magne Sæbø. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008.
Wellhausen, Julius. *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel.* New York: Meridian Books, 1957. Reprint of *Prolegomena to the History of Israel.* Translated by J. Sutherland Black and A. Enzies, with preface by W. Robertson Smith. Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1885. Translation of *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*. 2nd ed. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1883.
_____. *De Gentibus Et Familiis Judaeis Quae I. Chr. 2. 4. Enumerantur*. Göttingen: Officina Academica Dieterichiana, 1870.
Wilcock, Michael. *The Message of Chronicles: One Church, one Faith, one Lord*. The Bible Speaks Today. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1987.
Wilkin, Robert. "Early Christian Chiliasm, Jewish Messianism, and the Idea of the Holy Land." *The Harvard Theological Review* 79 (January-July 1986): 298-307.
Wilkinson, Bruce. *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life*. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2000.
Williamson, H. G. M. Review of A. Graeme Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings*. *Vetus Testamentum* 46 (1995): 553-55.
_____. *1 and 2 Chronicles*. The New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1982.
_____. *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
Wise, Michael, Martin Abegg, and Edward Cook, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
Wooden, Warren W. *Children's Literature of the English Renaissance*. Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 1986.
Wooten, Deborah A. "The Bible in Children's Literature." Pages 80-83 in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (ed. Diane Goetz Person; New York: Continuum, 2005.
Worth, Roland H., Jr. *Church, Monarch and Bible in Sixteenth Century England: The Political Context of Biblical Translation*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2000.

Wright, David P. "Music and Dance in 2 Samuel 6." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 121/2 (2002): 201-25.

Wright, John W. "Beyond Transcendence and Immanence: The Characterization of the Presence and Activity of God in the Book of Chronicles." Pages 240-67 in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein*. Edited by M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie and Gary N. Knoppers. London: T&T Clark International, 2003.

Wyschogrod, Michael. *The Body of Faith: Judaism as Corporeal Election*. N.Y.: The Seabury Press, 1983.

Yerushalmi, Yoseph Haim. *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982.

Young, Brigham. *Discourses of Brigham Young*: *Second President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. Edited by John A. Widtsoe. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1926.

Zwicker, Steven. *Dryden's Political Poetry.* Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 1972.