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Agents of Exaltation  
Monotheism, Divine Supremacy, and Focal Institutions in the Book of Chronicles

By  
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ThM, Regent College, 2008  
M.C.S., Regent College, 2004  
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An abstract of a dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the  
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## Abstract

### Agents of Exaltation Monotheism, Divine Supremacy, and Focal Institutions in the Book of Chronicles By Matthew J. Lynch

Despite the ceaseless flood of publications on the origins of monotheism, and its alleged “refinement” in the exilic period (especially Deutero-Isaiah), attention to the varieties and functions of monotheistic discourse in the Persian/early Hellenistic period literature is scant by comparison. I contend that this is due, in part, to scholarly assumptions that monotheism necessitated a departure from the particularist commitments to institutions that defined Israel’s life as a nation in the land. Monotheism, it is often thought, completely severed the participatory bonds between divine and human realms. This study questions such assumptions through an investigation of the book of Chronicles, a work with clear monotheistic rhetoric and clear particularist commitments to Israel’s temple, priesthood, and kingship. My primary questions are, *in what kind of theological world does monotheistic rhetoric emerge in the book of Chronicles? How does Chronicles conceive the interrelation and interaction between Yhwh qua supreme deity and Israel’s particularist commitments to the temple, priesthood, and kingship?* In address of these questions, I suggest that (a) Chronicles depicts a highly integrated divine and institutional world, such that (b) expressions of divine supremacy and sole divinity have correlate expressions and manifestations in Israel’s focal institutions (the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king).

The primary aim of this dissertation, therefore, is to elucidate the nature and context of monotheizing processes in the book of Chronicles. By monotheizing processes, I refer to the various means by which Chronicles expresses and creates the conditions for the expression of Yhwh’s oneness and absolute distinctiveness. I contend that exalting and featuring Israel’s focal institutions are key ways that Chronicles exalts Yhwh, and at times, gives expression to Yhwh’s sole divinity. Monotheism and divine exaltation are part of a mutually reinforcing dynamic between Yhwh and Israel’s focal institutions (the temple, priesthood, and kingship). However, this study also attends to ways that Chronicles expresses and navigates tensions between divine supremacy and the institutional flaws that were part of Israel’s history. As such, it also challenges another scholarly perspective that sees monotheism-institutional relationships as only fatal in Israel’s thinking and experience. Chronicles bears witness to a history of *periodic and partial* manifestation of divine grandeur through Israel’s institutions. Chronicles avoids claiming an intrinsic or necessary connection between divine supremacy and Israel’s institutions, but maintains vigorously its ongoing possibility. My study thus recovers a notion of the participation of institutions in divine reality by focusing on the idea that supposedly severed their bond—monotheism.

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Several other individuals offered significant feedback on my dissertation. Dan Cantey read much of my dissertation, and provided a helpful perspective on my work. His friendship is one the greatest gifts I have received during my time at Emory. Special thanks are also in order for Joyce Lowman, who has read and offered editorial comments on much of this work. I also wish to express my gratitude to Benjamin Prill from the University of Göttingen for formatting a great deal of my bibliography.

At the completion of this study on institutions in the book of Chronicles, I am very aware of my indebtedness to several educational and research institutions. Emory University is one of the most supportive and generous institutions in which one can possibly work. Its first-rate faculty, library resources, and financial support have been tremendous. In addition, I am privileged to have worked within the Graduate Division of Religion's Hebrew Bible department. My professors and colleagues shaped me for the better. I also wish to thank the Educational and Cultural Affairs Scholarship committee, the generous support of Dr. Seymour Gitin, and the Albright Institute for funding and facilitating my research in Jerusalem. Emory's competitive funding award provided additional financial support to enable this research abroad. My wonderful colleagues at the institute constantly stimulated my thinking, challenging me always to think about the interrelation of text and realia. I appreciate the helpful feedback from Dr. Mark Smith, who read and commented on portions of my dissertation.

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My parents Wayne and Carol Lynch deserve special recognition for setting me on a path in which I would even consider biblical studies a worthy and meaningful endeavor. They have always encouraged me to think deeply about the bible, my faith, and education. I also wish to offer special thanks to my in-laws, Ron and Lois Raedeke, for their unflinching support of my seemingly endless education.

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Abi Lynch, who created an environment in which writing was a joy, and putting my dissertation aside an even greater joy. Abi has carefully edited and checked every page, footnote, and bibliographic entry in this

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <i>AA</i>     | <i>American Anthropologist</i>   |
| AB            | Anchor Bible   |
| <i>ABD</i>    | <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992                                    |
| ABRL          | Anchor Bible Reference Library   |
| ABS           | Archaeology and Biblical Studies   |
| AGSU          | Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums   |
| AI            | Acta Iranica   |
| <i>AJSL</i>   | <i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i>  |
| <i>ANET</i>   | <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3d ed. Princeton, 1969. |
| ANETS         | Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies   |
| AOAT          | Alter Orient und Altes Testament   |
| AOTC          | Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries  |
| AThANT        | Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments  |
| <i>ATJ</i>    | <i>Ashland Theological Journal</i>   |
| <i>ATR</i>    | <i>Anglican Theological Review</i>   |
| <i>BA</i>     | <i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>  |
| BARIS         | British Archaeological Reports International Series  |
| <i>BASOR</i>  | <i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>   |
| BBB           | Bonner biblische Beiträge  |
| BBET          | Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie  |
| <i>BBR</i>    | <i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>  |
| <i>BCT</i>    | <i>The Bible and Critical Theory</i>   |
| BDB           | Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford, 1907.  |
| BE            | Biblische Enzyklopädie   |
| BEATAJ        | Beiträge zur Erforschung des alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums  |
| BETL          | Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium  |
| BI            | Biblical Interpretation  |
| BibB          | Biblische Beiträge   |
| <i>BIOSCS</i> | <i>Bulletin of the International Organization of Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>                                  |
| BIS           | Biblical Interpretation Series   |
| BJS           | Brown Judaic Studies   |
| BJSUCSD       | Biblical and Judaic Studies of the University of California, San Diego   |
| BKAT          | Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament. Edited by M. Noth and H. W. Wolff   |
| BLS           | Bible and Literature Series  |
| BS            | Bollingen Series   |
| BTS           | Biblich-theologische Studien   |
| BWANT         | Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament  |
| <i>BZ</i>     | <i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>   |
| BZAW          | Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft  |
| CAD           | <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . Chicago, 1956-2010.          |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| CBC           | Cornerstone Biblical Commentary   |
| CBET          | Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology   |
| <i>CBQ</i>    | <i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>  |
| CEA           | <i>Companion Encyclopedia of Archaeology</i> . 2 Vols. Edited by Graeme Barker. London: Routledge, 1998-1999.   |
| CII           | Corpus inscriptionum iranicarum   |
| CM            | Cuneiform Monographs  |
| COS           | <i>The Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by W. W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden, 1997-2003.   |
| CTM           | <i>Concordia Theological Monthly</i>  |
| DCLS          | Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies   |
| DDD           | <i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> . Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. 2d ed. Leiden: Brill, 1999.   |
| DJD           | Discoveries in the Judaean Desert   |
| DSD           | <i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>   |
| EI            | <i>Eretz Israel</i>   |
| <i>EncJud</i> | <i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> . 16 vols. Jerusalem, 1972.  |
| ESEC          | Emory Studies in Early Christianity   |
| FAT           | Forschungen zum Alten Testament   |
| FOTL          | Forms of the Old Testament Literature   |
| FRLANT        | Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments   |
| FTS           | Freiburger Theologische Studien   |
| GKC           | W. Gesenius. <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> . Edited by A. E. Cowley and E. Kautzsch. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Eng. ed., based on the 28 <sup>th</sup> Ger. ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910.                          |
| GOF           | Göttinger Orientforschungen   |
| HALOT         | Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994-1999. |
| HAT           | Handbuch zum Alten Testament  |
| HBT           | <i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>  |
| HCOT          | Historical Commentary on the Old Testament  |
| HSM           | Harvard Semitic Monographs  |
| HTR           | <i>Harvard Theological Review</i>   |
| HUCA          | <i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>  |
| IBHS          | Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor. <i>An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax</i> . Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.   |
| ICC           | International Critical Commentary   |
| IEJ           | <i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>   |
| INR           | <i>Israel Numismatic Research</i>   |
| <i>Int</i>    | <i>Interpretation</i>   |
| JAOS          | <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>   |
| JBL           | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>   |
| JETS          | <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>   |
| JNER          | <i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>  |



|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| JBL           | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>  |
| JHNES         | Johns Hopkins Near Eastern Studies   |
| JHS           | <i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>  |
| JHoS          | <i>Journal of the History of Sexuality</i>   |
| JJS           | <i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>   |
| JNES          | <i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>   |
| JNSL          | <i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>  |
| Joüon-Muraoka | Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka. <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</i> . Revised Edition. Subsidia biblica 27. Pontifical Institute, 2006.   |
| JR            | <i>Journal of Religion</i>   |
| JSJ           | <i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>  |
| JSJSup        | Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism  |
| JSNTSup       | Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series  |
| JSOT          | <i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>  |
| JSOTSup       | Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series  |
| JTS           | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>  |
| KAI           | <i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften</i> . H. Donner and W. Röllig. 2d ed. Wiesbaden, 1966-1969.   |
| KAT           | Kommentar zum Alten Testament  |
| LHB/OTS       | Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies  |
| LS            | <i>Louvain Studies</i>   |
| LSTS          | Library of Second Temple Studies   |
| LTQ           | <i>Lexington Theological Quarterly</i>   |
| LUÅ           | Lunds universitets årsskrift   |
| NEA           | <i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>  |
| NIBC          | New International Bible Commentary   |
| NTOA/SUNT     | Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus/Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments  |
| OBO           | Orbis biblicus et orientalis   |
| OED Online    | <i>Oxford English Dictionary Online</i> . Oxford University Press, 2011. Online: <a href="http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/121673">http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/121673</a> . |
| OBT           | Overtures to Biblical Theology   |
| OIP           | Oriental Institute Publications  |
| OIS           | Oriental Institute Seminars  |
| OLA           | Orientalia lovaniensia analecta  |
| OLB           | Orte und Landschaften der Bibel  |
| Or            | <i>Orientalia</i>  |
| OtSt          | Oudtestamentische Studien  |
| OTL           | Old Testament Library  |
| PA            | Probleme der Ägyptologie   |
| POS           | Pretoria Oriental Series   |
| PSB           | <i>Princeton Seminary Bulletin</i>   |
| QD            | Quaestiones disputatae   |
| QJS           | <i>Quarterly Journal of Speech</i>   |
| RB            | <i>Revue biblique</i>  |
| ResQ          | <i>Restoration Quarterly</i>   |
| RHR           | <i>Revue de l'Histoire des Religions</i>   |
| RIMA          | The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods  |

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| RIME           | The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods  |
| SBFCM          | Studium biblicum franciscanum: Collectio maior  |
| SBLABS         | Society of Biblical Literature Archaeology and Biblical Studies   |
| SBLAIL         | Society of Biblical Literature ancient Israel and its Literature  |
| SBLDS          | Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series  |
| SBLRBS         | Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study   |
| SBLSymS        | Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series   |
| SBS            | Stuttgarter Bibelstudien  |
| SBT            | Studies in Biblical Theology  |
| SFSHJ          | South Florida studies in the history of Judaism   |
| SHCANE         | Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East   |
| SJLA           | Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity  |
| <i>SJOT</i>    | <i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>  |
| SNTSMS         | Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series  |
| SOTBT          | Studies in Old Testament Biblical Theology  |
| SSM            | Studia semitica neerlandica   |
| StBL           | Studies in Biblical Literature  |
| STDJ           | Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah   |
| <i>StOr</i>    | <i>Studia orientalia</i>  |
| STR            | Studies in Theology and Religion  |
| TAD            | Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, <i>Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt: Newly Copied, Edited and Translated into Hebrew and English</i> (4 vols.; Winona Lake, Ind. and Jerusalem, 1986. |
| TBS            | The Biblical Seminar  |
| TCS            | Texts from Cuneiform Sources  |
| TGUOS          | <i>Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society</i>  |
| <i>Transep</i> | <i>Transeuphratène</i>  |
| <i>TWQT</i>    | <i>Theologische Wörterbuch zu dem Qumrantexte</i> . Edited by Josef Fabry, Ulrich Dahmen et al. Bonn: Kohlhammer, 2011-.  |
| UBL            | Ugaritisch-biblische Literatur  |
| UCOP           | University of Cambridge Oriental Publications   |
| <i>VT</i>      | <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>  |
| VTSup          | Supplements to Vetus Testamentum  |
| WBC            | Word Biblical Commentary  |
| Williams       | Ronald J. Williams. <i>Williams' Hebrew Syntax</i> . 3 <sup>rd</sup> ed. Revised and expanded by John C. Beckman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007.   |
| WMANT          | Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament  |
| WUNT           | Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament  |
| YNER           | Yale Near Eastern Researches  |
| <i>ZAVA</i>    | <i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie</i>  |
| <i>ZAW</i>     | <i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>   |
| <i>ZDMG</i>    | <i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>  |
| <i>ZDPV</i>    | <i>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>  |

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This dissertation elucidates monotheizing processes in the book of Chronicles. By monotheizing processes, I refer to the various means by which Chronicles expresses and creates the conditions for the expression of Yhwh's oneness and absolute distinctiveness. My approach to this topic is contextual, in that (a) it examines monotheizing as a sub-species of a larger practice of divine exaltation, and (b) it treats monotheizing as a rhetorical process that operates within Chronicles' highly integrated divine and institutional world. I contend that claims about divine supremacy have important institutional correlates and reflexes in Chronicles claims about the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king.<sup>1</sup> Understanding monotheism within Chronicles, therefore, requires sensitivity to the context in which such notions take shape and expression.

In short, *this dissertation is a contextual analysis of monotheizing processes within the book of Chronicles*. For Chronicles, Israel's focal institutions participate variously in Yhwh's oneness and exalted status. Exalting and featuring the temple, priesthood, and king are ways that Chronicles exalts Yhwh. Monotheism and divine exaltation are part of a mutually reinforcing

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<sup>1</sup> Significant texts treated in this dissertation include 1 Chr 16:25-26; 17:20a; 17:26; 29:11-12; 2 Chr 2:4[5]; 6:14a; 13:9bc; 15:3; 20:6; 32:19; 33:13.

dynamic between Yhwh and Israel's focal institutions (the temple, priesthood, and kingship). Attending to the configuration of Chronicles' tightly woven divine-institutional world reveals a sustained effort to distinguish and bolster the *few, centralized* institutions endowed with the task of mediating and expressing divine reality. At times, moreover, one may speak of a monotheistic configuration of divine and institutional reality. That is, Yhwh's sole divinity translates into the idea that the temple, priesthood, and king were utterly unique.

My study thus examines (a) monotheizing as a process of divine exaltation, (b) the shape of divine and institutional interactions in the book of Chronicles, (c) and ways that those institutions convey or embody Yhwh's grandeur and power. I suggest that attending to the interaction between divine and institutional reality sheds light on the book's forms of theological "reasoning," and the ways that Chronicles conceives of divinity. For Chronicles, one could hardly speak of God without speaking of the institutional forms in which he is known and experienced. While not all the exalted Yhwh-language treated in this dissertation impinges directly on the question of monotheism, Yhwh's categorical distinctiveness (as I define monotheism later) captures an important aspect of Chronicles' struggle to exalt Yhwh, and becomes visible in the book's drive to exalt the one temple, one cult, and one king. Chronicles' divine-institutional configuration exhibits a propensity toward unity (oneness) and uniqueness that occasionally spills over into monotheistic claims.

My approach to the topic of monotheism, therefore, accounts for the fact that establishing "monotheism" is not Chronicles' explicit rhetorical aim. Nevertheless, one may still speak of a broad process of distinguishing Yhwh and his "proxy" institutions that exhibits monotheizing tendencies and trajectories. Indeed, Chronicles' drive toward unified, exalted, institutions that are bound to Yhwh sets the book on a path in which strong claims concerning Yhwh's absolute supremacy easily take shape. The exaltation of Israel's "focal"

institutions is part of Chronicles' broader effort to exalt Yhwh in absolute terms. My approach to the study of monotheism in Chronicles thus attempts to recognize the continuum between distinguishing Yhwh (by exalting him) and sharpening the distinction in absolute terms, and the fact that texts engage in a range of rhetorical strategies for exalting Yhwh.

I begin my study by reviewing scholarship on monotheism, which reveals important points of tension and disagreement within biblical scholarship regarding the way that exalted claims about Yhwh purportedly interacted with the “particularities” of Israel’s life (such as institutions). In this first section, I suggest the need to study the shape of monotheism in Chronicles. After doing so, I delineate my thesis in more detail (section II) and review critically the several studies on monotheism in Chronicles (section III). The next sections lay further groundwork for my study by clarifying my use of the word “monotheism” (section IV), and then offering a broad-based and integrated approach to understanding (a) biblical monotheism and (b) divine-institutional relationships that I apply to Chronicles (section V). In this portion of the introduction, I situate my focus on One-God theology within the larger field of divine exaltation in Chronicles. Finally, sections VI and VII explain the literary object of my study and the historical context(s) in which I situate my study, before discussing the limitations (VIII) and shape (IX) of this dissertation.

## I. DIVINE-INSTITUTIONAL INTERACTIONS AND THE STUDY OF MONOTHEISM

Interest in the subject of monotheism in the Hebrew Bible and later Jewish and Christian literature shows no signs of fatigue. A quick survey of secondary literature reveals numerous monographs, edited volumes, and popular works on the subject within the last

decade alone.<sup>2</sup> However, attention to monotheism in biblical literature of the Persian and early Hellenistic periods is scant by comparison.<sup>3</sup> This period postdates what many biblical scholars consider the Hebrew Bible's consummate expression of monotheism, namely, Deutero-Isaiah. Scholarship addressing monotheism in periods that postdate Deutero-Isaiah does not pick up again until literature addressing the first-century, when scholarly interests shift toward Judaism's tolerance for the veneration of angels within its monotheistic framework,<sup>4</sup> persistent polytheistic or syncretistic trends,<sup>5</sup> precursors to early Jewish Christology,<sup>6</sup> and possible Greek influences on Jewish monotheism.<sup>7</sup> Inattention to

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<sup>2</sup> E.g., most recently, Ulrich Mell and Sebastian Grätz, eds., *Der eine Gott und die Geschichte der Völker: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus* (BTS 123; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Theologie, 2011); Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, eds., *One God-One Cult-One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives* (BZAW 405; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010); André Lemaire, *The Birth of Monotheism: The Rise and Disappearance of Yahwism* (trans. Jack Meinhardt; Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2007); Robert Wright, *The Evolution of God* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Possible exceptions include works treating monotheism in Israel's priestly literature, and those dealing with Zoroastrianism's possible influence on Israelite monotheism. On the former, see Konrad Schmid, "Monotheistic Arguments in the Priestly Texts of the Hebrew Bible," in *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*, Proceedings of a conference held in Feb. 2007 at Princeton University (ed. Beate Pongratz-Leisten; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 271-89; Mark S. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 167-72; Sven Petry *Die Entgrenzung Yhwbs: Monolatrie, Bilderverbot und Monotheismus im Deuteronomium, in Deuteronesaja und im Ezechielbuch* (FAT 2/27; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); Nathan MacDonald, *The Many Faces of Monotheism* (forthcoming).

On the possible Persian "matrix" of monotheism, see Thomas L. Thompson, "The Intellectual Matrix of Early Biblical Narrative: Inclusive Monotheism in Persian Period Palestine," in *The Triumph of Elohym: From Yahwisms to Judaisms* (ed. Diana Vikander Edelman; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 107-24; Gregor Ahn, "Schöpfergott und Monotheismus: Systematische Implikationen der neueren Gatha-Exegese," in *"Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf": Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient. Festschrift für Oswald Loretz zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres mit Beiträgen von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen* (ed. M. Dietrich and I. Kottsieper; AOAT 250; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998), 15-26; Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Cosmological and Protological Language of Isaiah 40-55," *CBQ* 73 (2011):493-510.

<sup>4</sup> Though admittedly, these studies deal with earlier texts like *1 En.*, they do so with an eye toward developments in the first century. See, e.g., Darina Staudt, *Der eine und einzige Gott: Monotheistische Formeln im Urchristentum und ihre Vorgeschichte bei Griechen und Juden* (NTOA/SUNT 80; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011); Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology: A Study in Early Judaism and in the Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (WUNT 2/70; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995); Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North, eds., *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism* (JSNTSup 263; London: T & T Clark, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Michael S. Heiser, "The Divine Council in Late Canonical and Noncanonical Second Temple Jewish Literature," (PhD diss., The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, Gladys S. Lewis, eds., *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (Boston: Brill, 1999); Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Simo Parpola, "The Assyrian Tree of Life: Tracing the Origins of Jewish Monotheism and Greek Philosophy," *JNES* 52 (1993): 161-208.

monotheism in the late biblical period is partially attributable to the belief that after Deutero-Isaiah, monotheism began the rather uninteresting process of diffusion throughout Judaism until it was simply accepted by the majority, sometime during the late Hellenistic or Roman periods.<sup>8</sup>

Despite this relative inattention to monotheism in the late biblical period<sup>9</sup> from Hebrew Bible scholars, who instead show remarkable interest in the “origins” and “culmination” of monotheism,<sup>10</sup> and from scholars of early Judaism and Christianity, the late biblical period, and the book of Chronicles in particular, possess theological voices that deserve attention. Several scholars have noted this deficiency in the study of monotheism, calling for recognition of the distinct shape(s) of monotheism(s) in the Persian and Hellenistic periods.<sup>11</sup> However, much work remains in order to obtain a picture of the distinctiveness and diversity of monotheism in the late biblical period.

A potentially fruitful line of inquiry, which I pursue in the book of Chronicles, is to explore the theological interaction between Israel’s rhetoric about Yhwh’s sole divinity and other aspects of Israelite religious and social experience, including its view on the nations,

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<sup>8</sup> Grasping the extent of monotheism’s diffusion in the early Jewish period is difficult. One must take into account the full scope of literary, archaeological, and material evidence from the Persian and Hellenistic periods, and also consider factors such as “official” vs. “popular” religion, regional variations, differences between *golah* and indigenous Judaism (or the right mix thereof), and the possibility of contested notions of what counts as belief in, or adherence to, Yhwh as the one God. Surprisingly, scholarship on Israelite monotheism focuses almost entirely on the reasons for monotheism’s emergence and existence as an idea (Lemaire, *The Birth of Monotheism*; Jan Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010]) or archaeological fact (Ephraim Stern, “From Many Gods to the One God: The Archaeological Evidence,” in *One God-One Cult-One Nation*, 395-403), but not the reasons for its *success as a diffused movement*, even though its diffusion constitutes Jewish monotheism’s historical distinctiveness.

<sup>9</sup> I.e., the Persian and early Hellenistic periods.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, *Origins*; Herbert Niehr, *Der höchste Gott, Alttestamentlicher JHWH-Glaube im Kontext syrisch-kanaanäischer Religion des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.* (BZAO 190; Berlin, 1990); Robert K. Gnuse, *No Other Gods: Emergent Monotheism in Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Lemaire, *Birth of Monotheism*; Johannes C. de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism: The Roots of Israelite Monotheism* (rev. ed.; BETL XCI; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> Smith, *Origins*, 167-78; Fritz Stolz, *Einführung in den biblischen Monotheismus* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1996), 187-203; In addition, one may note the Sofja-Kovalevskaja “Early Jewish Monotheisms” Forschungsgruppe spearheaded by Nathan MacDonald at the University of Göttingen, Germany, which aims to examine from multiple angles the diversity of monotheism in this early Jewish period.

institutions, and life in the land. The purpose of such an inquiry is to move beyond attempts to determine only whether texts from the late biblical period were monotheistic or not by describing the place and purpose of monotheistic discourse within a given textual “world.” Attention to Israel’s belief in, and rhetoric about, its preeminent God requires simultaneous attention to the constellation of values, assumptions, and literary purposes within which this belief and rhetoric took shape. As I argue regarding Chronicles, one gains the fullest understanding of the book’s conception of divine oneness and supremacy by attending to the interaction between Yhwh and the core institutions that dominate and unify the book’s narrative world. As such, *this study examines the institutional manifestations of, and interactions with, divine oneness and exaltation in Chronicles.*

In addition to assumptions that Deutero-Isaiah is monotheism’s climactic moment in the Hebrew Bible, and possible anti-Jewish (or anti-Catholic) predispositions in biblical scholarship,<sup>12</sup> one might also explain the relative neglect of such theological interactions in terms of one scholarly perspective that sees exile as the social precondition of monotheism. Shorn of its parochial, cultic, and nationalist “baggage,” some suggest that the exile forced Israel to reconceptualize its deity in universalistic terms. Klaus Koch refers to the “trans-national” significance of Yhwh that emerged among the classical prophets, which paved the way for Deutero-Isaiah’s monotheism. Koch does not specify what he means by “trans-national,” though one suspects he means something akin to “de-nationalized.” Indeed, Koch writes that

[p]olytheistic gods are essentially particular and regional. Because they are socialized in line with the community that worships them, they are dismissive, if not downright hostile, towards everything impure and foreign . . . Consequential monotheism, by contrast, presupposes a deity accessible in all places and to all people. This entails an ethics that applies in equal measure to all,

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<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., Lou H. Siberman, “Wellhausen and Judaism,” *Semeia* 25 (1982):75-82.



provided the monotheistic horizon is not *restricted by a closed society of the elect*. The more exclusive the deity, the more inclusive for humankind.<sup>13</sup>

Koch writes that Deutero-Isaiah's monotheism is the "result of a long history of religious experience and mental wrestling over the true essence of divinity and its relation to human life."<sup>14</sup> Monotheism thus transcends national and historical restrictions by assuming an ideational form. Ronald Clements echoes Koch's sentiments:

By shedding its earlier national limitations, and the destructive intolerance which these brought, the biblical doctrine of God could accommodate the demands of a doctrine of a universal creation and of a wisdom that embraced all humankind.<sup>15</sup>

Koch's and Clements' descriptions sit uneasily with the realities of post-exilic Judaism, including the concerns for purity present in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles, as well as the diminished interest in the plight of the nations in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles when compared with Deutero-Isaiah. There is no indication that post-exilic Judaism saw an inherent conflict between one-God theology and particularist commitments to the law, the temple, the priesthood, the land, the Davidic line, and so on. To explain this apparent coexistence of monotheism and particularism in the post-exilic period, Rainer Albertz speaks of a "difficulty in detaching ... from long accustomed trains of thought and familiar patterns of religious conceptuality" even though monotheism entailed "an opening up of Yahweh religion toward universalism." According to Albertz, these trains of thought and religious conceptions were formed "in the circles of those engaged in the service of the Jerusalem temple with their nationalistic disposition," and thus had difficulty moving toward monotheism's true universalistic openness.<sup>16</sup> André Lemaire suggests that "old provincial

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<sup>13</sup> Klaus Koch, "Monotheismus als Sündenbock?" in *Mosaische Unterscheidung: oder der Preis der Monotheismus* (Munich/ Vienna: Carl Hanser Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, 2003), 221-38 [229-30], cited by Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism*, 16. Emphasis mine.

<sup>14</sup> Klaus Koch, "Ugaritic Polytheism and Hebrew Monotheism in Isaiah 40-55," in *The God of Israel* (ed. Robert P. Gordon; UCOP 64; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 205-228 [224].

<sup>15</sup> Ronald E. Clements, "Monotheism and the God of many names," in *The God of Israel*, 47-59 [58-59].

<sup>16</sup> Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period: Volume II: From the Exile to the Maccabees* (trans. John Bowden; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 420.

Yahwism” persisted alongside the “new universal Yahwism” of Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>17</sup> But by the first century, he argues, Yahwism eventually died out and was replaced by worship of the “God of Heaven,” the God of universal religion. For Lemaire, the destruction of the second temple marked the complete end of that “old provincial Yahwism.” Yahwism could thus complete the process of moving “to other peoples ... outside the old territories of Israel and Judah, and disappeared as a particular form of worship.” In sum, “Yahwism ... fulfilled its historical role by giving birth to universal monotheism.”<sup>18</sup> The universality of monotheism eventually pushed out the particulars of Yahwism.<sup>19</sup>

Implicit in these assessments is a teleology, according to which monotheism evolved along a trajectory that led inevitably beyond particularism, or at least, the elements of “national” life that restricted its expression. This view assumes a basic conflict between monotheism and particularism. The exile provided the ideal seedbed for monotheism because it enabled Israel to dissociate itself from particularist preoccupations like kingship, the land, and the temple system, and to rethink divinity. Deutero-Isaiah’s landless historical context fostered a universal theology. The post-exilic period, so the argument suggests, marks a period wherein the implications of exilic monotheism were in a restrictive holding pattern until the seeds of Deutero-Isaiah’s *universal* monotheism broke the bonds of the particular. As such, the possibility of mutual interactions between Yhwh’s preeminence and the “elect” institutions that dominate a book like Chronicles could only be conflictual.

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<sup>17</sup> André Lemaire, *The Birth of Monotheism*, 112.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>19</sup> Of course, the opposite has been argued. Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism*, argues that monotheism results in certain kinds of intolerances. My contention is that neither position is an inevitable conclusion, and that the interactions between particular commitments (e.g., nationalism, election, adherence to particular institutions, etc.) and monotheism are more complex and varied in the biblical material. For a balanced word on this topic, see John Goldingay (*Old Testament Theology: Volume Two: Israel's Faith* [Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2006], 40).

Approaching divine-institutional relationships from a different angle, Baruch Halpern traces the emergence of “radical monotheism” to a fundamental breakdown in Israelite social structures, traditional iconism, ritual patterns, and traditional temple worship.<sup>20</sup> Sennacherib’s destruction of the Israelite and Judean countryside along with the aniconic reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah weakened these traditional structures such that the emergence of individualism, monotheism, and various other “monisms” became possible in the late monarchic and exilic periods. As Israel moved from a “traditional to literate [i.e., literary]” culture, it abandoned its traditional institutions and embraced notions of one God, aniconism, and the “book.”<sup>21</sup> Building on Halpern’s work, Mark Smith hypothesizes similarly that the breakdown of Israel’s social structures during the late monarchic and into the exilic period, led to a corresponding breakdown in the divine family:

A culture with a diminished lineage system, one less embedded in traditional family patrimonies due to societal changes in the eighth through sixth centuries, might be more predisposed both to hold to individual human accountability for behavior and to see an individual deity accountable for the cosmos. ... Accordingly, later Israelite monotheism was denuded of the divine family, perhaps reflecting Israel’s weakening family lineages and patrimonies.<sup>22</sup>

Israel’s defeats at the hands of major world empires, its “political and social reduction ... loss of Judean kingship ... [and] loss of identity as a nation” prompted the nation to extend its “understanding of its deity’s mastery of the world even as the nation was being

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<sup>20</sup> Baruch Halpern, “Jerusalem and the Lineages in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century BCE: Kinship and the Rise of Individual Moral Liability,” in *Law and Ideology in Monarchic Israel* (JSOTSup 124; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 11-107; repr. in *From Gods to God: The Dynamics of Iron Age Cosmologies* (ed. Matthew J. Adams; FAT 1/63; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 339-424 [415, cf. also pg. 424]. One wonders if Halpern oversteps the evidence in suggesting that “Hezekiah’s congeries [in the royal court] struggled not for subsistence or the accumulation of wealth, but for influence. In this struggle, lineage mates were the danger: half-brothers were rivals, cousins competitors, affinals potential foes. Hezekiah’s courtiers expressed their rapacity in the rasp of *Realpolitik*.” See also Baruch Halpern, “Sybil, or the Two Nations? Alienation, Archaism, and the Elite Redefinition of Traditional Culture in Judah in the 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Centuries BCE,” in *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference* (ed. Jerrold S. Cooper and Glenn M. Schwarz; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 291-338; Cf. Ronald Simkins (“Family in the Political Economy of Monarchic Judah,” *BCT* 1/1 [2004]: 1-17), who argues that the extended family became important again within the post-exilic period. For a study on the *persistence* of traditional family structures and a strong centralized state, see Daniel M. Master, “State Formation Theory and the Kingdom of Ancient Israel,” *JNES* 60/2 (2001):117-31.

<sup>21</sup> Halpern, “Jerusalem and the Lineages,” 412-15.

<sup>22</sup> Smith, *Origins*, 164. See Halpern, “Jerusalem and the Lineages in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century BCE,” 339-424.

reduced.”<sup>23</sup> Smith also contends that “[m]onotheistic claims made sense in a world where political boundaries or institutions no longer offered any middle ground.”<sup>24</sup> In other words, the devastation of Israel’s socio-political structures provided the conditions necessary for, or at least conducive to, the emergence of monotheism.<sup>25</sup>

However, there are several problems with the aforementioned perspectives. First, there is no reason to assume that monotheism requires or was prompted by the dissolution of particularist societal elements. Even Deutero-Isaiah attests to Israel’s resolute commitment to the land and its central institutions, even while it advances strong monotheistic rhetoric.<sup>26</sup> For example, the prophet asserts that Yhwh’s servant Cyrus would rebuild Jerusalem and its temple (44:24-28) and that Yhwh’s salvation would become established “in Zion” (46:13). Israel’s exilic literature attests to the convergence of particularist commitments and monotheistic expressions.<sup>27</sup> Second, and even more problematic for those who would divide monotheism from “provincial Yahwism,” is the simple fact that Judeans did return to the land to join the many who remained in seeking to re-organize society around the institutions that endured exile. Though configuring those institutions differently, many remained committed to Israel’s central institutions (e.g., the temple, priesthood, and kingship) while continuing to advance monotheistic rhetoric (e.g., Neh 9:6; 1 Chr 16:8-36). Monotheistic rhetoric continued to take shape within religious frameworks committed to the uniqueness of Yhwh’s relationship with Israel, its institutions, and its land. Monotheism and particularism interacted in various ways in the exilic and post-

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<sup>23</sup> Smith, *Origins*, 165.

<sup>24</sup> Smith, *Origins*, 193.

<sup>25</sup> Smith also traces a move from the land and political institutions to the book (*Origins*, 194). Halpern, “Jerusalem and the Lineages,” 404, argued earlier that the transition to a “literate culture” in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. coincided with a critique of “icons ... rituals ... the temple ... [and] subordinate gods.”

<sup>26</sup> See Nathan MacDonald, “Monotheism and Isaiah,” in *Interpretation of Isaiah*. (ed. H.G.M. Williamson and D. Firth; Leicester: IVP, 2009), 43-61 [46]; Hywel Clifford, “Deutero-Isaiah and Monotheism,” in *Prophecy and Prophets in Ancient Israel* (John Day ed.; New York/London: T & T Clark, 2010), 267-89.

<sup>27</sup> I treat the expressions, or “modes,” of monotheism in section V below.

exilic periods. Though not as explicitly (or abstractly) as in Josephus' formulation—"One temple of the one God—for like is always attracted to like—common to all people as belonging to the common God of all"<sup>28</sup>—biblical writers like the Chronicler nonetheless saw congruency between divine supremacy and the assertion of particular institutions that deserves attention. As Solomon states, "The temple that I build will be supreme, for our God is supreme above all the gods" (2 Chr 2:4[5]).<sup>29</sup> This congruency also applies to statements about Yhwh's sole divinity (1 Chr 17:19-27//2 Sam 7:21-29).

Nonetheless, the aforementioned studies raise questions that require deeper probing. If the exile proved formative in the articulation of monotheism, did the return to the land modify the way in which Israel espoused or conceptualized monotheism or divine supremacy?<sup>30</sup> If so, what prompted such modifications? How did the returnees negotiate their understanding of Yhwh's sole divinity and their commitments to the land, temple, priesthood, and other "provincial" concerns? Though a comprehensive answer to these questions is beyond the scope of the present study, I propose one step toward addressing such questions by taking an explicitly post-exilic corpus with clear monotheistic rhetoric *and* obvious commitments to "provincial" aspects of life in Yehud in order to explore their interaction. It is in this vein that the book of Chronicles warrants particular attention.

First, Chronicles allows one to compare Yhwh-exaltation and monotheistic discourse within two bodies of literature that share the same genre and subject matter. As such, Chronicles enables one to detect rhetorical or conceptual shifts between bodies of literature

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<sup>28</sup> *Ag. Ap.* 2:193. Translation by John M. G. Barclay, *Against Apion* (Vol. 10 of *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*; ed. Steve Mason; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 279-80.

<sup>29</sup> Translation mine, and throughout the dissertation, except where noted otherwise. In ch. 2, I address how this verse assumes that the gods are really non-gods by evoking Ps 135:5.

<sup>30</sup> My reason for investigating supremacy, and not just monotheism, is the contention that monotheism is heightened rhetoric about Yhwh's supremacy, and not an altogether new form of assertion. Monotheism is one extension of the claim that Yhwh is altogether supreme, though not necessarily a conscious extension.

that took shape in the exilic and post-exilic periods. Chronicles allows for regular comparison with a work marked by the experience of exile—namely, the Deuteronomistic History (hereafter DH).<sup>31</sup> In this sense, a study of Chronicles offers an opportunity for investigation not available in other post-exilic literature (for example Ezra-Nehemiah, and to some extent P). Of course, the DH is also marked by the experience of the monarchy, which allows for further comparison of monotheizing discourse before and after the exile.<sup>32</sup> Second, Chronicles maintains a clear focus on institutions (especially the temple, priesthood, and kingship), and as such allows one to explore one way that post-exilic Judeans negotiated exalted claims about Yhwh that were forged and inflected during exile with overwhelmingly

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<sup>31</sup> While the DH may have been redacted into the post-exilic period, I nonetheless maintain that it bears the distinctive marks of Israel's exilic and pre-exilic experiences, and that large portions of this work were available to Chr. It is nevertheless important to exercise caution in ascribing too much intention to Chr's revision of Sam-Kgs because of the possibility that the author(s) of Chr employed extra-biblical sources or earlier literary editions of Sam-Kgs. It is clear in some cases that Chr used a version of Sam that differs from MT Sam, as is of the Palestinian "text type" more akin to LXX Sam or 4QSam<sup>a</sup>, on which see Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus* (HSM 19; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978); Moreover, it appears that Chr used a version of Kgs more akin to the MT, on which, see Steven L. McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History* (HSM 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985).

Cf. also the theory that where MT Chr and MT Sam-Kgs differ, they reflect later expansions of a shared original. See A. Graeme Auld, *Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994); Cf. Gary N. Knoppers, review of A. Graeme Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings*, *ATJ* 27 (1995):118-21; cf. also Steven L. McKenzie, "The Chronicler as Redactor," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1999), 70-90; Auld responds to McKenzie in, "What Was the Main Source of the Book of Chronicles?" in *The Chronicler as Author*, 91-100; A recent elaboration of Auld's thesis can be found in the work of Raymond R. Person, Jr. *The Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles: Scribal Works in an Oral World* (SBLAIL 6; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2010).

For additional studies on textual issues pertaining to Chr and its sources, and especially the relationship of MT Sam-Kgs to LXX Sam-Kgs, see Dominique Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, vol. 1 *Josué, Juges, Ruth, Samuel, Rois, Chroniques, Esdras, Nébémie, Esther* (OBO 50/1; Fribourg/Göttingen, 1982); Julio C. Treballe Barrera, "Kings (MT/LXX) and Chronicles: the Double and Triple Textual Tradition," in *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A. Graeme Auld* (ed. R. Rezetko, T. H. Lim, and W. B. Aucker; VTSup 113; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 483-501; Steven L. McKenzie, "1 Kings 8: A Sample Study into the Texts of Kings Used by the Chronicler and Translated by the Old Greek," *BIOSS* 19 (1986):15-34; Gillis Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint, II. Chronicles* (LUÅ 44/5; Lund: Gleerup, 1946); idem, *Synoptic Studies in the Old Testament* (Lund: Gleerup, 1948); cf. James D. Shenkel ("A Comparative Study of the Synoptic Parallels in I Paraleipomena and I-II Reigns," *HTR* 62 [1969]: 63-85) who notes how Paral. 1 is heavily dependent on 3 Reg, and that it precedes the *kaige* recension; T. M. Law, "How Not to Use 3 Reigns: A Plea to Scholars of the Books of Kings," *VT* 61 (2011): 280-97.

<sup>32</sup> According to Juha Pakkala ("The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," *SJOT* 21:2 (2007):159-178), however, the explicitly monotheistic texts in the Deuteronomistic History (hereafter DH) are post-exilic (Deut 4:32-40; 7:7-11; 2 Sam 7:22-29; 1 Kgs 8:54-61; 18:21-40 and 2 Kgs 19:15-19). Pakkala attributes all six monotheistic passages in DH to the latest "nomistic," or post-nomistic, redactor. See my discussion in the appendix.

“provincial” commitments that defined their existence. While Samuel and Kings certainly take an interest in the founding of the temple and cultic reforms, the temple dominates Chronicles’ narrative world, and the priesthood attracts unprecedented attention.<sup>33</sup> A study of the constructive interaction between these institutions and one-God theology warrants investigation. Third, Chronicles bears witness to distinct ways of expressing Yhwh’s supremacy and sole divinity vis-à-vis its primary sources Samuel and Kings.<sup>34</sup> I do not suggest that Chronicles simply introduces monotheism to Israel’s historical literature, or that it simply increases the number of monotheistic claims. Indeed, there is ample evidence that monotheistic ideology was thoroughly embedded within the final form of the DH.<sup>35</sup> Rather, I contend that monotheism in Chronicles fosters a different divine-institutional configuration than one finds in Samuel-Kings. In particular, Chronicles emphasizes the temple as the organizing embodiment of divine supremacy, with the king and priesthood oriented toward its augmentation. As such, Chronicles offers an important witness to the conceptual unification of these institutions within early Judaism, and, as I will argue, an important witness to the theological system undergirding beliefs concerning the place of the temple, priesthood, and royalist hopes within post-exilic Jewish society.<sup>36</sup> I will discuss my particular approach to understanding monotheizing as a process that (a) was embedded

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<sup>33</sup> For a comparative study on the temple in Sam-Kgs and Chr, see Steven J. Schweitzer, “The Temple in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles,” in *Rewriting Biblical History: Essays on Chronicles and Ben Sira in Honor of Pancratius C. Beentjes* (ed. Jeremy Corley and Harm van Grol; DCLS 7; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 123-38. Kingship, as I argue, does not loom larger in Chr, only differently.

<sup>34</sup> On the relationship between Chr and Sam-Kgs, see fn. 31 above. Throughout this dissertation, I treat text-critical and ideological issues as they arise in connection with differences between the two histories.

<sup>35</sup> Pakkala, “The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History”; idem, *Intolerant Monolatry in the Deuteronomistic History* (PFES 76; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> If the temple did not yet form the religious center of Judaism when Chr was written, Chr certainly represents an argument in its favor. On the texts of Sam-Kgs available to the Chronicler, see Leslie C. Allen, *The Greek Chronicles: The Relation of the Septuagint of I and II Chronicles to the Masoretic Text, Part 1: The Translator’s Craft* (VTSup 25; Leiden: Brill, 1974); idem, *The Greek Chronicles: The Relation of the Septuagint of I and II Chronicles to the Masoretic Text, Part 2: Textual Criticism* (VTSup 27; Leiden: Brill, 1974); McKenzie, *The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History*.

within a larger discourse of divine exaltation, and (b) that interacted significantly with institutional realities in section V below.

## II. THESIS QUESTIONS AND STATEMENT

This dissertation explores the interrelation of divine and institutional reality in Chronicles as a backdrop for understanding the coordination of claims about Yhwh's exalted and sole divinity and the exaltation of Israel's central institutions. My dissertation thus aims to answer the questions, *in what kind of theological world does monotheistic rhetoric emerge in the book of Chronicles? How does Chronicles conceive the interrelation and interaction between Yhwh qua supreme deity and Israel's commitments to the temple, priesthood, and kingship?* In address these questions, I suggest (a) that Chronicles depicts a highly integrated divine and institutional world, such that (b) expressions of divine supremacy and sole divinity have correlate expressions and manifestations in and through Israel's focal institutions. Understanding the "shape" and impact of monotheism in Chronicles, therefore, requires the elucidation of both dimensions, and ultimately, an understanding of the way that Chronicles constructs its world theologically. I contend that Chronicles exhibits consistent efforts to *forge bonds* between Yhwh and Israel's focal institutions, *forge divisions* between the institutions and non-Yahwistic institutions, and *exalt* those institutions as instantiations of Yhwh's own supremacy. As such, Chronicles engages in a struggle to "monotheize"<sup>37</sup> and exalt Yhwh by exalting and distinguishing the institutions through which he is known—the temple, priesthood, and kingship. Broadly speaking, the structural, functional, and qualitative similarity between Yhwh and these institutions provides Chronicles with tangible analogies, or realities, for

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<sup>37</sup> James A. Sanders (*Canon and Community* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 52) uses the language of "monotheizing" to describe a "struggle within and against polytheistic contexts to affirm God's oneness" (Cited in Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 84-85). Sanders points out that monotheizing does not denote evolution, but rather an ongoing effort to assert divine unity that continues "into the present day."



rendering the experience of divine power and grandeur.<sup>38</sup> Chronicles translates divine preeminence in and through the institutions central to Israel throughout its history, and which remained central to early Jewish realities and hopes in the post-exilic period.

Rhetorically, this divine-institutional exaltation functioned as part of what one might call Chronicles' "doxological" history of Israel.<sup>39</sup> Chronicles' doxology renders Yhwh praise by simultaneously exalting the visible instruments of Yhwh's exceeding power and fidelity—the temple, the priesthood, and the Davidic king. However, Chronicles cannot simply "praise the present," especially if one considers the dire state of life in the post-exilic period. Rather, Chronicles must turn to the past in order to construct its argument concerning the location and nature of divine power in the present, and to cast its unified vision. As such, Chronicles is a constructive response to the rift between the pre- and post-exilic experience of divine power. By doing so, Chronicles advances a vision for the organization of "all Israel" around the institutions that mediate divine power and blessings, offering Israel the possibility of an encounter with the powerful God of the past, and of a society that sustains itself through ongoing participation in worship (i.e., connection to that power).<sup>40</sup>

### III. A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON MONOTHEISM IN CHRONICLES

Only a few studies have treated monotheism in Chronicles, only in passing, and without attention to Chronicles' rhetorical aims. Sara Japhet finds traces of the "monotheistic idea" in Chronicles. And while she argues that the book presupposes

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<sup>38</sup> At points in the book, however, the "analogy" breaks down, requiring other means of asserting and protecting divine preeminence and sole divinity.

<sup>39</sup> Others have referred to Chr's "theocentric historiography," e.g., Christian Frevel, "Die Elimination der Göttin aus dem Weltbild des Chronisten," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 263-71 [264]. Schweitzer ("The Temple in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles," 125) says that "with this focus on the temple and its operation, Chronicles becomes a cultic history rather than a royal one."

<sup>40</sup> On the importance of "all Israel" for Chr, see H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

monotheism, it only offers one “true expression of monotheism”: “O Lord, there is none like you, and there is no other God but you, as we have always heard” (1 Chr 17:20). Yet, Japhet contends (sharing in the view of R. Albertz) that even this verse and others like it (e.g., 1 Chr 16:26) preserve “older” formulations, which compared Yhwh to other deities, alongside newer claims (17:20b; 16:25), which came about “even after the monotheistic idea was formulated in a clear-cut and uncompromising manner.”<sup>41</sup> The older “popular” outlook, wherein other deities were thought to exist, persists in the book. She maintains that the tension between these views was probably not perceived. Since Chronicles’ only clear-cut expression of the “monotheistic idea” occurs in a text it borrows from Samuel (1 Chr 17:20// 2 Sam 7:22), “the Chronicler has not provided us with an unequivocal affirmation of the monotheistic idea.” To explain Chronicles’ putative silence, Japhet suggests that the book “contains historiography, not religious dogma.”<sup>42</sup> Japhet’s claim that the Chronicler presupposes monotheism, and her argument that the “monotheistic idea” is latent, or only subtly present amidst “older” formulations in the book (e.g., 2 Chr 25:15), suggests that monotheism leaves little clear impact on the book’s overall shape. One must accept the premise without any evidence. As Japhet argues, the book contains very little “religious polemic” or interest in “the nations” and “reforming the world,” ideas that she sees as intrinsic to a monotheistic worldview.<sup>43</sup>

Other than Japhet’s study, one may note the studies of Joel Weinberg and Christian Frevel on the names for Israel’s God and the suppression of Asherah in Chronicles.<sup>44</sup>

Weinberg argues that Chronicles exhibits a “conscious, deliberate” suppression of several

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<sup>41</sup> Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles its Place in Biblical Thought* (BEATAJ 9; New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 44.

<sup>42</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 45.

<sup>43</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 53.

<sup>44</sup> Joel P. Weinberg, “Gott im Weltbild des Chronisten: Die vom Chronisten verschwiegenen Gottesnamen,” *ZAW* 100 (1988): 170-189; Frevel, “Die Elimination der Göttin.”

names of God that appear throughout the biblical corpus.<sup>45</sup> These include אל, אל שדי, אל, אל, עליון, אל עולם, אדון/אדני, and אביר. Weinberg argues that Chronicles suppresses these theonyms because of their association with the world of mythology and divine corporeality.<sup>46</sup> Such associations “contradict” the demythologizing world of Chronicles, which sought to detach the world of the profane from the sacred.<sup>47</sup> While the relative absence of such terms in Chronicles (and Ezr-Neh) is notable, Weinberg does not discuss the near absence of most of these terms (except אדון/אדני) in the Deuteronomistic corpus, in which case most omissions by Chronicles would not would not be characteristic of the Chronicler’s perspective. To explain the absence of אדון/אדני, Weinberg argues that it contradicted the Chronicler’s preference for a “community” conception of the relationship between God and humans. The term אדון/אדני implies the oppositions, “master-slave” and “ruler-subject.”<sup>48</sup> Weinberg and Frevel both link this tendency of Chronicles to its “monotheistic” background and concept of a “theocentric historiography,”<sup>49</sup> though they offer no proof or elucidation of the book’s monotheistic character.<sup>50</sup>

Frevel argues that Chronicles deliberately suppressed references to the goddess Asherah.<sup>51</sup> Chronicles does not mention the female deity “Asherah,” and usually employs the plural “asherim” to refer generically to illicit cult objects. In one instance Chronicles substitutes סמל (image; 2 Chr 33:15) for פסל האשרה (image of Asherah; 2 Kgs 21:7).<sup>52</sup> Frevel

<sup>45</sup> Weinberg, “Gott im Weltbild des Chronisten,” 175. Translations mine throughout.

<sup>46</sup> Weinberg, “Gott im Weltbild des Chronisten,” 175, 186-7.

<sup>47</sup> Weinberg, “Gott im Weltbild des Chronisten,” 187.

<sup>48</sup> Weinberg, “Gott im Weltbild des Chronisten,” 185.

<sup>49</sup> Frevel, “Die Elimination der Göttin,” 264.

<sup>50</sup> Japhet, (*Ideology*, 22-23) Japhet argues that the omission of אדון/אדני may have been a theo-linguistic development, based on comparative substitutions of יהוה for אדני in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, and that its omission was due to reverence for the divine name, since אדון/אדני was considered its pronunciation during this period. However, what Jews understood to be the pronunciation of the divine name during this period is unknown.

<sup>51</sup> A point seized upon with some interest by Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and images of God in Ancient Israel* (trans. Thomas H. Trapp; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 390-91.

<sup>52</sup> Frevel, “Die Elimination der Göttin,” 265.

interprets these patterns as deliberate attempts to suppress the memory of Israel's female deity, in what he characterizes as the "patriarchal" post-exilic period.<sup>53</sup> However, it is not always clear whether Chronicles simply misunderstands the historic relationships between האשירה and the female goddess "Asherah," and thus makes changes to its sources (rendering sg. in pl.) to bring אשורות into parallelistic harmony with terms like בעלים and במות characteristic of reform accounts (e.g., 2 Chr 34:4), or if Chronicles' revisions were more intentional, as Frevel suggests. The fact that Chronicles only once glosses a reference to Asherah (2 Chr 33:15) suggests that Frevel is on weak grounds when making sweeping claims about the "intentional" suppression of a female deity.

Other than these brief studies, there is virtually no literature on monotheism in Chronicles, and very little attention to the relationship between divine exaltation and the institutions which dominate the book. Thus, in order to develop my thesis concerning divine-institutional exaltation in Chronicles, it is necessary to establish an approach to its examination that is appropriate for Chronicles. Before doing so I will first define what I mean by the word "monotheism," and especially how it relates to the broader process of divine exaltation that I examine in this study.

Accordingly, it is important to emphasize again that my study treats monotheism as a phenomenon embedded within a larger variegated process of divine exaltation. Though I use monotheism as a way of focusing on ways that Chronicles distinguishes Yhwh absolutely, I also explore the wider field of Yhwh-exaltation of which monotheizing is one part. Monotheizing is Yhwh-exaltation language of a "particularly potent stripe."<sup>54</sup> To treat

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<sup>53</sup> Frevel, "Die Elimination der Göttin," 270-71.

<sup>54</sup> Christopher R. Seitz, *Word Without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 255 (cited by Smith, *Origins*, 154). Note, however, that Seitz refers to monotheistic rhetoric as "henotheistic language of a particularly potent stripe," though his use of the term henotheism is to

Yhwh's sole divinity as rhetorically distinct from his (general) exaltation would be to create an artificial separation. Monotheism is a focused and particular way of expressing divine supremacy (the larger category) that emphasizes divine oneness and supremacy. Monotheism is not simply a religious "stage" that a given body of literature does or does not achieve. Instead, monotheism is a part of a broad rhetorical and theological *process* or *struggle* that occurs in the book of Chronicles, namely, (1) the struggle to distinguish Yhwh in terms of his "oneness" and supremacy, and (2) the correlated "oneness" and supremacy of Israel's primary institutions as they embody Yhwh's character and qualities. Monotheism captures an important trajectory within Chronicles' theology of divine-institutional exaltation, namely, the drive to distinguish Yhwh and by derivation, the exclusive institutions to which Yhwh is bound. As such, my study explores the embeddedness of various modes of monotheizing within a larger process of distinguishing and exalting Yhwh.

#### IV. DEFINING AND CONCEPTUALIZING MONOTHEISM

Defining monotheism is fraught with difficulties.<sup>55</sup> As Nathan MacDonald points out, "monotheism" is a relatively modern term, originating among the 17<sup>th</sup> century Cambridge Platonists who sought to categorize rationally all religions according to their propositional belief systems (including the number of deities thought to exist). This "intellectualization of religion," as MacDonald calls it, has a distorting effect when applied to

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avoid what he calls "sublime monotheism" (in contrast to "concrete henotheism"). His reaction is clearly against treating divine exaltation in abstract terms.

<sup>55</sup> Note also the inverse problem of defining polytheism, expressed well by Smith (*Origins*, 13): I have wondered if we now regard polytheism appropriately. Views of ancient polytheism seem to labor still under simplistic notions, such as the idea that polytheism was a system of division of powers corresponding to different deities. In this view, each deity has a prime characteristic or profile (e.g., Baal as a storm-god) and these characteristics, or at least the positive ones, cumulatively equal the total that monotheism claims for its single deity.

Cf. also Gregor Ahn, "Monotheismus'—'Polytheismus': Grenzen und Möglichkeiten einer Klassifikation von Gottesvorstellungen," in *Mesopotamien-Ugaritica-Biblica: Festschrift für Kurt Bergenhof* (Kevelaer/Neunkirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker/Neunkirchen, 1993), 1-24.

ancient Israelite religion, for it introduces categories and dichotomies alien to ancient cultures and fails to deal with the relational dynamics presupposed, for example, by God's "oneness" in Deuteronomy.<sup>56</sup> MacDonald also expresses concern that monotheism "has generally been taken to entail a ... flat 'universalism', and an emphasis on the metaphysical reality of God, rather than his character, and that as such 'monotheism' does not provide a good description of Israelite religion."<sup>57</sup> Similarly, Walter Moberly wonders whether the term "monotheism" obscures more than it illuminates. There is a tendency, Moberly argues, to relegate monotheism solely to the status of a "concept" without concern for the practical and existential factors that motivated biblical writers to "monotheize" in the first place. Moberly suggests that this is part of modernist attempts to view religion abstracted from relationships between God and human life. As he understands it, Yhwh's uniqueness was asserted to make certain demands on Israel.<sup>58</sup> Moberly suggests that perhaps the best strategy is "to concentrate on careful definition of what is, and is not, meant by [Yhwh's oneness] in its various contexts."<sup>59</sup> Arguing similarly, MacDonald points out that "in Deuteronomy ... the recognition of YHWH's oneness is a call to love YHWH, a love expressed in obedience and worship."<sup>60</sup>

While some scholars call for a complete rejection of the term "monotheism" due to its inapplicability to ancient Israel and its modernist baggage,<sup>61</sup> it seems wise to heed

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<sup>56</sup> MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism'* (FAT 2/1; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 210. For a history of the term, see, "monotheism, n.," *OED Online*. Cited 24 January, 2012. Online: <http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/121673>.

<sup>57</sup> MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 218. Cf. idem, "The Origin of 'Monotheism'," in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, 204-215; cf. David Tracy, "God as Trinitarian," in *Christianity in Jewish Terms* (ed. Tikva Frymer-Kensky et al; Boulder, Colo./Oxford: Westview, 2002), 77-84.

<sup>58</sup> R. W. L. Moberly, "How Appropriate is 'Monotheism' as a Category for Biblical Interpretation?" in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, 216-34.

<sup>59</sup> Moberly, "How Appropriate is 'Monotheism'," 233.

<sup>60</sup> MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 210.

<sup>61</sup> E.g., Peter Hayman, "Monotheism—A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 42/1 (1991): 1-15.

Moberly's and MacDonald's call for contextual understandings of monotheism and divine oneness, both at a definitional level and in terms of an approach to studying monotheism as a feature of Israel's literature (developed in the next section). Like many terms employed in description of biblical phenomena, the test of monotheism's applicability is the extent to which it makes sense of the text. Accordingly, any use of the term "monotheism" in application to biblical Israel should attempt to grapple with the Hebrew Bible's own categories for talking about "oneness" (mono-) and "divinity" (-theism), as well as its notions of "existence" and "being."

#### A. DIVINE ONENESS

Terms denoting divine "oneness" pose difficult problems for interpreters. For instance, the phrase יהוה אחד that some claim distinguishes Deuteronomy as monotheistic is not as obviously monotheistic as often supposed.<sup>62</sup> For example, some argue that early on, the phrase יהוה אחד in Deut 6:4 gave expression to the unification of multiple forms of Yahwism after the exile of the North and the ensuing waves of refugees that came south. These refugees, it is argued, brought their own traditions that were subsequently pressed into a unified Judean mold. Deuteronomy 6:4 thus implies that there is no longer *yhwh tmn/tymn* and *yhwh šmrn* (as in the *Kuntillet 'Ajrud* inscriptions), but rather, "one God" (and later, *yhwh*

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<sup>62</sup> On אחד, see Judah Kraut, "Deciphering the Shema: Staircase Parallelism and the Syntax of Deuteronomy 6:4," *VT* 61/4 (2011):582-602; Armin Lange, "The Shema: Israel in Second Temple Judaism," *JAJ* 1/2 (2010):207-14; Gerhard Langer, "'Hear, O Israel: The Lord Our God, the Lord is One' (Deut 6:4)," *JSJ* 1/2 (2010):215-26; MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of "Monotheism,"* 79-85; Adrian Schenker, "L'Institution des dieux et des religions: Le Unicité du Dieu de la Bible," in *Bible et sciences des religions: judaïsme, christianisme, islam* (ed. Françoise Mies and Jean Noël Aletti; Namur, Belgium: University Press of Namur, 2005), 17-40; M. I. Gruber, "One אחד," in *DDD* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 646-48.; Eugene B. Borowitz, ed., *Ebad: The Many Meanings of God is One* (New York: *Sh'ma*, 1988); S. Dean McBride Jr., "The Yoke of the Kingdom: Exposition of Deuteronomy 6:4-5," *Int* 27 (1973): 273-306; Daniel I. Block, "How Many is God? An Investigation into the Meaning of Deuteronomy 6:4-5," *JETS* 47/2 (2004):193-212; Gnuse, *No Other Gods*, 206 and fn. 47. In biblical traditions, אחד can take on a wide range of meaning, from "one," to "alone," and "unique." Cf. also "išten," CAD I/J, 278.

*šjyḡôn*; Ps 135:21) for all Israel.<sup>63</sup> As such, יהוה אחד pertains to Israel’s unification around one Yhwh and not to Yhwh’s sole existence. Based on the comparable use of אחד in Song 6:8-9, MacDonald argues that the phrase יהוה אחד denotes the uniqueness and unrivaled nature of Yhwh *for Israel*, and as such constitutes a call for Israel to give Yhwh its “wholehearted love.”<sup>64</sup> In short, divine “oneness” is no straightforward matter. It requires contextual sensitivity to the meaning of Yhwh *qua* אחד. Moreover, MacDonald’s study calls for attention to the relationships forged with Yhwh *qua* אחד, and the “oneness” that Yhwh’s “oneness” lends to its partners. As we will see, this is important in a book like Chronicles, whose portrayal of Israel’s institutions exhibits a drive toward unity and supremacy. For instance, Chronicles conceives of Israel as a “unique nation” (גוי אחד; 1 Chr 17:21//2 Sam 7:23), to Solomon as “my [David’s] unique son” (בני אחד; 1 Chr 29:1), and to Jerusalem’s altar as the “one altar” (מזבח אחד; 2 Chr 32:12)—all in the context of proclaiming their exalted status.<sup>65</sup>

## B. DIVINITY

The biblical term for divinity, אלהים, occupies a fairly broad semantic range, applying not only to other “high gods” such as Baal or Chemosh, but also to deceased ancestors, cultic images or emblems of deities—some of which can be thrown away (Josh 24:23)—mediating divine beings, and Yhwh.<sup>66</sup> This presents problems for a notion of monotheism

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<sup>63</sup> On the unification of Yhwh in Deuteronomic thought, see Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); cf. Mark S. Smith, “The Problem of the God and His Manifestations: The Case of the Baals at Ugarit” (Paper presented at the International SBL in London, July 6, 2011). I thank Mark Smith for an advanced copy of this paper. Smith notes the case of *ʾašmat šōmrôn* for *ʾašrat šōmrôn*. Smith (5) notes that the latter finds some support in *KAI* 48:2, which appears as [ *ʾrt šmrn* in Charles Richard Krahmalkov, *Phoenician-Punic Dictionary* (OLA 90; Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 392-92. One could reconstruct this as “[A]she[ra]h of Samaria,” “[A]sh[te]art of Samaria,” or “[M]el[qa]rt of Samaria.”

<sup>64</sup> MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 74.

<sup>65</sup> As Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 761, states, “The Chronicler, more so than the Deuteronomist, maintains a consistent interest in the fate of the Jerusalem altar . . .”

<sup>66</sup> See the survey in Mark S. Smith, *God in Translation: Deities in Cross-Cultural Discourse in the Biblical World* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 11-15.



that would allow for only one אלהים. If mediating divine beings qualify as “gods,” or “divinities” (אלים/אלהים), then early Judaism never achieved monotheism because of its belief in a divine realm heavily populated by אלים/אלהים.<sup>67</sup> As Smith notes, the range of applications for אלהים suggests that the term basically denotes “power” that is “extraordinary,” though possessed in varying degrees by divinities.<sup>68</sup> However, even this definition does not account for its wide-ranging usage in biblical texts. For example, Genesis 3:15 seems to suppose that divinity was characterized by knowledge of good and evil. Taking a different tack, Michael Heiser argues that biblical writers did not necessarily presume that אלהים had “specific attributes that might be shared equally between Yahweh and other entities called אלהים.”<sup>69</sup> Rather, he suggests a need to “divorce ... [אלהים] from attribute ontology” and recognize that אלהים is a “place of residence term.” By “attribute ontology,” Heiser refers to a list of features that make a god a god (e.g., power, wisdom). אלהים does not explain “what a thing is in terms of attributes; it tells me the proper domain of a thing,” namely, the unseen world within which there is “rank, and hierarchy, and in the case of Yahweh, uniqueness in attribute ontology.”<sup>70</sup> While Heiser’s definition does not work for all instances of אלהים, for example, when applied to cult objects (Gen 31:30) or kings (Ps 45:7), it highlights the difficulties in grasping the meaning of “divinity” in the Hebrew Bible, and the need to embrace historically and contextually appropriate descriptions of such basic terms.

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<sup>67</sup> E.g., 4QShirShabb<sup>a</sup>. See Joel S. Burnett, “אלהים אֱלֹהִים,” *TWQT* 1:178-90; John J. Collins, “Powers in Heaven: God, Gods, and Angels in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. John J. Collins and Robert A. Kugler; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 9-28.

<sup>68</sup> Smith, *God in Translation*, 11-15.

<sup>69</sup> Michael S. Heiser, “Does Divine Plurality in the Hebrew Bible Demonstrate an Evolution from Polytheism to Monotheism in Israelite Religion?” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the ETS, San Francisco, 17 November, 2011), 4 [cited 28 November 2011]. Online: [http://www.thedivinecouncil.com/ETS\\_monotheism.pdf](http://www.thedivinecouncil.com/ETS_monotheism.pdf).

<sup>70</sup> Heiser, “Divine Plurality in the Hebrew Bible,” 4-5.

## C. DIVINE EXISTENCE

Similar challenges to an indigenous understanding “monotheism” obtain for the so-called non-existence clauses (e.g., *אני ואין עוד*, *אין עוד מלבדו*, and *כי אפס מלבדי*) of Deutero-Isaiah, clauses that allegedly epitomize the expression of biblical monotheism.<sup>71</sup> Some scholars suggest that the very first verse in Isa 40-55 assumes a divine council of heavenly beings that carries out Yhwh’s will.<sup>72</sup> Also, Babylon claims *אני ואפסי עוד* (“I [am], and there is no one else”) of herself (47:8, 10), echoing the self-aggrandizing words of Nineveh in Zeph 2:15 (*אני ואפסי עוד*). In context, the phrase refers to her sense of invulnerability and power. Also, several texts speak of all nations (40:17) or enemies (41:12) as *אפס* (“nothing”) before Yhwh.<sup>73</sup> When placed in the mouth of Yhwh, the “sole-existence clauses” function less as metaphysical statements than as “divine recognition” formulae, calling attention to Yhwh’s “sole effectiveness” and power, and his unique ability to act on Israel’s behalf.<sup>74</sup> That is, statements such as *אני ואין עוד* (“I, and there is none other”) are deployed so that Israel will recognize that only Yhwh *acts* (not exists) on her behalf, though these texts also seem to emphasize that Yhwh is the only who *can* act on her behalf. The point of such language is to emphasize the utterly asymmetrical power differential between Yhwh and the gods or nations, and as such, it sits within a larger field of expressions that emphasize Yhwh’s

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<sup>71</sup> The following studies question the applicability of traditional notions of “monotheism” to Deutero-Isaiah. P. A. H. de Boer, *Second Isaiah’s Message* (SOT 11; Leiden: Brill, 1956), 47. James Barr, “The Problem of Israelite Monotheism,” *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society* 17 (1957–58): 52–62. Ulrich Mauser, “One God Alone: A Pillar of Biblical Theology,” *PSB* 12/3 (1991):255-65 [259]. Moberly, “How Appropriate is ‘Monotheism?’” 229–31. Michael S. Heiser, “Monotheism, Polytheism, Monolatry, or Henotheism? Toward an Assessment of Divine Plurality in the Hebrew Bible,” *BBR* 18/1 (2008): 9–15; Nathan MacDonald, “Monotheism and Isaiah” *The Interpretation of Isaiah* (ed. H.G.M. Williamson and D. Firth; Leicester: IVP, 2009), 43-61

<sup>72</sup> Note the use of the 3cpl. *נחמו נחמו עמי* (Comfort, O comfort my people).

<sup>73</sup> Cf. the use of *אפס* in reference to idols in Isa 41:29.

<sup>74</sup> About which, see Benedikt Hartmann, “Es gibt keinen Gott außer Jahwe: Zur generellen Verneinung im Hebräischen,” *ZDMG* 110 (1960): 229-35.

uniqueness. In other words, such language is not necessarily a new religious idea or realization but a stark way of expressing Yhwh's supremacy.

In sum, the difficulties surrounding the establishment of culturally appropriate renderings of terms for oneness, sole divinity, and divine existence (vs. non-existence) should alert one to the broader difficulty of grasping the meaning of "monotheism."

#### D. TOWARD A CONCEPTION OF MONOTHEISM

Nevertheless, the threat of anachronism and the difficulties of obtaining an emic grasp of "divinity" and "oneness" should not lead us to flee from ambiguity toward a definition that reifies modern preconceptions (or dictionary definitions), nor should it lead us to abandon use of the term "monotheism." Simply defining monotheism as the belief in one god and the non-existence of other gods will inevitably prove anachronistic, because "oneness," divine "existence," and "divinity," are by no means self-evident notions in Israel, let alone the ancient Near East.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, nearly all terms utilized by scholars of ancient religion possess limits and require qualification in light of differing worldviews. Abandoning "monotheism" would leave one with other problematic terminology (monolatry, henotheism) that likewise prove anachronistic and distorting.<sup>76</sup> For example, monolatry, or the belief in the need to worship one god alone, says nothing about the relative status or power of that exclusively worshipped god vis-à-vis other gods. This is a substantial shortcoming, especially when many so-called monolatrous (or henotheistic) texts are concerned with Yhwh's power relative to other divinities or nation-states. As an analogy to

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<sup>75</sup> On ancient Near Eastern conceptions of divine ontology, see John H. Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

<sup>76</sup> For a discussion of these and related terms see David L. Petersen, "Israel and Monotheism: The Unfinished Agenda," in *Canon, Theology, and Old Testament Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Brevard S. Childs* (ed. Gene M. Tucker, David L. Petersen and Robert R. Wilson; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 92-107.

such problems with religious terminology about divine existence, we may also observe how the term ἄθεος (“atheistic”) was employed in the Greco-Roman milieu. According to Plutarch, Hans-Josef Klauck argues, “the gods act to stabilise personal and societal harmony, and the error of atheism consists in denying this by evidencing indifference (*apatheia*) toward the divine and refusing to perceive the good things provided by the divine.”<sup>77</sup> As it was applied derisively to the early Christians, moreover, the term ἄθεος carried the sense of “anti-social impiety,” and denoted Christians’ unwillingness to participate in the civic life of the cults. Indeed, the claim was not that Christians denied the “existence” of (a) god(s), but rather that they rejected the social system maintained, in part, through the worship of the gods. Understanding “atheism” in antiquity thus requires sensitivity to the rhetorical purpose and social world in which such terms were embedded. While monotheism as a term never appears in the Hebrew Bible, the analogy of ἄθεος highlights the need for historically appropriate conceptions of “divine existence” and the like, and for recognition of the embeddedness of monotheism in Israel’s social particularities.<sup>78</sup>

Use of such “problematic” terms can also serve as helpful analytical tools for discerning the distinctive configurations of beliefs and conceptions in ancient cultures and their literature. Ethel Albert makes this point well regarding the concept of freedom. She observes that while one culture may conceive of “freedom” from within a worldview committed to hierarchical arrangements of submission, modern Westerners often link freedom inextricably to equality.<sup>79</sup> “Freedom” will look very particular to each society. Use of

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<sup>77</sup> *De superstitione* (§7), cited by Hans-Josef Klauck in, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* (trans. Brian McNeil; New York/London: T & T Clark, 2003), 410. Cf. Plato’s *Laws* 10.908a-b.

<sup>78</sup> One may also note the use of the phrase אֵין אֱלֹהִים in Ps 10:4; 14:1; 53:1 to denote immoral and secretive behavior.

<sup>79</sup> Ethel M. Albert, “The Classification of Values: A Method and Illustration,” *AA* 58/2 (1956): 221-48. Cf. also the classic study of Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty,” *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969); Charles Taylor, “What’s Wrong with Negative Liberty?” in *The Idea of Freedom:*

the term “freedom” as an analytical tool can illumine these differences, and help to map a society’s distinct “value system.” Likewise, “monotheism” can serve as an analytical tool for illuminating ways of construing Yhwh’s sole divinity throughout different periods and literature, as long as one sets sole divinity within rhetorical and conceptual frameworks operative in antiquity, and within specific texts that take up one-God discourse.

My working definition of monotheism is *the assertion of one deity’s categorical supremacy (or supreme uniqueness)*. This definition draws in part from Richard Bauckham’s discussion of monotheism in his studies of early Judaism.<sup>80</sup> Bauckham contends that while “mere uniqueness” simply establishes the difference between two beings, “transcendent uniqueness” establishes categorical differences in which one being stands distinctly above

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*Essays in Honour of Isaiah Berlin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 179-93. One may also note the shift in ideals of justice and equality in the West, from equality *before the law* as justice, to a view that “iniquities are ... *ipso facto* proof of iniquities,” discussed by Jon D. Levenson, “The Universal Horizon of Biblical Particularism,” in *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. Mark G. Brett; BI 19; Leiden/New York: Brill, 1996), 143-69[167].

<sup>80</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*. Bauckham follows in the tradition of Yehezkel Kaufmann (*The Religion of Israel* [trans. Moshe Greenberg; University of Chicago Press, 1960], 137), who operates with a broad notion of monotheism that is not restricted to existence clauses, and even tolerates the existence of other deities. For Kaufmann, the fundamental “monotheistic distinction” was Yhwh’s absolute distinctiveness from creation. Kaufmann sought to date monotheism to Israel’s wilderness period, and resisted any notion of development or change in its expression. Baruch Halpern (“‘Brisker Pipes than Poetry’: The Development of Israelite Monotheism,” in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* [ed. J. Neusner, B. A. Levine, and E. S. Frerichs; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987 Pages 77-115]; repr. in *From Gods to God: The Dynamics of Iron Age Cosmologies* [ed. Matthew J. Adams; FAT 1/63. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009], 13-56[20]) also follows Kaufmann, though in modified form, taking issue, for example, with Kaufmann’s idea that monotheism was distinguished by Yhwh’s remove from creation, and freedom from the domains of myth and magic. Halpern also rejects Kaufmann’s dating of monotheism so early in Israel’s tradition. Halpern finds monotheism “when the notion prevailed that Yhwh was the god who indisputably mastered the cosmos,” when monolatry took hold, and when radical monolatry (allowing sacrifice directly to Yhwh only) became normative (21).

The definition of monotheism as *the assertion of one deity’s categorical supremacy, or supreme uniqueness*, comports with Benjamin Sommer’s category “broad monotheism,” which in contrast to “narrow monotheism”—defined exclusively in terms of existence vs. non-existence—refers to “one supreme being in the universe, whose will is sovereign over all other beings.” What matters here is not “the number of divine beings ... but the relations among them” (Sommer, *The Bodies of God*, 246-47). Adrian Schenker similarly proposes that monotheism should be defined in terms of the transcendent status of a god relative to other gods, which is “analogous to the transcendence of the gods over mortals.” The status of a deity which is “not comparably of the same order” constitutes a notion of “monotheism” appropriate to biblical literature (Adrian Schenker, “Le monothéisme israélite: un dieu qui transcende le monde et les dieux,” *Biblica* 78 [1997]:436-448 [438]). Translation mine. While I am resistant to the spatial connotations of “transcendent,” Schenker’s point about a categorical difference is well placed.

and apart from others (not in a spatial sense).<sup>81</sup> Bauckham suggests that whereas a god might be the highest member of the class to which s/he belongs, supreme uniqueness “understands the uniqueness of the one God in terms of an absolute difference in kind from all other reality.” This means that “there is no class of beings to which God belongs and of which he can be the supreme instance.”<sup>82</sup> He is *sui generis* in relation to all reality (gods, humans, nations, etc.),<sup>83</sup> such that he essentially redefines “deity” around himself. I avoid Bauckham’s specific phrase “transcendent uniqueness” because of its spatial connotations, which are not well-suited to many monotheistic texts, preferring instead to use “categorical supremacy,” or “supreme uniqueness.” However, Bauckham’s emphasis on monotheism as a process of asserting Yhwh’s categorical uniqueness, or supremacy, adequately captures the range of monotheistic expressions that appear in biblical texts (explained below).<sup>84</sup> Moreover, it allows one to situate monotheistic rhetoric and conceptions in continuity with broader processes of divine exaltation employed by biblical writers. That is, “monotheizing” is a stark way of exalting Yhwh.

This is not to deny that there are biblical texts that place Yhwh and other divine beings in the *same* category (e.g., Mic 4:5; Judg 11:24), but rather to state that (a) non-existence clauses and (b) explicit exclusion of other אלהים (and the like) as real beings are not necessary for, or intrinsic to, monotheism in biblical texts. The presence of כוכבי, בני אלהים, אלהים

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<sup>81</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 109, uses the phrase “transcendent uniqueness” instead.

<sup>82</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 108-09.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. also the appropriation of Bauckham by Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Bible and the Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2006), 82, 131.

<sup>84</sup> One might suggest, for example, that thinking about monotheism in terms of categorical supremacy explains why a question like “Has any god ever ... ?” (Deut 4:34) can coincide with the statement “Yhwh, he is the true God, there is none other except him” (Deut 4:35). Deut 4:34 forges a fundamental divide between two categories, Yhwh and “the gods,” while Deut 4:35 redefines the one category of “god” with Yhwh as its only member. The two verses do different but related work. In fact, the explicitly monotheistic statement of Deut 4:35 may depend on the division formed by Deut 4:34. Because no god ever accomplished anything akin to what Yhwh accomplished in Egypt (Deut 4:34; cf. 37-38), one might say that Yhwh redefines the category of god with himself as its only member. (Deut 4:35; cf. 39). Cf. the similar collocation of incomparability clauses with non-existence clauses in 2 Sam 7:22 (/1 Chr 17:20); Ps 86:8, 10; Isa 46:9; cf. Ps 97:7.

השמים, אלים, or similar beings in connection with Israel's God need not compromise an "indigenous" conception of monotheism,<sup>85</sup> despite the fact that such beings *can* appear within polytheistic systems (such as Ugarit). Their precise power relation to Israel's deity in the Hebrew Bible can differ or align with the configuration of deities elsewhere. As Bauckham rightly cautions, "we should avoid the 'etymological fallacy' of determining the significance of [the] heavenly retinue of YHWH by reference to its origins in a properly polytheistic context rather than its functions in the biblical text."<sup>86</sup> Insofar as those beings derive their identity solely from Yhwh, they may be deemed subsidiary and thus of a different class. In fact, it is often that "YHWH's retinue are the attendants of an absolute monarch, whose sheer numbers evidence his greatness and whose constant praises serve precisely to define and to proclaim his transcendent uniqueness."<sup>87</sup> Similarly, Larry Hurtado (following Hans Bietenhard) writes,

The description of the heavenly hosts as a gigantic hierarchy of many ranks with numerous specialized duties is quite easily understood as an attempt to defend the power and significance of Israel's God. The point of these descriptions is to say, "Do you see how great our God is, who has such a vast and powerful retinue to do nothing but serve him?"<sup>88</sup>

Biblical writers could "re-function" the ancient Near Eastern notion of a divine council "to serve the purpose of asserting and characterizing the transcendent uniqueness of YHWH."<sup>89</sup> Admitting "gods" into a given rhetorical system *and* excluding gods from the system are both possible ways of asserting Yhwh's uniqueness or sole divinity, and sometimes in the same literary context (Deut 4:34-35; Ps 86:8, 10). One may diagram this phenomenon as follows:

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<sup>85</sup> E.g., Ps 103, 148.

<sup>86</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 88.

<sup>87</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 88.

<sup>88</sup> Larry W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 25; Hans Bietenhard, *Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum* (WUNT 2; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1951), 101-42.

<sup>89</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 90.

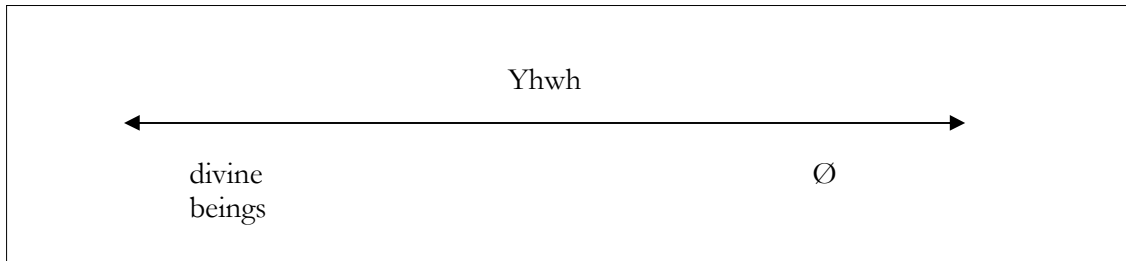


Table 1.1

On the left side, divine beings appear “on stage” with Yhwh, while the right side of the scale admits to no other deities within Yhwh’s domain. The constant is Yhwh’s categorical distinction from both.

The question that follows is whether one can identify the terms and categories by which biblical traditions establish Yhwh’s categorical supremacy. How does one determine that a particular *text* espouses monotheism? What maintains this divide between Yhwh and other divine beings and upholds Yhwh’s categorical supremacy?

In what follows, I answer these questions as follows. The criteria and means by which biblical writers establish and struggle to assert Yhwh’s categorical supremacy differ among biblical texts. Thus, the dividing line between Yhwh and reality (or the salient aspects of reality) differs in accordance with the criteria operative in various texts. Moreover, the distinction between Yhwh as a distinct deity and Yhwh as a categorically unique deity is more fluid than often allowed. As such, attempts to map or understand monotheism in a particular body of literature will benefit from contextualizing monotheistic discourse within that literature’s broader approaches to exalting Yhwh.

## V. AN APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING MONOTHEISM AND ITS APPLICATION TO CHRONICLES

Beyond defining monotheism, it is critical to move descriptively to examine the range of ways that biblical texts express Yhwh’s distinctiveness and sole divinity. I propose



three analytical categories for understanding biblical monotheism as it is integrated within various literary contexts—rather than as an isolated “idea” encountered in various biblical texts. These analytical categories are (a) modes of monotheizing, (b) configurations of divine exaltation, and (c) rhetorical function. The first refers to the variegated means by which various texts give expression to Yhwh’s sole divinity, the second to the structuring of reality that results from a text’s understanding of the relationship between Yhwh *qua* exalted deity and reality, and the third to the rhetorical function of exaltation language and ideas within a given text. Considering these three categories allows for a broad-based and contextually sensitive understanding of monotheism and divine supremacy within a given textual corpus, and will prove important in my examination of Chronicles.

#### A. MODES OF MONOTHEIZING

The Hebrew Bible exhibits various modes of monotheizing. By modes of monotheizing, I refer to the way a given text gives expression to Yhwh’s supreme uniqueness. *What are the ways that a given text forges divisions between Yhwh and all else such that he is “one/alone”?*

Scholars often assume that there is one biblical perspective on whether other אלהים compromise Yhwh’s sole divinity. Some suggest that the *only* mode of monotheizing was to deny the existence of other gods.<sup>90</sup> Others suggest that “monotheism”—as a self-standing theological system—could tolerate other deities so long as they were subsidiary to Yhwh.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> See the strong assertions of Theophile James Meek, “Monotheism and the Religion of Israel,” *JBL* 61/1 (1942): 21-43 [22]; cf. also Smith’s section on “Defining Monotheism” in, *Origins*, 151-55. Smith defines monotheism as claims that proclaim Yhwh “alone . . . or no god “apart from, besides” him, and “statements claiming that all other deities are ‘not’ . . . ‘nothings’ . . . or ‘dead’” (151). He also that one can speak of monotheism when texts exclude “the reality of other gods.” Yet, insofar as texts mention other deities, they are not “preferable” in a discussion about monotheism (153).

<sup>91</sup> Casper J. Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 82-83; Patrick D. Miller, *Genesis 1-11: Studies in Structure & Theme* (JSOTSup 8; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978), 18; Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy* (JPS; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 514.

For instance, C. J. Labuschagne claims that “the conception of a host of heavenly beings, Yahweh’s *entourage*, was always present in the faith of Israel, and ... it never clashed with monotheism, but in fact emphasized Yahweh’s majesty and uniqueness.”<sup>92</sup> However, the entire Hebrew Bible may not be in agreement on this question. According to Jacob Milgrom “The Priestly theology ... posits the existence of one supreme God who contends with neither a higher realm nor with competing peers.”<sup>93</sup> In other words, there appears to be inner-biblical diversity on the question of whether a divine entourage threatens Yhwh’s sole divinity.

Similarly, texts differ in their approaches to the “threat” to Yhwh’s sole divinity posed by other deities. Some texts *include* the gods into Yhwh’s being by treating them as manifest hypostatizations of Yhwh’s own self,<sup>94</sup> while others reject completely the notion that Yhwh can be localized in order to preserve Yhwh’s transcendence.<sup>95</sup> Of Jeremiah, for instance, Halpern suggests that “in keeping with his notion that any localization of Yhwh’s presence, whether as god, symbol, or icon, belies (i.e., is fraudulent) Yhwh’s omnipresence, full intangibility, and the transcending unity, epiphany is aural rather than visual.”<sup>96</sup>

Inner-biblical diversity on the question of what distinguishes Yhwh, and what compromises his distinctiveness, ranges broadly. In other words, modes of monotheistic discourse differ throughout biblical texts, and not all involve the explicit denial of the

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<sup>92</sup> Labuschagne, *The Incomparability* 82-83; Yehezkel Kaufmann makes a similar point in his *The Religion of Israel*, 137.

<sup>93</sup> Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16* (AB 3/1; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 43; cited by W. Randall Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism* (CHANE 15; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 215.

<sup>94</sup> See, e.g., debates about Asherah becoming a hypostatization of Yhwh in conjunction with the Kuntillet ‘Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom inscriptions, discussed by Judith M. Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah: Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess* (UCOP 57; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7, 80, 105.

<sup>95</sup> Halpern, “Brisker Pipes than Poetry,” 45-46, refers to a systematic assault on the notion that Yhwh could be localized, citing such examples as the temple as symbol (7:4-15) when protection was gone (15:18), the law (8:7-9), and divine armies (19:13). “For ... [Jeremiah], Yhwh is not and cannot be localized; rather, ‘I fill the heavens and the earth’” (23:24).

<sup>96</sup> Halpern, *From Gods to God*, 46.

existence of other deities. Quite often, studies of monotheism presuppose that one only encounters monotheism in texts that *explicitly* deny the existence of other deities. This approach to monotheism does not deal adequately with the many texts and traditions that eliminate other deities from a given narrative world without a “fight,” and those that employ other means of bolstering Yhwh’s supreme uniqueness. In consideration of those various modes, I propose to enumerate descriptively various *explicit* and *implicit* modes of monotheizing encountered in the Hebrew Bible. The following taxonomy is not exhaustive, yet it covers the considerable range of monotheizing modes, or, the expressions in which writers distinguish categorically between Yhwh and the rest of reality (including “the gods”).

*Explicit* modes of monotheizing entail overt references to deities: (1) dramatizing the demotion or death of the gods,<sup>97</sup> (2) reducing other gods to mere idols,<sup>98</sup> (3) substituting deities with humans through text or tradition alteration,<sup>99</sup> (4) refusing the designation of אלהים or its synonyms for other divinities, and employing only derisive terms such as the “highly pejorative *gillálim*,”<sup>100</sup> (5) depicting divine beings in completely adorational or accompanying roles,<sup>101</sup> (6) and explicitly denying other deities’ power/existence.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> The classic instance is Ps 82, where Yhwh, a member of Elyyon’s court (or alternatively, equated with El-Elyyon himself) pronounces death on all other gods of the assembly, and takes his place as the sole deity over the nations. W. Randall Garr calls this poem a “dynamic monotheizing drama” in his book, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 210; Cf. also Ps 97.

<sup>98</sup> Isa 40-55; Jer 10; Ps 115; 135.

<sup>99</sup> E.g., The בני אלים in Ps 29:1 become the משפחות עמים in Ps 96:7. Note that the process of demotion is also evident within the manuscript tradition of Ps 29 itself. Several Mss of Ps 29:1 have אילים (mighty ones) for אלים. LXX 29:1 (28:1) preserves אילים as “young rams” ἰσοῦς ἄρτων, but also preserves the Heb. בני אלים with νιοὶ θεοῦ = “Bring to the Lord, O divine sons, bring to the Lord young rams, bring to the Lord glory and honor.” The LXX clearly refigures the divine council in human terms; cf. MT Deut 32:8 with LXX and 4QDeut<sup>a</sup> 32:8; cf. also the substitutions which occur in Deut 32:43 and Ps 99:2.

<sup>100</sup> John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel* (BJSUCSD 7; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 38. Significantly, Kutsko’s study challenges the consensus that Deutero-Isaiah is the Hebrew Bible’s first *explicit* voice of monotheism on the basis of Ezekiel’s *mode* of monotheizing. While Deutero-Isaiah affirms Yhwh’s sole divinity through idol and idol-maker polemics, and through “sole existence” clauses (e.g., אין עוד), Ezekiel “appears to struggle with the very use of the term *’ēlohîm*.” Thus, he never employs אלהים to refer to idols or pagan deities. Instead, Ezekiel employs a diverse vocabulary of substitute terms that deride idols’ presumption to divinity (38). Moreover, Ezekiel modifies Deuteronomic language that refers to other deities (e.g., זונה/הלך אהרי אלהים) with phrases that lack אלהים (e.g.,

*Implicit* modes of monotheizing range more broadly. They can include (1) eliminating other deities from the “reality picture” within a given text (or tradition),<sup>103</sup> (2) exalting Yhwh in worship and praise as the only worthy recipient for all peoples/nations,<sup>104</sup> (3) employing designations typically associated with other divinities to refer to mundane or other non-divine realities, thereby “de-divinizing” the gods,<sup>105</sup> (4) enumerating the distinct features,

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(זנה/הלך/תעה אחרי גלולים (39). Significantly, Kutsko notes how the Targumim (*Tg. Neof.*, *Tg. Onq.*, *Tg. Ps.-J.*) follow Ezekiel’s lead by systematically substituting the Aramaic טעות (“idols”) for אלהים. Similarly, Kutsko notes that Ezekiel transforms the Deuteronomic phrase עץ ואבן ... עבד אלהים “to serve gods ... of wood and stone” (Deut 4:28; 28:36; 28:64) with שרת עץ ואבן “to worship wood and stone” (Ezek 20:32) (39). As Kutsko claims, This aversion, this avoidance of any association that might legitimize a god other than Yahweh has far-reaching implications, for it suggests that Ezekiel was clearly monotheistic, accomplishing his goal in ways different from Deutero-Isaiah but consciously carrying his conviction to a radical extreme in his terminology. Unlike Deutero-Isaiah, the prophet Ezekiel is rarely invoked as a theological voice contributing to the development of monotheism in the religion of Israel. Quite the opposite is true, however; he is one of its loudest voices (41-42).

<sup>101</sup> Deut 33:3; Ps 29:1-3; Ps 89:6-9 [5-8] (because the בני אלים and קדשים cannot compare with Yhwh, they simply praise and fear him); Rev 5:11-14.

On קדשים accompanying Yhwh in contexts with clear monotheistic language, note the concurrence of Yhwh’s קדשים (typically associated with Yhwh’s divine assembly) with an assertion that והיה יהוה למלך (So Yhwh will be king over all the earth. In that day Yhwh will be the only one and his name the only one; Zech 14:5, 9). For *qds* as a pl. in clear application to deities in the Northwest Semitic inscriptional evidence, see H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*, Vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1962), 27:12.

The power differential between Yhwh and the אלים is more ambiguous in other texts. See, e.g., Ps 58:2-3: “Truly, O gods, do you pronounce justice? Do you judge humanity equitably? Even so, with a perverse heart you act on earth; you mete out violence (with) your hands” (reading אַלם for אֱלִים, with Gunkel et al [discussed by Garr, *In His Own Image*, 210]).

<sup>102</sup> As in Isa 40-48.

<sup>103</sup> Priestly literature is a preeminent example of this approach. See, e.g., Smith’s discussion of Gen 1 in *The Memoirs of God. History, Memory, and the Experience of the Divine in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004); idem, *The priestly vision of Genesis 1* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010). The exception, Gen 1:26, proves the rule according to Garr, *In His Own Image*.

<sup>104</sup> E.g., Zeph 3:8-10.

<sup>105</sup> E.g., the transformation of תהום *têbôm* “deep,” likely evoking (yet neutralizing) the Babylonian deity *Tiamat* (or Mammu, the personified ocean), to a non-threatening and subdued watery mass. The evocation of *Tiamat* is especially likely given the importance of winds in Marduk’s victory over *Tiamat* in the *Enuma Elish* epic. See discussion by B. Alster, “*Tiamat*,” in *DDD*, 867-869. Other biblical passages, of course, presuppose real divine opponents to Yhwh (e.g., Rahab in Ps 89:10; Isa 51:9). Garr, *In His Own Image*, 216-18, offers an example of this process in the priestly literature of Exodus:

Whereas God’s council disappears [in Gen 1], another set of nonmalevolent divine beings has left distinct traces in the subsequent Priestly narrative. They too were once God’s assistants. They too are now deposed, depersonalized, demythologized, and deprived of any vitality whatsoever. And they too specifically express the ‘kingly deity.’ These beings are the Cherubim. (216)

The Cherubim persist in two forms in P, they are the protective beings over the ark, and the other are two-dimensional designs on the tabernacle curtains:

narratives, or qualities of Yhwh that leave no room for other powers,<sup>106</sup> (5) acclaiming the “eschatological sovereignty” of Yhwh in which other deities will fade from reality in the future,<sup>107</sup> (6) inclusion of domains otherwise relegated to other deities—such as death or evil—within Yhwh’s sovereign domain,<sup>108</sup> (7) the assertion of Yhwh’s “mono-agency,”<sup>109</sup> or performance of roles otherwise distributed between multiple deities,<sup>110</sup> and (8) the inclusion of other deities as aspects or hypostatizations of Yhwh himself.<sup>111</sup>

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In their Priestly incarnation, then, the Cherubim have been converted from angelic assistants to symbolic ornamentation. . . . In the Priestly tradition, these Cherubim are ossified symbols of a God enthroned amidst royal splendor in his earthly sanctuary (217, 218).

<sup>106</sup> E.g., 1 Chr 29:10-12.

<sup>107</sup> E.g., Mic 4:1-5; Isa 2:1-5; Zech 14:7-9; Cf. Phil 2:9-11 for the application of Yhwh’s sovereignty (Isa 45:23) to Jesus. Stolz, *Einführung in den biblischen Monotheismus*, 194-96, discusses “Die Einheit Gottes in der eschatologischen Orientierung.” Bauckham (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 184) uses the designation “eschatological monotheism” as a contrast to “creational monotheism” and “cultic monotheism.” Bauckham describes “eschatological monotheism” as a logical extension of “creational monotheism,” in that “God . . . [as] sole Creator of and the sole Lord over all things required the expectation that, in the future when YHWH fulfils his promises to his people Israel, YHWH will also demonstrate his deity to all nations, establishing his universal kingdom, making his name known universally, becoming known to all as the God Israel has known.”

<sup>108</sup> Including the functions or attributes of other deities in Yhwh is a way of reducing the realm of other gods, and thereby diminishing their significance relative to Yhwh. In distinction from vertical monotheizing, lateral monotheizing involves the convergence of features from other gods into Yhwh, and combative rhetoric against other gods or idols. Isa 45:5-7; Job 9:2-33; 23:11-13; Dan 4:31-32; Ps 135:6; 4QTQah (4Q257); *Gen. Apocr.* 20:13; 2 Macc 7:16-17; Menahem Kister treats these texts in his article, “Some early Jewish and Christian Exegetical Problems and the Dynamics of Monotheism,” *JSJ* 37/4 (2006): 548-93; cf. Christopher B. Hays, “Religio-Historical Approaches: Monotheism, Method, and Mortality,” in *Method Matters: Essays on the Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David L. Petersen* (ed. Joel M. LeMon and Kent Harold Richards; SBLRBS 56; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 169-193.

<sup>109</sup> E.g., 2 Chr 20:6.

<sup>110</sup> Note also Petersen’s (“Israel and Monotheism”) observation that in the flood narrative Yhwh performs a variety of roles as sole sovereign—that of prosecutor, judge, court of appeal, and executioner. Yhwh also takes on roles of other deities (diachronically). A complex characterization of Yhwh ensues: “Conflict concerning the flood, in Israel, exists within the deity rather than between two opposing deities” (102).

<sup>111</sup> For studies on divine hypostases, see, P. Kyle McCarter, “When the Gods Lose Their Temper: Divine Rage in Ugaritic Myth and the Hypostasis of Anger in Iron Age Religion,” in *Divine Wrath and Divine Mercy in the World of Antiquity* (ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann; FAT 2/33; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) 78-91; idem, “Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy: Biblical and Epigraphic Data,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (repr.; ed. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 137-55. McCarter also discusses the possibility of Yahwistic hypostases at Elephantine, arguing that the names affixed to Bethel and Yahu such as “Anat,” “Eshem,” and “Herem” are hypostases of Yhwh’s ‘name’ and ‘sign.’ As such, they refer to his presence as it becomes available in the temple. It is not always clear whether the theonym combined with “Bethel” refers to a hypostatization or simply another deity. On Lady Wisdom as a hypostatization of Yhwh, see Ralph Marcus, “On Biblical Hypostases,” *HUCA* 25 (1950/51): 157-71; Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom: Studies in the Hypostatization of Divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East* (Lund: H. Ohlsson, 1947). On early Jewish reactions against the notion of Wisdom as a distinguishable entity, see Sir 42:15-21 and 11QPsa 26:11-13,

Explicit and implicit modes of monotheizing *may* admit other “divine beings” into their respective systems, though only in subsidiary or derivative roles, and often as “props” to demonstrate or augment Yhwh’s power.<sup>112</sup> Conversely, texts might exclude other divine beings through polemics (e.g., Isa 40-48)<sup>113</sup> or through silence (e.g., Gen 1). The criteria for determining the admittance of gods within a given rhetorical system differs among different bodies of literature. Notably, tendencies to include *and* exclude deities for monotheizing purposes persist well into early Judaism, for example, in the notions of a divine council of heavenly אלהים,<sup>114</sup> בני האלים,<sup>115</sup> “spirits” that rule the nations,<sup>116</sup> or malevolent divine beings opposed to Yhwh. Simultaneous with such trends are the texts stating that there are no other אלהים.<sup>117</sup> In other words, there are multiple modes of monotheizing which, for different rhetorical purposes, set out different or conflicting criteria for supreme uniqueness or divinity in order make their point.<sup>118</sup>

The importance of recognizing these modes of monotheizing for thinking about Chronicles is two-fold. First, biblical literature possesses different *explicit* and *implicit* modes

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discussed by Menahem Kister, “A Contribution to the Interpretation of Ben Sira,” *Tarbiz* 59 (1989/90):303-78 [355-57] [Hebrew].

<sup>112</sup> See Stolz, *Einführung in den biblischen Monotheismus*, 196.

<sup>113</sup> Combative rhetoric may involve polemics against other gods (e.g., against Baal or Asherah), critiques of other political powers and the desire to depend upon them instead of Yhwh (e.g., Egypt or Assyria), or polemics against idols or idol-makers (e.g., Isa 44:9-20).

<sup>114</sup> Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; 1QM 15:14; 17:7; 4Q181 1:4; 4Q427 7 ii 9; 5Q13 1:6; See discussion by Heiser, “The Divine Council in Late Canonical and Noncanonical Second Temple Jewish Literature,” esp. 122-257. Heiser concludes that “[t]he idea that Judaism in the Second Temple period must be unequivocally described in terms of intolerant monolatry cannot be sustained” (257); cf. also Burnett, “אלוהים” *lōhīm*,” 178-90.

<sup>115</sup> Representative texts include 4Q400 frg. 2 ln. 5; 1QH<sup>a</sup> 18, 8; *Additions to Esther* 14:12; Philo, *Conf.* 173; LXX Num 16:22; 27:16. On these texts, see William Horbury, “Jewish and Christian Monotheism in the Herodian Age,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, 16-44;

<sup>116</sup> See Horbury, “Jewish and Christian Monotheism,” 31-40, on the reception history of Deut 4:19 (cf. Deut 29:25; 32:8); Michael Mach, “Concepts of Jewish Monotheism during the Hellenistic Period,” in *The Jewish roots of Christological monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, Gladys S. Lewis; JSJSup 63; Leiden: Brill, 1999).

<sup>117</sup> See, e.g., Targum Onkelos Exod 15:11; *Jub.* 12:17-19; Ps.-Orph. 10-12.17, Sib. Or. 48-49; 693; 717-8; 722-23; 760. Especially interesting in these latter Hellenistic-Jewish texts, is the observation by Mach (“Concepts of Jewish Monotheism,” 32) that “these ‘monotheisms’ are not the Jewish answer to Greek culture but the Jewish way to connect itself thereto.”

<sup>118</sup> Of course, we cannot exclude the possibility of conflicting theological reasons for excluding or including divinities within a given text.

of monotheizing, and some texts, like those represented in Chronicles, may employ different explicit and implicit modes within a unified rhetorical system.<sup>119</sup> Second, it allows one to attend to the diverse ways that Chronicles exalts and seeks to distinguish the focal institutions that embody divinity. As I argue in the next section, Chronicles distinguishes categorically the temple, priesthood, and king by virtue of their relationship to the one God.<sup>120</sup> They relate to reality in a way that indicates, manifests, and sharpens Yhwh's categorical uniqueness. Thus, examining divine exaltation in Chronicles depends on (a) establishing the nature of the relationships between the book's focal institutions and Yhwh, and (b) examining the criteria and modes by which they are distinguished categorically, as expressions of divine supremacy. Just as Chronicles employs various modes of expressing Yhwh's categorical uniqueness, so it employs various modes of expressing the utter distinctiveness of the focal institutions that bear Yhwh's character. "Particularist" commitments are critical to understanding divine exaltation and sole divinity in Chronicles. As such, descriptions of institutions require attention as part of a holistic effort to understand Chronicles' ways of exalting Yhwh.

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<sup>119</sup> Schenker ("Le monothéisme," 448) makes a helpful distinction between the authority delegated to categorically inferior gods expressed in LXX Deut 32:8-9, the eschatological monotheism of Mic 4:5 (cf. 4:1-4) where other gods are "followed" in the present, and the present judgment of inferior gods expressed in Ps 82.

The relative autonomy granted to other divine beings in LXX Deut 32:8-9 (MSS 848 and 106c) and 4QDeut<sup>i</sup> exhibits traces of a monolatrous system. However, for the author of the earlier Hebrew Deut 32, it became possible to read the phrase בני אלים within a monotheistic framework (see vv. 36-39), e.g., as lesser beings subordinate to Israel's God. The very preservation of  $\nu\sigma\iota\zeta\ \theta\epsilon\sigma\omega\delta$  in the LXX attests to the fact that they *could* be reconciled with the One God within a monotheistic milieu. But not all tradents agreed. A proto-MT scribe reinterpreted this text as a threat to monotheism, and thus changed בני ישראל to בני אלים. It is important to note, however, that two later traditions (the LXX and proto-MT) dealt differently with the בני אלים. We have to distinguish between monotheizing modes of different periods, and the perception of some of those periods by others that they constituted polytheism. However, even here, one needs to be careful. Were later scribal changes efforts to *efface* earlier polytheism, or to *safeguard* divine uniqueness? How would one know when a text (1) alters the tradition to remove polytheistic elements or (2) rewrites to further remove Yhwh from such associations. This is basically a problem of "underdetermined" language. One might conjecture as to its reception, but the efforts of later redactors or scribes to alter that language is no reliable guide for understanding its function within earlier religious frameworks.

<sup>120</sup> See Bauckham's discussion of early Jewish monotheism in terms of its dual commitment (a) Yhwh's unique relationship with the whole of reality as creator, and (b) Yhwh's unique relationship to Israel, expressed in his delivering them from Egypt (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 7-11).

## B. CONFIGURATIONS OF DIVINE EXALTATION

In addition to understanding how various texts can give expression to Yhwh's sole divinity, my study also suggests the need to consider the wider interaction between Yhwh *qua* exalted deity and the particularities of Israel's world, and the various configurations of reality that result from those interactions. Configurations of divine exaltation pertain to the portrait of reality conveyed by a text, insofar as various aspects of "reality" relate to the exalted God. Examining such configurations requires asking, *how does a text configure and elucidate the relationships between Yhwh qua exalted deity and the rest of reality?* I refer here to the web of relationships in which Yhwh is embedded according to a given text. These relationships (e.g., between Yhwh and creation) clarify the nature and context of Yhwh's exaltation, but also define the presentation of those things related to Yhwh *qua* exalted deity. As such, related entities also constitute the effects of Yhwh's preeminence and sole divinity. Reality changes and reconfigures when in contact with Yhwh. However, different texts present that reality in different terms. There is no one inevitable construction of reality that follows from the conviction that Yhwh is exalted, or even that he is the sole deity. As with the modes of monotheistic expression, the possible monotheistic configurations in the biblical text range widely. For instance, scholars have argued that Gen 1 advances, or at least implies, a monotheistic worldview.<sup>121</sup> As Smith states, "In Genesis 1, creation is no longer primarily a conflict; it is the result not of two wills in conflict but of One Will expressing the word issuing in the good creation."<sup>122</sup> The premise that God created the entire cosmos alone

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<sup>121</sup> See Smith, *Priestly Vision*; idem, *Origins*, 167-72; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 201-40; Kenton L. Sparks, "Enūma Elish' and Priestly Mimesis: Elite Emulation in Nascent Judaism," *JBL* 126/4 (2007):625-48 [631]; Rüdiger Schmitt, "The Problem of Magic and Monotheism in the Book of Leviticus," *JHS* 8/11 (2008):1-12; Leroy Waterman, "Cosmogonic Affinities in Genesis 1:2," *AJSL* 43 (1927):177-84 [177].

<sup>122</sup> Smith, *Origins*, 169.



supports various relational configurations according to the priestly writer. The “configuration” of monotheism in Gen 1 pertains to God’s relationship with creation. God stands utterly apart from his creation as uncontested ruler. All creation is obedient to his word and completely “other” than the supreme creator-God. God and creation are in distinctly different categories. This is not to suggest, however, that there is no relationship between God and the world. In particular, humanity figures differently than the rest of creation as bearer of the divine “image and likeness” (דמות and צלם),<sup>123</sup> and as recipient of particular mandates to “rule and subdue” (\*כבש\* and \*רדה\*). By virtue of their unique relationship to the sovereign deity, humanity acquires a distinct status and purpose within creation.<sup>124</sup> A number of scholars have noted that Gen 1 diffuses the ancient Near Eastern notion of the king as a unique image bearer such that all humanity now participates in the task of divine imaging and delegated rule. Even if such notions of ancient kingship are not in view, one may still observe in Gen 1 a decentralized notion of divine intermediation. Humanity participates equally in the mediation of divine power on earth.<sup>125</sup>

I raise this example from Gen 1 to emphasize that Yhwh’s exalted status results in certain configurations of the world. The drive to distinguish and exalt Yhwh among various texts does not result in the same configuration, but nonetheless, depictions of reality change insofar as they relate to Yhwh *qua* exalted deity. Though outside the scope of this dissertation, there is room to explore (as some have) the way that biblical texts depict the One God’s relationship to evil, other deities (or lack thereof), nations, physical matter, the

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<sup>123</sup> On which, see Garr, *In His Image and Likeness*; idem, “‘Image’ and ‘Likeness’ in the Inscription from Tell Fakhariyeh,” *IEJ* 50 (2000):227-34.

<sup>124</sup> One which, see Brent A. Strawn, “Comparative Approaches: History, Theory, and the Image of God,” in *Method Matters*, 117-42, who argues that the Genesis account is far more pacificistic in relation to creation than in ancient Near Eastern accounts of the king as divine image.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Gen 1 with the configuration of monotheism in Jeremiah as depicted by Halpern (“‘Brisker Pipes than Poetry,’” 47), who notes the book’s strong link between monotheism and aniconism in Jer 10; Cf. Helga Weippert, *Schöpfer des Himmels und der Erde: Ein Beitrag zur Theologie des Jeremiabuches* (SBS 102; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1981).

land, sexuality,<sup>126</sup> political structures, and so on. Moreover, one may also find that different biblical texts respond differently to the configuration of One God and “magic,”<sup>127</sup> images, bodily representations of Yhwh,<sup>128</sup> and multiple cultic sites.

Most relevant for an investigation of Chronicles, however, is to consider one specific way of configuring reality in relation to Yhwh’s supreme divinity, namely, the formation of homological relationships with Yhwh wherein entities in relationship with Yhwh participate in, or manifest, his exalted status. As suggested earlier, expressions of divine exaltation and sole divinity occur frequently via proxy in Chronicles. Thus, it is important to give attention to how Chronicles forges relationships between Yhwh and proxy institutions, and how those institutions (sometimes) become embodied expressions of Yhwh’s divinity.

## 1. HOMOLOGICAL CONFIGURATIONS

Understanding the configuration of monotheism in Chronicles requires attention to the centralized, hierarchical “instantiations” of divine supremacy at the heart of the book’s narrative, namely, Jerusalem’s temple, priesthood, and king. This dissertation explores ways that these three institutions share in Yhwh’s own “being” or nature and thus embody divine reality. As such, divine and institutional realities reinforce each other’s the status and significance. I am indebted for this line of thinking to Smith’s work on deity-temple identification in ancient Israel and the ancient Near East (especially Ugarit). In several of his publications, Smith probes the close relationship between deities and temples.<sup>129</sup> As

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<sup>126</sup> Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, “The Problem of the Body for the People of the Book,” *JHöS* 2/1 (1991):1-24.

<sup>127</sup> Rüdiger Schmitt, “The Problem of Magic and Monotheism.”

<sup>128</sup> Sommer, *The Bodies of God*.

<sup>129</sup> Smith’s seminal article on this topic is “Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People),” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* (ed. John Day; LHB/OTS 422; New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 3-27; Smith develops his work in Mark S. Smith and Wayne T. Pitard, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle. Vol. 2: Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of CAT/KTU 1.3-1.4* (VTSup 114; Leiden: Brill,

expressed in his article “Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People),” Smith’s goal in exploring deity-temple-human relationships is “to try to abstract some sense of *how* deities and their characteristics are expressed or mediated through temples as well as the various *means* of how the ancients posited their relationships to deities *via* temples.”<sup>130</sup> In his recent work co-authored with Wayne Pitard, Smith takes up the term “homology” to describe the god-temple relationship in Ugarit and Israel.<sup>131</sup> Homology suggests a similarity in function and structure as well as a common ancestry. This is important for thinking with Chronicles about the temple’s ability to function “like” God—i.e., exhibit his characteristics and evoke responses usually reserved for God—but also for understanding its origins in the divine realm (an important point in Chronicles) and Israel’s glorious past.<sup>132</sup> As mediators within that realm, priests and kings facilitate the benefits of that participation to others, even as they participate in divinity themselves (to be discussed in chs. 3-4). Smith’s study thus applies more generally to some of the most significant ways that deities became capable of being encountered, known, and experienced in the ancient world.

To explain the relationship between deities and temples, Smith lays out four aspects of deity-temple homologies. First, temples facilitate the encounter between deity and people. As such, they facilitate human experience with the deity. Smith writes, “the core of intersection between divine presence (theophany) and human presence (pilgrimage) is ritual.”<sup>133</sup> Second, Smith uses the term “recapitulation” to refer to the ways that temples

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2009); Cf. also Mark S. Smith, “Divine Form and Size in Ugaritic and Pre-exilic Israelite Religion,” *ZAW* 100 (1988): 424-27; idem, *God in Translation*, 14.

<sup>130</sup> Smith, “Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People),” 4.

<sup>131</sup> *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle. Vol. 2*, 63. On the use of the term “homology” to describe temple-cosmos relationships, see the use of this language by Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religions* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958), 373-85; idem, *The Myth of the Eternal Return, or, Cosmos and History* (BS 46; Princeton 1971); Jon D. Levenson, “The Temple and the World,” *JR* 64/3 (1984): 275-98 [295].

<sup>132</sup> Smith and Pitard, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle. Vol. 2*, 63.

<sup>133</sup> Smith, “Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People),” 7. Interestingly, Smith suggests that “with the Asherah and other signals of other deities removed, the Second Temple perhaps expressed the viewpoint of its

could evoke divine stories, for example by using the giant “sea” to recall Yhwh’s subduing the waters at creation.

Third, Smith refers to a temple’s “ontological participation” in the power, security, and holiness of a deity.<sup>134</sup> Smith also notes how a given cultic site acquired power, security, and holiness insofar as the deity endowed it with such qualities. I employ the language of “participation” in connection with the temple in Chronicles, extending Smith’s category as a way of discussing the temple’s functional, qualitative, and material participation in Yhwh’s “being” and power. Because of the relative importance of this category for my thinking about monotheism in Chronicles, I will offer examples from Pss 48 and 119 in order to explain the phenomenon in further detail.

Smith cites texts like Ps 48 to demonstrate the way that Yhwh’s qualities of strength were shared with other physical structures, such as the city of Zion. An explicit identification between Yhwh and Zion occurs in Ps 48:13-15, which enjoins worshippers to “walk about Zion, go round about her . . . number her towers, consider well her ramparts, go through her citadels; that you may tell the next generation that *this is God*, our God forever and ever.”

One may also note that Ps 48 draws a parallel between praise of Yhwh and praise of Zion in vv. 2-3.<sup>135</sup> Interestingly, Ps 48:4 states that Yhwh is “in [Zion’s] citadels” and then identifies

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priestly groups [concerns over fertility], arguably by realigning various sorts of monisms into expressions of oneness: in short, one deity, one Temple, one people, one priesthood, one prophet, one teaching.” Cf. Smith, *Origins*, 41-66.

<sup>134</sup> I.e., a deity’s “being” construed as power and holiness. I use this language of “ontological participation” in my dissertation to speak of the temple’s *functional, qualitative, and material* participation of institutions in Yhwh’s being and power (ch. 2). I also apply this language to the priesthood and kingship in chs. 3-4. For a stimulating theological study of the early and Medieval Christian notion of creation’s ontological participation in divine reality, see Hans Boersma’s *Nouvelle théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Boersma offers a helpful distinction between “symbol” and “sacrament” that fits with my understanding of institutions in Chronicles. Whereas symbols point to a separate reality utterly distinct from themselves, sacraments represent a “co-inherence” of divine and created reality. Sacraments overlap with that to which they also point.

<sup>135</sup> “יפה נוף משובש כל הארץ” (v. 2) and “גדול יהוה ומהלל מאד” (v. 3). Interestingly, the previous Psalm identifies Yhwh as “עליון נורא מלך” (Ps 47:3). “supreme, feared, a great king over all the earth” (Ps 47:3).

Yhwh’s manifestation as the Zion fortress itself: “God ... is known as a stronghold” (אלהים נודע למשגב ...). Verses 6-7 then describe the response of kings to the sight of Yhwh *as stronghold*: “They saw and were indeed astounded, they were confounded ... trembling gripped them” (vv. 6-7).<sup>136</sup>

Smith analyzes the chiasmic arrangement of Ps 48, which serves to sharpen the identification of Yhwh with Zion.<sup>137</sup> “One result of the many chiasms with *’ēlobīm* and *’ēlobēnū*,” Smith argues, “is to identify Zion, the mountain and its places with God.”<sup>138</sup> Smith also notes the psalm’s use of imagery about God as a refuge in connection with Zion as a refuge. It is God’s presence *in Zion* that provides refuge. Moreover, parallelistic uses of verbal roots bring Yhwh and Zion into collocation. For example, \*גדל refers to God’s greatness and the greatness of Zion’s towers, and ספר\* (“to (re)count”) applies to “counting” Zion’s towers (v. 13) and “recounting” to future generations that “this is God” (v. 15).

Smith’s conclusions provide an apt summation:

The ‘divinity’, eternity and safety of Zion all hinge on God’s own nature as divine, eternal and caring. God is the basis of Zion’s continuation, and concomitantly, Zion is the concrete sign to each generation that God has bestowed blessings to the people. The praises of God and Zion magnify one another in Psalm 48.<sup>139</sup>

As with Zion, biblical traditions also maintain that torah was so closely identified with Yhwh that it could serve as a surrogate recipient of devotion and admiration typically reserved for Yhwh. Kent Reynolds examines several verses from Ps 119 that illustrate this

<sup>136</sup> A claim reminiscent of the claim in the Gudea cylinder that “great fear of my [Ningirsu’s] house hovers over all the lands.” The deity Ningirsu here celebrates the temple Eninnu, the personified bearer of his own supreme qualities (E3/1.1.7 CylA ix 17-19). Translation from Dietz Otto Edzard, *Gudea and His Dynasty* (RIME 3/1; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 74-75.

<sup>137</sup> Mark S. Smith, “God and Zion: Form and Meaning in Psalm 48,” *Studi epigrafici e linguistici* 6 (1989): 67-77 [68-69].

<sup>138</sup> Smith, “God and Zion,” 69.

<sup>139</sup> Smith, “God and Zion,” 71-72. See also Mark E. Biddle, “The Figure of Lady Jerusalem: Identification, Deification, and Personification of Cities in the Ancient Near East,” in *The Biblical Canon in Comparative Perspective* (Vol. 4 of *Scripture in Context*; ANETS 11; New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), 173-94.

phenomenon.<sup>140</sup> He notes texts like Ps 119:19b in which the psalmist cries out, “do not hide your commandment from me” (אל תסתר ממני מצותך) a phrase typically found with *Yhwh’s face* as its object. The more common phrase “do not hide your *face* from me” (אל תסתר ממני פניך) appears in Ps 27:9a, 69:18a, 102:3a, and 143:7b (cf. Deut 31:17), illustrating the use of torah as a proxy for Yhwh. Psalm 119 depicts the psalmist “clinging to torah,” “trusting in torah,” “hoping in torah,” “believing in torah,” “loving torah,” “fearing torah,” “seeking torah,” “setting torah before me,” and “raising my hands to torah.” All these examples illustrate forcefully what Reynolds calls “torah piety,” a phenomenon whereby the psalmist substitutes “torah” for “God” in phrases typical of Yhwh-devotion. Torah becomes the medium, or proxy, object of the psalmist’s exclusive loyalty to Yhwh. In short, homologous entities—and in the case of Chronicles, homologous institutions—participate in the power, security, functioning, and holiness of Yhwh, and thus become concrete means of encountering him.

Smith argues fourthly for the importance of physical “analogy” in thinking about deity-temple relationships. Analogy explains how a temple could embody the size and attractiveness of a deity. This occurs, for instance, by means of a super-human cherubim throne and a giant washbasin in the temple’s courtyard.<sup>141</sup> One might also note ways that the architecture of a temple (or palace) could communicate notions of power and authority.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Kent Aaron Reynolds, *Torah as Teacher: The Exemplary Torah Student in Psalm 119* (VTSup 137; Leiden: Brill, 2010), esp. 31-41. Thanks to Travis Bott for pointing me to this resource. Cf. also Titus Reimuth, “Nehemiah 8 and the Authority of the Torah in Ezra-Nehemiah,” in *Unity and Diversity in Ezra-Nehemiah: Redaction, Rhetoric, and Reader* (Hebrew Bible Monographs 17; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 241-62.

<sup>141</sup> Smith, “Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People),” 17; Smith notes, “The exaggerated size of the structures in the Solomonic Temple courtyard would suggest that they were not intended for human use, but belonged to the realm of the divine, as noted by Bloch-Smith.” See E. M. Bloch-Smith. “Who is the King of Glory?: Solomon’s Temple and its Symbolism,” in *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King* (ed. M. D. Coogan, J. C. Exum and L. E. Stager; Louisville: WJK, 1994), 18-31.

Smith also sets up the relationship between human and temple in terms of “problems” (human powerlessness, lack of fertility, unholiness, mortality), “human contradictions” (limited power, but experience of suffering and evil; limited time, but intuiting eternity; knowledge of self as sinning and holy), divinity (strength, size) and temple (strength, size; channel of blessing, beauty). Temples focus the relationship between humans and deity and allow for the possibility of mediation by virtue of the fundamental analogy between deity

In sum, Yhwh's supremacy and sole divinity find congruent manifestations and embodiments in the real world through homologous institutions, individuals, and other "agents" of divinity.

## 2. HOMOLOGIES IN CHRONICLES

Understanding monotheism and divine exaltation in Chronicles, therefore, requires attention to the homologous relationships forged between Yhwh and the temple, priesthood, and kingship. Frequently in Chronicles, responses to Yhwh can be measured squarely with responses to those institutions. The application of Smith's approach requires sensitivity to Chronicles' particular strategies for configuring the relationship between Yhwh, temple, priesthood, and kingship. Though the centrality of the temple, priesthood, and kingship is obvious in Chronicles, the way that their centrality expresses and is informed by Yhwh's supremacy also requires a careful examination of ways that Chronicles revises its sources and supplements the history of those institutions with new material. Such an examination requires attention to patterns of characterization, or the "narrative identity" of institutions and possible patterns of revision vis-à-vis Samuel-Kings. Chronicles rarely states directly that Jerusalemite institutions stand in for Yhwh and instantiate his supreme uniqueness. For instance, whereas Ps 119 simply substitutes "seeking the torah" for "seeking Yhwh," Chronicles might employ the phrase "seeking Yhwh" but use a narrative about Judeans abolishing foreign cults and restoring the temple or altar (e.g., 1 Chr 15:4, 8-10) to show what it means. Similarly, Chronicles connects "abandoning Yhwh" with closing the temple

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and temple. The crucial word is "like", which "expresses the fulcrum-point between similarity and difference, connection and disjunction." Smith, "Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People)," 21.

<sup>142</sup> See, e.g., Rüdiger Schmitt, "The Iconography of Power. Israelite and Judean Royal Architecture as Icons of Power," in *Iconography and Biblical Studies. Proceedings of the Iconography Sessions at the Joint EABS/SBL Conference, 22-26 July 2007, Vienna, Austria* (ed. Izaak J. de Hulster and Rüdiger Schmitt; AOAT 361; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010), 73-92.

(something that never happens in Kings). In Hezekiah's great speech (2 Chr 30), in which he calls for the reunification of Israel, he implores his hearers to "submit to Yhwh and come to his sanctuary" (v. 8). Thus, the book's narrative presentation of Yhwh requires attention to the institutions that bear homological similarity, as I discuss at length regarding the temple, priesthood, and kingship.

Because the relationships between Yhwh *qua* supreme deity and the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king are so multifaceted in Chronicles, elucidating Chronicles' homological Yhwh-institutional configuration(s) will occupy the bulk of the dissertation, yet consistently with a view to the larger question of how these institutions mediate, embody and reinforce Yhwh's exalted status, and in some instances, his sole divinity.

### C. RHETORIC OF EXALTATION

In recognition of the need to move away from abstract and developmental notions of monotheism as an "intellectual achievement," several scholars now argue for the need to examine monotheism as a form of rhetoric aimed at exalting God as worthy of Israel's exclusive devotion.<sup>143</sup> Especially important is the recognition by scholars that even Deutero-Isaiah, considered by many to be the clearest biblical exponent of monotheism, has particularist concerns and rhetorical objectives other than monotheism in view. While Deutero-Isaiah's discourse addresses the nations, its rhetoric "aims at persuading insiders."<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> See, MacDonald, "Monotheism and Isaiah," 46; Clifford discusses the "rhetoric of monotheism" in, "Deutero-Isaiah and Monotheism," 273-77. Clifford argues that Deutero-Isaiah renders "incomparability" language in "absolute" terms; Smith, *Origins*, 149-166; Richard A. Engnell ("Otherness and the rhetorical exigencies of theistic religion," *QJS* 79/1 [1993]:82-98) offers an interesting discussion on monotheism and rhetoric; cf. also Gerhard van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (2d ed.; trans. J. E. Turner; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 180.

<sup>144</sup> Smith, *Origins*, 180; idem, "The Polemic of Biblical Monotheism: Outsider Context and Insider Referentiality in Second Isaiah," in *Religious Polemics in Context: Papers Presented to the Second International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR) held at Leiden, 27—28 April 2000* (ed. T. L. Hettema and A. van der Kooij; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004), 201-34.



Scholars have proposed variously that Deutero-Isaiah employs monotheistic language in order to persuade Israel that Yhwh (a) was present with his people in exile,<sup>145</sup> (b) had a special concern for Israel,<sup>146</sup> (c) that he was Israel's only recourse, and (d) that Yhwh was exalted and had the power to bring Israel back to the land.<sup>147</sup> Thus, Deutero-Isaiah not only expresses an interest in the nations and other "universalistic" themes, but also concrete themes central to the particular circumstances of Israel. Deutero-Isaiah also expresses explicit concern for rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple (Isa 44:28), and more urgently, for an imminent return to the land.<sup>148</sup> As MacDonald notes, "Though sometimes overlooked by those who argue for Second Isaiah's universalism, this is a message that will lead to Judah, more specifically Jerusalem."<sup>149</sup> In short, recent scholarship has begun to recognize the need to examine the role of monotheistic discourse within larger rhetorical strategies that reinforce particularist concerns.

In consideration of Chronicles, it is important to consider the rhetorical function of its exalted language about Yhwh, and significantly, the rhetorical function of language about the institutions that mediated Yhwh's supremacy. My interest here is in rhetoric as a persuasive literary strategy rather than simply a form of literary architecture.<sup>150</sup> Form and content collaborate in the service of a literary strategy. Thus, literary features (e.g., genre, stylistic features, tropes, characterization, citation, allusion) as well as design (e.g., literary

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<sup>145</sup> Smith, *Origins*, 192.

<sup>146</sup> Israel's election plays an important role in the discussion of Joel Kaminsky and Anne Stewart, "God of All the World: Universalism and Developing Monotheism in Isaiah 40-66," *HTR* 99/2 (2006):139-63.

<sup>147</sup> On this theme, see Kaminsky and Stewart, "God of All the World," esp. 140, 144, 145, 150-51].

<sup>148</sup> MacDonald, "Monotheism and Isaiah," 46.

<sup>149</sup> MacDonald, "Monotheism and Isaiah," 46.

<sup>150</sup> I thank Robert Barrett for pointing out this distinction. See the discussion of rhetoric in biblical studies by Phyllis Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1994), 25-54. For a rhetorical analysis of Chr, see Rodney K. Duke, *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicles: A Rhetorical Analysis* (JSOTSup 88; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990). Duke employs categories drawn from Aristotelian rhetoric to examine the book of Chr. Particularly relevant for examining rhetoric specific to Chr's literary genres, with inset lists/genealogies and poetry are the works of James W. Watts, *Psalm and Story: Inset Hymns in Hebrew Narrative* (JSOTSup 139; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), esp. 155-85; idem, *Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

framing, chiasm) require attention. It is also important to note that persuasion does not necessitate direct appeal to a particular audience. In other words, rhetorical aim and audience(s) are often obscure. This is important when considering the rhetorical strategy of historiographical literature—in which talking about the past functions rhetorically for a contemporary audience, but it is not always clear how, and for which audience(s), a book’s rhetoric functions.<sup>151</sup> According to Rodney Duke, “historical narratives are representational depictions of the world composed for the purpose of conveying ‘meaning’ to one’s audience. The historian wishes to persuade the audience to accept her or his story as true—that means to accept it with its inherent presuppositions, world-view and ideology.”<sup>152</sup> However, without more concrete textual clues, one may find difficulty in determining the rhetorical objectives of a historiographical work.

One concrete way that historiographical literature reaches its audience rhetorically is by drawing explicit and implicit lines of continuity and discontinuity between the past and the present. Chronicles begins its work with a series of genealogies—texts that draw explicit connections between the post-exilic period and the beginnings of humanity, between Israel and the nations, and between tribal groups within Israel. Attention to the literary arrangement and content of these genealogies suggests an emphasis on the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with a chiastic focus on Levi, and in particular, the ritual duties of the priests.<sup>153</sup> Narrative portions of the book also draw lines of continuity with the past, through direct appeals for divine deliverance from exile placed in the mouth of David (1 Chr 16:35-36), through citation of post-exilic psalms, through mention of certain institutional

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<sup>151</sup> See, recently, Rachele Gilmour, *Representing the Past: A Literary Analysis of Narrative Historiography in the Book of Samuel* (VTSup 143; Leiden: Brill, 2011). I thank Lydia Lee for pointing me to this resource.

<sup>152</sup> Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 33.

<sup>153</sup> See the argument of James T. Sparks, *The Chronicler’s Genealogies: Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1-9* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008); cf. Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9* (AB 12; New York: Doubleday, 2004); Thomas Willi, *Chronik, 1 Chr 1-10* (BKAT 24/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2009).

configurations that endured into the post-exilic period, and through references to Cyrus' decree for the exiles to return. As such, the past holds a kind of authority for the present, a point made repeatedly in the book by referencing cultic acts undertaken according to the "law of Moses" and the "law of David." In addition to lines of continuity with the past, the book also draws important lines of continuity between the divine and human realms, in particular, through mediating institutions. Thus, the horizontal authority of the past joins with vertical divine authority, in ways more explicit than in Samuel-Kings. As Thomas Renz argues, persuasion can occur by reconfiguring an audience's priorities and values, such that, if those priorities and values are accepted, change results. For Renz, this falls generally under the classical category of epideictic rhetoric, where rhetors or writers attempt to produce a "certain kind of community by promoting certain values."<sup>154</sup> One might extend Renz's statements here to say that Chronicles attempts to produce a certain kind of nation, defined by certain loyalties, by promoting a certain configuration of reality where divine authority and power intersected with the institutions accessible (and hoped for) to post-exilic Judeans. It is not simply that Chronicles' audience needed to discover that the temple, priesthood, and kingship were important, but, perhaps, they needed to discover that these institutions were the primary loci of Yhwh's divine power that could sustain and protect the nation into the future. As Renz notes, praise and blame are crucial to epideictic rhetoric, in that they create imitable prototypes. One might suggest that Chronicles seeks to create "utopian"

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<sup>154</sup> Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel* (VTSup 76; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 59. Epideictic rhetoric is not about trying directly to urge some decision, but rather to urge audiences to rearrange its values and priorities through praise or blame (24). Thanks to Robert Barrett for pointing me toward this book and the significance of epideictic rhetoric. Cf. Robert Barrett ("I have a dream': Ezekiel's Rhetorical Strategy for Eradicating Idolatry" [Paper Presented at the International Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, London, July, 2011], 1, 11-12) points out that the rhetorical purpose of Ezekiel is not to persuade Israel that idols are bad, but to move idolatry to the center stage as a chief offense against Yhwh, and to instill a sense of repugnance regarding idols.

prototypes of Israel's central institutions with the hope of mobilizing the entire nation toward unity and worship.<sup>155</sup>

In sum, this study attends to the embeddedness of rhetoric of divine exaltation and sole divinity within Chronicles' larger rhetorical objectives. Chronicles takes up language of monotheism and divine supremacy in advancement of the argument that Israel's primary institutions—the temple, priesthood, and kingship—were the locus of ongoing divine power and of continuity with the great God of the past. Moreover, Chronicles argues for the viability of those institutions for commanding the loyalty of all Israel and sustaining Jewish society into a future devoid of the syncretism and idolatry that characterized its past. However, Chronicles could not simply *argue for* the viability of these institutions as the locus of divine power without first making the case that divine power and presence were uniquely related to these institutions.<sup>156</sup> In other words, establishing divine-institutional relationships contributes to the book's rhetorical purposes. The Chronicler wrote during a time when the Second Temple already stood, yet “all Israel” did not participate in its benefits or support its cause. In order to drive home the absolute cruciality of the temple and its cult for the unification of post-exilic society, Chronicles tells history.<sup>157</sup> The book does not engage in a direct appeal, but (re-)configures the past such that if its premises concerning Yhwh's unique relationship to the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king are accepted, those institutions cannot help but capture the commitments of Chronicles' audience(s) and lead toward national unity *and* purpose.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> As Steven Schweitzer (*Reading Utopia in Chronicles* (LHB/OTS 442; London/New York: T & T Clark, 2009) argues, “utopian” does not mean perfect, but rather, a “better alternative reality” (133).

<sup>156</sup> For this reason, I spend much of this dissertation exploring the ways that Chr configures divine-institutional relationships, in order to then explain how those related institutions instantiate divine supremacy.

<sup>157</sup> I do not mean to ignore kingship here, but will note briefly that embracing the king as agent of divine rule was a way of endorsing the cult in Chr. I discuss the importance of this institution further in ch. 4.

<sup>158</sup> One may also say national “belonging,” in the sense of having a cause and purpose to effectively mobilize the nation, and to experience together divine power, once the other institutions, such as the military,

D. SUMMARY OF AN APPROACH TO DIVINE EXALTATION AND ITS APPLICATION TO CHRONICLES

The approach to understanding divine exaltation that I lay out suggests a need to attend to the modes of monotheistic discourse regnant in a particular text, understand the relationships forged between Yhwh *qua* exalted deity and the rest of reality, and examine the rhetorical function of discourse about Yhwh's exaltation and relationships to reality. Examining modes of monotheizing alerts one to the various ways that biblical writers forge divisions between Yhwh and the rest of reality. Writers may do this through explicit reference to other deities or by ignoring them. Examining configurations of divine exaltation attends to the web of relationships created between the exalted deity and the rest of reality, especially as this occurs through particular "agents" or proxies. Finally, rhetorical approaches examine the use of language about Yhwh's sole divinity and exaltation to advance an argument or instill certain values and priorities.

My study in Chronicles draws from each of these approaches to understanding monotheism. First, Chronicles employs several modes of monotheistic discourse, each of which serves particular goals in their respective literary contexts. There is no "dominant" mode, such as one might find in Deutero-Isaiah. It is notable, however, that Chronicles engages less in explicit polemics against "the gods" and more frequently in polemic through "counterpoint" praise of Yhwh and his exalted agents. Second, I argue that Chronicles' history draws explicit and implicit homologies between divine and institutional supremacy. Chronicles exhibits consistent efforts to *forge bonds* between Yhwh and these focal institutions, *forge divisions* between Israel's focal institutions and non-Yahwistic institutions,

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monarchy, and statehood were no longer constitutive of Israel. See, Jacob Wright, "David, Saul, and Internal Judahite Politics," (forthcoming).

and *exalt those institutions* as instances of Yhwh’s own preeminence. Through this configuration of reality (third), Chronicles aims rhetorically to bolster the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king as the unique loci and embodiment of ongoing divine power, and consequently, to draw “all Israel” toward the institutions that could secure the nation’s future, and would reflect the nation’s identification with *the* exalted deity.

## VI. LITERARY CONSIDERATIONS

While the full range of factors that inspired the Chronicler’s composition remain opaque, it is clear that the book draws together a diverse range of material. Chronicles consists of material from a number of sources, by its own admission, and through quotation or allusion. Scholars debate the degree to which the book’s diverse material also reflects redactional growth or simply lacks neat harmonization. The most significant areas of literary diversity exist in the book’s lists, in 1 Chr 1-9, 15-16, and 23-27. Because lists are susceptible to literary expansion, on the one hand, while difficult to assimilate when drawing from many sources on the other, there is little scholarly consensus on whether these chapters (1) underwent expansion with larger redactional “layers,”<sup>159</sup> (2) underwent gradual non-systematic expansion, or (3) were part of a “synthesis” struck by the original compilers of the book. Few now adhere to the *Blockmodell* advocated by David Noel Freedman and then

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<sup>159</sup> E.g., Hugh G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 15-16, sees a “pro-priestly” redaction across these chapters that joined the book literarily to Ezr 1-6. Cf. also the proposals of Ernst Michael Dörrfuss (*Mose in den Chronikbüchern: Garant theokratischer Zukunftserwartung* [BZAW 219; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994]), who proposes a Moses-theocratic redaction (critical of royalist hopes), and Georg Steins (*Die Chronik als Abschlussphänomen: Studien zur Entstehung und Theologie von 1/2 Chronik* [BBB 93; Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum, 1995]), both of the *Göttingerschule* of redaction criticism.

Frank Moore Cross,<sup>160</sup> according to whom large sections of Chronicles, such as 1 Chr 1-9 and 23-27 were appended secondarily.

One may make the following observations concerning these proposals. First, various *Schichtmodelle* depend heavily on the perception of pro-priestly or pro-Levite ideologies in the book, relating to priestly and Deuteronomistic influences.<sup>161</sup> Reconstructing such ideologies, in turn, depends heavily on the notion of priest-Levite conflicts as a social backdrop for the post-exilic period, and the book of Chronicles in particular.<sup>162</sup> I treat the relationship between priests and Levites in further detail in ch. 3, though it is worth noting here that this two-fold reconstruction is tenuous. Gary Knoppers, Steven Schweitzer, and others, argue convincingly that Chronicles navigates a *via media* between the strict subordination of Levites to priests and a flattening out of their differences.<sup>163</sup> Texts to which scholars often appeal for evidence of conflicting priestly agendas (1 Chr 15-16; 23-27) also advocate complementary roles for Levites and priests. I argue for additional aspects of complementarity in ch. 3.

In addition, recent scholarship in Chronicles has argued increasingly for the integral relationship between the lists in 1 Chr 1-9, 15-16, and 23-27 and the rest of the book, and

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<sup>160</sup> David N. Freedman, "The Chronicler's Purpose," *CBQ* 23 (1961): 436-42; F. M. Cross, "A Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration," *JBL* 94 (1975): 4-18; cf. also J. D. Newsome, "Toward a New Understanding of the Chronicler and his Purposes," *JBL* 94 (1975):201-17.

<sup>161</sup> Scholars who argue for an initial pro-priestly composition include Johann Wilhelm Rothstein and Johannes Hänel, *Das erste Buch der Chronik: Übersetzt und Erklärt* (KAT 18/2; Leipzig: Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1927); Martin Noth, *The Chronicler's History* (trans. By H. G. M. Williamson; JSOTSup 50; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987); Wilhelm Rudolph, *Chronikbücher* (HAT 21; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1955), 1-5; Rudolph Mosis, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes* (Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 44-45; Scholars who propose an initial pro-Levite composition include Gerhard von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild des chronistischen Werkes* (BWANT 54; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1930); Adam C. Welch, *Post-Exilic Judaism* (London: Blackwood, 1935), 172-84; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 28-31; Simon J. De Vries, *I and II Chronicles* (FOTL 11; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 191-96 (usually on the basis of 1 Chr 23-27).

<sup>162</sup> On which, see Nathan MacDonald, *Turbulent Priests* (forthcoming).

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Paul D. Hanson, "1 Chronicles 15-16 and the Chronicler's Views on the Levites," in "*Sha'arei Talmon*": *Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East presented to Shemaryahu Talmon* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 69-77. Hanson notes that "the conciliatory posture of the Chronicler is evident ... The fact that the priests are superior to the Levites in rank is not denied, though the lack of emphasis given to this fact is itself significant" (74).

for the internal unity of these lists.<sup>164</sup> While editorial activity is plausible and indeed likely,<sup>165</sup> the plausibility of unified and systematic redactions that take the book in a direction it was not already moving thus become diminished.<sup>166</sup> Whether one sees the affinities between the lists and narrative portions of the book as later affirmations of earlier texts, or parts of the book's original composition, one can recognize a high degree of literary unity in Chronicles.

As Knoppers states,

there is no question that one encounters both pro-Priestly and pro-Levitical passages in Chronicles. Nor is there any doubt that the work draws from Priestly tradition in certain contexts, but from Deuteronomistic tradition in others. Rather than an indelible mark of literary disunity, these passages evince the author's concern to mediate different perspectives within the context of the late Persian period or early Hellenistic age.<sup>167</sup>

In this study, I treat Chronicles as a literary unity that is distinct from Ezra-Nehemiah,<sup>168</sup> and which reflects a distinct theological-ideological (though not necessarily

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<sup>164</sup> On integral relationship between 1 Chr 1-9 and the rest of the book, see Japhet, *Ideology*, 278; Williamson, *Israel in the book of Chronicles*, 82; Marshall D. Johnson, *Purpose of Biblical Genealogies* (2d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 55; Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 52; William L. Osborne, *The Genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9* (Philadelphia: The Dropsie University Press, 1979), 55; Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 259-65; Kenneth G. Hoglund, "The Chronicler as Historian: A Comparativist Perspective," in *Chronicler as Historian*, 19-29 [esp. 21-23]. Theologically, the genealogies all relate to the "12 tribe" unity of Israel. Further, as Knoppers (*I Chronicles 1-9*, 265) states, "the genealogical prologue (1 Chr 1-9) and the story of the monarchy (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 36), despite their different genres, reveal similar points of view. Both end with exile (1 Chr 9:1; 2 Chr 36:17-21), charge the deportation to infidelity (1 Chr 9:1; 2 Chr 36:12-16), and announce a return (1 Chr 9:2-34; 2 Chr 36:22-23); on 1 Chr 15-16 and the rest of Chr, see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 654-61; on 1 Chr 23-27 as an internal unity integral to the rest of Chr, see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 406-11; Gary N. Knoppers, "Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors? The Levites in Chronicles and the History of the Israelite Priesthood," *JBL* 118 (1999):49-72; idem, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 788-98 (esp. 794-95); John W. Wright, "The Legacy of David in Chronicles: The Narrative Function of 1 Chronicles 23-27," *JBL* 110 (1991):229-42; William M. Schniedewind, *The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period* (JSOTSup 197; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1995), 165-70.

<sup>165</sup> E.g., sections of 1 Chr 4-5 and 7; 9:35-44; 24:20-31. See discussions in Reinhard G. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (trans. John Bowden; London/New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 16-20.

<sup>166</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 92 n. 96, offers a substantial list of scholars who are similarly skeptical of distinct priestly, Levitical, or Deuteronomistic redactions in the book. Steven L. McKenzie ("The Chronicler as Redactor," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* [JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999], 80, is in basic agreement with the idea of a unified book of Chr, with some light revisions.

<sup>167</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 92. Knoppers emphasizes the legitimating purpose of assimilating earlier traditions. He notes that it (1) "establishes his own position as an exegete and trident of older traditions," (2) it "creates the impression of continuity from ancient times to the monarchy," and it (3) "can be used to authorize later innovations" (92-93).

<sup>168</sup> The literary unity of Chr-Ezr-Neh was first advocated by Leopold Zunz in his work *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden, historisch entwickelt: ein Beitrag zur Alterthumskunde und biblischen Kritik, zur Literatur- und Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin: A. Asher, 1832). Sara Japhet and H. G. M. Williamson critiqued this consensus, and shifted the burden of proof toward those who would treat Chr and Ezr-Neh as a unity. Consequently,



linguistic) “dialect.” In addition to the complementarity of priests and Levites, evidence for Chronicles’ literary unity also lies in the towering importance accorded to the temple and cult throughout the book’s narrative, and the unswerving effort to magnify its significance.<sup>169</sup>

Though my focus remains on ways that Chronicles—as a literary unity—exhibits a consistent effort to exalt Yhwh through “proxy” institutions, I do not suggest that the book exhibits an easily unified theological system. Indeed, the constraints of Chronicles’ sources and the needs of various rhetorical situations, create certain tensions within the book. For example, Asa and Jehoshaphat are both said to have removed the high places (2 Chr 14:3-5; 17:6) *and* not removed them (2 Chr 15:17; 2 Chr 20:33). The presence of tensions and conflicting details in the book are likely the result of Chronicles’ integration of Deuteronomistic, priestly, psalmic, and other traditions into one history, and not necessarily multiple *discrete* redactions.<sup>170</sup> As Knoppers states, “One should not be surprised that some of the writer’s citations of earlier works do not mesh with each other.”<sup>171</sup> Moreover, with Japhet, it is doubtful that a “meticulous harmony of all the possible details was ever aimed at

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many scholars of Chr treat the book as a separate composition. See SaraJaphet, “The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew,” *VT* 18 (1968): 332-72; idem, “The Relationship between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah,” in *Congress Volume, Leuven 1989* (J. A. Emerton ed.; VTSup 32; Leiden: Brill, 1991), 298-313; Williamson (*Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 5-70). Some critique Japhet’s proposal on linguistic grounds. See e.g., Mark A. Throntveit, “Linguistic Analysis and the Question of Authorship in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah,” *VT* 32 (1982): 201-16; David Talshir, “A Reinvestigation of the Linguistic Relationship between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah,” *VT* 38 (1988): 165-93; and Robert Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (HSM 12; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1976), 1-84. However, the distinctiveness of Chr vis-à-vis Ezr-Neh can be sustained on the ideological differences noted by Japhet, “The Relationship between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah,” 505-06. Japhet notes differences concerning (1) the Davidic monarchy, (2) Israel as a 12-tribe unity, (3) attitudes toward outsiders, (4) mixed marriages, and (5) retribution. One may also note differences concerning the exodus-traditions. Cf. the critical assessment of Japhet’s ideological observations by James VanderKam, “Ezra-Nehemiah or Ezra and Nehemiah,” in *Priests, Prophets, and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp* (ed. Eugene Ulrich, John W. Wright, Robert P. Carroll, Philip R. Davies; JSOTSup 149; JSOT Press: Sheffield, 1992), 55-75 [58-59]. Cf. also the qualified assessment of these ideological differences in Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 80-85.

The closest affinities between Chr and Ezr-Neh exist in Ezr 1-3. On the literary relationship between Ezr 1-3 and Chronicles, see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 93-96.

<sup>169</sup> On the sustained attention devoted to the temple in Chr vis-à-vis Kgs, see Schweitzer, “The Temple in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles,” 123-138.

<sup>170</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 7; Klein, *I Chronicles*, 426.

<sup>171</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 93.

by the Chronicler.”<sup>172</sup> Therefore, my objective is not to harmonize textual differences, but rather to explain what I consider a broader unifying logic concerning Yhwh’s divinity and cult that would employ, and also advance, conflicting perspectives on deities and historical events. Moreover, my dissertation seeks to examine *monotheizing trends and trajectories* in the book, without flattening out these trends into a monolithic system. The degree to which study of divine and institutional exaltation explains Chronicles’ diverse and conflicting data will be one test of the book’s literary unity.

## VII. HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

My study seeks to investigate Chronicles against the backdrop of the late Persian/early Hellenistic period when the book most likely took its final shape.<sup>173</sup> While

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<sup>172</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 7.

<sup>173</sup> The most substantial treatment of dating issues is that of Kai Peltonen, “A Jigsaw without a Model? The Dating of Chronicles” in *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 225-271. Dating the book of Chr depends on specifically datable points, theories of cultural influence, and literary redaction. As such, Chr’s date of composition is very difficult to determine. Nonetheless, several points deserve mention. First, one may note that the decree of Cyrus in 2 Chr 26:22-23 provides a *terminus a quo* of 538 B.C.E., and that the mention of the Persian “Daric” (דַּרְכֻּמָּוּן; 1 Chr 29:7), moves the *terminus a quo* even later, to around 515 B.C.E. (discussed by H. G. M. Williamson, *Studies in Persian Period History and Historiography* [FAT 1/38; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004], 169-70). There exist other Persian loanwords in the book as well, such as גִּזְוֹךְ (“treasury” 1 Chr 28:11) and פֶּרֶר (‘‘colonnade’’ 1 Chr 26:18), making unlikely an early post-exilic date such as proposed by Cross, Freedman, Newsome, and others. Second, 1 Chr 3:17-24 mentions the descendents of Jehoiachin, who was exiled in 597 B.C.E. The MT mentions *six* generations beyond Zerubbabel, which would date to around the late 5<sup>th</sup> or early 4<sup>th</sup> century. The LXX traces *eleven* generations beyond Zerubbabel, which would date this text—and possibly the book of Chr—to around the late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 3<sup>rd</sup> century at the earliest. It is unclear whether the LXX preserves an earlier Hebrew, the MT was earlier, or if the passage itself is a late addition and therefore of no use for dating the entire book of Chr (see discussion in Peltonen, “A Jigsaw without a Model?” 229-30; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 26). Third, Eupolemus (ca. 150 B.C.E.) cites the LXX of Chr, and Ben Sira (ca. 190 B.C.E.) presupposes David’s appointing of temple singers (Sir 47:8-10; see Steven S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles* [Interpretation; Louisville: WJK, 2001], 10). Fourth, some scholars examine the status of Levites vis-à-vis Ezr-Neh to discern, e.g., whether Chr knows of events in Nehemiah’s day (see discussion in ch. 3), or whether it represents a more “advanced” stage in the development of priestly courses (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 26-27). However, it is not always clear when Chr depends on the Neh, vice-versa, or whether both represent independent developments (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 135-36; e.g., in 1 Chr 23-27; Neh 12). As such, this is a dubious enterprise. Fifth, scholars argue for or against knowledge of Hellenistic features in the book. However, Hellenistic influence in Palestine began as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., and was not limited to the periods after the conquests of Alexander. Moreover, as Knoppers (*1 Chronicles 1-9*, 104) contends, Hellenistic influences in Yehud were far less pronounced than on the coast until well into the Hellenistic period. Thus, the presence or absence of Hellenistic features “should be discontinued as a benchmark to establish a *terminus ante quem* for

biblical scholars often treat the shift from Persian to Hellenistic rule as a watershed in Palestine, it is not evident that this shift made a significant impact on the ground, socially, economically, culturally, or politically in *Yehud*.<sup>174</sup> Greek influence in Palestine began as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., though incursions specific to Hellenism did not reach the hill

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the composition of the Chronicler's work." However, broad knowledge of Greek influences in Syro-Palestine provides opportunities for situating Chr generally in its larger milieu. See, e.g., the studies of Adi Erlich, *The Art of Hellenistic Palestine* (BARIS; Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009); Ephraim Stern, *Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period: 538-332 B.C.* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1982); idem, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: Volume II: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods 732-332 BCE* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 2001); C. L. Myers and E. M. Myers, *Zechariah 9-14* (AB 25C; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1993), 22-26.

<sup>174</sup> For studies in the archaeology of this period, see Oren Tal, *The Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine: Between Tradition and Renewal* (Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, 2006) [Hebrew]; Andrea M. Berlin, "Between Large Forces: Palestine in the Hellenistic Period," *BA* 60/1 (1997):2-51; R. H. Smith, "The Southern Levant in the Hellenistic Period," *Levant* 22 (1990):123-30; M. C. Halpern-Zylberstein, "The Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism: Volume Two: The Hellenistic Age* (ed. W. D. Davies and Louis Finkelstein; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1-34; Robert Harrison, "Hellenization in Syria-Palestine: The Case of Judaea in the Third Century BCE," *BA* 57 (1994):98-108; Oded Lipschits and Oren Tal, "The Settlement Archaeology of the Province of Judah," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (2007), 33-52. As Lester Grabbe (*A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period, Vol. 2: The Coming of the Greeks: The Early Hellenistic Period (335-175 BCE)*) [New York: T & T Clark, 2008], 44 contends, "There is no clear break between the late Persian and the early Hellenistic period. As important as Alexander's conquest and the wars of the Diadochi were to history they left little impression on the artefactual record."

Politically speaking, one may note the following about Persian and Ptolemaic local administration. Persian administration sites likely include Ramat Raḥel and Mizpah (the provincial capital under the Babylonians). Administrative control may have shifted to Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah, but this is uncertain (John W. Betlyon, "A People Transformed: Palestine in the Persian Period." *Near Eastern Archaeology* 68 (1-2): 4-58 [26]; cf. John W. Betlyon, "Egypt and Phoenicia in the Persian Period: Partners in Trade and Rebellion," in *Egypt, Israel, and the Ancient Mediterranean World: Studies in Honor of Donald B. Redford* (ed. Gary N. Knoppers and Antoine Hirsch; PES; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004), 455-78. More broadly, however, Persian presence became evident through taxation and the conscription of Judeans for the military purposes. In addition, the plain of Acco to the west likely served as a staging ground for Persian military campaigns into Egypt (Betlyon, "A People Transformed," 52). Persia also created outposts to quarter troops and increase stability in this "buffer" region. The degree to which the Persians used the Jerusalem temple as a bank is uncertain, though likely in this period.

The shift from Persian rule to Ptolemaic rule brought few changes to the region, though it certainly increased economic pressures due to practices of tax farming and taxation on all commercial exchanges (Berlin, "Between Large Forces," 4; John H. Hayes and Sara R. Mandell, *The Jewish People in Classical Antiquity: From Alexander to Bar Kochba* [Louisville: WJK, 1998], 35-36). Moreover, by eliminating the office of governor, Ptolemaic rule set the stage for an increasingly powerful high priest and priestly families, who stepped in as political intermediaries (Hayes and Mandell, *The Jewish People in Classical Antiquity*, 32). Concomitant with such political shifts, one might also detect an increase in the temple's ability to act as a bank, as suggested by the number of YRŠLM jar handles dating to the Hellenistic period ca. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries B.C.E. and the production of coins bearing the titles "bakohen" (the priest). See Diana Edelman, "Gibeon and the Gibeonites Revisited," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 153-68 [161]. On coins bearing priestly associations, see Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 567.

country of Judah until well after 332 B.C.E.<sup>175</sup> As Robert Harrison notes, “There is really very little archaeological support for the contention that Judaea was thoroughly Hellenized before the middle of the second century BCE.”<sup>176</sup> Moreover, the shift from Persian to Hellenistic imperial rule did not bring to an immediate end the influence and imitation of Persian ideology by biblical writers. Far more significant for Yehud were the economic and cultural changes brought about by the Hasmonians ca. 175 B.C.E. onward.

Thus, rather than pursuing the precise historical context in which the book of Chronicles took shape, I propose to interpret the book with an eye to the general conditions in Palestine in the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods. The precise historical circumstances that occasioned the book of Chronicles will continue, most likely, to elude scholars. Chronicles yields very little of its own context, and like the DH, seems to cut short its historical narrative before the time of its own composition. Moreover, the degree to which Chronicles reflects and supports, or subverts and reimagines features of its historical and cultural context is not always straightforward.<sup>177</sup>

In recognition of such complexities, I propose to examine the late Persian/early Hellenistic context of Yehud as a broad backdrop for hearing Chronicles’ distinct voice regarding divine supremacy and sole divinity. I suggest here several historical coordinates as possibilities for backlighting my discussion of divine supremacy and sole divinity in the book of Chronicles.

#### A. POPULATION AND ECONOMIC COLLAPSE

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<sup>175</sup> For scholarship on Hellenism as a cultural process, the classic treatment is that of Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period* (2 vols., 2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974). Hengel argues that all Judaism may be characterized as “Hellenistic” by the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E. Hengel was subsequently criticized for overestimating pre-Maccabean Hellenistic influences in Palestine. See discussion in Grabbe, *History of the Jews, Volume 2*, 125-33.

<sup>176</sup> Harrison, “Hellenization,” 106; cited by Grabbe, *History of the Jews, Volume 2*, 106.

<sup>177</sup> As discussed by Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*.

When compared with the Iron Age Israelite past into which Chronicles peered, Persian/early Hellenistic period Yehud. Yehud suffered a significant decline in its population, economic vitality, and cultural production because of the Babylonian destruction in 587 B.C.E., and remained in such a state for several centuries. Recent demographic studies by Oded Lipschits and Israel Finkelstein suggest that Yehud had an estimated 30,000 people, around a 70% reduction from the end of the Iron II period, though some areas may have had up to a 95% population reduction.<sup>178</sup> The settled territory and borders of Yehud were diminished when compared even with the small kingdom of Judah.<sup>179</sup> The total number of settled dunams in Yehud decreased from 1,000 in the late Iron Age to 110 in the Persian period. Most of the population lived in small, un-walled settlements. There were likely only three walled settlements, Tell en-Neşbeh (Mizpah), Ramat Raḥel, and Jerusalem.<sup>180</sup> Of sites within three kilometers of Jerusalem, there was an 89% decline in the number of settlements from the end of the Iron Age to the Persian period, with slightly greater population stability in the Benjamin plateau.<sup>181</sup> Jerusalem itself also lacked a population and stature worthy of its

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<sup>178</sup> Oded Lipschits, “Demographic Changes in Judah between the Seventh and the Fifth Centuries B.C.E.,” in *Judah and Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 323-376; Cf. Avraham Faust, “Settlement Dynamics and Demographic Fluctuations in Judah from the late Iron Age to the Hellenistic Period and the Archaeology of Persian-Period Yehud,” in *A Time of Change: Judah and its Neighbors in the Persian and early Hellenistic Periods* (ed. Yigal Levin; LSTS 65; New York/London: T&T Clark, 2007), 23-51.

<sup>179</sup> Town lists in Ezr 2 and Neh 7 do not agree, and may represent idealized boundaries. See Betlyon, “A People Transformed,” 20-21; cf. Charles E. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

<sup>180</sup> See discussion in Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, 214-15.

<sup>181</sup> Lipschits, “Demographic Changes,” 332-333; idem, “Achaemenid Imperial Policy, Settlement Process in Palestine, and the Status of Jerusalem in the Middle of the Fifth Century B.C.E.,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (ed. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 19-52; idem, “Jerusalem Between Two Periods of Greatness: The Size and Status of the City in the Babylonian, Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods,” in *Judah Between East and West: The Transition from Persian to Greek Rule (ca. 400-200 BCE)* (ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Oded Lipschits; LSTS 75; London/New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 163-175; Israel Finkelstein, “Jerusalem in the Persian (and Early Hellenistic) Period and the Wall of Nehemiah,” *JOT* 32 (2008): 501-20; idem, “Persian Period Jerusalem and Yehud: A Rejoinder,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9, no. 24 (2009): 2-13. Gary N. Knoppers, “‘The City Yhwh Has Chosen’: The Chronicler’s Promotion of Jerusalem in Light of Recent Archaeology,” in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period* (ed. Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew; SBLSS 18; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), 307-326. On

heritage, exhibiting the uninhabited state of affairs described by Nehemiah: “Now the city was spacious and large, but the people were few within it. The houses were not built” (Neh 7:4).<sup>182</sup> Excavations in Jerusalem suggest that Jews resided only in the small “Ophel” hill of the city of David. While several settlements existed in the Katef-Hinnom region, the southwestern hill (Mount Zion) incorporated by Hezekiah was likely unsettled in this period, and may have even been unwalled.<sup>183</sup> As Ephraim Stern states, “As the excavated areas [in Jerusalem] increase and cover more of the western hill, it can be stated today with almost complete certainty that no urban settlement existed in this period in Jerusalem outside the southeastern hill [i.e., the “city of David”].”<sup>184</sup> This situation appears unchanged until well into the Hellenistic period.<sup>185</sup> As Lipschits and Oren Tal suggest, it was not until the rise of the Hasmoneans under Antiochus III (ca. 222-187 B.C.E.) that Jerusalem (or Judah) showed signs of revitalization.<sup>186</sup>

Economically, the province of Yehud was impoverished, isolated from the main Phoenician trade routes that ran through coastal cities like Ashkelon, Gaza, and Dor, and northern cities like Mizpe-Yamim, and to some extent Samaria.<sup>187</sup> Yehud’s geographical limitations isolated it from the full agricultural advantages of the Shephelah, the “bread-

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the impoverished state of Yehud into the Hellenistic period, see Israel Finkelstein, “The Territorial Extent and Demography of Yehud/Judea in the Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods,” *RB* 117/1 (2010):39-54.

<sup>182</sup> See Lester Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period: Volume 1: Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah* (LSTS 47; London: T & T Clark, 2004), 30; Betlyon, “A People Transformed,” 4-58.

<sup>183</sup> See Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 434-35. Grabbe (*History of the Jews*, Vol. 2, 49), dates the settlement of the Southwest Hill to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E.

<sup>184</sup> Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 436.

<sup>185</sup> See Othmar Keel, *Die Geschichte Jerusalems und die Entstehung des Monotheismus* (OLB 4/1-2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 1279; Smith, “The Southern Levant in the Hellenistic Period,” 123-30.

<sup>186</sup> Lipschits and Tal, “Settlement Archaeology,” 46-47; Antiochus III wrote a letter to Jerusalem’s elders in which he comments twice on Jerusalem’s depopulation. Josephus remarks that he offered several benefits and tax breaks to Jerusalem in order to reinstate Jerusalem and its temple (*Ant* 12.140-42; discussed by Berlin, “Between Large Forces,” 8-9).

<sup>187</sup> See Einat Ambar-Armon and Amos Kloner, “Archaeological Evidence of Links between the Aegean World and the Land of Israel in the Persian Period,” in *A Time of Change*, 1-22 [20-21].

basket” of the region.<sup>188</sup> Not surprisingly, luxury wares were noticeably lacking in Yehud. Though a few examples of imported goods appear in the archaeological record of the late Persian/early Hellenistic periods, the fine wares from Greece, Italy, and the Aegean found along the coast were wholly lacking.<sup>189</sup> Writing of the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods, Andrea Berlin notes that

[i]n the central hills ... there was but one city: Jerusalem. Small farmsteads dotted the region; settlement was fragmented and dispersed; few villages can be identified. This area’s material remains were poor and simple, the buildings largely unadorned. Lifestyles were untouched by the sophisticated goods available in the coastal plain.<sup>190</sup>

In short, Yehud had become what several scholars call a “post-collapse society,” an evocative designation connoting both the ongoing impact of the Babylonian destruction and the struggle for a new future.<sup>191</sup>

#### B. RELIGIOUS DISTINCTIVENESS IN YEHUD?

Religiously, Yehud, and to some extent, Samaria, appear implicitly or explicitly resistant to Persian and Hellenistic religious influences. Historical studies on Yehud in the Persian period often follow the assessment of Stern, who claims that there is no record of figurines or statues from Persian period Yehud or Samaria.<sup>192</sup> Stern connects the lack of such material to Israel’s aniconic and monotheistic religion. However, the picture may not be as absolute as Stern suggests. For instance, Stern acknowledges that Bes, Ptah, and Pataikos figurines were found in Samaria, but dismisses them as features of “popular” apotropaism,

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<sup>188</sup> Azekah sat on the edge of Yehud, in the Shephelah, though its status as a border town is disputed. The Shephelah’s fertile grain-growing capacities made this region desirable to those in the hill country of Judea and the coastal regions, explaining the numerous clashes between Israel and Philistia depicted in the book of Sam.

<sup>189</sup> Berlin, “Between Large Forces,” 8. For a recent discussion of Tyrian wares in Yehud, see Benjamin J. Noonan, “Did Nehemiah Own Tyrian Goods? Trade between Judea and Phoenicia during the Achaemenid Period,” *JBL* 130/2 (2011): 281–298.

<sup>190</sup> Berlin, “Between Large Forces.”

<sup>191</sup> J. Tainter, “Post Collapse Societies,” in *CEA*, 988-1039; Faust, “Settlement Dynamics,” 23-51.

<sup>192</sup> Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 488-513.

and not “official worship.”<sup>193</sup> In addition, incense altars and figurines were discovered at Lachish, though most argue that worshippers of Yhwh did not occupy this site in the Persian and early Hellenistic periods.<sup>194</sup>

Recently, Izaak de Hulster questioned the thesis of Yehud’s material-religious distinctiveness in the Persian period. Outside of Jerusalem, de Hulster (following R. Schmitt) notes the presence of figurine fragments in Persian period layers at Gibeon, Gezer, Tell en-Neşbeh, Ramat Raḥel, Jericho, and En-Gedi.<sup>195</sup> Furthermore, de Hulster points to the discovery of 51 figurine fragments in stratum 9 of Shiloh’s city of David (i.e., South-eastern Hill) excavations. These 51 fragments were found throughout 32 loci in 4 different areas among *yhd* seals and other material “generally recognized as typical for the Persian period.”<sup>196</sup> As de Hulster notes, “with a relatively small number of finds in the Persian period stratum, the relatively high number of figurines seems to be significant.”<sup>197</sup> Furthermore, de Hulster mentions some 400 figurine fragments from Hellenistic layers, half of which come from the Hasmonean stratum 7 (ca. 150-37 B.C.E.), though he does not treat these finds.<sup>198</sup> Though typologically similar to figurines from the Iron Age, the presence of these figurines in Persian and Hellenistic layers is suggestive of their continued use and significance. Yehud wares were notably “conservative” in the Persian and early Hellenistic periods, and thus the

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<sup>193</sup> Ephraim Stern, “Bes Vases from Palestine and Syria,” *IEJ* 26 (1976):183-87; idem, *Archaeology* 507-10 (sources cited by Melody D. Knowles, *Centrality Practiced: Jerusalem in the Religious Practice of Yehud and the Diaspora in the Persian Period* [SBLABS 16; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006], 72).

<sup>194</sup> Discussed by Knowles, *Centrality Practiced*, 72-73.

<sup>195</sup> Izaak J. de Hulster, “Figurines from Persian period Jerusalem?” Forthcoming, *ZAW* (forthcoming). I thank Izaak de Hulster for an advanced copy of this article. R. Schmitt, “Gab es einen Bildersturm nach dem Exil? Einige Bemerkungen zur Verwendung von Terrakottafigurinen im nachexilischen Israel,” in *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian era*, Proceedings of the EABS 2000 (ed. R. Albertz and B. Becking; STR 5; Assen, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Van Gorcum, 2003), 186-98 [196]. De Hulster also cites the work of U. Hübner (“Das Fragment einer Tonfigurine vom Tell el-Milh: Überlegungen zur Funktion der sog. Pfeilerfigurinen in der israelitischen Volksreligion,” *ZDPV* 105 [1989], 47-55), who uses evidence of figurines at Gibeon to argue for Persian period iconoclasm.

<sup>196</sup> De Hulster, “Figurines from Persian period Jerusalem?” 7, 15.

<sup>197</sup> De Hulster, “Figurines from Persian period Jerusalem?” 12.

<sup>198</sup> De Hulster, “Figurines from Persian period Jerusalem?” 8 fn. 38.



presence of late Iron Age figurine types in later periods is not surprising. However, further analysis is required before making firm judgments regarding their continued use, let alone function, in the Persian and early Hellenistic periods.

In addition to evidence of figurines from Jerusalem and Yehud, one may also note the appearance of pagan images and motifs on coins from the Persian and Hellenistic periods, for example, on the “Yehud drachm,” a Persian period *yhd* coin with a possible depiction of Yhwh.<sup>199</sup> In short, material evidence places a question mark over an easy correspondence between Yehud’s (monotheistic?) religious distinctiveness and its material culture.<sup>200</sup> Caution is thus in order before assuming that monotheism (or at least, aniconic monotheism) had won the day by the Persian period. It is becoming evident that there was still a case to be made.

### C. YAHWISTIC DIVERSITY

In addition to possible religious diversity within Yehud, the Chronicler’s was also a time of cultic and religious diversity among adherents of Yhwh. Diversity within Yhwh-devotion in the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods existed as part of the geographical separation between Jewish communities in Samaria, Yehud, Idumea, Babylon, Egypt (e.g., at Elephantine, Heracleopolis, and Alexandria), and elsewhere. Judaism lacked a real center

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<sup>199</sup> Catalogued as BMC Palestine XIX 29 (George F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek coins of Palestine (Galilee, Samaria, and Judaea)* [A catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum, London, 1914], 181) and TC 242.5 (Taylor Combe, *Veterum Populorum Et Regum Numi Qui In Museo Britannico Asservantur* [London, 1814], 242). See discussion in Izaak J. de Hulster, “(Ohn)Macht der Bilder? (Ohn)Macht der Menschen? TC242.5 in ihrem Entstehungs- und Forschungskontext” in *Macht des Geldes – Macht der Bilder*, *Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina Vereins* (ed. Anne Lykke; forthcoming, 2012). Special thanks to Izaak de Hulster for an advanced copy of this article. Cf. also the more recent Yehud coin with the image of a Gorgon face on one side and prancing lion with a “concealed owl” on the reverse side. Catalogued as #1046 in David Hendin’s *Guide to Biblical Coins* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.; New York: Amphora, 2010), 126-27; See discussion by Haim Gitler, “The Earliest Coin of Judah,” *INR* 6 (2011):21-33. This Gorgon faced coin was likely struck in Philistia.

<sup>200</sup> As noted by de Hulster, “Figurines from Persian period Jerusalem?” 14.

during this period,<sup>201</sup> with at least *four* Jewish temples, and possibly others,<sup>202</sup> coexisting during the Persian and early Hellenistic periods alone. These temples included: (1) The temple of the God YHW [i.e., Yhwh] in Elephantine, Egypt:<sup>203</sup> Egyptian Jews built this temple sometime prior to the conquest of Cambyses in 525 B.C.E. It was destroyed ca. 410 B.C.E., probably due to the expansion of the nearby temple of Knum, but was probably rebuilt before 402 B.C.E. as suggested by its mention in a later bill of sale.<sup>204</sup> Because the Elephantine papyri date only until 399 B.C.E., it is not certain how long this temple persisted. (2) “The House of Yhwh” on Mount Gerizim:<sup>205</sup> Until recently, scholars assumed on the basis of Josephus’ account that Jews built the temple on Mount Gerizim in the Hellenistic period, recent excavation reports suggest otherwise. Most likely, the temple to Yhwh on Gerizim was built sometime around the mid-fifth century B.C.E. and stood until the end of Ptolemaic rule in the land. This temple exhibits Phoenician influences.<sup>206</sup> Jews

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<sup>201</sup> Significantly, the Jews of Elephantine appeal to Jerusalem *and* Samaria for support in rebuilding their sanctuary (*TAD* A 4.7, 4.8). In one text, Elephantine Jews ask Jerusalem for permission to offer burnt, grain, and incense offerings. Jerusalem’s diplomatic omission of “burnt offerings” may represent an effort to assert the primacy of Jerusalem’s altar (*TAD* A 4.10 ln. 10; Bezael Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968], 292). However, other interpretations of Jerusalem’s silence on the question of burnt sacrifices are possible. See Anke Joisten-Pruschke, *Das religiöse Leben der Juden von Elephantine in der Achämenidenzeit* (GOF 3; Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2008), 67-76.

<sup>202</sup> For an overview of temples and cults in the Persian period, see Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 478-513; idem, *Material Culture of the Land of the Bible*, 61-67. See also the article by Bob Becking, “Temples Across the Border and the Communal Boundaries within Yahwistic Yehud,” *Transuephratène* 35 (2008): 39-54. On the problem of identifying and defining temples see G. R. H. Wright, *Ancient building in South Syria and Palestine* (2 Vols.; Leiden-Köln: Brill, 1985), 225-27.

<sup>203</sup> Reinhard G. Kratz, “The Second Temple of Jeb and of Jerusalem,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, 247-64; Bezael Porten, “The Structure and Orientation of the Jewish Temple at Elephantine: A Revised Plan of the Jewish District,” *JAOS* 81 (1961):38-42; idem, *Archives from Elephantine*.

<sup>204</sup> Stephen G. Rosenberg, “The Jewish Temple at Elephantine,” *NEA* 67:1 (2004):4-13 [9].

<sup>205</sup> Two of five volumes reporting on excavations at Gerizim are now available. Yitzhak Magen, Haggai Misgav and Levana Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume I: The Aramaic, Hebrew and Samaritan Inscriptions* (Jerusalem: Judea and Samaria Publications, 2004); Yitzhak Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume II: A Temple City* (Jerusalem: Judea and Samaria Publications, 2008); Ephraim Stern and Yitzhak Magen, “Archaeological Evidence for the First Stage of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim,” *IEJ* 52 (2002):49-57; Yitzhak Magen, “Mount Gerizim and the Samaritans,” in *Early Christianity in Context* (ed. F. Manns and E. Alliaia; SBFCM 38; Jerusalem, 1993).

<sup>206</sup> Stern and Magen originally stated that Jews built a temple on Mount Gerizim by reusing material, including three capitals, from a “House of Yhwh” in Shechem, which was destroyed during the Assyrian period (mentioned in Josh 24:26). See Stern and Magen, “Archaeological Evidence,” 49-57. However, the more recent

rebuilt the temple ca. 200 B.C.E. after the Seleucid conquest, but it was destroyed by the Hasmonean John Hyrcannus I ca. 112-111 B.C.E.<sup>207</sup> (3) The Jerusalem temple. Traditionally dated to 515 B.C.E. under the leadership of Zerubbabel, there is a recent attempt to date the temple's construction to the reign of Artaxerxes I and the mission of Nehemiah (ca. 465 B.C.E.).<sup>208</sup> If this proposal proves correct, it would suggest a nearly simultaneous construction (or at least, restoration) of the Jewish temples on Mount Gerizim and Jerusalem.<sup>209</sup> At present, however, the redating of the Jerusalem temple's construction has

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reports of Magen suggest that the capitals originate from the Persian period temple, and attest to imitations of Phoenician style (Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume II*, 153).

Among the inscriptions from the Ptolemaic period were several containing the phrases קדמ אלהא “before God in this place” (e.g., nos. 152, 154, 155) or קדמ אדני “before the Lord” (no. 151) to refer to offerings or donations to God at the temple (cf. the similar formulations in nos. 152-56 and nos. 188-191). These formulae bear affinities with the phrase לפני יהוה used frequently in the biblical text to denote cultic activity before Yhwh at the temple (e.g., Deut 12), and are “indicative of the site’s sanctity” (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume I*, 19). Another inscription contains the phrase קדמ אל[הא זי (no. 172), which, if reconstructed properly, reads “before God who . . .”. This is an unusual phrase that may link the deity to a specific location (likely Gerizim), such as the “God of Teman,” or the “God who is in Jerusalem” (Ezr 1:3) (166-67); cf. also Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume II*, 155 fig. 277.

An Aramaic inscription refers to the “House of Sacrifice,” a phrase used in 2 Chr 7:12 in reference to the Jerusalem temple (cf. Isa 56:7), and at Elephantine in reference to the Yahu temple (Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume II*, 155-56; A. E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* [Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1923], 108-122, nos. 30-31). Significant religious finds include a Paleo/Neo-Hebrew votive inscription with the title כהן “priest,” and a silver ring that contains the phrase יהוה אהו, though it likely dates from the Roman period (Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume II*, 156, figs. 279-80). Further discussion of this ring are found in Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume II*, 260-61. A later inscription from the Greek island of Delos indicates that Samaritans paid taxes to the temple on Mount Gerizim (“APFAIZEIN”). Two inscriptions from 250-175 and 150-50 B.C.E. respectively refer to offerings made on Mount Gerizim (discussed by Berlin, “Between Large Forces,” 11).

<sup>207</sup> Magen, “Mount Gerizim and the Samaritans,” 10. See 2 Macc 5:22-23; 6:2.

<sup>208</sup> Diana Edelman, *The Origins of the ‘Second’ Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem* (London/Oakville: Equinox, 2005). Edelman argues that while Hag-Zech and Ezr 1-6 (depending on Hag-Zech) thought Darius I (522-486) sponsored the temple, genealogical information in Neh suggests that Zerubbabel and Nehemiah were either contemporaries or a generation apart. Based on this connection, Edelman argues that the temple was built in Nehemiah’s time, under Artaxerxes I (465-425), and not Darius I, and that the editor of Hag-Zech set the temple’s construction in the time of Darius I under the influence of Darius’ widely circulated autobiography of his rise to power. Artaxerxes I instituted a plan to incorporate Yehud into the Persian road, postal, and military systems, and therefore rebuilding the temple would provide soldiers stationed in Jerusalem and civilians living in the new provincial seat a place of worship (to their native god) and a place to store taxes collected for the Persian administration. On military garrisons in Yehud, see Kenneth G. Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah* (SBLDS 125; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

<sup>209</sup> On the mid-fifth century date of the Gerizim temple, see Yitzhak Magen, “The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim in Light of Archaeological Evidence,” in *Jews and Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (Edited by Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Rainer Albertz; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2007) 157-212 [161].

not become a consensus. (4) The “BYT YWH” in Idumea:<sup>210</sup> A land transfer recorded on Idumean ostraca no. 283 mentions a ruined BYT YWH somewhere in Idumea, most likely in Khirbet el-Kôm/Makkadah. Based on comparative epigraphy, this temple appears to date from the Babylonian or Persian periods, though precision is difficult. The text also refers to two other temples in close proximity, a “BYT ‘Z” (temple of ‘Uzza), and a “BYT NBW” (temple of Nabu).

In sum, the Jerusalem temple of the late Persian/early Hellenistic period sat among several Yhwh-temples. As Bob Becking notes,

the presence of competing Yahwistic temples in the Persian Period seems to be a greater threat to the identity of Jerusalem as the centre of ‘real Yahwism.’ ... The presence of these sanctuaries indicate the re-emergence of poly-Yahwism, i.e. a variety of forms of Yahwism differing from temple to temple.<sup>211</sup>

Interestingly, Chronicles displays a strong theology of centralization—noting especially that the priesthood was *always* centralized during the monarchy—alongside a unique recognition that Yahwism existed at decentralized shrines (2 Chr 1; 33:13).<sup>212</sup> This religious configuration finds a parallel in Chronicles’ insistence that *all* Yhwh worshippers had a place in Jerusalem’s temple (2 Chr 11, 13; 30). Yahwistic diversity was part of the “scattering” effect of exile, about which Chronicles appeals to Yhwh for deliverance (1 Chr 16). Whether Chronicles attempts to explain or polemicize against those contemporary circumstances is not certain. The existence of Yahwistic *cultic* diversity in the Persian and Hellenistic periods likely posed a problem for the cult-centric Chronicler, even though it allowed for *temporary* periods of decentralization, or at least, non-Jerusalemite worship (1 Chr 16; 2 Chr 1:3-6; 33:17).

#### D. NON-YAHWISTIC DIVERSITY IN YEHUD AND ITS ENVIRONS

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<sup>210</sup> See André Lemaire, “New Aramaic Ostraca from Idumea and Their Historical Interpretation,” in *Judah and Judeans*, 413-456 [416-17].

<sup>211</sup> Becking, “Temples Across the Border,” 53.

<sup>212</sup> I discuss this in greater detail in ch. 2.

In addition to the possibility of religious diversity within Yehud itself, non-Yahwistic influences swirled around the province of Yehud.<sup>213</sup> Pagan temples dotted the landscape of provinces around Yehud, and some within the territory of monarchic Israel. These include temples at (1) Dan,<sup>214</sup> (2) Baniyas, (3) Mitzpe Yamim,<sup>215</sup> (4) Makmish (Tel Michal),<sup>216</sup> (5) Lachish (the administrative center of Idumea),<sup>217</sup> (6) Dor,<sup>218</sup> (7) the Phoenician coast,<sup>219</sup> (8) the Syrian coast,<sup>220</sup> (9) Jaffa,<sup>221</sup> and many others. The presence of multiple non-Yhwh temples, many of which sat within the borders of monarchic Israel, set the stage for “multi-religiosity and . . . reciprocal religious influence.”<sup>222</sup> The uniqueness of the Jerusalem temple could not be assumed, and the future of its cult hung in the balance.

## E. PERSIAN IMPERIUM

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<sup>213</sup> For an overview, though not comprehensive, see Oren Tal, “Cult in Transition from Achaemenid to Greek Rule: The Contribution of Achaemenid-Ptolemaic Temples of Palestine,” *Transeuphratène* 36 (2008):165-183.

<sup>214</sup> Avraham Biran, *Biblical Dan* (Jerusalem: IES, 1994). Biran reports that use of the sacred precinct persisted through the Persian period. Several architectural remains were discovered on the west side of the sanctuary. Excavations also yielded a terra cotta figurine of Bes, attesting to continued Egyptian and Phoenician-Cypriotic influences. Other figurines at the cult site included a figurine of a woman carrying a child, a female (deity?) head, a bronze Osiris figure, and a Horus temple-boy figurine (214-16). That Dan persisted through into the Hellenistic period as a cult site is evident by the bilingual Greek and Aramaic inscription “To the God who is in Dan,” vowed by one Zoilos/Zilos (221-23). Unfortunately, there is no name associated with this deity, though, it is noteworthy, that the phrasing of this inscription bears similarities with the phrase מִקְדָּשׁ יְהוָה “before God who . . . [presumably a place name],” found at Mt. Gerizim (Magen, Misgav, and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume I*, 157, no. 172).

<sup>215</sup> Rafael Frankel and Andrea M. Berlin, “The Sanctuary at Mizpe Yammim: Phoenician Cult and Territory in the Upper Galilee during the Persian Period,” *JAOS*, forthcoming. Thanks to Andrea Berlin for an advanced copy of this report.

<sup>216</sup> This temple sits on the Sharon plain, and attests to two construction phases in the Persian period. Stern, *Archaeology, Vol. II*, 481-83.

<sup>217</sup> Y. Aharoni, “Trial Excavation in the ‘Solar Shrine’ at Lachish, Preliminary Report,” *IEJ* 18 (1968):157-80; idem, *Investigations at Lachish: The Sanctuary and Residency (Lachish V)* (Publications of the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, 4; Tel Aviv: Gateway Publishers, 1975).

<sup>218</sup> See Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 486.

<sup>219</sup> E.g., the Sarepta Ashtarte temple between Tyre and Sidon on the Phoenician coast. An inscription at the site mentions a “Shillem son of Mapa’al” who made a statue for Tanit-Ashtarte; Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 481. See James Pritchard, *Recovering Sarepta, a Phoenician City: Excavations at Sarafand, Lebanon, 1969-74* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

<sup>220</sup> E.g., the Ashtart-Melqart Sanctuary on Tell Sukas, which includes a “small altar enclosure (ca 5m x 3m)” with an adjacent cella, and which dates from a later period. See Wright, *Ancient Building*, 224.

<sup>221</sup> Stern, *Archaeology, Volume II*, 486.

<sup>222</sup> Becking, “Temples Across the Border,” 51-52.

The Persians were notable propagandists. Texts of Darius' rise to power (reported on the Behistun inscription) were widely circulated in the Persian empire, and there is even evidence that the Behistun relief was copied in Babylon.<sup>223</sup> Aramaic copies of the relief were even available to, and possibly copied by, Jews living in Elephantine.<sup>224</sup> Imperial administrative centers in Yehud and its environs provide likely vehicles for cultural transmission.<sup>225</sup> Imperial religious culture took a distinctive turn under the Persians, at least when compared with the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Babylonian empires that Israel encountered. Notably, great temples and cults played virtually no role within the dominant imperial system. As Margaret Cool Root argues, "there are very few installations in Achaemenid Iran that fit normative ideas of what constitutes a 'temple' as a structure for the housing of a deity and/or for the exercise of 'religious' observances."<sup>226</sup> This was already observed by the Greek historian Herodotus, who wrote this of the Persians: "Statues of the gods, temples and altars are not customary among them."<sup>227</sup> Similarly, Rémy Boucharlat argues that there is "almost no *built* evidence of religious practice in Achaemenid Iran."<sup>228</sup> However, there are significant lines of continuity between Achaemenid palace ideology and ancient Near Eastern temple ideology. Cool Root speaks of an "inherent fluidity in the

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<sup>223</sup> See discussion in Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990), 134.

<sup>224</sup> Jonas C. Greenfield and Bezalel Porten, *The Bisitun Inscription of Darius the Great: Aramaic Version: Text, Translation and Commentary* (IAI 5; London: Humphries, 1982).

<sup>225</sup> On administrative control in Yehud, starting in the early Persian period, see Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration*; idem, "The Material Culture of the Seleucid Period in Palestine: Social and Economic Observations," in *Second Temple Studies III: Studies in Politics, Class and Material Culture* (ed. Philip R. Davies and John M. Halligan; New York/London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 67-73.

<sup>226</sup> Margaret Cool Root, "Temple to Palace-King to Cosmos: Achaemenid Foundation Texts in Iran," in *From the Foundations to the Crenellations: Essays on Temple Building in the Ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible* (ed. Mark J. Boda and Jamie Novotny; AOAT 366; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010), 165-210 [170].

<sup>227</sup> Cool Root, "Temple to Palace-King to Cosmos," 170, citing Herodotus (1.131).

<sup>228</sup> Cool Root, "Temple to Palace-King to Cosmos," 170, summarizing Rémy Boucharlat, "Iran," in *L'archéologie de l'empire achéménide: nouvelles recherches* (ed. Pierre Briant and Rémy Boucharlat; Persika 6; Paris: De Boccard, 2005), 221-292. Cool Root examines the so-called "fire altar" at Nush-i Jan (pp. 173-75). What she finds at Nush-i Jan is not a temple, *per se*, but "a multipart and multipurpose elite installation incorporating a structure that shows clear evidence of association with important ritual/religious activities" (174). Cf. Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (trans. Peter T. Daniels; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 248-50.

conceptualization between what we speak of as ‘palaces’ or audience halls in Persepolis and what may with equal validity be construed as ‘temples’ in the sense of being sites of religiously imbued observances focusing on the person of the king ‘in residence.’”<sup>229</sup>

Chronicles does employ the term בִּירָה “citadel,” or “palace complex,” in reference to the temple, despite the use of the term elsewhere in LBH in reference to royal citadels in Israel and Persia.<sup>230</sup> The application of this term to the temple in Chronicles occurs in conjunction with statements about the scope of Solomon’s building task (1 Chr 29:1, 19).<sup>231</sup> Knoppers suggests that “in employing the term ‘the citadel’ instead of the more narrowly defined ‘temple,’ the author may be stressing the enormity of the task that awaits Solomon.”<sup>232</sup>

Accordingly, we may note the increased emphasis on the grandeur of the imperial court and “political ceremony” in Achaemenid Iran—which was directed toward the exaltation of the imperial ruler<sup>233</sup>—and the emphasis on the elaborate divine court and “public ceremonies” at the *temple* in Chronicles—which were directed at the exaltation of the divine ruler.<sup>234</sup> Though not drawing the connection to Chronicles’ putative Persian context,

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<sup>229</sup> Cool Root, “Temple to Palace-King to Cosmos,” 207.

<sup>230</sup> For בִּירָה as an Israelite royal citadel, see Neh 2:8; 7:2. In reference to the royal citadel at Susa, see Neh 1:1; Est 1:2, 5, 8; 3:15; 8:14; 9:6, 11, 12; Dan 8:2.

<sup>231</sup> See discussion by Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 950.

<sup>232</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 950.

<sup>233</sup> This is not to deny the importance of honoring the gods, or worshipping the gods, in Achaemenid Iran. See, Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 240-54; Raymond A. Bowman, *Aramaic Ritual Texts from Persepolis* (UCOIP 91; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970).

<sup>234</sup> Cf. also the Chronicler’s use of a Yhwh-kingship hymn in the context of the ark’s transference to Jerusalem in 1 Chr 16. On political ceremony in Persian cities, see Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 175-99; cf. also the comments of Jon Berquist (Jon L. Berquist, “Spaces of Jerusalem.” Pages 40-52 in *Constructions of Space II: The Biblical City and Other Imagined Spaces* [ed. Jon L. Berquist and Claudia V. Camp; LBH/OTS 490; New York: T & T Clark, 2008], 47). Though Berquist does not distinguish ideological presentation from reality (Persepolis was also an important administrative center), his comment nonetheless captures the Chronicler’s imperial milieu:

The capital cities of ancient Persia operated very differently from modern Western capitals. Cities such as Persepolis, Pasargadae, Ecbatana, and Susa were sparsely populated and difficult to reach. They did not function as population centers, transportation hubs, commercial sites, or military garrisons. Instead, their primary purpose was as ceremonial cities, used for political spectacles with a civil-religious tone. The emperors themselves may have lived in these cities only part of the year or more rarely. The cities were not meant for habitation, and the main architecture was neither housing nor commerce, but large public spaces.

Japhet notes that “a prominent characteristic of the Chronicler’s history is his penchant for *public ceremonies*.”<sup>235</sup> Chronicles expands on ceremonies mentioned only in passing in its sources (e.g., 2 Sam 5:3; 1 Kgs 3:4; 1 Chr 11-12; 2 Chr 1:2-6). Chronicles introduced ceremonies to the reforms of Asa (1 Kgs 15:12-13//2 Chr 15:1-15), Jehoiada’s revolt (2 Chr 23), Josiah’s Passover (2 Kgs 23:21-23//2 Chr 35:1-19), and Hezekiah’s Passover ceremony (2 Chr 30). Chronicles’ depictions of war also include a ceremonial overlay (e.g., 2 Chr 13:3-20; 20:1-30). Japhet also notes that “major [literary] sections of Chronicles are explicitly described as ceremonies.”<sup>236</sup> These include the beginnings of David’s reign, the transfer of the ark,<sup>237</sup> registration and organization of clergy and cabinet, Solomon’s enthronement, Solomon’s visit to Gibeon, the dedication of the temple, the temple’s purification by Hezekiah, and Hezekiah’s and Josiah’s Passover celebrations. Japhet concludes,

The prevalence of the ‘ceremonial’ component in the Chronicler’s work may very well reflect his historical setting, in which public ceremonies may have occupied an important place in the community’s life. It may also reflect literary and theological characteristics of the Chronicler himself.<sup>238</sup>

Chronicles’ ceremonies were characterized by the presence of “all Israel,” the ranks of priests and Levites, and the king, along with great song and displays of wealth for the temple (1 Chr 22:14; 29:4, 7). The increased attention to Jerusalem’s temple-ceremonies within a cultural milieu already dedicated to prominent “ceremonial cities” designed to augment the splendor of the king, as found at Persepolis and Ecbatana, certainly warrants consideration as a point of possible shared cultural emphasis. At the very least, political-ceremony-cum-

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Berquist’s comments regarding the ceremonial nature of cities, finds resonance in Isa’s Zion ideology. See Brent A. Strawn, “A World Under Control?: Isaiah 60 and the Apadana Reliefs from Persepolis,” in *Approaching Yehud: New Approaches to the Study of the Persian Period* (ed. Jon L. Berquist; SBLSS 50; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 85-116.

<sup>235</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 38. Emphasis original. Also noted by Roddy Braun, *1 Chronicles* (WBC 14; Waco: Word Books, 1986), xl.

<sup>236</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 39.

<sup>237</sup> See Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* (trans. J. Sutherland Black and A. Menzies; Edinburgh: A & C Black, 1885), 125.

<sup>238</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 40.



religious-ceremony became a significant feature of the empire in which the Chronicler wrote. Chronicles' efforts to bolster Yhwh's supremacy through great ceremonies and a great "citadel" is in the very least analogous to efforts to exalt the Persian "king in residence" at his great citadel. Moreover, Chronicles' increased interest in detailing the copious and orderly priestly ranks within the "divine court" certainly accords with the Achaemenid fascination with depicting visually the ranks of guards, soldiers, servants, and foreigners that filled the royal court. Pierre Briant's comments about the art of Persepolis find a ready analogy in the ideological and historically "impressionistic" tenor of Chronicles' history and its imperial overtones, and thus deserve quotation in full:

Iconological and iconographic analysis has shown that, overall, inscriptions and reliefs are intended prima facie to impose and transmit the image of a universal, intangible power. Achaemenid rhetoric is nourished less by administrative realities than by ideological assumptions, which have their own logic. In other words, *Persepolitan art is not a simple, quasi-photographic reflection of reality. Though it does capture reality, it does so in order to transform it and make it sublime; it relates less to a scenic scenario than to an ideological discourse on royalty and imperial might organized around themes particularly evocative of the power of the Great King: the king in majesty (audience reliefs, etc.), armed forces (rows of Persian and Elamite guards), the cooperation of the aristocracy (rows of nobles in Persian or Mede garb), and imperial dominion in turn symbolized by the gifts from various populations and by the richness of the royal table.*<sup>239</sup>

In sum, the Chronicler's was a time of Persian and possibly Ptolemaic dominance, which carried in its wake politicized ideologies of supremacy. These ideologies, purveyed through an efficient propaganda, were aimed at augmenting the supremacy of the king through imperial court ceremonies and iconographic hyperbole. Yet the Chronicler's was also a time where these international realities were inverted at home in Jerusalem. Economic, demographic, and societal decline defined his "post-collapse" world. Jerusalem's future as a place of religious significance and divine power was uncertain. Not only kingship, but also the temple and its cult were unrealized, or only nascent, potentials for communicating divine power and support in Yehud. As Knoppers rightly states, "In the context of the Persian and

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<sup>239</sup> Excerpt, from Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 185-86. Emphasis mine.

Hellenistic periods, the exclusive authority and privilege of the Jerusalem temple [and, we might add, the priesthood and kingship] could not be taken for granted. Its supporters had to argue their case.”<sup>240</sup> It is most certainly the case, moreover, that the production of a “founding narrative” for these institutions, with a focused emphasis on temple, priestly, and royal participation in divine power and preeminence, was Chronicles’ way of arguing such a case.

### VIII. LIMITATIONS

The decision to limit my analysis of Chronicles to an investigation of its *institutions* derives from a desire to understand divine exaltation and sole divinity in terms internal to the book itself. More broadly, my focus on institutions seeks to explain in detail a phenomenon sketched above, namely, the identification of Yhwh with real-world entities, and the resultant exaltation of those entities as an expression of Yhwh’s own exaltation. It is the interaction between divine and institutional exaltation, I argue, that constitutes Chronicles’ unique theological configuration. Therefore, my study will not attempt an exhaustive examination of Chronicles’ perspectives on the temple, the priesthood, and kingship. Rather, I examine passages where these institutions become closely identified with Yhwh, and where they instantiate aspects of Yhwh’s uniqueness or sole divinity.

An additional limitation of this dissertation is its use of focal texts to examine broad phenomena. Each chapter will include broad overviews of ways that institutions in Chronicles substitute for Yhwh and instantiate his supreme uniqueness, but will also include focused studies of texts where such trends converge. The effect of this approach is that my dissertation constitutes a broad and careful survey with deep probes (e.g., 1 Chr 16, 29; 2

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<sup>240</sup> Knoppers, “Promotion of Jerusalem,” 321.

Chr 2, 13) in places where the connection between divine and institutional supremacy emerge most vividly.

Finally, although I undertake a comparative study of monotheism in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles in the appendix, the comparison is provisional, based on a limited selection of texts. A full-scale comparison would require another lengthy analysis of Samuel-Kings (likely in conjunction with the entire DH) and the unique constellation of themes that emerge in its wake.

#### IX. SHAPE OF THE STUDY

My examination of Chronicles' theology of divine exaltation proceeds as follows. In chs. 2-4 I examine the temple, priesthood, and kingship respectively as exemplary institutional expressions of Yhwh's preeminence. Chapter 5 synthesizes the findings of this dissertation and the appendix explores differences and similarities between monotheism in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles.

## CHAPTER 2

## THE TEMPLE AND DIVINE EXALTATION

Εἷς ναὸς ἑνὸς θεοῦ φίλον γὰρ αἰεὶ παντὶ τὸ ὅμοιον κοινὸς ἀπάντων κοινοῦ θεοῦ ἀπάντων  
 τοῦτον θεραπεύσουσιν μὲν διὰ παντὸς οἱ ἱερεῖς ἡγήσεται δὲ τούτων ὁ πρῶτος αἰεὶ κατὰ γένος

One temple of the one God—for like is always attracted to like—common to all people as belonging to the common God of all. The priests will continually offer worship to him, and the other who is first by descent will always be at their head.

-Josephus (*Ag. Ap.* 2:193)<sup>1</sup>

Chronicles is the only book in the Hebrew Bible to claim that the temple bears witness to Yhwh’s superiority over other gods (2 Chr 2:4[5]). Other books like Psalms and Isaiah emphasize the importance of the temple and Zion, or Yhwh’s supremacy over the gods, but to my knowledge none link these explicitly. For Chronicles, the temple’s superiority is a direct correlate of Yhwh’s superiority, and therefore stood as an implicit polemic against other divine dwellings and their deities. Such convictions become evident by examining *patterns* of change vis-à-vis its extant *Vorlage* (primarily Samuel-Kings), and patterns emerging within the Chronistic *Sondergut*.<sup>2</sup> The coordination of these patterns reveals

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<sup>1</sup> Translation by Barclay, *Against Apion*, 279-80. Barclay observes that though Josephus was aware of the Jewish temple at Leontopolis (*Ant.* 13.62-73; *War* 7.420-32), “it could never compete in status” (279). That is, “oneness” is not here a matter of existence. Cf. 2 Bar 48:24; Philo, *Spec.* 1.67; 4.159; *Virt.* 35; *Legat.* 318; Jos, *Ant.* 4.200-1.

<sup>2</sup> The only study of which I am aware that compares the temple in Sam-Kgs with Chr is that of Schweitzer, “The Temple in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles,” 123-38.

a striking and sustained effort to assert the distinctiveness of Yhwh's temple, and via homology, the supremacy of Yhwh. In several cases, moreover, this spills over into claims concerning the categorical distinctiveness of God and temple.

My specific goal in this chapter is to examine a set of convictions that support the Chronicler's contention that the Jerusalem temple bears witness to Yhwh's superiority over "all the gods" (2 Chr 2:4[5]). These convictions build upon a basic premise of the Chronicler that receives emphasis over the next two chapters, namely, that Yhwh's temple and cult are categorically distinct from non-Yahwistic cults and deities. Their "being" belongs to a class of its own. They are not merely the exclusive possessions of Israel, set among a world of distinct national cults (i.e., within a monolatrous system). Rather, Yhwh's temple and cult stood categorically *above* the illusory and artificial cults of other gods. Yhwh's cult is *genuine* and not simply *legitimate*, and thus it stands categorically apart from any other cult. Other cults were *false* and not only *illegitimate* for Israel, and thus, where mentioned, they were ontologically deficient. The inferiority of other gods corresponds to their places of worship, just as the supremacy of Yhwh corresponds to his supreme dwelling. Consequently, the Chronicler's division between Yhwh and the gods takes on a spatial or geographical dimension. The inferiority of those gods corresponds with their cultic institutions and the geographical space they inhabit. That is, other gods receive their cultic due among the lesser geography that surrounds the Jerusalem temple. Other cults sweep their devotees into a separate realm of non-gods and human-made cults.

To extend the language used in ch. 1, Chronicles engages predominantly *implicit* modes of monotheizing and divine exaltation, but does so via proxy. By virtue of its homological relationship to Yhwh, Chronicles renders Yhwh praise by exalting the temple as a divine proxy, and by distinguishing categorically the temple's operations, qualities, and

characteristics. Though historical events repeatedly call the temple's distinctiveness into question, Chronicles engages in a struggle to assert its preeminence, and by derivation, Yhwh's own preeminence.

As stated in the introduction, this study employs Smith's study of a temple's "participation" in divinity to describe institutional relationships to Yhwh's own "being," power, and functions. This chapter on the temple in Chronicles extends Smith's discussion of participation in three directions in application to Chronicles. First, this chapter treats the temple's *functional* participation in Yhwh's utter distinctiveness. Functional participation refers to the way that the temple retains its sanctity and differentiation from the realm of other gods. Functional participation in Yhwh's uniqueness becomes evident in the way that syncretism between Yhwh's cult and other cults almost completely disappears in Chronicles.<sup>3</sup> In its place one can observe almost perfectly distinct periods of idolatry or Yhwh-devotion (*contra* Samuel-Kings; see chart below) wherein the temple itself remains "loyal" only to Yhwh. Narratives about these distinct periods operate according to a fairly consistent pattern wherein idolatrous cults force the temple into periods of temporary closure. Yhwh worship only resumes in connection with cultic restorations, which often include elaborate celebrations patterned after David's and Solomon's temple-founding narratives. In other words, Chronicles sharpens—or struggles to sharpen—the divide between Yhwh's temple and other cults. Yhwh's temple does not commingle with idolatry, either temporally or spatially. The Chronicler's effort to efface syncretism raises questions: What drove this narrative presentation in Chronicles? Why did the Chronicler omit references to syncretism but not idolatry? To address these questions, this chapter examines texts where such

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<sup>3</sup> I put syncretism in quotes in acknowledgement of the fact that historically, Yhwh was often (and indigenously) worshipped alongside other deities. The category "syncretism" presupposes a distinct Yhwh cult, a view not common in ancient Israel though increasingly so in the post-exilic period. See Frederick E. Greenspahn, "Syncretism and Idolatry in the Bible," *JTS* 54/4 (2004):480-94.

omissions occur and argues that the Chronicler sought to reinforce the categorical uniqueness of Yhwh's temple. Yhwh's temple did not and could not function alongside other cults.

But this functional division between Yhwh's cult and foreign cults does not explain fully the Chronicler's full range of strategies for distinguishing between Yhwh's cult and other cults. Thus, the chapter's second and third sections will analyze how the Chronicler establishes the *qualitative* and *material* distinctiveness of Yhwh's temple. In its very nature the temple (and its cult) stood apart from other cults. By qualitative distinctiveness, I refer to the temple's participation in Yhwh's own supreme qualities. The Chronicler argues that just as the gods of the nations are human creations, so are the cults in which they are embedded. Thus, Chronicles sets up a contrast between the creator God and his mediating temple on the one hand, and created cults and defunct deities on the other. Exploration of this contrast requires attention to 2 Chr 2:4[5] in its literary context. In this text, Chronicles invokes language from idol-polemic psalms to suggest that the temple instantiated Yhwh's superiority over other gods. This is so because the temple shared in Yhwh's own supremacy and was not simply the work of human hands. Yhwh's temple is supreme because it is a divine creation.

Material distinctiveness refers to the way that the temple's very materiality and construction originated with Yhwh, or became connected with unique manifestations of Yhwh. This third section will support the second section by demonstrating that the Chronicler's temple was sufficiently inspired and initiated by God so as to stave off potential allegations that it was of the same nature as (i.e., ontologically similar to) the human-crafted gods of the nations.

In short, understanding monotheism and divine supremacy in Chronicles requires attention to the book's characterization of the temple—for it participated in Yhwh's distinctiveness and thus became a concrete embodiment of the deity to which it was bound. Thus, while much of what follows focuses on the Chronicler's view of the temple, such an investigation—as with the investigations of the priesthood and kingship that follow—is a necessary precondition for understanding the contours and logic of divine exaltation in Chronicles.

To the first *functional* distinction we now turn.

#### I. FUNCTIONAL PARTICIPATION: YHWH'S EXCLUSIVE TEMPLE AND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SYNCRETISM

For the Chronicler, exclusive Yhwh-devotion shifts from a religious ideal to a cultic reality. Israel certainly lapsed into periods of idolatry, but those lapses hardly ever coincided with periods in which Israel served Yhwh cultically at the temple. This is a two-fold shift from Samuel-Kings.<sup>4</sup> First, syncretism occurs in Samuel-Kings whereas in Chronicles it almost never appears. Second, Chronicles conceptualizes exclusivity to Yhwh in terms of allegiance to the temple and repudiation of Yhwh as repudiation of the temple. As a consequence, Chronicles, in contrast to Samuel-Kings, more often associates idolatry with a complete abandonment of the temple, and sometimes with accounts of kings pillaging its vessels.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of syncretism in DH, see Stolz, *Einführung in den biblischen Monotheismus*, 114-141. Stolz explores the coexistence of family, state, foreign, house, death, and other cults during the monarchic period, suggesting that they each performed distinct but related societal roles. For instance, personal deities were really mediating gods whose primary purpose was to interact personally with its devotee(s) and interact with high gods. Many of his examples come from Sam-Kgs. See also John J. Collins, *The Bible after Babel: Historical Criticism in a Postmodern Age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 99-130; Gösta Ahlström, *Aspects of Syncretism in Israelite Religion* (trans. E. Sharpe; Lund: Gleerup, 1963).

<sup>5</sup> The exceptions are Manasseh's and possibly Josiah's reigns, which I discuss below.



There exist only a few scholarly studies of this shift away from syncretism in the Chronicler's history. Gerhard von Rad argued that the Chronicler employs Deuteronomic emphases on cult distinctiveness and idolatry, and combines these within a monotheistic framework.<sup>6</sup> Steven McKenzie states that in Chronicles "worship of Yahweh and that of other gods are mutually exclusive activities," though he does not give a rationale for this feature of the Chronicler.<sup>7</sup> Only Japhet deals with the Chronicler's aversion to syncretism in any detail, suggesting rightly that

[t]his principle of exclusivity, which governs the [Chronicler's] entire concept of divine worship, operates in two directions. Just as one cannot worship YHWH and recognize other gods, so, too, it is impossible to serve other gods and still worship YHWH. ... pagan ritual had a direct adverse effect on the worship of God, to the extent that the Temple was closed and YHWH worship abolished.<sup>8</sup>

According to Japhet, the Chronicler is not entirely consistent on this point. For instance, she points out that during Manasseh's reign, the temple changed into a non-Yahwistic cultic site.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, Chronicles suggests that Israel *never* worshipped other gods and Yhwh in the temple at the same time, and registers several changes to its sources such that cultic worship of Yhwh and cultic worship of other gods did not exist simultaneously.<sup>10</sup>

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The act of pillaging temple vessels, which occurs far more often in Chr, is associated with the exile and return motif explored by H. G. M. Williamson ("Eschatology in Chronicles," *TynB* 28 [1977]: 115-54); and idem., *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 94-95, 353; Mosis, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes* (Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 17-43; Peter R. Ackroyd, "The Theology of the Chronicler," *LTQ* 8/4 (1973):101-116 [106]. Note, however, that Ackroyd includes Ezr-Neh within the scope of his analysis of "the Chronicler." See also Jacob L. Wright, "The Deportation of Jerusalem's Wealth and the Demise of Native Sovereignty in the Book of Kings," in *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts* (Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritche Ames, and Jacob L. Wright eds.; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 305-34. I thank Jacob Wright for a copy of this article. Cf. also Schweitzer, "The Temple in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles.," Key texts exhibiting the exile and return motif prior to "the Exile" include 2 Chr 14:14; 21:17; 25:12; 28:5, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17; 29:9; 30:9 (Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 99).

<sup>6</sup> von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild*, 58-59.

<sup>7</sup> Steven L. McKenzie, *1-2 Chronicles* (AOTC; Nashville: Abingdon: 2004), 338.

<sup>8</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 216.

<sup>9</sup> I discuss this account below. One may note additionally that Chr contends that Asa and Jehoshaphat did not remove the high places (2 Chr 15:17; 2 Chr 20:33), even while presenting them as reformers. However, Chr also states at the beginning of their reigns that these kings removed high places (2 Chr 14:3-5; 17:6) without any attempt to harmonize these claims. It is noteworthy that the statements that they *did* remove high places are unique to Chr.

<sup>10</sup> See also Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 292.

In examination of these phenomena, I turn now to examine several cases in which the Chronicler creates sharp distinctions between periods of devotion to other gods and devotion to Yhwh’s temple. Such accounts alone do not prove that this division is an institutional reflex of monotheism. However, in conjunction with my later arguments that the Chronicler polemicizes against human-made cults, the consistent aversion to syncretism suggests that the Chronicler sought to forge a categorical distinction between Yhwh’s cult and other cults, and hence, between Yhwh and other gods. Cultic devotion to Yhwh and other gods could not be grouped together as two versions of the same activity. I have listed below several cases on the following chart where syncretism, or dual-allegiance to Yhwh *and* other gods, appears in Kings but seems to be deliberately omitted or reworked by the Chronicler.<sup>11</sup>

#### SYNCRETISM AND DUAL CULTIC ALLEGIANCE IN SAMUEL-KINGS VS. CHRONICLES<sup>12</sup>

| Samuel-Kings  | Chronicles  |
|---|---|
| And Saul <u>inquired of the LORD</u> , but the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets. Then Saul said to his courtiers, “Find me a woman who consults ghosts, <u>so that I can go to her and inquire through her.</u> ” And his courtiers told him that there was a woman in En-dor who consulted ghosts. (1 Sam 28:6-7) | Saul died for the trespass that he had committed against the LORD ... moreover, he had <u>consulted a ghost to seek advice</u> , <sup>13</sup> <u>and did not seek advice of the LORD</u> ; so He had him slain and the kingdom transferred to David son of Jesse. (1 Chr 10:13-14) |
| The Philistines abandoned their idols [עצביהם]  | They abandoned their gods [אלהיהם] there, and <u>David</u>  |

<sup>11</sup> One might include as additional examples those verses found among the larger blocks of text omitted by Chr, such as 2 Kgs 10:23 (where Jehu suggests the possibility of Yhwh worshippers in a temple of Baal) and 2 Kgs 5:18 (Naaman in the temple of Rammon).

<sup>12</sup> Translations (for table 2.1) come from the NJPS unless otherwise noted.

<sup>13</sup> Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 151, proposes to delete לדרש here as a dittography (which creates the redundant “consulted ... to seek advice [לדרש]”). However, the contrasting use of דרש at the beginning of the next verse suggests an intentional use. As Knoppers (*1 Chronicles 10-29*, 519) writes of vv. 13-14, “These verses, unparalleled in Samuel, are filled with typical Chronistic expressions, but the syntax is rough.”

|  |   |
|--|---|
| there, and <u>David and his men carried them off</u> .<br>...so <u>David inquired of the LORD</u> ... <sup>14</sup> (2 Sam 5:21, 23a)  | <u>ordered these to be burned</u> . ... <u>David inquired of God</u> once more ... <sup>15</sup> (1 Chr 14:12, 14a)   |
| In his old age, his wives turned away Solomon's heart after other gods, and he was <u>not as wholeheartedly devoted</u> to the LORD his God (אלהיהה ליהוה לבבו שלם עם-יהוה) as his father David had been. (1 Kgs 11:4)   | —   |
| [Asa] expelled the male prostitutes from the land, and <u>he removed all the idols</u> that his ancestors had made. (1 Kgs 15:12)  | ... [Asa] took courage and <u>removed the abominations</u> from the entire land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. <u>He restored the altar of the LORD</u> in front of the porch of the LORD. <sup>16</sup> (2 Chr 15:8) |
| However, each nation <u>continued to make its own gods and to set them up in the cult places</u> which had been made by the people of Samaria; each nation <u>set them up</u> in the towns in which it lived. ... <u>They worshiped the LORD [as well]</u> , but they also appointed all sorts of their own people to officiate for them as priests in the shrines at the high places. (2 Kgs 17:29, 32) | —   |
| The king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, to the south of the Mount of Destruction, <u>which King Solomon of Israel had built for Astarte</u> the abomination of the Sidonians, for <u>Chemosh</u> the abomination of Moab, and for <u>Milcom</u> the abomination of the Ammonites. <sup>17</sup> (2 Kgs 23:13)  | — <sup>18</sup>   |

Table 2.1

<sup>14</sup> The LXX reads τὸς θεὸς αὐτῶν, and likely preserves an earlier Hebrew text also reflected in MT Chr. See the brief discussion in Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 270-71.

<sup>15</sup> Whereas in Sam, David takes the Philistine idols with him, in Chr he has them burnt *and* seeks Yhwh cultically.

<sup>16</sup> Chr typically expands accounts of reforms vis-à-vis Kgs, and often in emphasis of the fact that cultic sacrifice to Yhwh ceased during the preceding period of apostasy.

<sup>17</sup> Translation from the NRSV.

<sup>18</sup> This narrative of Josiah's reform obviously implies that the intervening Judean kings tolerated high places to these deities, though of course, their purpose may have actually shifted toward Yhwh-worship.

This chart is merely illustrative of the many cases in which the Chronicler eschews syncretism, or more precisely, the co-operation of Yhwh's temple-cult and those of other deities. Additional examples require lengthier explanation. The following sections (A.-H.) examine Chronicles' narratives about Israel's kings, attending particularly to ways that the Chronicler (a) portrays the temple's functional sanctity, (b) emphasizes that idolatry was a repudiation of the temple (again, opposing the categories), and (c) expresses the need for temple restorations after periods of religious apostasy.

#### A. SAUL'S REIGN

The Chronicler's description of Saul's reign is succinct but clear. In just one short chapter (1 Chr 10), the Chronicler recounts the death of Saul and his entire household in a battle against the Philistines. The author explains that the reason for Saul's death was his unfaithfulness (*\*מעל\**; 10:13-14). He failed to seek Yhwh and sought mediums instead (v. 14). As H. G. M. Williamson points out, *\*מעל\** appears typically in the Chronicler's non-synoptic passages, and usually characterizes "an offense against the Jerusalem temple and the purity of its service."<sup>19</sup> The Chronicler ignores Saul's acts of disobedience against Samuel's commands that feature prominently in 1 Samuel (chs. 13 and 15) in order to highlight what it considers Saul's more telling infraction, namely, seeking (*\*דרש\**) a medium and not seeking (*\*דרש\**) Yhwh (10:13-14).<sup>20</sup> These are the only specific sins of Saul about which the Chronicler writes, yet they are particularly appropriate to the Chronicler's cultic focus. As Chronicles

<sup>19</sup> Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 94, lists the following references as examples (2 Chr 26:16, 18; 28:19, 22; 29:5ff, 19; 30:7; 33:19; 36:14). See also Jacob Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience: The Asbam and the Priestly Doctrine of Repentance* (SJLA 18; Leiden: Brill, 1976), 16-35 and Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 29-33. Mosis ties cultic infractions to worship of other deities. For the use of the root *\*מעל\** in Chr, see Peter B. Dirksen, *1 Chronicles* (trans. Anthony P. Runia, HCOT; Leuven, Peeters, 2005), 25-26; William Johnstone, *1 Chronicles-2 Chronicles 9: Israel's Place Among the Nations* (Vol. 1 of *1 and 2 Chronicles*; JSOTSup 253; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 13-16, 19, deals with the cultic connotations of the verb *\*מעל\** in Chr, specifically in connection with Lev 5-6, 26.

<sup>20</sup> This contrasts with the presentation of 1 Sam 14:37; 15:31; 28:6, where he sought Yhwh. See discussion in Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 524.

later states when recounting David's reign, failing to seek Yhwh meant specifically that Saul failed to seek the welfare of the ark (1 Chr 13:3; cf. 14:14), a point of major contrast between the two kings.<sup>21</sup> Saul's infraction had two components, turning toward the cult of the dead and turning away from Yhwh's cult.

For this failure, Yhwh put Saul to death and handed kingship over to David. As Japhet points out, the transition from Saul to David marks the beginning of a new era in which Israel sought Yhwh cultically.<sup>22</sup> So after defeating his enemies (1 Chr 10-12)—during which time he burns the gods of the Philistines (1 Chr 14:12)<sup>23</sup> and receives numerous blessings<sup>24</sup>—David resolves to bring the ark to Jerusalem because in the days of Saul, “we did not seek it/him [לֹא דָרַשְׁנָהוּ]” (1 Chr 13:3).<sup>25</sup> Interestingly, this verse does not clarify the 3 m.sg. antecedent of the verb \*דָּרַשׁ, and may have Yhwh *or* the ark in view. It may be best to let the ambiguity stand, given Chronicles' emphasis on seeking the ark/temple as a way of seeking Yhwh. It is critical to observe that for Chronicles, “seeking” (\*דָּרַשׁ or \*בָּקַשׁ) often entailed cultic veneration (cf. 1 Chr 10:14; 22:19; 28:9-10; 2 Chr 15:10-15; 17:3; 20:3-5; 25:14-15), or appeal toward or at the sanctuary.<sup>26</sup> In 1 Chr 16:10-11, the hymn writer calls its

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<sup>21</sup> Yet, cf. 1 Chr 15:13, where David did not seek the ark *according to Mosaic law*, a deficiency that he soon remedies by appointing the Levites to carry the ark.

<sup>22</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 230. It is also important to consider that from its inception, David's was a kingdom over *all Israel*.

<sup>23</sup> Which he kept according to 2 Sam 5:21.

<sup>24</sup> See discussion in H. G. M. Williamson, “The Temple in the Books of Chronicles,” in *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (ed. William Horbury; JSNTSup 48; Sheffield, 1991), 15-31, repr. in *Studies in Persian Period History and Historiography* (ed. H. G. M. Williamson; FAT 38; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 150-61 [151].

<sup>25</sup> Chr clearly views consultation with the medium as illicit, and antithetical to seeking Yhwh (cf. 2 Chr 17:3; 25:14-15).

<sup>26</sup> As Knoppers notes (*I Chronicles 10-29*, 524), the verb דָּרַשׁ “is one of the Chronicler's favorites to express divine inquiry and veneration.” For studies on “seeking” Yhwh (typically with the verbs דָּרַשׁ, בָּקַשׁ, and sometimes שָׁעַל), see Dirksen, *1 Chronicles*; Christopher Begg, “Seeking Yahweh’ and the Purpose of Chronicles,” *LS* 9 (1982): 128-42; Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 28-41; Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 151-52; Cf. the study by Glenn Edward Schaeffer, “The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler,” (ThD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1972); Jonathan E Dyck (*The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler* [BI 33; Leiden: Brill, 1998], 146-47) argues that Chr's account may be shaped by Deut 12:5. He notes that the one occurrence of דָּרַשׁ in Sam-Kgs is in Saul's consultation of the medium of Endor. Cf. also Rodney K. Duke,

audience to “seek Yhwh and his strength” (דרשו יהוה ועוז), employing the term עז, which Chronicles also uses in reference to the ark (2 Chr 6:41; cf. Ps 78:61). As noted earlier, the sanctuary could substitute functionally for Yhwh, receiving actions otherwise reserved for “direct” contact with Yhwh. David enjoins Solomon to “seek” (\*רש) Yhwh with his whole heart, by which he means set himself to build the temple (1 Chr 28:8-9). In addition, Chronicles reports that all the Levites and priests who committed to “seeking” (\*בקש) Yhwh came to Jerusalem to sacrifice (2 Chr 11:16). But even beyond the occurrences of the verbs \*רש and \*בקש, Chronicles often identifies responses to the temple with responses to Yhwh. Hezekiah entreats Israel to “submit themselves before Yhwh and come to his sanctuary” (2 Chr 30:8). Also, Chronicles reports that Israel “forsook Yhwh’s temple,” and so prophets came to “bring the people back to Yhwh” (2 Chr 24:18-19). But before the temple was built, the temple’s “role in the religious life of the people was largely fulfilled by the ark.”<sup>27</sup> In fact, Chronicles claims that the temple was built specifically as a place of rest for the ark (2 Chr 5:2-6:11; 6:41-42).<sup>28</sup> As such, Chronicles begins its account of the monarchy by distinguishing between Saul and David in terms of their exclusive dedication to, or abandonment, of the ark.

Against this background, the demise of Saul in ch. 10 comes into clear focus. Saul died on the battlefield and his body was paraded before all the Philistine idols. The Philistines hung his armor in the temple of their gods and his head in the temple of Dagan,

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“The Strategic Use of Enthymeme and Example in the Argumentation of the Books of Chronicles,” in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts: Essays from the Lund 2000 Conference* (ed. Anders Erikson, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Walter Übelacker; ESEC 8; New York: T&T Clark, 2002), 127-40. One may also note an emphasis on “seeking” (\*רש) the law of God in Chronicles (e.g., 2 Chr 12; 14:6).

<sup>27</sup> Williamson, “The Temple,” 151.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

employing בית דגון instead of בית שן (as in 1 Sam 31:12).<sup>29</sup> William Riley captures the irony of this situation:

By altering בית שן to בית דגון, the Chronicler may be alluding to the Philistine attempt to house the Ark in the temple of Dagan, and giving an ironic manifestation of the failure of Saul in the very place where the Ark of Yahweh had shown its strength, a strength which would have been available to Israel had Saul shown proper concern for the Ark.<sup>30</sup>

The king who sought mediums and failed to seek Yhwh's cultic presence ends up beheaded and hung in a Philistine shrine. Such is the stark cultic portrait that the Chronicler paints. Yhwh and other cults cannot commingle; they exist in utterly separate spheres and draw their worshippers into one or the other, and never simultaneously. Syncretism only occurs within the realm of "other gods," as Saul's dismembered body so vividly illustrates. From the Chronicler's point of view, Saul's death was a fitting end to his cultic disloyalty, for he ended up enshrined in the sphere of the lifeless "gods" which he sought.<sup>31</sup> By contrast, David burns the Philistine gods (1 Chr 14:12) then seeks God (14:14) and the welfare of his ark (15:1). David is a reformer even before he begins to make provisions for the ark and the temple, a pattern that recurs in Chronicles.

## B. SOLOMON'S REIGN

I will examine further incidents from Solomon's reign in the second part of this chapter, but focus here on Solomon's construction of a house for Pharaoh's daughter.<sup>32</sup> This incident includes one of the Chronicler's particularly revealing textual modifications in that it

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<sup>29</sup> 1 Chr 10:9-10. In 10:9, Chr follows LXX Sam 31:9, which reads "their idols" for "house of their idols," whereas in 10:10, Chr diverges from MT Sam 31:10 and LXX Sam by reading "temple of their gods ... temple of Dagan" instead of "temple of Astarte ... wall of Beth-shan."

<sup>30</sup> William Riley, *King and Cultus in Chronicles: Worship and the Reinterpretation of History* (JSOTSup160; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 24.

<sup>31</sup> It is also worth noting that the arch-blasphemer Sennacherib dies in the temple of his god (2 Chr 32:21), while the godly Zechariah dies in the courtyard of Yhwh's temple (24:21-22) but is avenged by Yhwh (24:23).

<sup>32</sup> 1 Kgs 9:24; 2 Chr 8:11. On the relevant texts pertaining to Pharaoh's daughter in Kgs and Chr, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Solomon and the Daughter of Pharaoh: Intermarriage, Conversion, and the Impurity of Women," *JANES* 16-17 (1984-1985): 23-37.

demonstrates his clear tendency to dissociate the temple/ark from syncretistic connotations. However, this modification receives little attention in secondary literature. I will outline the incident as it appears in Kings before exploring the Chronicler's textual modifications and expansions.<sup>33</sup>

1 Kings 9:24 recounts the following:

אך בת־פרעה עלתה מעיר דוד אל־ביתה אשר בנה־לה אז בנה את־המלוא  
As soon as Pharaoh's daughter went up from the city of David to her house which he built  
for her, he (Solomon) built the Milo.

The author of Kings already informed his readers in 3:1 that Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter to the city of David fortress in Jerusalem "until he finished building his palace, Yhwh's temple, and the walls around Jerusalem." Presumably, Pharaoh's daughter needed to wait in the fortress during construction but would go on to live with Solomon in an addendum to his palace-temple complex. Indeed, 1 Kgs 7:8-9 interrupts the narrative about constructing Solomon's palace to state that the Queen's palace shared a courtyard with the other palace buildings.<sup>34</sup> That she "went up" (אלתה) from the city of David suggests that as she "rose" in her political status, her dwelling place was moved into close proximity with the palace-temple, and was cordoned off from the rest of the people of Jerusalem by the Milo.<sup>35</sup>

Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter and her presence in the city of David was not

<sup>33</sup> Pharaoh's daughter receives mention in 1 Kgs 3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24; 11:1, though it is notable that only in 1 Kgs 3:1 does she appear in the same place in the MT and LXX (W. Boyd Barrick, *The King and the Cemeteries: Toward a New Understanding of Josiah's Reform* [VTSup 88; Leiden: Brill, 2002], 206). However, the Chronicler seems to follow a Vorlage like MT Kgs here.

<sup>34</sup> The author of Kgs only mentions her palace in conjunction with Solomon's, clearly indicating that she held a special position among Solomon's wives. Cf. the restrictive sense of וְאֵל in 1 Kgs 9:24 ("However, the Daughter of Pharaoh went up..."), which the Chronicler retains. The LXX likely reads וְאֵל, producing two consecutive clauses. See Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings* (AB 10; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 304, for further discussion. This may have been the grammatical point of departure for the Chronicler's modification. See also, Percy S. F. Van Keulen, *Two Versions of the Solomon Narrative, An Inquiry into the Relationship between MT 1 Kgs. 2-11 and 3 Reg. 2-11* (VTSup 104; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 238-64.

<sup>35</sup> This is an interpretation that finds support by the Septuagint rendition of (3 Kgdms 9:9a = MT 1 Kgs 9:24): τότε ἀνήγαγεν Σαλωμων τὴν θυγατέρα Φαραω ἐκ πόλεως Δαυιδ εἰς οἶκον αὐτοῦ ὃν ὠκοδόμησεν ἑαυτῷ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις, "Then Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh from the city of David into his house which he built for himself in those days." A version of this verse also appears in 3 Kgdms 2:35 (=material after MT 1 Kgs 4:34), and is closer to MT 1 Kgs 9:24. See D. W. Gooding, "The Septuagint's Version of Solomon's Misconduct," *VT* 15 (1965): 325-31.



without negative evaluation in Kings, however. Warnings against intermarriage leading to idolatry (Deut 7:3-4; 23:4, 8-9) echo throughout Kings' account of Solomon's dealings with his foreign wife. Readers of Deuteronomy will take notice when they hear in 1 Kgs 9:16 that Pharaoh conquered Gezer, rid it of Canaanites, and gave it as a dowry gift with Pharaoh's daughter. It is a great irony that the expulsion of Canaanites from Israel's land, which Yhwh ordained to protect Israel from intermarriage and idolatry (Deut 7), comes at the hand of the Egyptian ruler who gives his daughter in marriage to Solomon. Moreover, Solomon's very marriage to *Pharaoh's* daughter also foreshadows Solomon's pharaoh-like slavery of his own people (1 Kgs 5:13-18, 27-30).<sup>36</sup> This, in conjunction with Solomon's violation of laws against returning to Egypt for horses portray Solomon as heir to Pharaoh more than David.<sup>37</sup> Though 1 Kgs 3:2 contends that religious apostasy persisted because Israel lacked a temple, 3:1 suggests that apostasy might persist beyond its construction.

It is also important that Kings reports that Pharaoh's daughter went up to the palace complex (9:24) immediately after informing readers that there were still Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites living in the land (9:20-22). Though Solomon subdued them through slave labor, their very presence in the land was a sign of their lingering religious threat.<sup>38</sup> It is then of small assurance, as Iain Provan suggests, to read in 9:25 "that Solomon is for the first time being an orthodox worshipper in the temple."<sup>39</sup> His cultic piety eventually gives way to impiety in connection with his many wives, against which Deuteronomy had also warned (17:17). The next time that one hears of Pharaoh's daughter is 11:1, where the author states that Solomon loved many foreign women "in addition to Pharaoh's daughter."

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<sup>36</sup> Marvin A. Sweeney, *1 & 2 Kings* (OTL; Louisville: WJK, 2007), 72-73; Iain W. Provan, *1 and 2 Kings* (NIBC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 86. Yet cf. 9:22, which maintains that Solomon did not enslave his own people.

<sup>37</sup> Deut 17:14-20; 1 Kgs 10:28-29.

<sup>38</sup> Deut 7:2; 20:17.

<sup>39</sup> Provan, *1 and 2 Kings*, 86.

These women led Solomon into idolatry and the construction of many illicit shrines “on the hill near Jerusalem” (11:7). In sum, Kings uses Solomon’s marriage of Pharaoh’s daughter to signal Solomon’s syncretistic turn.<sup>40</sup>

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Chronicler would express uneasiness about the prospect of Pharaoh’s daughter joining Solomon in his palace. On the positive side, marriage to Pharaoh’s daughter bolstered Solomon’s status, a clear interest of the Chronicler. “The court and its composition,” as William Johnstone points out, “are all part of the standing and international recognition of the Davidic king.”<sup>41</sup> Johnstone notes that the Chronicler’s mention of David’s wives comes at an analogous point in 1 Chr 14:3-7. Chronicles does not have a wholly negative view of foreign marriages.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, possessing wives was a means by which Chronicles depicts the wealth and strength of kings, and even priests.<sup>43</sup>

However, in the case of *Solomon*, mixed marriages were cultically problematic. As suggested, Pharaoh’s daughter functioned in Kings as a diagnostic of Solomon’s increasing cultic infidelity. The Chronicler therefore omits most of the aforementioned information about her from his narrative and recounts only one related event (2 Chr 8:11):

ואת־בת־פרעה הָעֵלָה שלמה מעיר דויד לבית עשר בנה־לה  
כי אמר לא־תשב אשה לי בבית דויד מלך־ישראל  
כי קדש המה אשר־באה אליהם ארון יהוה

Solomon brought out/up the daughter of Pharaoh from the city of David to the house which he built for her, reasoning, “My wife should not live in the palace of David, king of Israel, for the places to which Yhwh’s ark comes are sacred.”

The Chronicler here offers a rationale for moving Solomon’s daughter from the city of David; Solomon did not want her in sanctified space (2 Chr 8:11).<sup>44</sup> But why move her out

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<sup>40</sup> The Deuteronomist suggests that Solomon still worshipped Yhwh in 11:4: “As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been” (NIV, emphasis mine).

<sup>41</sup> Johnstone, *1 Chronicles-2 Chronicles 9*, 365-66.

<sup>42</sup> See Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 60-61; Japhet, *Ideology*, 295-99.

<sup>43</sup> 1 Chr 14:3; 2 Chr 11:21; 13:21; 24:3 (Jehoiada, the chief priest).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. 1 Chr 15:1, 29. However, no text in Chr states that Pharaoh’s daughter lived in David’s house, unless Chr equates David’s *city* with his house (cf. 2 Sam 6:10-12, 17).

of one sacred place and up onto the temple mount, especially since the ark was already there? One possibility is suggested by the change of the Qal perfect עלתה (she went up) in 1 Kgs 9:24 to a Hiphil perfect העלה, which could be rendered “he brought up,” or simply, “he brought *out*,” indicating her transfer out of the city.<sup>45</sup> Chronicles offers no details of Solomon building his own palace, and only mentions it in passing. Moreover, the context of 2 Chr 8:11 contains no hint that Solomon built her home near his own, leaving open the possibility that her house was not even near the ark, temple or palace areas, but rather outside the city.<sup>46</sup> One may note that in Chronicles earlier reports that David prepared tents for himself *and* the ark (1 Chr 15:1), clearly a precursor to the temple-palace complex on the temple. If, according to 2 Chr 8:11 the ark “sanctified” the tent near David’s dwelling, then moving her up onto the temple mount would not make sense. Whether Chronicles offers such a resolution is not entirely clear. What does emerge clearly, however, is that Solomon takes the lead in bringing her out of David’s house and away from sanctified space. One might reason that sexual relations with his wife in a sanctified place would be deplorable, as it would make

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<sup>45</sup> For this meaning for the hiph. \*עלה, see *HALOT* ad loc, though one may note its application to groups, not individuals. I see no reason why its application to groups could not also apply to individuals.

<sup>46</sup> Johnstone, *1 Chronicles-2 Chronicles* 9, 366 understands the whole point of this text to be that Solomon moves her outside the city. However, Johnstone does not address the Chronicler’s distinction between the city of David and Jerusalem.

Curiously, 2 Chr 8:11a refers to Solomon taking Pharaoh’s daughter from the “city of David” (עיר דוד), but has him state that she must not live in the “house of David” (בית דוד) in 2 Chr 8:11b. This phrase, not found in 1 Kgs 3:1 or 9:24 or anywhere in Sam, lacks an explanation. The appellation בית דוד typically refers to the Davidic line of kings (though cf. 1 Sam 19:11 and Isa 22:22). The LXX of 2 Chr 8:11 has ἐκ πόλεως Δαυιδ “out of the city of David” (though lacking in codex Alexandrinus). One might render בית דוד as “Davidic palace” in a reference to the royal palace more generically, and not only David’s residence in the city of David, leading to the rendering of 2 Chr 8:11b as “For he [Solomon] said, my wife should not live in the Davidic palace of Israel’s king, for holy are the places into which Yhwh’s ark enters” (כי אמר לא־תשב אשה לי) (בבית דוד מלך־ישראל כִּי־קדשׁ הִמָּה אֲשֶׁר־בָּאָה אֵלֵיהֶם אֲרוֹן יְהוָה). If the alternative rendering stands, then Solomon moved Pharaoh’s daughter out of the Davidic city *and* palace and into her own separate house, rather than into Solomon’s palace, where she ends up in Kgs. In either case, it is clear that Solomon protects the sanctity of the ark from contact with Pharaoh’s daughter.

one unclean and thus unfit for the holiness of the Davidic palace, whether the temporary palace on Mount Zion or the Temple Mount itself (cf. Lev 15).<sup>47</sup>

Kings links Pharaoh's daughter with foreign gods and idols (1 Kgs 11:1-2), and so it is not surprising that Chronicles would dissociate her from the ark spatially, even though her marriage to Solomon indicated his international status. By relocating Pharaoh's daughter, Solomon exhibits cultic loyalty and the ability to revere the *one* cult above his foreign wives—a complete reversal of his loyalties in Kings, where foreign women turned his heart from Yhwh.<sup>48</sup> In Solomon's only brush with foreign wives in Chronicles, therefore, he emerges as a defender of the cult.

### C. ATHALIAH'S REIGN

During Athaliah's reign, the temple was never really “open for business,” since it served as a hideout for the young Davidide Joash (2 Chr 22:12). That Joash could hide there unnoticed for six years suggests Athaliah's unfamiliarity with the temple. There is no indication that Yhwh's cult functioned in the temple during her rule, especially since Jehoiada<sup>49</sup> later needed to repair the temple and reappoint its priestly divisions (2 Chr 24:13). Indeed, Athaliah had to “breach” (פרץ\*) the temple in order to take “all the sacred things of Yhwh's temple for the baals” (24:17). The assumption seems to be that the temple was closed off, or at least to the Queen. Though Chronicles does not describe the use of these “sacred things,” the mention of a Baal temple in 23:16-17, and the fact that she was the daughter of Jezebel, suggests that her loyalties to Baal entailed a repudiation of Yhwh's cult.

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<sup>47</sup> This might be one more way that Chr downplays the palace, or at least subsumes it beneath the temple.

<sup>48</sup> In fact, 2 Chr 8:12-13 goes on to state that Solomon offered the *daily* offering in the temple, whereas 1 Kgs 9:25 has Solomon offering three times a year at the temple.

<sup>49</sup> Jehoiada was the priest who facilitated the temple's restoration for the young King Joash (2 Chr 24).

It seems that she pillaged Yhwh's temple in order to use its sacred vessels for Baal's temple.<sup>50</sup> This account of her breeching and pillaging Yhwh's temple, not mentioned in Kings, likely stems from Chronicles' conviction that apostasy entailed the discontinuation of normal temple worship. In reference to Athaliah and Joash's later reforms, Japhet offers an apt summary,

For the Chronicler, both Israel's worship and idolatry are exclusive; 'evil' rulers introduced 'other gods' not as optional additions to, but as actual replacements of, God's worship. Thus, a commitment to be 'the Lord's people' could not be fulfilled only by the eradication of Baal from Jerusalem. *It also demanded a renewal of temple orders, and eventually – the restoration of the sanctuary, to be handled [by Jehoiada] in ch. 24.*<sup>51</sup>

#### D. JOASH'S REIGN

The Chronicler further emphasizes Yhwh's non-syncretistic cult in his portrayal of Joash's reign. Joash and his officials "abandoned the temple of Yhwh, God of their ancestors, by serving the asherim and formed 'gods.' So wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because they were guilty" (2 Chr 24:18).<sup>52</sup> As Japhet suggests, there is a "causal relationship between the two transgressions."<sup>53</sup> The Chronicler bases this account of Joash's apostasy on the statement in 2 Kgs 12:3[2] that "Jehoash [=Joash] did what was upright before Yhwh *all his days during which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.*"<sup>54</sup> Linking Joash's reign to Jehoiada suggests to the Chronicler that the king's loyalty to Yhwh depended on priestly instruction, thus providing a way to distinguish Joash's periods of cultic faithfulness and

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<sup>50</sup> According to Raymond B. Dillard (*2 Chronicles* [WBC 15. Waco: Word Books, 1987], 184) Athaliah is a "Jezebel redivivus" who "leads the South in the path laid out by her infamous mother. ... Both women were defiant at the time of their death (2 Kgs 9:30-31; 2 Chr 23:13); Jezebel is trampled by horses, a fate presumably shared by Athaliah who is slain at the Horse Gate (23:15; 2 Kgs 9:33)."

<sup>51</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 836, emphasis mine.

<sup>52</sup> Several MSS have ברית instead of בית, and several G versions translate only יהוה, probably on analogy with \*עזב + יהוה in vv. 20, 24.

<sup>53</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 210. Forsaking (\*עזב) and seeking (\*דרש) form a coherent *cultic* dyad in Chr, indicating two sides of what the Chronicler meant by devotion to Yhwh. Chr perceived that abandoning Yhwh or Yhwh's law (Deuteronomic idioms) invariably meant separation from Yhwh's cult (1 Chr 28:9; 2 Chr 15:2), while seeking Yhwh would invariably involve cultic service or temple renovation projects. Solomon and Asa both undertake temple building in direct response to encouragement to "seek" Yhwh (1 Chr 28:9-10; 2 Chr 15).

<sup>54</sup> Emphasis mine, 2 Kgs 12:3[2]//2 Chr 24:2.

disloyalty, and significantly, Joash's capitulation to Hazael in 2 Chr 24:23-25 (//2 Kgs 12:17-18). During Jehoiada's tenure as priest, Joash restored the temple and remade the sacred vessels that Athaliah had stolen for Baal worship (2 Chr 24:7).<sup>55</sup> Moreover, "Burnt offerings were offered up regularly in Yhwh's temple all the days of Jehoiada" (2 Chr 24:14). The death of Jehoiada marked the beginning of Joash's apostasy. Judean officers came "bowing low" and thus turned Joash's loyalties away from the temple and cult. 2 Chronicles 24:18 states that "they forsook (\*עזב\*) the temple of Yhwh, the God of their fathers, and served (cultically) the asherim, and the images." In time, Joash became so overt in his rebellion against the temple cult that he had the high priest's son, Zechariah the prophet, stoned in the temple's courts (24:21, 25).<sup>56</sup> This cultic encroachment returned on him, however, for his courtiers slew him to avenge Zechariah's death (24:25).<sup>57</sup> In short, Chronicles indicates that while Joash "restored" (\*הדש\*) the temple with the help of Jehoiada the priest, he "forsook" (\*עזב\*) the temple and sought non-Yahwistic cults when Jehoiada died. Pursuing other deities and their cults meant forsaking the temple.

#### E. AHAZ'S REIGN

Ahaz constitutes yet another king who, like Saul, became cultically unfaithful (\*מעל\*) by turning from Yhwh's cult toward other gods. The use of \*מעל\* in conjunction with his

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<sup>55</sup> In Chr, cultic restoration includes the production of gold and silver dishes and vessels for priestly duties (2 Chr 24:14), whereas 2 Kgs 12:14 states that *no* vessels of gold or silver were produced. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 319-22, argues that this difference amounts to the authors' different understanding of what repairs to the temple entailed. For Kgs, he states, the repairs were taken to ensure the *ongoing* maintenance of the cult, whereas in Chr, the author was interested in each generation's response to Yhwh. Hence, the repair was a *restoration* of Yhwh's cult. However, it is not clear that a given generation's response to Yhwh would necessitate a restoration movement and not simply the destruction of prohibited cultic objects. Because Chr forges such a sharp divide between serving Yhwh and other deities that the need for restoration occurred more frequently because each instance of apostasy brought the Yhwh cult to a grinding halt.

<sup>56</sup> An incident not recorded in Kgs. See Isaac Kalimi, "Murder in Jerusalem Temple, The Chronicler's Story of Zechariah: Literary and Theological Features, Historical Credibility and Impact," *RB* (2010): 200-09.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. the encroachment of non-priestly authority into the temple in Neh 13:4-9.

cultic unfaithfulness leads one scholar to refer to him as a “second Saul.”<sup>58</sup> As several scholars contend, Ahaz surpasses even Manasseh as the worst king in the Chronicler’s history.<sup>59</sup> This follows from two dominant themes in the Chronicler’s presentation of his reign. First, Ahaz is an idolater. Kings never states explicitly that Ahaz worshipped foreign gods, only that he made his son “pass through the fire” (2 Kgs 16:3) and offered sacrifices at illicit cultic sites (2 Kgs 16:4).<sup>60</sup> But in 2 Chr 28:2-3 (1 Kgs 16:3), for example, the narrator states (beyond his sources) that Ahaz made images for the “baals,” just like the kings of Israel, whom the Chronicler consistently portrays as idolatrous.<sup>61</sup> As Raymond Dillard suggests, mentioning the images of the baals are “part of the Chronicler’s efforts to draw a parallel between apostasy under Ahaz and the apostasy of the North at the time of the schism.”<sup>62</sup> Judah’s rebellion had reached its nadir.

Second, the Chronicler diverges from Kings’ account by stating that Ahaz completely shut down the temple and destroyed its vessels (2 Chr 28:23-24).<sup>63</sup> For the Chronicler, closing the temple appears as a direct correlate of Ahaz’s construction of altars all around Jerusalem: “He closed the doors of Yhwh’s temple, and made himself altars on

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<sup>58</sup> Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 32, 186-89, supports this claim on the basis of the recurrence of the verb מעל in 2 Chr 28:19. Von Rad, *Geschichtsbild*, 79, also sees Saul as a negative foil in the book.

<sup>59</sup> McKenzie, *1-2 Chronicles*, 334-35; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 224-25; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 897; Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 188.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. 2 Kgs 16:3. Kgs states that Ahaz “passed his son through the fire” אֶת־בְּנוֹ הָעֶבֶיר בְּאֵשׁ whereas Chr states that he “burned his son in the fire” וַיִּבְעַר אֶת־בְּנוֹ בְּאֵשׁ. As McKenzie, *1-2 Chronicles*, 335, states, this shift may result simply from a metathesis of the consonants *ayin* and *beth*, but it may also signal agreement with Jeremiah’s belief that this was a practice of human sacrifice (Jer 7:31-32; 19:2-6; 32:35, and note the Chronicler’s addition of Ben Hinnom). Tadmor and Cogan, *II Kings*, 266-67, argue that Kgs envisions a less severe practice.

Provan (*1 and 2 Kings*, 244) contends that the language used in 2 Kgs 16:1-4 derives primarily from 1 Kgs 14:23-24, which describes Israel’s fertility cult. This is not a direct reference to idolatry, though mention of child sacrifice in 2 Kgs 16:3 certainly evokes devotion to Molech (1 Kgs 11:7).

<sup>61</sup> That the Northern Kingdom of Israel was idolatrous follows logically from the Chronicler’s temple-centric conception of Yahwism. Because of the North’s failure to come under the authority of the Jerusalem temple, they had therefore chosen a path not open to worshipping Yhwh.

<sup>62</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 221.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. 2 Kgs 16:10-18 where Ahaz is censured for building an altar *in the temple* that was modeled after an altar in Damascus.

every corner of Jerusalem” (v. 24). In other words, making himself many cult sites required Ahaz to close down the “one” cult site (v. 23).<sup>64</sup>

Kings never mentions that Ahaz closed up the temple, and in fact, it states contrastingly that Ahaz built an altar in the temple that was modeled after the Syrian altar in Damascus. Ahaz creates a sketch of that altar and then commissions Uriah the priest to build an altar for Yhwh’s temple (2 Kgs 16:10-11). When Ahaz returned to Judah, he sacrificed on the altar and moved Yhwh’s altar to another location *in the temple’s precincts* for Ahaz’s personal use (vv. 13-15). Yhwh’s altar thus took its place in subordination to the Damascene altar, which now stood centrally as a symbol of Judea’s recent subordination to its Assyrian overlord.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, Ahaz instructs Uriah to arrange the temple’s daily rituals in accordance with those of Damascus, where he had met with the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser (1 Kgs 16:10, 15). Thus, not only the altar but the whole Judean cult became patterned after the Assyrian/Damascene template.

One of the Chronicler’s reasons for omitting this account becomes clear in 2 Chr 28:23. Chronicles reports that Ahaz worshipped the gods of Aram that had defeated him in an effort to stave off the Assyrian threat. Though the Chronicler does not report on Ahaz’s construction of an Syrian-inspired altar, his notation that Ahaz worshipped Aram’s deities (something not mentioned in Kings) may be an *interpretation* of that act in Kings. Adopting the furniture of a foreign cult—especially the altar—was tantamount to idolatry, and the subordination of Yhwh’s cult to foreign gods.<sup>66</sup> But even more plainly, Ahaz had already

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<sup>64</sup> Ahaz “made for himself” *לִּי עֲשָׂה* altars around Jerusalem, a conspicuous statement that certainly recalls the prohibition on “making oneself” idols (Exod 20:4; Deut 5:8; 1 Kgs 14:9).

<sup>65</sup> Verses 16-18 recount other ways in which Assyria’s suzerainty was depicted visually. A helpful discussion of these cultic changes appears in Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 384-85; cf. also Hermann Spieckermann, *Juda unter Assur in der Sargonidenzeit* (FRLANT 129; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 362-69.

<sup>66</sup> 1 Kgs 16:13 states only that Ahaz offered sacrifices on the Damascene altar, but does not specify the recipient of those sacrifices. According to Chr, tribute to Assyria was a form of defeat (2 Chr 28:20), and the cultic fealty Ahaz demonstrates *outside the temple* caused his ruin.



shut down the temple in the Chronicler's account, thus sealing it off from such foreign influences. Thus, Chronicles could not include the account of the Syrian altar. Together with the Chronicler's assessment that Ahaz was an idolater, the omission fits Chronicles' *Tendenz*. Yhwh's cult and the cults of other gods were mutually exclusive, and that the temple's primary furniture—the ark and altar—were always the exclusive property of Yhwh. The God worshipped in Jerusalem's temple was to remain distinct from other gods in Israel *and* the nations. Thus, a foreign altar (and especially one which symbolized foreign domination!) in the temple would imply an impossible situation of syncretism wherein Yhwh would be cultically subordinated to other gods.<sup>67</sup> Chronicles leaves no trace of Uriah the priest in his narratives or genealogies. For Chronicles, Ahaz *sacrificed to* foreign gods, sought outside political support, and constructed multiple cults when faced with threats from Edom and Philistia (vv. 17-18). He *abandoned* the temple by pillaging it for foreign aid (v. 21), shutting its doors (v. 24), and destroying its vessels (v. 24). Ahaz's actions thus anticipate the temple's ultimate closure during the exile (cf. 2 Chr 36:7; 2 Kgs 24:13),<sup>68</sup> and ironically, his actions reinforce its sanctity (cf. 2 Chr 36:14, 21) as a temple that functioned *only* in service of Yhwh. Moreover, as with Judah's eventual exile, temple vessels in the hands of foreign rulers usually brought about an assertion of divine power against Judah (2 Chr 36:7, 18-20).

#### F. HEZEKIAH'S REIGN

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<sup>67</sup> In the Chronicler's account, the altar of Damascus would seem to imply Aramean domination (see 2 Chr 28:5). Ahaz fell under Assyrian domination in 2 Chr 28:16-21, though this occurs in the context of attacks from Edom and Philistia rather than threats from Israel and Aram, as in 2 Kgs 16:5-7. Moreover, the king of Assyria came and "attacked Ahaz rather than helping him" (2 Chr 28:20). Ahaz tries to curry Assyrian favor by giving him temple vessels, but to no avail (v. 21). It is in this context that he sacrifices to the Damascene gods who defeated him (see v. 5), an act for which the Chronicler finds reason to mock (v. 23). See Ben-Zion Luria, "Amaziah King of Judah and the gods of Edom," *BMik* 30/102 (1984/85): 353-60 [Hebrew].

<sup>68</sup> In 2 Kgs 24:13 Nebuchadnezzar cuts up the temple's vessels. Interestingly, in 2 Chr 36:10, Nebuchadnezzar leaves the vessels in tact (likely influencing Dan 5:1-4), leaving open the possibility of their return.

If Ahaz was a second Saul, Hezekiah was a second David-Solomon, one who sought the temple with complete loyalty.<sup>69</sup> In 2 Chr 29:6-7 Hezekiah grieves the disloyalty (*מעל*\*) of Ahaz's generation, which "turned their faces away from Yhwh's dwelling place ... shut the doors of the portico ... and did not burn incense or present any burnt offerings in the sanctuary of the God of Israel." Indeed, Ahaz had "closed the doors of Yhwh's temple [*ויסגר את־דלתות בית־יהוה*]" (28:24) and "made himself altars" throughout Jerusalem. Hezekiah thus depicts his father's unfaithfulness (*מעל*\*) in terms of turning away from the temple and closing its doors. And whereas in Kings, Hezekiah cuts up the temple's doors to pay tribute to the Assyrians (2 Kgs 18:16),<sup>70</sup> in Chronicles, he demonstrates his *immediate* loyalty to Yhwh by looking after the temple's doors: "In the *first* year of his reign, in the *first* month, he opened the doors of Yhwh's temple [*את־דלתות בית־יהוה פתח*] and restored them" (29:3). Hezekiah immediately sets to work restoring the temple and reappointing priests (29:3-4). Because of Israel's cultic unfaithfulness, Yhwh had made Judah and Jerusalem infamous among the nations (v. 8); Judean fathers died in war, and their sons, wives, and children were taken captive (v. 9).<sup>71</sup> As Williamson observes, Chronicles often characterizes God's judgment on Israel's unfaithfulness (*מעל*\*) in terms of military defeat and exile.<sup>72</sup> Idolatry was like entering a foreign land, away from the temple. Conversely, "seeking" Yhwh constituted

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<sup>69</sup> On Hezekiah as a second Solomon, see the striking evidence gathered by Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 119-125. Cf. also Mark A. Throntveit, "The Relationship of Hezekiah to David and Solomon in the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 105-21.

<sup>70</sup> In 2 Kgs 18:16, Hezekiah "cuts up" (*קצר*\*) the temple's doors in order to pay tribute to Assyria. In Chronicles, Ahaz who "cuts up" (*קצר*\*) the temple's vessels in an act of unfaithfulness (2 Chr 28:24). Chronicles apparently wishes to exonerate Hezekiah of such cultic infidelity.

<sup>71</sup> 2 Chr 29:8 borrows its language from Jer 29:18, which speaks of impending degradation for Israel's disloyalty. Israel would become a curse among the nations.

<sup>72</sup> Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 94-95, 353. For a discussion of the notion of "restoration" in DH, see J. G. McConville, "Restoration in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic Literature" in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives* (James M. Scott ed.; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 11-40; Peter Ackroyd discusses the exile and return motif in his book *The Chronicler in His Age* (JSOTSup 101; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 239-51, 290-310.

a mini return from exile to restore the temple and its cult.<sup>73</sup> Accordingly, Chronicles emphasizes the inclusion of “all Israel” from all the territories of Israel in Hezekiah’s reform and restoration of the temple.<sup>74</sup> As each unfaithful generation foreshadowed the exile, so each faithful generation foreshadowed the return to the land and the restoration of the temple and its cult. Hezekiah set about appointing, purifying, and celebrating the restoration of the temple starting, much as the returnees would do in the days of Zerubbabel (Ezr 3:8-13). By framing idolatry in terms of exile from the temple, the Chronicler suggests one more way that idolatry isolated Israel from Yhwh’s cultic presence, and one more way that the temple remained distinct. Moreover, the temple served as the focal point for religious and geographical unity among those who returned to Israel, as Hezekiah’s is the first time since Solomon that the northern and southern kingdoms were united.<sup>75</sup>

#### G. MANASSEH’S REIGN

The principle that idolatry interrupts temple worship finds one possible exception during the reign of Manasseh. In parallel to the account in 1 Kgs 21, Chronicles reports that Manasseh built altars to the host of heaven in the temple and its two outer courts (2 Chr 33:3-5). He also placed a “carved image of an idol” in the temple (33:7).<sup>76</sup> It is not immediately clear from the account in 33:1-9 whether these acts re-consecrated the temple to

<sup>73</sup> For other literature on the exile and return pattern in Chr, see fn. 5 above.

<sup>74</sup> Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 119-25.

<sup>75</sup> As Williamson, “The Temple in the Books of Chronicles,” suggests, this unifying effect of the temple contrasts with Ez-Neh, which uses the idea of continuity with first temple to *exclude* those who think they have a claim on the temple. Williamson thus sees Chr as very much a reaction to the policies of Ezr-Neh. Chr sought to integrate those excluded from the community by rigid policies: “He achieved this by demonstrating from the history of the divided monarchy that a faithful nucleus does not exclude others, but is a representative center to which all the children of Israel may be welcomed if they return” (Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 301).

<sup>76</sup> 1 Kgs 21:7 refers instead to אֶת־פֶּסֶל הָאֲשֵׁרָה “the image of Asherah.” The term סָמֵל, which the Chronicler adds, appears elsewhere only in Deut 4:16; Ezek 8:3, 5; 2 Chr 33:7, 15. The occurrences in Ezek 8:3 and 5 refer to a carved image in the temple that provokes Yhwh’s glory to depart. On the supposed suppression of a female deity in Chr, see Frevel, “Die Elimination der Göttin,” 263-71.

other deities or whether these acts were syncretistic, leading Japhet to suggest that Manasseh's reign was an exception to the general pattern of temple closure during times of religious apostasy.<sup>77</sup>

However, the subsequent account of Manasseh's repentance and reforms in 33:10-17, and also Josiah's reforms in chs. 34-35, indicate that Chronicles nevertheless sought to emphasize the purity and distinctiveness of Yhwh's cult. In punishment of Manasseh's actions, Yhwh sends the Assyrians who bring Manasseh to Babylon in chains. In his distress Manasseh cries out to God, recalling Solomon's temple dedication speech, in which Yhwh hears the prayers of captives "from heaven."<sup>78</sup> But it is not until Yhwh restores Manasseh to Jerusalem and his kingdom that Manasseh recognizes that "Yhwh is the true God" יהוה הוא (33:13), language that undoubtedly draws from two key monotheistic statements (1 Kgs 8:60 and 18:39), the first of which occurs in Solomon's temple-dedication speech.<sup>79</sup> In short, Manasseh gives expression to monotheism upon being restored to Jerusalem.<sup>80</sup> True to the Chronicler's pattern of "exile and restoration," Manasseh then works to restore the

<sup>77</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 216.

<sup>78</sup> 2 Chr 33:12; cf. 2 Chr 7:14. Solomon's statement comes from 2 Chr 6:39.

<sup>79</sup> The full expression in 1 Kgs 8:60 is as follows: למען דעת כל־עמי הארץ כי יהוה הוא האלהים אין עוד. Similarly, in 1 Kgs 18:24 Elijah states that the God who answers by fire (in the contest between Yhwh and Baal) is the true God (הוא האלהים). Cf. Isa 37:16 (אתה־הוא האלהים לבדך); 42:5. As William Johnstone (*2 Chronicles 10-36: Guilt and Atonement* [Vol. 2 of *1 and 2 Chronicles*; JSOTSup 254; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997], 227-228) argues, Manasseh removes offensive cult materials out of the city to align with his confession of Yhwh's sole divinity in v. 13. I might add that recognition of Yhwh's divinity required his presence in Jerusalem to restore the cult.

For discussion of אלהים, see Japhet, *Ideology*, 27-30. She observes the Chronicler's preference for the determinative + אלהים (האלהים). Also important is the discussion of whether the frequent substitution of אלהים for יהוה constitutes (a) an avoidance of the divine name, (b) a sense that Israel's God was God of the entire world [an argument that is blunted by the frequent use of אלהינו], or (c) some other reason. Japhet doubts that there is special meaning in the term, noting that Chr still employs the divine name Yhwh some 500 times. She also argues that the MT's אלהים sometimes reflects the original Hebrew based on the LXX. The epithet יהוה אלהים is unique (20x in Gen 2-3; 12X in Chr; 9x elsewhere, mainly Psalms), and the phrase יהוה האלהים is even more infrequent, occurring only 9x in the Hebrew Bible, and 3x in Chr (1 Chr 22:1, 19; 2 Chr 32:16). Other texts are generally deemed "late" (1 Kgs 18:21, 37; Neh 8:6; 9:7; cf. Josh 22:34; 1 Sam 6:20).

<sup>80</sup> Of the major English translations, only the JPS captures accurately Manasseh's conversion from idolatrous polytheist to monotheist: "Then Manasseh knew that the LORD alone was God" (2 Chr 33:13). Cf. also the translation, "So erkannte Manasse, daß Jahwe der wahre Gott ist," discussed in Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 317. On the phrase יהוה הוא האלהים see Japhet, *Ideology*, 30, (cf. 2 Chr 15:3).

cult to align with his recognition of Yhwh's sole divinity. He purges the temple and temple mount of altars and images, throwing them outside the city. Most notably, the Chronicler remarks that Manasseh "reinstated"<sup>81</sup> the altar of Yhwh (2 Chr 33:16), even though the account in 2 Kgs 21:1-9 (/ / 2 Chr 33:1-9) never mentions the removal or ruin of Yhwh's altar. The Chronicler apparently assumes that Manasseh's idolatrous transformation of the temple did not make use of Yhwh's altar, thus necessitating its reinstatement. One may also note in passing that Asa's reform necessitated a reinstatement of Yhwh's altar (2 Chr 15:8). The sacrificial element of the Yhwh's temple apparently remained distinct. Put another way, the primary *functioning* aspect of the temple ceased operations until Manasseh had destroyed the other cults (2 Chr 33:16).<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, details from the Chronicler's account of Josiah indicate that the *ark* also remained untainted by foreign cults during Manasseh's reign. In 2 Chr 35:3 Josiah orders the priests to put the ark back into the temple, an incident not recorded in the Chronicler's extant source material.<sup>83</sup> The Chronicler's account of Manasseh does not indicate that he removed the ark, though such would be consistent with the Chronicler's

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<sup>81</sup> Many MSS + Syr, Tg, Ar, have ויבן, "he built," instead of ויכין. Several MSS (and presumably, the LXX *Vorlage*) reprint the qal ויכין as a hiph, ויכין.

<sup>82</sup> Chr also includes a brief account of Asa restoring Yhwh's altar (2 Chr 15:8b) as the capstone of his reforms.

<sup>83</sup> There is some debate over the meaning this verse (תנו את ארון הקדש בבית ... אין לכם משא בכתף), though its most likely meaning is that Josiah orders the ark's return after Manasseh removed it. See discussion in Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 282 fn. 13. For a contrasting interpretation, which requires emending תנו (a contemporaneous imperative) to יתנו in reference to events from the bygone days of Solomon, when the Levites ceased "carrying" the ark, see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1048. Japhet's proposal lacks any manuscript support, but seeks to explain why Josiah tells the Levites that they need not carry the ark any longer when Solomon had already discharged them from that duty. In my estimation, Josiah echoes David's words from 1 Chr 23:25-26 precisely because his reform was a recapitulation of the cult's original organization, and included the reappointment of priests according to their ranks and divisions (2 Chr 35:4-6). The absence of any reference to the ark's departure in the days of Manasseh should not be surprising, moreover, because the narrative of Manasseh's apostasy mirrors the Deuteronomist's account from 2 Kgs 21:1-9. Just as we have no record of the altar's removal in Chr, even though Manasseh restores it, so we have no record of the ark's removal in Chr, even though Josiah restores it. See Christopher T. Begg, "The Ark in Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein* (ed. M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie and Gary N. Knoppers; JSOTSup 371; New York: T & T Clark, 2003), 133-45.

claim that Manasseh needed to reinstate Yhwh’s altar, even though he made no mention of its removal (cf. 2 Chr 15:8b). After all, Manasseh had placed a פסל הסמל “graven image of an idol” in the temple of which Yhwh told David and Solomon “I will put my Name forever” (2 Chr 33:7 || 2 Kgs 21:7). It is unlikely that Chronicles distinguished sharply between Yhwh’s name and his actual presence, as post-exilic literature seems to have avoided such bifurcations.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the Chronicler may have thought that since Manasseh placed the סמל in the temple where Yhwh’s *name* dwelt, Yhwh’s presence actually departed from the temple, much like the סמל in the temple caused Yhwh’s glory to depart in Ezekiel (Ezek 8:3, 5). Such a departure would set up the Chronicler nicely for the return of the ark and the Passover celebration in the days of Josiah (2 Chr 35:3), again, following Chronicles’ use of the exile and return pattern.<sup>85</sup> The temple’s re-consecration began in the days of Manasseh, but concluded with Josiah. This gap before the temple’s complete restoration may explain a curious addition by the Chronicler. The Chronicler concludes Manasseh’s reign by stating that even though Manasseh rebuilt Yhwh’s altar and offered sacrifices (2 Chr 33:16), “nevertheless, the people still sacrificed at the high places, only to Yhwh their God”

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<sup>84</sup> R. E. Clements (*God and Temple* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965], 128) writes that Chr “appears not to possess a systematic doctrine of the divine presence and dwelling place on earth. In this it is quite unlike either Deuteronomy or the Priestly Writing. . . . Instead we find that the ideas which the author has drawn from his sources re-appear in his own work. We are thus faced with what is virtually a synthesis of earlier thought and doctrine on the subject, without any attempt being made to resolve the tensions, or to eliminate the difficulties.”

William M. Schniedewind observes the Chronicler’s marked emphasis on Yhwh’s cultic presence in the temple (e.g., 2 Chr 6:41-42) when compared with the DH (“The Evolution of Name Theology,” in *The Chronicler as Theologian*, 228-239). One text that Schniedewind does not discuss, but supports his thesis concerning the Chronicler’s emphasis on Yhwh’s cultic presence, is 1 Chr 13:10, which changes “beside the ark of God” (2 Sam 6:7) to “before God” (1 Chr 13:10), when speaking about the location of Uzzah’s death. It is not entirely clear here whether Chr follows a Hebrew text underlying the LXX text, though the LXX 2 Sam 6:7 seems expansive, and likely conflates proto-MT 2 Sam 6:7 and MT 1 Chr 13:10 with *παρὰ τὴν κιβωτὸν τοῦ κυρίου ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ* “by the ark of the Lord before God.” Ralph Klein, *1 Chronicles* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006], 328) claims that Chr follows a proto-MT text here, though he only bases this claim on evidence from the Septuagint. Cf. 2 Chr 13:8.

<sup>85</sup> Accordingly, it might be that the Chronicler conceptualized the exile as a period in which Yhwh retained his sanctity.

(33:17).<sup>86</sup> Yhwh's cult was pure but not yet been consolidated or re-consecrated. Resolution via centralization came only during the reign of Josiah, and most likely, because the ark was not yet returned. Though conjectural, one might suggest that since the Levites are later instructed to bring back the ark, they had also stowed it away during the time of Manasseh's apostasy.

At this juncture, it is worth considering the ways that Chronicles "comprehensively reworked" the subject of the "high places," or "shrines" (במות) in keeping with its ideology of Yhwh's unique mediating institutions.<sup>87</sup> Chronicles omits references to worship at the shrines from the reigns of Joash/Jehoash, Amaziah, Azariah/Uzziah, and Jotham.<sup>88</sup> Japhet states that Chronicles' high view of Solomon led Chronicles to delete references to the במות from his successors, though this is difficult to prove.<sup>89</sup> In the cases of Asa and Jehoshaphat, Chronicles follows its source in Kings, which states that Asa and Jehoshaphat *did not* remove the shrines (2 Chr 15:17; 20:33), but goes on to state that they actually *did* destroy them (2 Chr 14:2-4[3-5]; 17:6).<sup>90</sup> Japhet attributes these contradicting accounts to Chronicles' desire to follow its sources in Kings, but also praise these kings as reformers.<sup>91</sup> Chronicles makes no attempt at a synthesis.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, Chronicles only states that these kings removed the

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<sup>86</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1011, contends that this verse "offers the clearest biblical expression of the distinction between two kinds of high places: for idolatry and for the worship of the Lord."

<sup>87</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 218, 220-21.

<sup>88</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 220-21; Knowles, *Centrality Practiced*, 122.

<sup>89</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 220-21.

<sup>90</sup> 2 Chr 15:2-4[3-5] mentions במות twice, and may reflect "a distinction between places for idolatrous worship (v. 3) and *loci* dedicated to worship of the Lord" (Japhet, *Ideology*, 706). Also notable, is that Chr avoids the term *gillulim* here (cf. 1 Kgs 15:12) and in all cases where they receive mention in Kgs (2 Kgs 17:12; 21:11, 21, 26; 23:24).

<sup>91</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 218-21.

<sup>92</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 220-21.

shrines from *Judah*, as the removal of shrines from *all Israel* was impossible during their reigns.<sup>93</sup> It is not until Jehoram that a Judean king *introduces* shrines (2 Chr 21:11).

Decentralized sacrifice to Yhwh receives mention on only three occasions, and never in connection with priests. Chronicles offers an explanation for the first two instances that maintains the temple's distinctiveness, while the third borrows from a text in Kings that ultimately bolsters the temple's importance. The first instance of decentralized sacrifice occurred at Gibeon, where Solomon (as in Kings) offers sacrifices (2 Chr 1:5-6). Chronicles reworks the account of Solomon's sacrifice at Gibeon to make the point that Solomon could sacrifice at Gibeon because the tabernacle and Bezalel's altar were there (vv. 3, 5-6) "before Yhwh" (לפני יהוה), even though the ark sat in the city of David with musical attendants (v. 4). It was the temple and altar that eventually unified the cult. The account of Yahwistic worship at high places during the reign of Manasseh is the second partial exception (2 Chr 33:17), and even here there is no indication that priests or Levites participated. Moreover, Chronicles' account of Josiah's reign suggests that Manasseh had removed Yhwh's ark (2 Chr 35:3). A third acknowledgement occurs in the mouth of Sennacherib's messengers: "Is Hezekiah not the one who removed his [Yhwh's] high places and his altars, saying to Judah and Jerusalem, 'Before one altar [מזבחה אחד] you shall worship, and upon it offer incense?'" (2 Chr 32:12).<sup>94</sup> Here Chronicles lets the implication of decentralized worship stand, it seems, to amplify the significance of Hezekiah's reforms. Hezekiah eradicated the *במות* and

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<sup>93</sup> The account of Asa says that he "removed the foreign altars and high places" in the context of his Judean reforms, and then states in 15:17 that "the high places were not removed from Israel, however Asa was fully committed to Yhwh all his life." Of Jehoshaphat, Chr states that he removed them from Judah (17:6), but does not specify the region over which he failed to remove the high places in 20:33. On Asa, see Edward Lewis Curtis and Albert Alonzo Masden, *The Books of Chronicles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1910), 10.

<sup>94</sup> The phrase *מזבחה אחד* "one altar" is unique here in 2 Chr 32:12. 2 Parap. 32:12 has τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τούτου "this altar," reflecting the Heb. of 2 Kgs 18:22 and Isa 36:7, perhaps as a harmonizing measure (as Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 254). MT Chr also adds the phrase ועליו תקטירו "and upon it offer incense," a plus also reflected in 2 Parap. 32:12.



supported only “one altar” (מזבח אחד; המזבח הזה in 2 Kgs 18:22), which Sennacherib boastfully interpreted as a sign of weakness, but Chronicles interprets as a sign of strength. While admitting at points that *Yahwistic* high places persisted while service to Yhwh occurred at the temple, Chronicles’ overarching portrait is that since the days of David, sacrificial worship of Yhwh took place in one location. De-centralized Yhwh worship appears as a provisional measure in the days of David-early days of Solomon (in preparation for the temple) and after Manasseh’s incomplete restoration of the cult.<sup>95</sup>

#### H. JOSIAH’S REIGN

The Chronicler’s account of Josiah’s reign (2 Chr 34-35) diverges from the patterned outlined thus far. In particular, he begins to “seek” (\*דרש) Yhwh at age sixteen but only purges Judah and Jerusalem of its idols at age twenty. This would seem to imply a four-year period of syncretism in which Josiah worshipped Yhwh and yet idolatry prevailed in Judah and Jerusalem. However, the Chronicler avoids a clear statement to this effect. First, while Chronicles often employs \*דרש to refer to cultic pursuit of Yhwh, it is evident that 34:3 refers to the *beginning* of a process that was not complete until the temple was repaired and restored. The text claims that Josiah only *began* to seek God (החל לדרוש) in his eighth regnal year (at age sixteen). In addition, Chronicles claims that Josiah was still young (והוא עודנו נער) when he sought the “God of his father David,” and only began his cult reform at age twenty (v. 3). The age of twenty is significant in Chronicles, for it is the age when priests may begin to serve (1 Chr 23:24). This may explain what otherwise appears like reticence. Josiah began to take action when he was at the age of adulthood by cultic standards, an age when he *could*

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<sup>95</sup> This is different from the picture conveyed by Sam-Kgs, which at points seems comfortable with decentralized Yhwh worship, especially in Sam and in the Northern traditions (1 Kgs 18:38; 19:10, 14; 2 Kgs 5:17). However, Chr clearly adopts the notions of cult centralization *already present* in Kgs and Deut.

take action (e.g. 1 Chr 27:23; 25:5).<sup>96</sup> In other words, he took action as soon as he was able, even though he was endowed with Yahwistic inclinations from an earlier age. Third, the Chronicler's ordering of events differs from those in Kings. As a result, illicit cult sites were removed *before* the temple's cult resumed its operations, as demonstrated on the following chart.<sup>97</sup>

### THE SEQUENCE OF JOSIAH'S ACTIVITIES

| Age/Regnal Year | 2 Kgs 22-23   | 2 Chr 34-35   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| 8 / 1           | Begins his Reign (22:1)   | Begins his Reign (34:1)   |
| 16 / 8          |   | Begins to Seek God החל לדרוש (34:3a)  |
| 20 / 12         |   | Begins to Purify החל לטהר (34:3b)<br><br>Purifies Jerusalem, Judah, and the North (34:3b-7a)<br><br>Returns to Jerusalem וישב לירושלם (34:7b) |
| 26 / 18         | Orders to Repair Temple (22:4-7)<br><br>Finds the Book of the Law (22:8)<br><br>Purifies the Land (23:1-19)<br><br>Returns to Jerusalem (23:20)<br><br>Celebrates Passover (23:21-27) | Repairs and Restores Temple (34:8-13)<br><br>Finds the Book of the Law (34:14)<br><br><br><br>Celebrates Passover (35:1-19)                   |

Table 2.2

In Kings, Josiah first undertakes routine repairs of the temple, then he finds the book of the law, and only then does he purge Israel and the temple of their idols and illicit worship sites. In Chronicles, Josiah sought Yhwh at an early age, and purged Israel and Jerusalem of their idols when he was of “cultic age.” Only *after* he purifies the city and land does he begin to repair and restore the temple, during which time he then finds the law. Once the land was

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Num 1:3; 26:2. See Larry E. Stager, “The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel,” *BASOR* 260 (1985):25-8; Barrick, *The King and the Cemeteries*, 18; Yet one may note that 1 Chr 23:3 understands the priestly age to be thirty.

<sup>97</sup> On the complex relationship between Josiah's reform in 2 Kgs 23 and the Chronicler's version in 2 Chr 34, see Barrick, *The King and the Cemeteries*, 17-26, 61-63. Barrick argues that Chr had an earlier version of the reform recorded in Kgs that lacked the account of Josiah burnings priests' bones in the North, along with other differences.

purged of idolatry, the temple could be restored to its purpose, but not while idols existed in the land (as in Kings).<sup>98</sup>

In addition, Chronicles already reported that Manasseh purged the temple of its idols, and thus the Chronicler has no record of any illicit images or idols in the temple (cf. 2 Kgs 23:4, 6) during Josiah's reign. There were altars to Baal, cast images, sacred poles, and altars around Jerusalem and Judah. However, all of these were purged *before* he repaired and restored the temple. Part of the Chronicler's motivation for reordering these events may include the need to emphasize that the temple ceased operations so long as idolatry persisted in Judah.<sup>99</sup> "Seeking" Yhwh, in this scenario, meant a rather long process of cultic purgation that culminated in the "return" to Jerusalem, the reappointment of priests and Levites, and the Passover ceremony in which the temple resumed operations (ch. 35). Thus, Chronicles' account of Josiah's reform shares with Hezekiah's (ch. 31) the assumption that reform involves comprehensive restoration and reactivation of the temple after its cessation in times of apostasy.

## I. CONCLUSIONS

Several preliminary conclusions follow from the preceding discussion. First, the Chronicler's depiction of various kings' reigns illustrates that turning toward other deities involved a rejection of the temple, or at least the altar and ark that represented its functionality (2 Chr 7:12). This is a subtle, but significant, difference from Samuel-Kings. As

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<sup>98</sup> It is interesting to note in this connection the preparatory role of purifying the city in the temple-building narrative of King Gudea of Lagash in Mesopotamia ("Cylinders of Gudea," translated by Richard E. Averbeck [COS 2.155: 417-33]). See discussion in Victor (Avigdor) Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House: Temple Building in the Bible in Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings* (JSOTSup 115; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 39-40.

<sup>99</sup> This is so in addition to the historical plausibility of Josiah's expansionist reform as depicted in Chr. Josiah may have begun such a reform because of weakening Assyrian influence and Egypt's *laissez-faire* political policy (J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* [2d ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006], 454).

Japhet contends, turning toward other gods involved two sins, idolatry and forsaking the temple.<sup>100</sup> My analysis expands Japhet's point to suggest additionally that the Chronicler's narrative assumes a deeper incompatibility between Yhwh's temple and other cults, and also offers an explanation for decentralized Yhwh worship in the time of Manasseh. I suggest that Chronicles struggles to assert the distinctiveness of the temple's operations within the constraints provided by his sources, and to portray loyalty to Yhwh in terms of exclusive loyalty to the temple.

Second, by negating syncretism, Chronicles poses two exclusive options, polytheism or exclusive worship of Yhwh. And even in the case of Manasseh, where it appears that Yhwh's temple commingled with idolatrous worship, the Chronicler retained the distinctiveness of the altar and ark, the two key furnishings of the temple. As such, Yahwism creates a realm of worship apart from the realm of "the gods" and images of gods. It forges a division between cultic realms, such that Yhwh refuses to compete with baser forms of worship or other gods. As the account of Manasseh demonstrates, recognizing Yhwh's sole divinity leads to reforms in which those baser forms are demolished.

Moreover, Chronicles overlays its account of Israel's history by employing an exile and return pattern in which idolatry was a form of exile, a departure from the temple and its cult. By contrast, turning to Yhwh (emphasized through use of verbs like *\*בָּקַשׁ* and *\*דָּרַשׁ*) meant a return to the temple and the reestablishment of its cult. I will discuss this pattern further in the next chapter, but simply note here that Chronicles widens the functional gap between the temple and non-Yahwistic cults.

However, to maintain that the temple's functional distinctiveness served as a proxy for Yhwh's own categorical distinctiveness requires careful attention to the ways that

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<sup>100</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 216.

Chronicles draws connections between Yhwh and the temple, as well as divisions between Yhwh/the temple and the rest of reality. The next two sections explore such bonds and divisions. I suggest that the Jerusalem temple operates in a class of its own because it participates in Yhwh's supreme status.

## II. QUALITATIVE PARTICIPATION

While the previous section argued for the functional distinctiveness of the temple, this section argues that the Chronicler's temple was bound to and reflected Yhwh's qualitative supremacy over the nations and gods. The temple mediated Yhwh's power and supremacy over all things, and becomes evident in its cultic grandeur.

Several texts in the David and Solomon narratives emphasize the unique bond between Yhwh and the temple, and highlight the quality of "supremacy" (expressed often using גְּדוּלָה or \*גְּדוּלָה)<sup>101</sup> shared by both. First, in 1 Chr 29:1, David says this of the temple-building project, "The task is enormous [גְּדוּלָהּ], for this palace is not for a human, but for Yhwh God." According to David, the temple needed to befit Yhwh's divinity. The scope of the project that lay before him demanded that he make extensive preparations, which Chronicles details in the preceding chapter and, regarding his wealth, in 29:1-9. An expression similar to 1 Chr 29:1 appears in the mouth of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser I, who boasts in the following way about his reconstruction of Aššur's temple:

I (Shalmaneser) laboriously (re)built for Aššur, my lord, the holy temple (Eḥursaḡkurkurra), the high shrine, the lofty dais, the awesome shrine, which was constructed much more cunningly than before, which rises up gloriously, which is dedicated *as befits his great divine person, (and) which is greatly appropriate for his lordly person.*<sup>102</sup>

<sup>101</sup> 1 Chr 16:25; 22:5; 29:1, 11, 12; 2 Chr 2:4[5]; 3:5. Notably, as a quality of Yhwh, גְּדוּלָהּ appears most frequently in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> psalmic divisions from which Chr draws. On several occasions, גְּדוּלָהּ denotes Yhwh's supremacy over nations and gods (Ps 95:3; 99:2-3; 106:21 cf. 108:5), as well as the abundant praise he receives (Ps 96:4; 135:5; 138:4-5; 145:3, 6). These two dimensions of divine supremacy resonate with Chronicles' use of the term.

<sup>102</sup> Emphasis mine. RIMA 1, p. 185, A.0.77.1:134-40.

Similarly, Tiglath-Pileser exclaims:

I [Tiglath-Pileser] constructed two large ziqurrats *which were appropriate for their* [Anu's and Adad's] *great divine persons*. I planned (and) laboriously (and) completely (re)built the pure temple, the holy shrine, their joyful abode, their celebrated dwelling which stands out like the stars of the heavens and which represents the choicest skills of the building trade. ... I raised up to the sky its towers and its *ziqurrats*, and I constructed its crenellations with baked bricks.<sup>103</sup>

While not attesting to the same configuration of deity-temple relations found in Chronicles, these passages indicate the Chronicler's participation in a wider near Eastern belief that temples "ought" to reflect a deity's greatness. As with Shalmaneser and Tiglath-Pileser's temples, David's and Solomon's temple *needed* to be exceedingly magnificent to convey adequately Yhwh's status.

Second, Chronicles ascribes qualities to *the temple* that it also ascribes to *Yhwh*. As an example, one may compare 1 Chr 22:5b with 29:11, two texts that form part of the Chronicler's *Sondergut*:

הבית לבנות ליהוה להגדיל למעלה לשם ולתפארת לכל־הארצות  
The temple I am about to build for Yhwh must become utterly supreme, for fame and splendor throughout all lands. (1 Chr 22:5b)

לך יהוה הגדלה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד כי־כל בשמים ובארץ  
To you, Yhwh, belong the utmost supremacy, power, beauty, splendor, and majesty<sup>104</sup>—  
*indeed all that is in heaven and earth*. (1 Chr 29:11a-b)

Both texts use terms for supremacy (גדלה/גדל\*), splendor (תפארת), and universal influence (בשמים ובארץ/כל־הארצות) to speak about the temple and Yhwh respectively. Whether Chronicles composed these texts with the other in mind is difficult to prove, though they reflect an *integrated conception of the qualities that define the temple and Yhwh* (cf. 1 Chr 16:25).

For Chronicles, these shared qualities extend to include supremacy over the gods. An expression of their shared supremacy appears most explicitly in 2 Chr 2:4[5], where Solomon

<sup>103</sup> Emphasis mine. RIMA 2, pp. 28-29 A.0.87.1 vii 87-104.

<sup>104</sup> The translation "the utmost" comes from the presence of definite articles with the abstract nouns, which in context denotes Yhwh's worthiness of all supreme qualities. On the use of a definite article for marking a distinctive class, or superlative, see Williams, §88; *IBHS*, 13.6a; 14.5c.

states that “the temple I am about to build must be supreme [גדול], for our God is supreme [גדול] beyond all the gods.” Not only does this text bring into parallel claims about Yhwh’s and the temple’s supremacy, it also echoes an earlier hymnic statement that “Yhwh is great [גדול]” and one who is praised “beyond all gods” (1 Chr 16:25). In his dialogue with Hiram, Solomon continues to emphasize the importance of the temple’s supremacy: “The temple that I am about to build must be supreme [גדול] and magnificent [פלא]” (2 Chr 2:8; cf. 2 Chr 3:5). Having just overlapped in language about God from 1 Chr 16:25, the language in 2 Chr 2:8 also recalls the statement in 1 Chr 16:24 that Yhwh’s “magnificences” [נפלאות] should be proclaimed throughout the nations. While it is not always clear that Chronicles is deliberately evoking language from earlier hymns, or other portions of the book, these texts reflect an integrated conception of the qualities that distinguish God *and* the temple, especially when referring to Yhwh’s/temple’s “supremacy” (גדול). I will discuss these texts in greater detail throughout this study, but it is now important to highlight that *Chronicles emphasizes far beyond its sources (none of these texts have parallels) that the temple should be impressive as a fitting reflection and embodiment of Yhwh’s status as exalted deity*. The following section explores these texts by focusing more specifically on the relationship between divine supremacy and the temple’s supremacy expressed succinctly in 2 Chr 2:4[5].

A. SOLOMON’S EXCHANGE WITH HURAM PART I: YHWH’S FAME (2 CHR 1:18-2:17[2:1-18])

As discussed earlier, Chronicles is the only book in the Hebrew Bible to claim that Yhwh’s superiority over other gods is evident in the temple. This central portion of the chapter examines how this claim makes sense within the book of Chronicles by looking closely at the exchange between Hiram (=Hiram in Kings) and Solomon (2 Chr 1:18-

2:17[2:1-16]). This exchange comes between the account of Solomon's acquisition of wisdom (1:1-17) and the account of Solomon's construction of the temple and temple speeches/prayers that comprise the next seven chapters (2:18-8:16).<sup>105</sup> As Dillard suggests, this account serves "as the aperture or stage for the narrative of the temple building as a whole."<sup>106</sup>

In his exchange with Hiram, Solomon offers a different rationale for the temple's construction than given in Kings. In 1 Kgs 5:3-5, Solomon explains to Hiram that he wanted to build the temple because there were no longer military threats to Israel. God had already given him rest on all sides, and thus he was in a position to build a house for God's name and to fulfill the promise to David. Solomon thus offers a political and theological rationale to Hiram. The temple would serve as a fitting conclusion to the successful military campaigns of David, and a fulfillment of Yhwh's promises concerning the Davidic successor.

The exchange between Hiram and Solomon in Chronicles (2 Chr 1:18-2:17) makes no reference to David's military victories, but instead mentions Yhwh's superiority over the gods as its rationale (2 Chr 2:4[5]). Whether or not Chronicles *deliberately* substitutes the military rationale of 1 Kgs 5 for a theological rationale is unclear, though it is noteworthy that while 1 Kgs 5:1 bases Hiram's support of Solomon on his prior political loyalty to David, 2 Chr 2:12-16 bases Hiram's support on his awe over the scope of the temple project and Yhwh's greatness as creator. The effect of these differences is to set Yhwh's supremacy over other gods in sharper relief than Solomon's political superiority over other

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<sup>105</sup> The turn toward the temple begins with the phrase in 1:18[2:1] that "Solomon decided to build a house for Yhwh, and a house for his kingdom." The ambiguity of the phrase "his kingdom" is palpable in light of the almost complete silence on Solomon's palace in the ensuing chapters. 8:16 concludes with the statement, "the house of Yhwh was complete."

<sup>106</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 17.



lands. Israel's true significance and power were found in the temple, an emphasis that undoubtedly resonated with the experience of Jews living in the politically backwater province of Yehud.

Significantly, 2 Chr 2:2-4[3-5] explains the temple's construction in *functional* and theological terms:

*Look, I am about to build a house for the name of Yhwh my God, to consecrate [קדש\*] it to him for offering fragrant incense before him [לקטיר לפניו], and for daily rows of bread, and burnt offerings in the morning and evening, on Sabbaths, and new moons, and festivals to Yhwh our God, as is Israel's perpetual duty. The temple that I am about to build must be great, for our God is greater than all the gods! So who could possibly build him a house, for the heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain him. And who am I that I should build him a house—except to offer incense before him [לקטיר לפניו].*<sup>107</sup>

This passage suggests two ways that the temple marked distinctions, and thus obtained its functional and theological significance. First (functionally), the temple was “consecrated” (\*קדש; cf. 2 Chr 8:11) to Yhwh for the regular cultic service. This service included incense offerings, bread, and burnt offerings.<sup>108</sup> Solomon states twice that these cultic acts took place in Yhwh's presence (לפניו; vv. 2, 4). The temple's ritual distinctiveness thus derived from Solomon's act of consecration and Yhwh's presence.<sup>109</sup> Second (theologically), the temple embodied Yhwh's supremacy over the gods. Just as Yhwh was “supreme beyond” (גדול מ-) all the gods, so the temple would be “supreme” (גדול). As Knoppers writes,

In Chronicles Israel's God is more than a national deity, Yhwh reigns in heaven and rules over all the kingdoms of the earth (2 Chr 20:6; 32:19; cf. 2 Kgs 19:15-16). For the Chronicler, there is only one supreme deity—“Yhwh is the God” (*yhwh hū' hā'elohim*; 2 Chr 33:13; cf. 1 Chr 16:24-26; 17:20). Because Israel worships an incomparable God (1 Chr 29:10-12; 2 Chr 32:19), the House built in his name must reflect his incomparability (2 Chr 2:4-5 [ET 2:5-6]).<sup>110</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Emphasis mine.

<sup>108</sup> A shorter enumeration of cultic duties occurs in v. 5 and in 1 Chr 16:40; 2 Chr 8:13; 13:11; 31:3.

<sup>109</sup> It deserves mention that in the Persian/Early Hellenistic periods, the use of incense among Yahwistic communities outside of Jerusalem appears to continue unabated, as evident in the biblical (Isa 66:3; Mal 1:11) and extra-biblical records (e.g., at Elephantine; TAD A4.10.10-11, discussed in Knowles, *Centrality Practiced*, 69-71).

<sup>110</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 771.

Though the temple had no explicit domain over which it was “supreme” (גדול), the parallelism between Yhwh’s and the *temple’s* “supremacy” (2:4[5]) implies an additional parallel between “all the gods” and all rival *temples* among the nations (cf. 1 Chr 22:5). This suggestion concerning the temple’s supremacy over rivals becomes plausible when considering the late Persian/early Hellenistic economic, if not religious, hegemony of Phoenicia, and the significant economic and religious forces moving through Phoenicia into the Levant.<sup>111</sup> Chronicles’ interest in imaginatively transforming the power relations between Phoenicia and Israel is evidenced by the Chronicler’s contention that *Huram* granted cities to *Solomon* (2 Chr 8:2), and not the other way around as in *Kings* (1 Kgs 9:11). The assertion of Yhwh’s supremacy via the Jerusalem temple thus added further to Yehud’s distinctiveness, or at least gave theological support to that distinctiveness. The temple would be greater than all rivals, both in terms of the functions of its rituals, and its theological statement against all other gods.

Solomon’s perspective on the temple was shared already by his father David: “The house to be built for Yhwh is to become exceedingly great [\*גדול], for fame [שם] and glory over all lands. Therefore I will lay aside (materials) for him” (1 Chr 22:5).<sup>112</sup> Chronicles seems to pattern Solomon’s words after this text, and in particular, Solomon’s expressed desire to build a house for Yhwh’s “name” (שם; 2 Chr 1:18) that would establish Yhwh’s supremacy (גדול) over the gods (2:4[5]). While David talks about the temple’s fame over “all the lands” (כל־הארצות), Solomon extends the logic of David’s claim by stating that he would build a

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<sup>111</sup> See Andrea M. Berlin, “From Monarchy to Markets: The Phoenicians in Hellenistic Palestine,” *BASOR* 306 (1997), 75-88; and more recently, Noonan, “Did Nehemiah Own Tyrian Goods?” 281-98. One may also consider the presence of Phoenician votive figurines as far south as Beersheva during the Persian period, on which, see Ephraim Stern, “Votive Figurines from the Beersheba Area,” in *Bilder als Quellen/Images as Sources: Studies on ancient Near Eastern artefacts and the Bible inspired by the work of Othmar Keel* (OBO Special Volume; ed. Susanne Bickel, Silvia Schroer, René Schurte, and Christoph Uehlinger; Göttingen/Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 321-27.

<sup>112</sup> This notion appears in incipient form in the Deuteronomistic idea that even foreigners could pray toward the temple and receive benefit (1 Kgs 8:43 || 2 Chr 6:33).

temple for Yhwh’s “name/fame” that would embody his supremacy over “all the gods” (כל־האלהים). [\*\*\*incl brief note on Richter and name/fame]

In addition, Solomon requests cedars from Hiram because the temple would become “supreme and magnificent” (גדול והפלא; 2 Chr 2:8[9]). This claim also aligns with David’s claim in 1 Chr 22:5 that the temple would become supreme (גדל\*) throughout all lands. Both 2 Chr 2:8[9] and 1 Chr 22:5 contain statements about the temple’s magnificence and supremacy within the context of receiving wood from the Sidonians, reinforcing the unified efforts of David and Solomon to distinguish the temple internationally through contributions of wealth.

Taken together with the request for skilled workers and donations from Hiram, Solomon’s words in 2 Chr 2:4[5] thus contend that Yhwh’s supremacy over the gods would become evident through a magnificent temple, and specifically through its lavish and ongoing rituals (vv. 3, 5),<sup>113</sup> and by great wealth brought by Israelites and foreigners. Wealthy donations and rituals would now become ways of exhibiting *and participating in* Yhwh’s divine supremacy. As David states in the context of recounting the people’s generous donations to the temple, “The task is great [גדולה], for this palace [בירה] is not for a human, but for Yhwh God” (1 Chr 29:1). Read against the backdrop of Chronicles’ historical circumstances, the emphasis on donating wealth to the temple and supporting its ongoing rituals as ways of asserting Yhwh’s supremacy finds a plausible explanation. During a period when Yehud had no army or king “in residence” to indicate its *national power*, and meager land holdings by which to support the temple, the Judeans could nonetheless signify its potency by

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<sup>113</sup> Chr devotes significant attention to the “continual,” “ongoing,” and “ceaseless” nature of the temple’s rituals (e.g., 1 Chr 16:6, 11, 37, 40; 23:31; 2 Chr 2:4; 24:14).

contributing to make the temple/palace (בִּירָה)<sup>114</sup> a fitting embodiment of the deity it housed. Conversely, without any military achievements or divinely sponsored king to mark *divine power*, one could perceive and experience Yhwh’s power through his magnificently adorned, and internationally celebrated, temple. Conveying these possibilities and realities may constitute aspects of the rhetorical purposes to which Chronicles puts its exalted temple language.<sup>115</sup>

The temple *needed* to be(come) exceedingly magnificent to convey adequately Yhwh’s status. While it would not contain him (2 Chr 2:5a), it could exhibit his supremacy through ritual, wealth, and as Chronicles states consistently, the exuberant joy accompanying its cult<sup>116</sup>—activities and attitudes appropriate for his “great divine person” (cf. 1 Chr 29:1). The Chronicler thus front-loads his account of the temple’s construction and dedication (chs. 3-9) with his own spin on what it means to “build a house for Yhwh’s name/fame” (לְבִנוֹת בַּיִת) (לְשֵׁם יְהוָה; 2 Chr 1:18; 2:3), thereby providing a hermeneutical lens for interpreting the temple-building account that follows.

#### B. SOLOMON’S EXCHANGE WITH HURAM PART II: IDOL POLEMIC (2 CHR 1:18-2:17)

I have suggested that for Chronicles the temple bears witness to Yhwh’s supremacy over “all the lands” (כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת) and “all the gods” (כָּל־הָאֱלֹהִים) through lavish rituals and displays of wealth. This section examines Solomon’s exchange with Hiram against the backdrop of two psalmic allusions that appear in the pericope (2 Chr 1:18-2:17). I argue that

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<sup>114</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 950, explains that the “citadel,” or “palace” (בִּירָה), may refer to a complex of buildings that included the temple, possibly including the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of Hundred (Neh 3:1). In any case, Knoppers states rightly that “In employing the term ‘the citadel’ instead of the more narrowly defined ‘temple,’ the author may be stressing the enormity of the task that awaits Solomon.”

<sup>115</sup> See Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Did the Second Jerusalemite Temple Posses Land?” *Transen* 21 (2001): 61-68.

<sup>116</sup> See, e.g., 1 Chr 28:9; 2 Chr 11:16; 15:12, 15, 17; 23:13, 21; 24:10; 29:36; 30:19, 21-26; 34:31.

Solomon's exchange with Hiram represents the positive pole of a negative idol polemic. That is, a negative polemic against gods-as-solely-human-products provides the conceptual and literary backdrop for understanding the Chronicler's positive assertions about the transcendence of Yhwh and his temple over the nations and other deities. In light of the emphasis on Yhwh's supremacy over the gods, it is important, therefore, to notice that Solomon's letter-exchange with Hiram in 2 Chr 2 quotes and alludes to the only two idol-polemic poems in the Psalter (115 and 135). Scholars have observed the importance of the book of Psalms for Chronicles, and especially the way that Chronicles provides a cultic context for psalmic material.<sup>117</sup> However, to my knowledge, no one has noticed the significance of the Chronicler's adaptation of Ps 135:5 in 2 Chr 2:4[5]:

The temple that I am going to build will be supreme,  
for our God is supreme beyond all the gods.  
(2 Chr 2:4[5])

For *I am certain* that Yhwh is supreme,  
that our Lord is [supreme] beyond all gods.  
(Ps 135:5)<sup>118</sup>

הבית אשר אני בונה גדול  
כִּי־גדול אלהינו מכל־האלהים

כי אני ידעתי כִּי־גדול יהוה  
אֲדַנִּינוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים [ellipsis]

There are several clues indicating that 2 Chr 2:4[5] adapts Ps 135:5, and not the other way around. First, Chronicles studiously avoids use of אֲדוֹנִי/אֲדֹנָי, and on several occasions substitutes האלהים for אֲדוֹנִי/אֲדֹנָי (e.g., 1 Chr 17:16-17//2 Sam 7:18-19; 2 Chr 18:5//1 Kgs 22:6).<sup>119</sup> The direction of influence is likely from אֲדֹנִינוּ in Ps 135:5 to אֱלֹהֵינוּ in 2 Chr 2:4.

<sup>117</sup> Pancratius Cornelius Beentjes, *Tradition and Transformation in the Book of Chronicles* (SSM 52; Boston: Brill, 2008), 141-176; Adele Berlin, "Psalms in the Book of Chronicles," in *Shai le-Sarah Japhet* (ed. Moshe Bar-Asher et al; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007), 21-36; Ralph Klein, "Psalms in Chronicles," *CTM* 32:4 (2005): 264-275; R. Mark Shipp, "Remember His Covenant Forever: A Study of the Chronicler's Use of the Psalms," *ResQ* 35 (1993): 29-39; Howard Wallace, "What Chronicles Has to Say about Psalms," in *The Chronicler as Author*, 267-91.

<sup>118</sup> No other biblical texts parallel 2 Chr 2:4[5] as closely, especially in its parallelistic structure, though this verse bears obvious affinities with Jethro's exclamation in Exod 18:11a: עתה ידעתי כִּי־גדול יהוה מכל־האלהים: "now I know that Yhwh is greater than all the gods." Cf. also Ps 77:14: מִי־אֵל גָּדוֹל כְּאֱלֹהִים: "what god is as great as God?"

<sup>119</sup> For discussion of this, and other tendencies in Chr, see Japhet, *Ideology*, 20-21.

Second, the disruption of the neat parallelism between יהוה and אדני in Ps 135:5 suggests creative adaptation on the part of the Chronicler, especially given his interest in the temple. Third, Chronicles quotes from the Psalms on several occasions, and especially from books 4-5 (e.g., Pss 95, 105-106; 132).<sup>120</sup> Fourth, as discussed later, Chronicles appears to allude to the only other idol-polemic composition in the psalter in this same passage (2 Chr 2:11; Ps 115:15).

Psalm 135 is a hymn of praise that follows immediately after the Psalms of Ascent (Ps 120-134). Remarkably, Ps 135 is a hymn written to be uttered by those who stand “in the house of Yhwh, in the courtyards of the house of our God.” Moreover, the Psalm ends with a call for the house of Israel, the house of Aaron, and the house of Levi to bless Yhwh. In other words, Ps 135 is already embedded within a temple context, which may indicate a contextual factor that prompted the Chronicler’s adaptation, perhaps as part of a Second Temple cultic repertoire.<sup>121</sup> It is also significant, as James L. Mays points out, that Ps 135:15-18 borrows idol-polemic language from Ps 115:3-8, but subsumes it “under the rubric of ‘the gods of the nations’” and Yhwh’s universal sovereignty in 135:5-7.<sup>122</sup> To speak of “the gods” of the nations therefore, is the same thing as speaking of the “idols of the nations” (Ps 135:15). The gods lack all sentience and capacity to act.

By contrast, Yhwh does whatever he pleases in “heaven and on earth, in the seas and all the deeps” (135:6). Yhwh also “makes clouds rise from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain; He releases the wind from His vaults” (Ps 135:7 NJPS). Jeremiah uses

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<sup>120</sup> In 1 Chr 16:8-36 and 2 Chr 6:41-42.

<sup>121</sup> Ps 115 also sets its idol polemic within a liturgical summons to the “house of Aaron” and “house of Israel” (vv. 10, 12). Interestingly, there is no mention of the “house of Levi” in Ps 115.

<sup>122</sup> James L. Mays, *Psalms* (Interpretation; Louisville: WJK, 1994), 417.

similar language to contrast Yhwh with the idols of the nations (Jer 10:13; 51:16).<sup>123</sup> Yhwh has the power to shape nature for his purposes, whereas the idols of the nations are simply shaped by humans. They are “the work of human hands” (Ps 135:15),<sup>124</sup> which lack the sovereign and creative freedom of Yhwh. Conversely, Yhwh solicits praise from Israelites and priests that stand in his temple. Yhwh the creator thus stands over against the idol-gods of the nations.

In the light of Ps 135, several points about 2 Chr 2 emerge. First, the primary difference in 2 Chr 2:4 is the substitution of the temple for Yhwh in the first colon of Ps 135:5. That substitution of “temple” for “Yhwh” accords with the idea that the temple participates as a proxy for Yhwh’s supremacy (גדול) over the gods. Moreover, by preposing “the temple” in the poetic line, Chronicles places distinct emphasis on its significance as a manifestation of divine supremacy. Second, the Chronicler’s reference to “gods” does not necessarily imply their existence. Psalm 135 moves between “gods” and “idols” to suggest their equation. This point is strengthened by the semantic and syntactic similarities between 2 Chr 2:4[5] and 1 Chr 16:25-26, which employs the designation אלהים to refer to אלילים. Third, Ps 135 suggests that Yhwh’s greatness over the gods inheres in his power and freedom as creator.<sup>125</sup> It is the power to create that most distinguishes Yhwh from the idols, a point that 1 Chr 16:25-26 makes using similar language as that found in Ps 135:5//2 Chr 2:4:

כי גדול יהוה ...  
ונורא הוא על-כל-אלהים  
כי כל-אלהי העמים אלילים  
ויהוה שמים עשה

For Yhwh is supreme, ...

<sup>123</sup> Mays, *Psalms*, 417, noted these parallels, or possibly, quotations of Jeremiah. We may also find similar language in the idol-polemic in Jer 14:22.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. 2 Chr 32:19; 1 Kgs 19:18.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. the use of שם in Ps 135:1, 3, and 13.

He is feared beyond all gods.  
 For all the gods of the peoples are non-gods (or, created things)  
 But Yhwh made the heavens.<sup>126</sup> (1 Chr 16:25-26)

cf.

והבית אשר־אני בונה גדול  
 כִּי־גדול אלהינו מכל־האלהים

The temple that I am going to build will be supreme,  
 for our God is supreme beyond all the gods. (2 Chr 2:4[5])

As in Ps 135, referring to “the gods” does not grant them effective existence. Whereas the gods of the nations are “created things,” as 1 Chr 16:26 states, Yhwh made the heavens. Not surprisingly, Hiram responds to Solomon’s claim in 2 Chr 2:11 by extolling Yhwh as “creator of heaven and earth,” at text to which we will shortly return.

But the temple’s role as a standing witness to Yhwh’s supremacy over hand-made gods raises a fundamental question. How could a human-made temple bear witness to a God whose very nature stood in opposition to idols made of “silver and gold, the work of human hands” (Ps 135:15)? This problem was especially acute in light of Solomon’s first request to Hiram for an “artisan skilled in gold and silver ...” (v.7). Such concerns may drive Solomon’s reservations about the idea that any mortal could construct a house for Yhwh: “Who indeed is capable ... Who am I ...?” (v. 5). For the Chronicler to employ the *temple* as a witness against the “gods” *qua* human-made products would require that he (1) downplay the adequacy of its human origins and (2) emphasize Yhwh’s role in its creation.

Solomon’s specific emphasis in 2 Chr 2:5 addresses this first issue, though it is important first to consider its archetype, recorded in the book of Kings:

**But will God really dwell on earth?**

*Behold the heavens, even the upper heavens, cannot contain you,*  
 How much less this house that I have built! (1 Kgs 8:27 // 2 Chr 6:18)<sup>127</sup>

<sup>126</sup> I discuss this text at length in ch. 5, including my translation “created things” for אֱלִילִים.

<sup>127</sup> Line A of 2 Chr 6:18 reads, “But will God really dwell on earth *with humans* (אִתְּהָאָדָם)” This last phrase (אִתְּהָאָדָם) is preserved in LXX 1 Kgs 8:27 (μετὰ ἀνθρώπων), and likely present in the Chronicler’s *Vorlage*.



This text from Kings eschews any notion that the temple could contain the limitless God who resides in heaven. It goes on to affirm prayer as a means by which the temple retains its relationship to this God, but only in times of crisis. Chronicles adopts this formulation in Solomon's temple prayer (2 Chr 6:18), but frames the problem *and* solution differently in this exchange with Hiram:

**But who is even capable of building him a house?**

*For the heavens, even the upper heavens, cannot contain him.*

**And who am I, that I should build him a house—**

*except to make offerings before him?* (2 Chr 2:5[6])

Notably, 2 Chr 2:5 omits the phrase “how much less this house that I have built” (1 Kgs 8:27b) and poses questions about the temple's builders.<sup>128</sup> In so doing, Chronicles shifts the theological anxiety from the possibility of God's dwelling on earth, to the possibility of humans *building* God a dwelling on earth. This subtle difference moves the theological emphasis toward the problem of Yhwh being associated with the works of human hands, an important point of accusation in idol polemics.<sup>129</sup> The concern was not simply over the perception that the temple contained Yhwh, but over *human* involvement in building a house for the limitless God. One observes an analogous concern in David's prayer, which also draws on the language from 1 Kgs 8:27:

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<sup>128</sup> Careful attention to the style of Solomon's questions reveals that they are part of a larger pattern of deferential rhetoric that recurs in the Hebrew Bible, particularly in connection with the temple and cult. E.g., 1 Kgs 8:27//2 Chr 6:18; Isa 66:1; cf. 2 Sam 7:5//1 Chr 17:6. These texts each respond to an uneasiness regarding the tendency of temple projects to reduce God by depicting ritual practices (e.g., sacrifice or prayer) against a transcendent horizon. It is not surprising, moreover, that polemics against other deities emphasize that they are simply human products without any transcendent reference point. Idols only point toward their human creators, who find themselves formed into the senseless idols. They are ultimately reductive.

The deferential pattern **מי אני ...** (“who am I ... that ...”) recurs in the Hebrew Bible, for example in Exod 3:11 (regarding Moses' role as deliverer); 1 Sam 18:18 (regarding David's marriage to a member of the royal family); 2 Sam 7:18 // 1 Chr 17:16 (regarding Yhwh's favor on the Davidic house); 1 Chr 29:14 (regarding Israel's ability to offer Yhwh sacrifices); 2 Chr 2:5 (regarding Solomon's building of the temple); cf. also 2 Chr 1:10 (regarding Solomon's possession of wisdom); 2 Kgs 8:13. For a study of such formulae, see George W. Coats, “Self-Abasement and Insult Formulae,” *JBL* 89 (1970):14-26; *IBHS* §18.26; and recently, Edward J. Bridge, “Self-Abasement as an Expression of Thanks in the Hebrew Bible,” *Biblica* 92/2 (2011):255-73. Bridge points out rightly that expressions of self-abasement occur in contexts of thanksgiving to emphasize Yhwh's magnanimity.

<sup>129</sup> See 2 Kgs 19:18; Ps 115:4; 135:15; Isa 37:19; 2 Chr 32:19.

**Who indeed am I, and who are my people, that we are able to give freely like this?**

Surely everything is from you, and from your hand we give to you. (1 Chr 29:14)

Again, the question focuses on the question of *human* involvement. Humans could not really add anything to all that Yhwh owned. Offerings were token indications of Yhwh's sovereignty, and not a sign of Yhwh's needs or dependency on creation.

In an attempt to address the concern over human's building a temple that manifests Yhwh's supremacy (2 Chr 2:5[6]), Solomon states that the temple's purpose was also transcendent; it was for making regular sacrifices and offerings before Yhwh.<sup>130</sup> The emphasis in vv. 3 and 5 on offering incense "before him [Yhwh]" (לפניו) affirms Yhwh's presence at the temple, but avoids reducing Yhwh by stating that the highest heavens could not contain him. Offering incense to Yhwh was a way of enacting the recognition of his unique presence in the temple *and* his cosmic transcendence.<sup>131</sup> By evoking the idol polemic and raising questions about the possibility of a human building a house for Yhwh, Chronicles subtly resists any notion that the temple reduced or confined Yhwh. The cult was "iconic" and not reductive. As Johnstone states, "As a place of 'raising smoke' its [the temple's] altars can have only adorational and petitionary significance."<sup>132</sup> The temple cult was a signpost pointing to a limitless God, while also embodying his supremacy through its extravagant wealth and ongoing rituals. In this sense the temple was "supreme" (גדול) just as Yhwh was "supreme beyond" (גדול מ-) all the gods. The temple uniquely manifested Yhwh's supremacy without reducing him.

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<sup>130</sup> If the point of idol polemics is to emphasize the *functional ineptitude* of the gods (i.e., they cannot act in any meaningful capacity), then the counterpoint would be to emphasize the *functional aptitude* of Yhwh's temple, which participates in Yhwh's own *functional aptitude*. Hence, the Chronicler emphasizes the functional cult. On the significance of a deity's functional aptitude, see John Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 2009), 23-37.

<sup>131</sup> On the metonymic role of incense offering, cf. 2 Chr 26:18; 29:11. The root קטר can also mean, "to make sacrifices smoke" (as BDB 882-3; HALOT *ad loc*; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 919-20).

<sup>132</sup> Johnstone, *1 Chronicles-2 Chronicles* 9, 308. Johnstone may go too far, however, by referring to the "merely symbolical nature of the Temple" (308).

Huram's blessing in 2 Chr 2:11 also addresses the tensions that emerge in 2 Chr 2:5[6] regarding the close association between Yhwh and the temple. He emphasizes Yhwh's transcendent freedom as creator *and* his desire for a house:

ברוך יהוה אלהי ישראל / אשר עשה את־השמים ואת־הארץ  
 אשר נתן לדוד המלך בן חכם יודע שכל ובינה אשר יבנה־הבית ליהוה ובית למכלותו  
 Blessed is Yhwh, God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth  
 who gave King David a wise son, who possesses discernment and understanding, and  
 who will build a house for Yhwh and a house for his kingdom.

Read against the backdrop of vv. 2-9, wherein Solomon expressed reservations over the possibility of building a temple for Yhwh, Huram's response (vv. 10-15) constitutes a resounding "message received." It is Yhwh who creates, and who gives wisdom for creating the temple. Huram's words appear to draw from Ps 115, the other idol polemic in the Psalter, and the only place besides Gen 14:19 and Ps 134:4 where Yhwh's role as creator forms part of a blessing.

ברכים אתם ליהוה / עשה שמים וארץ  
 Blessed are you by Yhwh, maker of heaven and earth (Ps 115:15).

Huram's blessing belongs with such biblical traditions that distinguished Yhwh *as creator* from the created images of the nations. According to the logic of Israel's idol-polemics such as Pss 115 and 135 (cf. also Jer 10; 43-44; Isa 40-48), Israel's aniconism pointed the way toward Yhwh's freedom, often in connection with his residence or power in "heaven" or the "highest heavens." Psalm 115:16, the next verse after the one Huram evokes, claims that the "highest heavens" (השמים שמים) belong to Yhwh as a place of divine freedom (cf. 115:3), much as Solomon claims that the "highest heavens" (שמי השמים; 2 Chr 2:5[6]) cannot contain Yhwh. Psalm 115 responds creatively to the taunting question of the nations, "Where is your God?" (v. 2). The poet cleverly transforms this mocking question of divine *abandonment* into a question of divine *manifestation* in order to ridicule the nations' images as lifeless creations. Divine images, the psalmist claims, lack all sentience, and "cannot even

grunt” (vv. 4-7). Thus their worshippers become blind, deaf, and dumb (v. 8), much like the silent dead mentioned at the end of the Psalm (v. 17). By contrast, God is the creator who dwells in heaven and does as he pleases (vv. 3, 9-13, 16).<sup>133</sup> Those who worship him are characterized by eternal blessing and praise (v. 18). In short, Yhwh’s creations attest to the living and limitless God, while the nations’ creations do not transcend.

Hiram recognizes that the God for whom Solomon builds the temple is the supreme *creator*, and that even the wisdom needed to build the temple derives from God himself, just as Israel’s ability to make offerings to God presupposes God’s possession of wealth: “[God] gave King David a wise son who possesses discernment and understanding to build a temple for Yhwh” (2 Chr 2:11b). Though this does not completely resolve the tension created by the temple project, Hiram’s response indicates that the temple was, at least at the level of creative wisdom, God’s creation. Hiram affirms Yhwh’s divine freedom as creator, but also affirms the importance of the temple as Solomon’s project. The two ideas stood together in tension.<sup>134</sup> As such, Chronicles’ vision of the temple is not *an*-iconic, though it avoids the charge of divine reduction that features in idol polemics, and restricts Yhwh’s icon to *one temple*.

Chronicles thus reckons with the tension between the *human* as builder and contributor to the temple Yhwh as divine creator in ways not unlike ancient Near Eastern denials that craftsmen made divine images or temple.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, there is evidence that some temples in the ancient Near East underwent induction and denial ceremonies like those used

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<sup>133</sup> It is also interesting to note by way of analogy that Hezekiah’s prayer in 2 Kgs 19:15 links Yhwh’s power to creating heaven and earth to his sole divinity: אַתָּה־הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים לְבַדְךָ ... אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ (you alone are the true God ... you made heaven and earth; cf. Neh 9:6).

<sup>134</sup> Ps 115 is more restrictive of Yhwh’s domain to heaven (115:16b), though it nonetheless affirms his role as creator of all heaven and earth.

<sup>135</sup> See Nathaniel Levtow, *Images of Others: Iconic Politics in Ancient Israel* (BJS 11; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 132-43.

for divine images.<sup>136</sup> Because of their close contact with divinity, the very *material* of temples sometimes became identified with a god's body. For instance, when reconstructing new temples over old sites in the first millennium B.C.E., the Babylonians would remove the "first" or "former" brick (the *libittu mahritu*) from the rubble and place offerings before and on the brick "for the god of the foundations (and in some cases the goddess Bēlet-ilī, "mistress of the gods" = Mami).<sup>137</sup> Ritual experts would sometimes address the brick directly as the Mesopotamian brick-god "Kulla," the son of Ea/Enki and his wife Kam-gal-nunna (/Damkina). Kulla was a deified brick, and thus the most important material used in the reconstruction of temples, which placed the *libittu mahritu* (or "former brick") into a new temple.<sup>138</sup> Once it was placed in the new temple, temple singers would then sing an incantation which *denied that the temple was the work of human hands*.<sup>139</sup> Selz observes that cult objects in Sumeria and Ebla regularly received offerings and votives. Cult objects, like cult images "underwent rituals which ensured their divinity," such as (1) name giving, (2) "mouth-opening" or "mouth-washing" rituals, (3) induction, or "providing for an appropriate cult place," (4) and offerings and care to provide for their sustenance.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> On image ceremonies, see Michael B. Dick, ed., *Born in Heaven, Made on Earth: The Making of the Cult Image in the Ancient Near East* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1999), esp. 40, 62. For a discussion of ancient Near Eastern evidence regarding the deity as temple builder, see Hurowitz, *I Have Built*, 332-34; cf. also Ps 78:69; 127:1.

<sup>137</sup> Claus Ambos, "Building Rituals from the First Millennium BC," in *From the Foundations to the Crenellations*, 221-27. Temple building and birth were analogous activities, hence the mention of Bēlet-ilī, the mother-goddess.

<sup>138</sup> On Kulla, see Richard S. Ellis, *Foundation Deposits in Ancient Mesopotamia* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1968), 18; *ANET*, 317; cf. David L. Petersen, ("Zerubbabel and Jerusalem Temple Reconstruction," *CBQ* 36 [1974]: 366-72) on Zech 4:7.

<sup>139</sup> The specific incantation is "When Anu created the Heavens," which "describes how the gods themselves built their temples after they had created the world" (Ambos, "Building Rituals," 227). Ambos states, "By addressing this incantation to the brick recovered from the collapsed sanctuary, the whole temple, of which the brick formed only a small part, is identified as the work of the gods and not of human hands" (227).

<sup>140</sup> Gebhard Selz, "The Holy Drum, The Spear, and the Harp: Towards an Understanding of the Problems of Deification in the Third Millennium Mesopotamia," in *Gods and their Representations* (ed. Irving L. Finkel and Markham J. Geller; CM 7; Gröningen: Styx, 1997), 167-213 [179].

Moreover, it is important to note that idol construction accounts in the ancient Near East do not only *deny* categorically human involvement in order to maintain an image's/temple's connection with divinity. Indeed, some emphasize the cooperation of divine and human involvement in the production of an image. Smith cites several texts in that convey divine and human cooperation. One incantation text (STT 200) reports that “in heaven he [the image] was made, on earth he was made (*ina shame ibbanu ina erseti ibbanu*).” In the same text we read that “the statue is the creation of god and human (*shalam bunane sha ili u ameli*)!” An Assyrian text refers to the image as the “creation of the gods, work of humans.” An inscription on the Sippar sun-disk also conveys the cooperation of the human and divine in image production: “Then through the craft of Ea, by the skill of Ninildu [‘Ea of the carpenters’], Gushkinbanda [patron god of goldsmiths], Gushkinbanda [patron god of goldsmiths], Ninkurra [patron deity of stonecutters] and Ninzadim [patron god of lapidaries], with red gold and bright lapis lazuli, the image of Shamash, the great lord, he (the king) carefully prepared. (col. 4, lines 14-21).”<sup>141</sup> After reviewing these texts, Smith concludes,

The various expressions made about the cult statue in these rituals point to a sacramental communion presuming real divine presence, yet not identified in whole with the reality of the deity. More specifically, the rituals convey a divine communions with humans: hearing and seeing the deity and certainly being seen by the deity (and perhaps hearing as well), but even more fundamentally making offerings to the deity in the form of the statue. These experiences create an experiential web of interpersonal transactions between the human and divine participants via the statue.<sup>142</sup>

While not employing explicit denial statements, Chronicles certainly wrestles with anxieties over human participation in the construction of temples/images that are also reflected in ancient Near Eastern image/temple construction accounts. The temple was Solomon's building project, but *was not* insofar as it was Yhwh's creation, and made possible by Yhwh's wisdom. Similarly, David and Israel provided wealth for the temple's

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<sup>141</sup> These texts are all mentioned in Smith, “The Polemic of Biblical Monotheism,” 217.

<sup>142</sup> Smith, “The Polemic of Biblical Monotheism,” 219.

construction, but *did not* insofar as all wealth came from Yhwh's hands (1 Chr 29:11-20).

Appropriately, Hiram responds to Solomon's ambitious project by praising *Yhwh* as "creator" and provider of wisdom for building the temple, and seems to draw on the other idol-polemic psalm, Psalm 115. At issue in the idol polemics from which the Chronicler draws was not simply whether images were gods or not, but whether as images they transcended themselves, or simply pointed back to their human creator. Though Chronicles does not fully resolve the tension between Yhwh's role as creator and the temple as Solomon's project, it nevertheless insists that the temple points beyond itself to a supreme God even as it participates in and manifests Yhwh's supremacy, and that the temple was created with divinely given wisdom. In so doing, Chronicles forges bonds between the temple and Yhwh, forges divisions between Yhwh and "the gods" of the nations, and in so doing, exalts the temple as a unique embodiment of Yhwh's supremacy.

Chronicles' ability to point to a tangible object as an instance of Yhwh's *presence* and *supremacy* signals a significant departure from the configuration of monotheism/divine supremacy in Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, and Jeremiah. While these latter two prophetic books employ idol-polemics and other methods to emphasize Yhwh's superiority to the gods despite his ostensible absence in exile, Chronicles emphasizes Yhwh's presence and supremacy *through* the visible Jerusalem temple. Chronicles' mode of monotheizing does not employ simplistically a sharp division of the world into the "invisible" divine realm and the "visible" world of creation. Indeed, Chronicles engages broadly in the question of legitimate versus illegitimate embodiments of Yhwh. The temple, Chronicles suggests, embodies legitimately Yhwh's divine power and uniqueness by virtue of its functional, qualitative, and material participation in Yhwh's "being." The resultant configuration of reality is not simply that of the invisible true God versus the visible gods of the nations, "the works of human

hands.” Polemic against the gods, even one that invokes an idol-polemic psalm, need not imply an aversion to manifestations of Yhwh. Indeed, idol polemics did not revolve simplistically around the creator-created distinction, but instead, around what and whether created realities manifest Yhwh and possess any transcendent function. For example, P restricts divine imaging to humanity (Gen 1), who alone images God in(to) the world. Chronicles configures reality in terms of *restricted institutional embodiments of the one true God*. These embodiments (principally the temple, but also the priesthood and kingship) were restricted numerically, to their one Jerusalemite form, but also in terms of their ability to fully capture Yhwh’s supreme uniqueness. The temple was a unique manifestation of divine supremacy, but did not restrict Yhwh as creator. Yet like these prophets and psalmists who engage in idol-polemics, Chronicles’ emphases may have resonated with those in the post-exilic period who looked for evidence of Yhwh’s presence and magnificent power of the past, but who beheld only a pale reflection of its predecessor (Hag 2:3; Zech 4:10; Ezr 3:12).

As such, one might also discern a significant social impulse driving Chronicles’ concern to emphasize divine participation in creating the temple. Indeed, as Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann argue, “the basic ‘recipe’ for the reification [and legitimation] of institutions is to bestow on them an ontological status independent of human activity and signification.” Through such reification—that is, treating as objective reality “out there”—and denial of purely human origins, “the world of institutions appears to merge with the world of nature” and (we might add) the world of the divine.<sup>143</sup>

In the next section, therefore, I will explore various ways that Chronicles emphasizes the temple’s origins in, and reflection of, Israel’s supreme deity.

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<sup>143</sup> Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1966), locations 1538-49 on amazonkindle edition.



### III. MATERIAL PARTICIPATION: THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE AND DIVINE INITIATIVE

You instructed me [Solomon] to build a temple on your holy mountain, and an altar in the city where you now rest. It is a copy [μίμημα] of the holy tent which you prepared beforehand, in the beginning. (Wis 9:8)

While part I of this chapter emphasized the functional distinctiveness of the temple, and part II its qualitative distinctiveness, part III now explores how it is that the Chronicler presents the temple as a divine product, and how it manifested “greatness” physically. The temple originated with Yhwh and thus bore his fingerprints. The Chronicler’s temple was sufficiently inspired and initiated by God so as to stave off potential allegations that it was of the same nature as (i.e., ontologically similar to) the human-crafted gods of the nations. Though not each of the following points deals directly with anxieties over the human origins of the temple, I suggest that each deals broadly with the question of what makes the Jerusalem temple theologically distinctive, and how it relates to divinity. Several features of the Chronicler’s presentation of the temple suggest that he wrestles with this question beyond what one finds in Samuel-Kings.

First, Chronicles draws from Exodus the idea that the sanctuary’s plans were based on a divine “pattern” or “design” (תבנית) that Yhwh gave to the sanctuary’s founder.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> The noun תבנית appears in 1 Chr 28:11, 12, 18, 19; cf. Exod 25:9, 40; 27:8. See discussion in Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 493-94; Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, 168-70. There is a long ancient Near Eastern precedent for the divine design of temples. See e.g., the “Cylinders of Gudea,” translated by Averbeck (*COS* 2.155: 419, 421); cf. also the Sumerian royal hymn to Enlil, “The Birth of Shulgi in the Temple of Nippur,” translated by Jacob Klein (*COS* 1.172: 553a); Arvid S. Kapelrud, “Temple Building, a Task for Gods and Kings,” *Or* 32 (1963): 56-62; A. R. George, *House Most High: The Temples of Ancient Mesopotamia* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1993); Richard E. Averbeck, “Sumer, the Bible, and Comparative Method: Historiography and Temple Building,” in *Mesopotamia and the Bible: Comparative Explorations* (ed. M. W. Chavalas and K. L. Younger Jr.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 88-125; One may also consider the Harran inscriptions of Nabonidus, *ANET*, 562-63. Iconographic examples of divinely ordained sanctuary designs include the image of Gudea with a temple’s architectural plan spread across his lap (*ANEP*, 749, cited by Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, 49). Cf. the ancient Near Eastern idea that gods offered plans for temples. Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, 31-57, 143-49; *COS* 2.420; On Chr’s awareness of ancient Near Eastern temple-building traditions, see Mark J. Boda, “Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler’s Temple Building Account,” in *From the Foundations*, 303-18.

According to Chronicles, David received the “design” from Yhwh in writing: “Everything, in writing, by Yhwh’s power upon me, he made clear (\*שכל)—all the workmanship for the design” (הכל בכתב מיד יהוה עלי השכיל כל מלאכות התבנית) (1 Chr 28:19).<sup>145</sup> This account also picks up the wisdom theme mentioned earlier in connection with Hiram of Tyre. God infuses the temple’s construction with his wisdom and understanding. Just as Yhwh later gives Solomon “understanding” (\*שכל; 2 Chr 2:11; cf. 1 Chr 22:12) for building the temple, so Yhwh makes clear (\*שכל) the plans for the temple. David explains and passes the תבנית to his son Solomon as a last will and testament (1 Chr 28:11, 19).

Ezekiel’s description of the new temple similarly begins with a divine plan that God shows Ezekiel (Ezek 40:4), and that he later commits to writing (Ezek 43:11). One might surmise that divine plans for the temple/tabernacle are a uniquely priestly preoccupation, as no such notion appears in the Deuteronomist’s account in 1 Kgs 6-7.<sup>146</sup> The only mention of a תבנית in Kings refers to the “pattern” of the Damascene altar, which Ahaz sketched for the

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The תבנית became important in later Judaism, particularly in the Qumran literature, for imaging the construction of the cosmic sanctuary (4Q403 1 i 43-44; 1 ii 3//4Q404 6:5; 4Q403 1 ii 16; 4Q 405 20 ii 21-22:8). See James R. Davila, “The Macrocosmic Temple, Scriptural Exegesis, and the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,” *DSD* 9/1 (2002):1-19; cf. 1 QM 10:14; 4 Q 286 1 ii 6; 4Q287 2:2; 4Q417 2 i 17 // 4Q418 43 i 13.

<sup>145</sup> There are several syntactical difficulties with this verse. The initial phrase lacks a verb. If one takes its final word עלי to function like אלי, as was common in Late Biblical Hebrew, and join it with what precedes it, one might translate the phrase, “Everything [was confirmed] to me in writing from the hand of Yhwh.” As Knoppers (*I Chronicles 10-29*, 923) points out, עלי with השכיל would be an “exceedingly rare grammatical construction,” and it never occurs before the verb. As such, the phrase בכתב would not refer to instructions that David wrote (as in the NJPS), but instead, to what David received from God concerning the תבנית. Of course, the NRSV’s translation (“All this, in writing at the LORD’s direction, he made clear to me—the plan of all the works”) is also plausible, though would require an unusual use of the preposition על with high \*שכל (cf. Prov 16:20).

Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 527, points to several studies on 11QT that link the *Temple Scroll* with the document mentioned here in 1 Chr 28:11-19. See, e.g., Yigael Yadin, *The Temple Scroll* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983) 1:177; Dwight D. Swanson, *The Temple Scroll and the Bible* (STDJ 14; Leiden, Brill, 1995), 225-26; *idem.*, “The Use of the Chronicles in 11QT: Aspects of a Relationship,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* (Devorah Dimant and Uriel Rappaport eds.; STDJ 20; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 290-99. As Klein points out, the sequence of instructions for the construction of the temple in the Temple Scroll match the sequence found in 1 Chr 28:11-19.

<sup>146</sup> Again, Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 494. Nevertheless, the תבנית does appear in Deut 4:16-18 in a prohibition against making an image in the form of a man, woman, or any other created thing. The only oblique reference to “plans” is the statement in 1 Kgs 6:38 that Solomon completed the temple “according to all its details and all its specifications” (לכל-דבריו ולכל-משפטיו). Chr may have seized upon this text as an indication that Solomon followed plans, though this is only conjectural.

priest Uriah to build a similar altar in the temple (2 Kgs 16:10). This unique use of תבנית in Kings suggests that something other than “mere” architectural designs were at stake in the replication of the Damascene altar. Indeed, participation in a foreign religious system was at stake. Moreover, the priestly use of תבנית *only* in connection with divine revelation, and the Deuteronomist’s prohibition on making images based on the תבנית of *any* created thing suggests that the term denoted a divinely inspired design.<sup>147</sup> Insofar as a תבנית was given by God, the “patterned” object took on a transcendent function. It pointed beyond itself to the divine realm and participated in that realm by dint of its divinely orchestrated design. But when it was modeled after anything within the created realm, it became reductive and ultimately idolatrous. The Chronicler foregoes referring to Ahaz’s altar most likely because it diminished the temple’s divine origins. By contrast, the temple’s altar on which Solomon offered sacrifices and inquired of God was heir to the one made by Bezalel himself (Exod 31:2-11; 2 Chr 1:5-5; 4:1).<sup>148</sup> If the temple stood as a symbol of Yhwh’s supremacy over the gods of the nations, and the altar was heir to Bezalel’s spirit-guided creation,<sup>149</sup> why include an altar patterned after an altar to foreign gods?<sup>150</sup> In Chronicles, therefore, Ahaz sacrifices to the gods of Aram *outside* the temple (2 Chr 28:23).

Second, the temple site itself possessed divine significance because of an angelic hierophany to David (1 Chr 21:1-22:1).<sup>151</sup> Though the account of the hierophany likely

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<sup>147</sup> See also the use of תבנית in Second Isaiah’s idol-taunt (44:13).

<sup>148</sup> 2 Chr 1:5-6; 7:7.

<sup>149</sup> In addition, the altar of burnt offerings was located at the site of Yhwh’s theophany to David (1 Chr 21:28-22:1; 3:1). See discussion of these texts below.

<sup>150</sup> Yet, cf. 2 Chr 33:15 which indicates that Manasseh had set up foreign images in the temple.

<sup>151</sup> I use the term “hierophany” rather than theophany because it pertains to divine appearances at the founding of a sacred place. For a discussion of hierophanies and even the role of divine blueprints in conceptualizing sacred places, see Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (trans. Willard R. Trask; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1957) 20-65. On Chr’s modified presentation of divine intermediaries in this scene, see Paul Evans, “Divine Intermediaries in 1 Chronicles 21: an overlooked aspect of the Chronicler’s theology,” *Biblica* 85:4 (2004): 545-58.

existed in Chronicles' source text (as evident in 4QSam<sup>a</sup>),<sup>152</sup> it takes on a new effect in its current literary location and appears to include some significant variations (e.g., 1 Chr 22:1).<sup>153</sup> After he took a census of Israel and faced divine punishment, David sees the מלאך יהוה “standing between heaven and earth” (1 Chr 21:16 // 4QSam<sup>a</sup> *ad loc*) on the temple's future site. This angel is not necessarily mid-air,<sup>154</sup> since he is depicted as “standing” (עמד)<sup>155</sup> on the place that marks an intersection. Indeed, 1 Chr 21:15 states that the מלאך was standing on the threshing floor of Ornan. The מלאך stands in a place between heaven and earth, a spatial reference evoking a common ancient Near Eastern and biblical motif that conceived of temples as the *axis mundi*, or “mooring point” of heaven and earth.<sup>156</sup> In response to this angelic hierophany, David offers sacrifices and cries out, “*This is* indeed the house of Yhwh, the God, and *this* the altar of burnt-offering for Israel” (1 Chr 22:1), an exclamation evoking similar language used about the Northern sanctuary Bethel by Jacob (Gen 28:17).<sup>157</sup> In Chronicles, David thus makes explicit what is only implied in Samuel, that the site of this angelic appearance would be the exact site of the Jerusalem temple.<sup>158</sup> The appearance of the מלאך and his desire to stave off further punishment then prompt David to

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<sup>152</sup> Frg. 164-65 lns. 1-3. Also, see Jos. *Ant.* 7.328. See discussion in P. Kyle McCarter Jr., *II Samuel* (AB 9; New York: Doubleday, 1984), 506-07, 511.

<sup>153</sup> In particular, it is unlikely that David's exclamation in 1 Chr 22:1 is in Chronicles' source text, given the distinctly Chronistic material preceding 1 Chr 22:1 (in 1 Chr 21:28-30), and evidence from the LXX. However, 4QSam<sup>a</sup> breaks off beforehand, and therefore one cannot be certain.

<sup>154</sup> Against McCarter, *II Samuel*, 511, who cites 2 Sam 18:9 as a parallel.

<sup>155</sup> Though one might simply translate this term “stationed.”

<sup>156</sup> E.g., *COS* II, 429a. Andreas Schuele discusses the loss of this spatial conception in Persian ideology, *Der Prolog der hebräischen Bibel: Der literar- und theologischeschichtliche Diskurs der Urgeschichte (Genesis 1–11)* (AThANT 86; Zürich: TVZ, 2006), 59-124.

<sup>157</sup> Gen 28:17 reads *זה בני אדם בית אלהים וזה שער השמים* “*this is* none other than the house of God, and *this is* the gateway to heaven,” and 1 Chr 22:1 reads *זה הוא בית יהוה האלהים וזה מזבח לעלה לישראל* “*this is* indeed the house of Yhwh (the) God, and *this is* the altar for Israel's burnt offerings.” John Jarick, “The Temple of David in the Book of Chronicles,” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel* [ed. John Day; LHB/OTS 422; New York: T & T Clark, 2005], 365-381 [374-75], writes that this phrase “appears to have been especially crafted by the Annalists to supplant the Bethelite contention that a founder of Israel's traditions had placed the stamp of authenticity on a shrine other than Jerusalem's Temple site.”

<sup>158</sup> After this encounter, David immediately begins temple preparations (22:2-4), discussed by Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 760-61.

build an altar (cf. Gen 28:18; 35:7) and offer a sacrifice, on which God looks with favor and devours with “fire from heaven” (21:26; cf. Lev 9:24), further legitimating the site as divinely chosen.<sup>159</sup> At the same site, Yhwh later sends forth his fire to consume Solomon’s sacrifice (2 Chr 7:1; cf. Lev 9).

It is also worth considering David’s language for Yhwh in 1 Chr 22:1. He states that “this is indeed the house of Yhwh, the God [יהוה האלהים].” Chronicles employs the definite construction for אלהים in other cases, which may suggest a deliberate choice, based on cases where it appears as a textual plus vis-à-vis Samuel-Kings (1 Chr 17:21//2 Sam 7:23; 2 Chr 13:12; 33:13). That is, the dramatic appearance of the divine מלאך and Yhwh’s fire from heaven lead to David’s realization that *this* is the house of Yhwh, *the* God. The occurrence of the phrase יהוה האלהים is rather limited in the Hebrew Bible (9x), and occurs in several texts that emphasize Yhwh’s sole divinity (1 Kgs 18:21, 37; 2 Chr 32:16; Neh 9:7; cf. Neh 8:6). However, basing theological judgments upon linguistic features is a precarious enterprise. The noun + definite article construction may just be a way of stating a proper name.<sup>160</sup> Japhet judiciously allows that the general preference for the definite article with the divine name in Chronicles *may* be a “theological-linguistic development” to nullify plural connotations of אלהים, but states that “within the general ideological and literary framework, such usage may well be mechanical, not deliberate.”<sup>161</sup> Moreover, יהוה האלהים may be simply a Late Biblical Hebrew alternative to the phrase יהוה אלהים that occurs some thirty-seven

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<sup>159</sup> Cf. 2 Chr 7:1; The parallel text in 2 Sam 24:25 lacks any reference to fire from heaven. On the מלאך in the Hebrew Bible, see Samuel A. Meier, “Angel I מלאך,” in *DDD*, 81-90; idem, “Angel of Yahweh מלאך יהוה,” in *DDD*, 96-108.

<sup>160</sup> Williams §88; *IBHS* §13.6a; *GKC* §126d.

<sup>161</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 29-30. יהוה האלהים appears 33x in Chr as a proper name, and יהוה אלהים in reference to “the gods” appears only once (2 Chr 2:4[5]).

times in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>162</sup> Alternatively, יהוה האלהים might be a substitute for יהוה הוא האלהים, which carries more overtly monotheistic connotations.<sup>163</sup>

Third, in addition to co-opting Israel's Jacob-Bethel traditions (1 Chr 22:1), Chronicles also draws upon Abraham traditions to emphasize the temple's unique status as a place of divine manifestation. In 2 Chr 3:1 the narrator states that Solomon "began to build the temple on Mount Moriah, where [Yhwh] had appeared to his father David, on the place David had prepared at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite." Chronicles thus suggests a parallel between the appearance of the מלאך יהוה to Abraham on Mount Moriah in Gen 22 and the appearance of the מלאך יהוה to David, lending the site additional hierophanic significance.<sup>164</sup> Jonathan Z. Smith notes the difference between this text and other biblical traditions concerning the temple:

There is nothing inherent in the location of the Temple in Jerusalem [outside of Chronicles]. Its location was simply where it happened to be built. There are other shrines, often rivals to Jerusalem, for which aetiological traditions have been transmitted. Bethel is the most obvious example, both for its name and for its identification with a significant event in the legend of a patriarch (Genesis 28.10-22; 35.1-8) ... How different the case with Jerusalem. The major narratives present the portrait of the Temple being built as a royal prerogative at a place of royal choosing. Its power over the populace, and with respect to its rival shrines, was maintained or reduced by the *imperium*. There is no biblical aetiology for the location of Jerusalem's temple, except for the brief, late, post-exilic accounts in 1 Chronicles 22.1 and 2 Chronicles 3.1.<sup>165</sup>

Though Smith does not explore the significance of such "brief, late, post-exilic accounts" within Chronicles' exalted temple ideology, or the etiology already present in 4QSam<sup>a</sup>, his observations nonetheless highlight the distinctiveness of Chronicles' perspective regarding the temple's location. While Chronicles emphasizes the king's role in the temple's

<sup>162</sup> Gen 2:4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22; 3:1, 8 (2x), 9, 13, 14, 21, 22, 23; Exod 9:30; 2 Sam 7:25; 2 Kgs 19:19; 1 Chr 17:16, 17; 28:20; 2 Chr 1:9; 6:41 (2x), 42; Ps 59:6; 72:18; 80:5, 20; 84:9, 12; Jon 4:6.

<sup>163</sup> See fn. 80 above.

<sup>164</sup> On which, see the discussion by Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 1987), 164-65 n. 46. Smith cites later Jewish references to the link between the temple's location and Mount Moriah (e.g., *Ant.* 1.226; *Jub.* 18:13; cf. 4Q 225 Ps.-Jub<sup>a</sup> 2:13). For discussion of Mount Moriah in Chr, see Isaac Kalimi, "The Land of Moriah, Mount Moriah, and the Site of Solomon's Temple in Biblical Historiography," *HTR* 83 (1990): 345-62.

<sup>165</sup> Excerpt from Smith, *To Take Place*, 83, 164-65; cf. Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 141-49.

construction, it also expresses reservations. The Jerusalemite king served and facilitated the temple's construction, and David's organization of the cult even takes on a status akin to Mosaic law (2 Chr 23:18). Though David and Solomon direct preparations for the construction of the temple, Chronicles eschews the notion that temple was solely an expression of royal *imperium*—an assertion of kingly power against rival shrines. Rather, the book draws attention to Yhwh's role in planning, inspiring, legitimating, and exalting, the temple. The temple derived its significance and authorization from Yhwh's primordial, creative presence, and was a site at which one encountered divine power and magnificence. In Chronicles, the temple's location obtained two associations with angelic appearances (1 Chr 22:1; 2 Chr 3:1) and two associations with divine manifestations of fire (1 Chr 21:26; 2 Chr 7:1).

Fourth, the Chronicler contends that Solomon received wisdom for building the temple directly from God. As Williamson discusses, Chronicles' account of Solomon's fame, wealth, and wisdom were “channeled into the building of the temple.”<sup>166</sup> From the very beginning of his reign, Solomon leads the people in sacrificial worship (2 Chr 1:2-6; cf. 1 Kgs 3:4), receives wisdom “to enable him to undertake the task of temple-building” (2 Chr 1:7-13; cf. 1 Kgs 3:16-28), and receives great wealth prior to building the temple (2 Chr 1:14-17; cf. 1 Kgs 10:26-29).<sup>167</sup> Hiram's response in 2 Chr 2:11b also emphasizes that Solomon's wisdom was given by God for building the temple: “God has given King David a wise son, who possesses insight and understanding, and who will build a house for Yhwh, and a house for his kingdom.”<sup>168</sup> But before Solomon attained sufficient wisdom—for he was still נֶעַר וְרֶךְ

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<sup>166</sup> Williamson, “The Temple,” 151.

<sup>167</sup> In Kgs, the narrator recounts Solomon's great wealth before describing his demise. Williamson, “The Temple,” 150-51.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. the words of 1 Kgs 5:7b [Heb 5:21b]: “Blessed be Yhwh this day. For he gave David a wise son to rule over this great nation.”

“young and inexperienced” (1 Chr 22:5; 29:1)—David made preparations for the temple.<sup>169</sup> When he was of age and had ascended to the throne, Solomon traveled to Gibeon to inquire of God that the promise to David concerning the temple might come to pass.<sup>170</sup> As Japhet argues, the Chronicler takes interest in Solomon’s wisdom only insofar as it contributes to the temple’s construction, omitting several tangential references to Solomon’s wisdom, such as the incident of the two mothers and several passages about Solomon’s many proverbs, songs, and world-renowned wisdom (1 Kgs 5:9-14; 8:16-28).<sup>171</sup> As noted earlier, Hiram recognizes that it was God the *creator* who endowed Solomon with wisdom for the task of temple building.<sup>172</sup>

Accordingly (fifth), Chronicles appears to model the temple’s master craftsman Hiram-abi after Oholiab and possibly Bezalel, the two craftsmen who worked on the tabernacle with skill acquired from God (Exod 31, 35).<sup>173</sup> Hiram-abi is a Danite like Oholiab in Exodus (Exod 35:34; 2 Chr 2:13), even though he is from Naphtali in 1 Kgs 7:14.<sup>174</sup> Some scholars speculate that the –abi suffix that appears on his name only in Chronicles is patterned after the ending of name Oholiab.<sup>175</sup> Hiram-abi possessed skills for work in gold, silver, bronze and many other materials, just as Oholiab, and in contrast to Kings, where the

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<sup>169</sup> See discussion of נַעַר/נַעֲרָה by Carolyn S. Leeb (*Away from the Father’s House: The Social Location of na’ar and na’arah in Ancient Israel* [LHB/OTS 301; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000], 94), who argues that the term is a social designation for one who is still under the protective care of a parent or patron.

<sup>170</sup> Since Solomon was already king, with inhabitants “as numerous as the dust of the earth” (2 Chr 2:9), this “promise to David” must refer to the temple’s construction.

<sup>171</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 484.

<sup>172</sup> For ancient Near Eastern material treating wisdom’s relation to temple-building, see Raymond C. Van Leeuwen, “Cosmos, Temple, House: Building and Wisdom in Ancient Mesopotamia and Israel,” in *From the Foundations*, 399-421.

<sup>173</sup> See Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 4-5. Further, as Dillard points out, Solomon might also be patterned after Bezalel. Notably, both are Judeans (Exod 31:2; 35:30; 38:22) who receive wisdom for building sanctuaries for Yhwh (Exod 31:1-3; 35:30-35; 2 Chr 1). Moreover, the only two occurrences of Bezalel outside of Exod occur in Chr (2 Chr 2:20; 2 Chr 1:5), and Solomon receives wisdom for building the temple after visiting Bezalel’s altar in Gibeon (2 Chr 1:5; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 4).

<sup>174</sup> Both Dan and Naphtali were in the region of Tyre, and both texts indicate that Hiram / Hiram-abi had a Tyrian father.

<sup>175</sup> Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 137; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 544; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 201.



designer Hiram possessed skill only in bronze-work (1 Kgs 7:14).<sup>176</sup> When Hiram dispatches Hiram-abi, he describes him as “a skilled craftsman [חכם], endowed with understanding” (2 Chr 2:12), language that echoes the priestly description of Bezalel in Exod 35:31.<sup>177</sup> In fact, only Exodus and Chronicles use the root חכם to mean “craftsmen.” The emphasis here on Hiram-abi’s *wisdom* is significant, especially since Hiram had just praised Yhwh as giver of wisdom for the temple’s construction in the preceding verse (2 Chr 2:11), and since Solomon had questioned his own adequacy as temple-builder (2 Chr 2:5[6]). Again, Chronicles seeks to emphasize Yhwh’s role in creating and designing the temple.

The Chronicler goes on to state that Hiram-abi would “create any design [מהשבת] that may be assigned him.”<sup>178</sup> This term for “design” (מהשבה; 2 Chr 2:13) appears prominently in Exodus in description of tabernacle “designs” produced by Bezalel with the help of the divine spirit and wisdom (Exod 31:4; 35:32, 33, 35). Thus, Hiram-abi emerges in Chronicles as a wisdom-filled designer who, like Oholiab and Bezalel, carries out God’s plans for the sanctuary.

Chronicles later reports that those who worked on the temple during Joash’s reign did so according to its “specification” (מתכנת; 2 Chr 24:13), a term not used in the Kings parallel (2 Kgs 12:13). In Chronicles מתכנת likely refers to the specifications that David gave Solomon (1 Chr 28), leading some to translate the term as “original design.”<sup>179</sup> Joash restored the temple with the help of all Judah and Jerusalem. Each resident came and joyously gave the “Mosaic tax” (משאת משה; 2 Chr 24:9). Workers labored hard to complete the temple “according to its specification” (על-מתכנתו; 24:13), and to reconstruct the cultic implements.

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<sup>176</sup> Exod 35:31-35; 28:11; 39:6.

<sup>177</sup> 1 Kgs 7:14 also contains a similar description, but not the Chronicler’s additional claim that Hiram-abi would “execute any design that may be assigned him” (2 Chr 2:13-14).

<sup>178</sup> 2 Chr 2:13-14; cf. Exod 35:32.

<sup>179</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 191.

The term *מתכנת* appears exclusively in priestly writings, either in P material itself (Exod 30:32, 37) or in Ezekiel (45:11), in reference to specific divine prescriptions. Though *מתכנת* nowhere else applies to the sanctuary, it is likely a term that the Chronicler culls from a diverse priestly vocabulary for design and designers (e.g., *תבנית*, *מחשבה*, *חכם*) to emphasize the divinely ordained design of the temple. The temple project did not deviate from its divinely ordained design.<sup>180</sup>

Sixth, Yhwh uniquely chose the temple. Chronicles is the only book in the Hebrew Bible to indicate that the temple itself, and not just its location (Jerusalem), was chosen, or “elected,” by God (*בחר\**).<sup>181</sup> 2 Chronicles 7:12 and 7:16 both refer to Yhwh’s choosing (*בחר\**) the temple. Yhwh states in 2 Chr 7:12, “I ... have chosen this place to be a house of sacrifice for me,” and 7:16 that “I have chosen and sanctified this house for my name to be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there all days.”<sup>182</sup> Both texts add the idea of chosenness to their source text (1 Kgs 9:3) and link that chosenness with the temple’s role as a place of sacrifice and the place where Yhwh’s name, eyes, and heart would dwell. As Japhet argues, it appears that the Chronicler offers a new reading of the *מקום* from Deut 12:6 and 12:11 specifically in reference to the temple/sanctuary in 2 Chr 7:12.<sup>183</sup> By choosing the *מקום* of the sanctuary (7:12) for the particular purpose of sacrifice (7:16), Yhwh indicates clearly that the temple *and its cult* were his preordained initiative. This chosenness fits well with 1

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<sup>180</sup> This is a point of supreme importance in Assyrian and Babylonian temple reconstruction narratives. See the discussion by Hanspeter Schaudig, in his article “The Restoration of Temples in the Neo- and Late Babylonian Periods: A Royal Prerogative as the Setting for Political Argument,” in *From the Foundations*, 141-64.

<sup>181</sup> As von Rad, *Geschichtsbild*, 64, observes, the election of Israel never appears in Chr (e.g., 1 Kgs 3:8-9 // 2 Chr 1:9-10). See also Japhet, *Ideology*, 93.

<sup>182</sup> 1 Kgs 9:3 has “I have consecrated this house that you have built, and put my name there forever,” and in Isa 56:7 the temple is called a “house of prayer.”

Divine election of the temple is unique to this text and 2 Chr 7:16. As Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, 615) observes, Chr reads *מקום* in Deut 12 as a precise reference to “temple,” rather than “Jerusalem,” as in the Deuteronomistic literature.

<sup>183</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 614-15.

Chr 17:4, a text in which Yhwh tells David that Solomon would be the one to build the temple, and not (as in 2 Sam 7:5) that Yhwh had reservations about the very idea of the temple. Then in 1 Chr 28:10, Yhwh states that he chose (\*בהרר) Solomon for that task, a claim that is also unique to Chronicles.<sup>184</sup> Though the application of “chosenness” (\*בהרר) to Solomon and the temple might simply be an extension of its application to David in Samuel, in effect, Chronicles emphasizes that there was no divine aversion to temple-building. The temple, its builder, and cult were Yhwh’s elected purposes from the beginning.

Seventh, the Chronicler emphasizes that the temple’s magnificent wealth embodied divine grandeur, and ultimately, came from Yhwh. To establish the temple’s supremacy, David emphasizes the need to give generously to the temple, and models such generosity in his own life. In 1 Chr 29:1, David states he would make preparations for the temple because “the work is great [גדול]; for the temple will not be for mortals but for the Yhwh God,” in the context of recounting David’s and the people’s generous donations to the temple. These donations included some 3,000 talents of gold from David (1 Chr 29:4), and 5,000 talents (1 Chr 29:7) from the people. And then David and the people also donate 572 tons of refined silver. There are no such donations in Kings. 1 Kings 9:27 reports that 420 talents of gold from Ophir arrived for Solomon, while 2 Chr 8:18 reports 450 talents (from a sailing expedition). 1 Kings 7:51 mentions David’s dedicated furnishings brought into the temple by Solomon, but does not provide the amount. Even greater than the amounts mentioned in 1 Chr 29 were those reported in 1 Chr 22:14, where the Chronicler reports that David set aside

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<sup>184</sup> Moreover, in 1 Kgs 5:17 [Eng 5:3] David could not build the temple because his enemies were not yet subdued (a political-military rationale), whereas in 1 Chr 22:8 and 28:3, David could not build because of the blood he spilled in battle. That blood was shed “on the earth in my sight” suggests a cultic rationale in which the purity of the future temple sight would be compromised by David building the temple. See Braun, “Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder,” 581-90; Piet B. Dirksen, “Why was David disqualified as Temple Builder? The Meaning of 1 Chronicles 22.8,” *JSOT* 70 (1996):51-6; Brian E. Kelly, “David’s Disqualification in 1 Chronicles 22.8: A Response to Piet B. Dirksen,” *JSOT* 80 (1998): 53-61; Donald F. Murray, “Under Yhwh’s Veto: David as Shedder of Blood in Chronicles,” *Biblica* 82 (2001): 457-76.

100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver for the temple. Chronicles employs the phrases “beyond weighing” (אֵין מִשְׁקָל; 1 Chr 22:3) and “beyond number” (לֵאֵין מִסְפָּר; 1 Chr 22:4) to describe David’s contributions of cedar, iron and wood.<sup>185</sup> Solomon also emphasizes the need to accumulate great wealth in the temple. As discussed earlier, he says “the temple that I am going to build will be supreme [גְּדוֹלָה], for our God is supreme beyond [מִגְּדוֹלָה] all the other gods,” in the context of his request to Hiram for materials and craftsmen (2 Chr 2:4[5]). Solomon also asks Hiram for great quantities of wood, stating that “the temple I build will be large [גְּדוֹלָה] and magnificent” (2:8[9]). None of these texts have parallels in Kings, suggesting an increased focus on divine magnificence in conjunction with the temple’s material magnificence. Moreover, Chronicles emphasizes that even the abundant wealth donated by the king and people “comes from your [Yhwh’s] hand,” for “all things in heaven and earth belong to you,” so “all wealth . . . is from you.” (1 Chr 29:12, 14, 16). As such, the temple’s wealth was a testimony to Yhwh’s grandeur.

Historically, it bears consideration that Chronicles reports on the exceeding wealth of the first temple from the vantage point of the second temple’s impoverishment. Cleverly, Chronicles evokes scenes from the wilderness period, when Israel donated willingly and generously to the tabernacle’s construction. In so doing, Chronicles sets a precedent for the whole community’s participation in the cult through gifts and donations (1 Chr 26:26-28; 2 Chr 24:4-14; 30:24; 31:3-8; 35:7-9).<sup>186</sup> Financial contributions, like sacrifices, were a form of worship when offered from a willing heart: “Who then will offer willingly, consecrating

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<sup>185</sup> The latter phrase recurs only in 2 Chr 12:3, and the former is original (Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 394).

<sup>186</sup> Discussed by Knowles, *Centrality Practiced*, 115.

themselves today to Yhwh?” (1 Chr 29:5; cf. 2 Chr 29:31; Exod 35:21-29).<sup>187</sup> By offering donations, the entire Israelite community could exalt Yhwh through the temple, and join in his service.

Eighth, Chronicles emphasizes the commanding size and dominance of the temple. For example, Chronicles claims that the vestibule of the temple reached to a towering height of 120 cubits high (2 Chr 3:4).<sup>188</sup> Kings only notes that the temple itself was only 45 cubits high (1 Kgs 6:2-3).<sup>189</sup> Furthermore, Chronicles states that the two pillars at the temple’s entrance were 40 cubits high (2 Chr 3:14-15), whereas in Kings, the pillars were only 23 cubits high (1 Kgs 7:15-16). The Chronicler also reports on the size of the bronze altar (not detailed in Kings!),<sup>190</sup> which was a giant 20X20X10 cubit successor to the Bezalel’s altar (2 Chr 4:1; cf. 1:5).<sup>191</sup> The Chronicler’s temple also contained 10 tables for showbread (2 Chr 4:8, 19), whereas Kings records only one (1 Kgs 7:48).<sup>192</sup> In addition, Chronicles refers to “the great house” (הבית הגדול) that Solomon overlays with gold, most likely in reference to the main hall of the temple. Kings refers to this area as “the house, that is, the nave” (הבית; הוא היכל; 1 Kgs 6:17). While “the great house” (הבית הגדול) in 2 Chr 3:5 may be an unreflective adaptation of the more awkward rendering in 1 Kgs 6:17, it is interesting that (a)

<sup>187</sup> See discussions about Persian period pilgrimages to the temple and temple taxes in Knowles, *Centrality Practiced*, 91-92, 115-20. Cf. also Shaye Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (2d ed.; Louisville, WJK, 2006), 99-118.

<sup>188</sup> According to the long cubit (or the Old Egyptian Standard) the vestibule would then measure 206 ft, or 62.8 meters, or 177 ft. or 54 meters, according to the short cubit.

<sup>189</sup> Yet, cf. the witness of one LXX MS and Syr for 20 cubits. MT may have confused אמות “cubits” with מאות “hundred”. Jarick treats this text critical issue in his article, “The Temple of David in the Book of Chronicles,” 366-67. Jarick argues convincingly that the Chronicler deliberately augments the height of the temple’s vestibule. The Chronicler does not provide us with the height of the rest of the structure, as does 1 Kgs 6:2 (30 cubits).

<sup>190</sup> In fact, Kgs only mentions its inability to handle the large quantity of sacrifices during the temple’s dedication (1 Kgs 8:64), a point also mentioned in Chr though after emphasizing its grandeur (2 Chr 7:7).

<sup>191</sup> Interestingly, the inner sanctuary was 20X20X20, and may be the inspiration for the Chronicler’s dimensions (1 Kgs 6:20).

<sup>192</sup> Though a number of the Chronicler’s changes to the temple construction account in Kings are due to attempts to link the temple with the tabernacle (as Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 573), the Chronicler’s emphasis on grandeur is not explainable in those terms alone.

the mention of the “great house,” or “great hall,” (2 Chr 3:5) comes immediately after mentioning the vestibule’s great height, and (b) that “supreme,” or “great” (גִּדְגָּ), is a term used several times in Chronicles to emphasize the temple’s supremacy and its unique relationship to the supreme deity.<sup>193</sup> The Chronicler’s combined emphasis on the temple’s and pillar’s astonishing height, the large altar, ten bread tables, in addition to its great hall, underscores its impressive stature in the post-exilic memory, and the impressive stature of the deity it housed.

In this third section, I have suggested eight ways that the temple participated materially in divinity, or reflected divine grandeur, through its material origins, pattern, designers, design-skill, election, site location, wealth, and history. The temple was a unique creation of Yhwh, and as such, it took on a status and magnificence unmatched by the temple in the book of Kings. The temple was crafted with divinely enabled skill and wisdom, and was elected by Yhwh himself for a unique purpose. It was therefore far greater than their gods of metal, wood and stone. It is important to recall here that the primary criticism of idols was that they lacked all sentience (Ps 115, 135) and failed to transcend their own human creators. They have “mouths, but cannot speak; they have eyes, but cannot see; they have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths” (Ps 135:16-17). By contrast, the temple was the place where Yhwh’s name, heart, and eyes would always remain (2 Chr 7:15-16). Yhwh’s “eyes” and “ears” were always open to the prayers from the temple.<sup>194</sup> As such, the temple, while manifesting and embodying Yhwh’s own magnificence, also transcended itself. The temple mediated divine sentience. The temple originated with and remained enlivened by a living deity. Its ontological distinctiveness from other cults and deities was secure—a point David comes to with his dramatic exclamation in 1 Chr 29:1:

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<sup>193</sup> 1 Chr 22:5; 29:1; 2 Chr 2:4; cf. 1 Chr 16:25; 29:11-12.

<sup>194</sup> 2 Chr 6:20, 40; 7:15; Neh 1:6; cf. 1 Kgs 8:29, 52.

“The task is enormous, because the palace is not for a human but for Yhwh God.” Just as Solomon explained to Hiram in 2 Chr 2, the temple participated in Yhwh’s own supremacy, or “greatness” (גְּדוּלָה).<sup>195</sup>

#### IV. CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

This chapter examined the functional, qualitative, and material distinctiveness of the temple in Chronicles. Chronicles employs several strategies to express the “homological” parity between Yhwh and his temple. Chronicles depicts the *functional* uniqueness of the temple by emphasizing its closure during times of apostasy, and the non-participation of its most sacred furniture (the ark and altar) in apostasy. Times of Yhwh-worship required a complete reform and restoration of the cult. As such, syncretism nearly disappears from Chronicles. *Qualitatively*, the temple participated in Yhwh’s own supreme qualities. If the temple’s functional distinctiveness emphasized its horizontal separation from other religious influences, the temple’s qualitative distinctiveness emphasized its vertical, or categorical, distinctiveness. Chronicles emphasizes the necessity of the temple’s “greatness,” or “supremacy” (גְּדוּלָה) throughout the nations (1 Chr 22:5; 2 Chr 2:9). A premise supporting this necessity was the idea that the temple would embody Yhwh’s own supremacy (2 Chr 2:4; cf. 1 Chr 29:11). However, the temple did not reduce Yhwh insofar as Yhwh could not be contained by the temple (2 Chr 2:4[5]; 6:18). Chronicles alludes to idol-polemic psalms

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<sup>195</sup> An additional text in Chr may suggest the temple’s participation in Yhwh’s stature. 2 Chr 7:21 describes the temple’s international presence as עליון (exalted), a term not directly linked to divine wisdom, but one that recalls the same divine name employed frequently in the Persian period. In the 1 Kgs 9:8 parallel, which reads והבית הזה יהיה עליון (and this house, it is exalted), the OL and Syr apparently read עיין “heap of ruins” for עליון, and the NRSV follows suit (cf. Mic 3:12: ירושלם עיין תהיה “Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins”). These appear as attempts to resolve the MT’s awkward reference to an “exalted” temple in the midst of a judgment scene. 2 Chr 7:21 resolves the issue through use of a Qal perfect, referring to והבית הזה אשר היה עליון (and this house which was exalted). Alternatively, the OL and Syr may be reading an original Heb. עיין that Chr transforms. See discussion in Isaac Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 110-12.

(115, 135) to make the point that Yhwh's temple was to become great in order to demonstrate Yhwh's superiority over human-made deities. Yet at this same point, Chronicles expresses anxiety over the adequacy of the human king as builder of Yhwh's house, while nevertheless affirming the temple's unique role as a place for cultic activity. *Materially*, Chronicles emphasizes Yhwh's role in designing, granting wisdom for, enabling, choosing, exalting, and appearing at the temple. While David and Solomon prepared for and constructed the temple, Yhwh's presence and power infused it. Moreover, the unique status of the temple, the need to assert its significance, formed the basis for calls to support the temple through joyful donations. However, even such donations included their own "denial clause." As David asks in his final prayer, "Who am I, and who are my people, that we should have the capacity to give freely to you, for everything is from you, so from your possessions we give to you" (1 Chr 29:14). Moreover, "All this abundance that we prepared to build you a house for your holy name—it is from your hand. All of it belongs to you" (v. 16). Even the temple's great wealth, supplied by kings and the people, came from God, and thus bore witness to his supremacy. Yhwh furnished the materials, wealth, and strength for building his own temple.

In sum, Chronicles *forges bonds* between Yhwh and the temple, *forges divisions* between the temple and the rest of material reality, and *exalts* the temple as an instance of Yhwh's own uniqueness. My contention is not that each instance of such divisions or bonds was a deliberate attempt to polemicize against other deities, or even to assert Yhwh's sole divinity. Rather, Chronicles employs variegated themes and approaches to argue that Yhwh's power and presence were uniquely present in the Jerusalem temple. However, insofar as the temple was related to Yhwh *qua* supreme deity, it inevitably manifested his supremacy and uniqueness well beyond Chronicles' sources, though at times indirectly. The configuration of



monotheism and supremacy in Chronicles is such that the temple reflects, and sometimes instantiates, Yhwh's supreme uniqueness. Moreover, as a focal point for all Israel's worship, and the destination of the reunified people during the reigns of Hezekiah (2 Chr 30) and Cyrus (2 Chr 36), Chronicles bears witness to the *one* temple and *one* altar (מִזְבֵּחַ אֶחָד; 2 Chr 32:12) around which Israel could with one voice offer worship to its exalted God.

#### EXCURSUS: THE TEMPLE AS A DIVINE IMAGE

The notion that a deity could manifest itself in real-world entities, and especially temples and their sacred vessels, was widespread throughout the ancient Near East, lending further significance to the homology between a deity and real-world entities such as temples. Deities could inhabit and animate images, standing stones, statues, cult objects, temples, and temple vessels. One may note that all of these objects “housed” deities, and solicited care and devotion from worshippers.<sup>196</sup> The line between temple as a place animated by a deity and statue as animated by a deity was fluid.<sup>197</sup> Temples were not just repositories for divine images. Rather, like the cult images themselves, temples took on the life of their deity and

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<sup>196</sup> Karel van der Toorn, “Worshipping Stones: On the Deification of Cult Symbols,” *JNSL* 23/1 (1997):1-14; Selz, “The Holy Drum”; Wilfred G. Lambert, “Ancient Mesopotamian Gods: Superstition, Philosophy, Theology,” *RHR* 207 (1990):115-30 [129]; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, “Will the Real Massebot Please Stand Up: Cases of Real and Mistakenly Identified Standing Stones in Ancient Israel,” in *Text, Artifact, and Image: Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion* (ed. Gary Beckman and Theodore J. Lewis; BJS 346; Atlanta: SBL, 2006), 64-79; *ibid.*, “MAŠŠĒBŌT in the Israelite Cult: An Argument for Rendering Implicit Cultic Criteria Explicit,” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel* (ed. John Day; LHB/O’TS 422; London: T&T Clark, 2005) 28-39; J.-M. Durand, “Le culte des bétyles en Syrie,” in *Miscellanea Babylonica: Mélanges offerts à Maurice Birot* (ed. J.-M. Durand and J.-R. Kupper; Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1985), 79-84.

<sup>197</sup> One may observe that the Semitic term *betyl* could refer to a divinely infused standing stone or to a deity’s house. As Sommer (*The Bodies of God*, 28-9), argues convincingly after analyzing notions of divine embodiment in the ancient Near East,

We can note ... a parallel between the notion that a god is present in a *statue* in Mesopotamia and in something called a *house* or *dwelling place* (בֵּית) among Northwest Semites. The semantic range of בֵּית in the term בֵּית־יָאֵל (*betyl*) is not limited to a building; in most attested cases, the *betyl* is not literally a house but a stone.

shared in their identity. For example, Jan Assmann (following Hermann Junker) discusses how Egyptian deities do not “dwell” on earth, but rather “install” themselves in their images and reliefs on the walls of temples.<sup>198</sup> In Mesopotamia, hymns to *temples* became potent means of acclaiming and asserting divine supremacy.<sup>199</sup> These hymns included claims, for example, that the Eninnu Temple (the personified bearer of Ningirsu’s qualities) had “powers ... surpassing all others,” and that “great fear of my House hovers over all the lands” such that “all (these) lands will gather on its behalf.”<sup>200</sup> Actions toward the Eninnu Temple became identified with actions toward the god Ningirsu.

Though temple-deity configurations appear differently among ancient Near Eastern cultures, Chronicles and other biblical texts certainly stand within the wider streams of these ancient Near Eastern traditions that link divinity closely with temples.<sup>201</sup> One may note, for example, Jeremiah’s prophecy that “Moab will be deprived of Chemosh, just as the House of Israel was deprived of Bethel, their security” (Jer 48:13). Though some contend that “Bethel” (בֵּית אֵל) refers to the common Semitic god *betyl*,<sup>202</sup> more likely, this text simply

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<sup>198</sup> Jan Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt* (trans. David Lorton; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 43.

<sup>199</sup> See esp. Åke W. Sjöberg, E. Bergmann S. J., and Gene B. Gragg, eds., *The collection of the Sumerian Temple Hymns* (TCS 3; Locust Valley, N.Y.: J. J. Augustin Publisher, 1969); Åke W. Sjöberg, “In-nin sa-gur-ra. A Hymn to the Goddess Inanna by the en-Priestess Enheduanna,” *ZAVA* 65 (1975): 161-253; Betty De Shong Meador, *Inanna, Lady of Largest Heart: Poems of the Sumerian High Priestess Enheduanna* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); idem, *Princess, Priestess, Poet: The Sumerian Temple Hymns of Enheduanna* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009); cf., Hurowitz on “The Cosmic Dimensions of Cities and Temples” (Appendix 7) in his work *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, 335-37.

<sup>200</sup> Gudea Cylinder E3/1.1.7 CylA ix 11-19; Translation from Edzard, *Gudea and His Dynasty*, 69; The word that Edzard translates as “powers,” might also be rendered “rituals.” Cf. E. Jan Wilson (*The Cylinders of Gudea: Transliteration, Translation and Index* [AOAT 244; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996], 50), who translates ln. 12 as follows, “Its rituals are great rituals, surpassing all rituals.” Cf. also W. H. Ph. Römer, *Die Zylinderinschriften von Gudea* (AOAT 376; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010). The most thorough treatment of texts and images related to Gudea’s temple projects is Claudia E. Suter’s *Gudea’s Temple Building: The Representation of an Early Mesopotamian Ruler in Text and Image* (CM 17; Groningen: Styx, 2000).

<sup>201</sup> For a specific argument to this effect, see Boda, “Legitimizing the Temple,” 303-18. Boda argues that if we compare Chr with ancient Near Eastern temple building accounts as detailed by Hurowitz (*I Have Built You an Exalted House*) and Kapelrud (“Temple Building, a Task for gods and Kings,” 56-62), Chr actually shares more points of correspondence than Kgs.

<sup>202</sup> van der Toorn, “Worshipping Stones.”

makes the point that the Chemosh cannot offer protection just as the sanctuary at Bethel could not offer protection, even though it was closely identified with its deity.

With other biblical traditions, Chronicles also expresses concern about the close association between Yhwh and the temple. This concern emerges in several places throughout the book of Chronicles. Does the embodiment of divine supremacy by mediating institutions threaten or qualify Yhwh's own uniqueness? I discussed this anxiety in this chapter, but suggest here that the grounds for such an anxiety stems from a broad but variegated belief in the ancient Near East that kings, divine images, images, stones, statues, temple and cultic objects could manifest, embody, and become identified with divinity, or receive cultic veneration otherwise reserved for deities. As argued, Chronicles wrestles at various points with the idea that the temple (and also the priesthood's and king's) embodied divine uniqueness and magnificence, while struggling simultaneously to protect Yhwh's supreme uniqueness. The "solution" at which Chronicles appears to arrive, and which emerges also in connection with the priesthood and the king, is that Yhwh's identification with Israel's focal institutions is a *periodic*, and not intrinsic, part of their nature.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE PRIESTHOOD AND DIVINE EXALTATION

The previous chapter delineated the functional, qualitative and material means by which the Jerusalem temple participated in and instantiated Yhwh's sole divinity. The temple manifested and signaled Yhwh's supremacy and sole divinity by virtue of its close identification with him. Much as a load-bearing column manifests the relative size of the structure it supports, so the imposing presence of the temple in Chronicles signifies Yhwh's magnificent presence above. I argued that in Chronicles, the supremacy and sole divinity of Yhwh entailed the exaltation of Yhwh's exalted "agent," the temple. As we move now to examine Chronicles' depiction of the priesthood, we may consider another way that Chronicles configures relationships between Yhwh *qua* supreme deity and Israel's institutions. If the Chronicler's temple was like an enormous load-bearing column, signaling Yhwh's preeminence, it also served another purpose; it enlarged the arena and scope of priestly activity. The temple thus indicates the enormity of the deity above (*theologically*), but it supports that ceiling above a broad space for priestly activity below (*cultically*). As the temple grew in stature, so did its priesthood. The broad space for priestly activity becomes evident

by the addition and systemization of musical, security, teaching, prophetic,<sup>1</sup> and even baking (1 Chr 9:31) divisions and roles, the augmentation of existing priestly lines, the expanded roles that priests play in Chronicles' narratives, and the inclusion of lay Israelites in priestly ceremonies.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, I explore ways that Chronicles depicts the priesthood's grandeur, organization, and functions. I suggest that Chronicles' treatment of the priesthood fits more broadly within the book's pattern of exalting Yhwh through mediating institutions, and conversely, of depicting those institutions as unified instantiations of Yhwh's exalted status. Much as divine and angelic hosts signify the greatness of a deity by their sheer numbers and organization around a deity's throne,<sup>3</sup> so the priests in Chronicles amplify Yhwh's supremacy as they serve, defend, and mediate his power and blessings.

In a seven part discussion, this chapter will examine how Chronicles portrays the connection between Yhwh and his priests, and how that presentation relates to the configuration of monotheism and divine supremacy in Chronicles. After an introduction to scholarship on the priesthood in Chronicles (part I), part II will examine the divine election and design of the priesthood. For Chronicles, Yhwh's priesthood bears a unique purpose and design commensurate with the book's larger understanding of Yhwh's unique qualities and Yhwh's role as creator and initiator of *one* unique cult. Toward that end, part III examines the priesthood's "inaugural" hymn to Yhwh. In this hymn, the Levites extol Yhwh as the supreme and exalted God who deserves praise and offerings from Israel, the nations, and all creation. Part IV explores ways that priestly activity exhibits aspects of Yhwh's fullness and perpetuity, two features that receive recurrent emphasis in the book as means of emphasizing the magnificence of Yhwh's cultic presence. In addition to great wealth

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<sup>1</sup> See Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, esp. 64-68.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., 1 Chr 29:5, 2 Chr 20:22; 29:5, 30-31 (cf. Exod 35:22).

<sup>3</sup> See Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*, 26-27, who cites texts such as 2 Bar. 48:3-24 (cf. 6:5-9; 55:3-74:4); T. Levi 3:5-7; 5:6; T. Dan 6:2; 1 En. 9:3; 40:6; 47:1-2; 104:1.

(discussed in connection with the temple), ceaseless cultic rituals reflect divine grandeur in Chronicles. Section V examines the Chronicler's conception of Jeroboam's revolt and its relationship to Yhwh's sole divinity. Chronicles emphasizes the priestly dimensions of the religious split between Israel and Judah, and in particular, the idolatrous qualities of the northern priesthood and the priesthods of the nations. Section VI explores ways that priestly re-appointment narratives sharpen the division between periods of idolatry and Yhwh-worship. Idolatry necessitated cultic reforms, but those reforms created liminal periods in which Yhwh's cult and idolatry coexisted, or in which the cult did not function according to its original design. Following such liminal periods, however, Chronicles uses priestly re-appointment narratives to sharpen the distinction between Yhwh's cult and the "foreign" cults that pervaded Judah throughout its history. As such, the priesthood's origins mark a temporal and functional break with apostasy. These narratives emphasize the cult's "ritualized fullness" as the visible evidence of Yhwh's cultic "victories" over his cultic rivals. Section VII focuses on the story of Jehoshaphat's victory against a coalition from Moab, Ammon and Edom in 2 Chr 20 to show one exemplary case in which the Levites—accompanied by priests—herald the arrival of Yhwh's supreme power.

## I. INTRODUCTION TO PRIESTS IN CHRONICLES

Since Wellhausen, scholars have devoted considerable energy to the question of the relationship between the priests and the Levites in the book of Chronicles,<sup>4</sup> and for any light that the book might shed on the development of Israelite religion. Objects of historical

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<sup>4</sup> Julius Wellhausen (*Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* [trans. J. Sutherland Black and A. Menzies; Edinburgh: A & C Black, 1885], 104-08) alleged that there was no distinction between priest and Levite in pre-exilic literature. The Chronicler's modification of "priests" (from 1 Kgs 8:3) to "Levites" is often viewed as indicative of this attempt to sharpen distinctions in the post-exilic period. As we will see, however, recent scholarship also sees trends in the opposite direction in the book of Chr.

interest include the status of cultic tensions and conflict in the late Persian period, when most date the book, and the development of priestly and Levitical divisions.<sup>5</sup> Relatedly, many scholars argue (or assume) that pro-priestly or pro-Levitical biases guided the book's literary development and expansion. In turn, texts addressing the status of priests and Levites become evidence concerning literary composition.<sup>6</sup> In fact, most debates regarding the compositional history of Chronicles revolve around the presence and sequence of these compositions,<sup>7</sup> and theories concerning the date of the Chronicles often invoke data concerning the standing of Levites or priests, or criticism directed toward either group.<sup>8</sup>

Influential in this regard has been the thesis of Harmut Gese, who conceived of three stages in the development of the cult musicians, who eventually became Levites.<sup>9</sup> (1) As of Ezra 2:41 (// Neh 7:44), the musicians were not considered Levites. (2) By Nehemiah's day,

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<sup>5</sup> See ch. 1, fn. 170.

<sup>6</sup> Scholars who argue for an initial pro-priestly composition include Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 1-5; Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 44-45; Paul D. Hanson, "1 Chronicles 15-16 and the Chronicler's Views on the Levites," in "Sha'arei Talmon" *Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon* (ed. Michael Fishbane and Emanuel Tov; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns: 1992), 69-77 [75].

Scholars who propose an initial pro-Levite composition (usually on the basis of 1 Chr 23-27) include Adam C. Welch, *Post-Exilic Judaism* (London: Blackwood, 1935), 172-84; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 28-31; Simon J. De Vries, *I and II* (FOTL; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 191-96. Cf. discussion by Kyung-Jin Min, *The Levitical Authorship of Ezra-Nehemiah* (LHB/OTS 409; London: T & T Clark, 2004), 66-70. Other issues factor into discussions of priests in Chr, including views on the book's unity with Ezr-Neh. For example, Robert Kugler sees a unified Chr-Ezr-Neh designed to perpetuate the sharp divisions between priests and Levites ("Priests and Levites," *NIDB* 4.596-613 [610]). Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 14-15, sees light pro-priestly expansions to an original Levitical work in 1 Chr 15-16, 23-27, and Ezr 1-6, that join Chr with Ezr-Neh.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Frank Moore Cross ("A Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration," *JBL* 94/1 (1975):4-18) who argues for redactional activity on the basis of dynastic hopes. Cross argues for a three-fold expansion of the Chronicler's work, by which he means Chr and Ezr-Neh. Chr<sub>1</sub> (ca. 515-520 B.C.E.), or 1 Chr 10-2 Chr 34+2 Chr 34:1-Ezr 3:13 (the *Vorlage* of 1 Esdr 1:1-5:65), agitates for a diarchy between king and high priest, and was "designed to support the program for the restoration of the kingdom under Zerubbabel" (13). Unfortunately, most of Cross' arguments are based on evidence in Ezr-Neh, concerning Zerubbabel, and do not find wide support today, since most treat Chr and Ezr-Neh as distinct works.

<sup>8</sup> E.g., 2 Chr 24:5, where the Levites did not respond quickly to Joash's instructions, or 2 Chr 29:34, where priests were slow to consecrate themselves. However, cf. 2 Chr 30:15, where priests *and* Levites were ashamed.

<sup>9</sup> Harmut Gese, "Zur Geschichte der Kultsänger am zweiten Tempel," in *Abraham unser Vater: Juden und Christen im Gespräch über die Bibel: Festschrift Otto Michel zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Otto Betz, Martin Hengel, and Peter Schmidt; AGSU 5; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), 222-34; H. G. M. Williamson, "The Origins of the Twenty-four Priestly Courses: A Study of 1 Chronicles xxiii-xxvii," in *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 30; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), 251-68.

they were considered two groups descended from Asaph and Jeduthun, and therefore Levites (Neh 11:3-19; 1 Chr 9:1-18). (3a) The descendants of Heman constituted a third group added later (1 Chr 16:37-42; 2 Chr 5:12; 29:13-14; 35:15). (3b) Heman eventually became more prominent than Asaph, while Ethan's choir displaced Jeduthun's (1 Chr 6:18-33; 15:16-21).

Assumed in Gese's thesis is the notion that differences between texts could be plotted developmentally in terms of the ever increasing prominence and systemization of the Levites.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, Gese assumed that these different textual arrangements reflected the actual historical status of the musicians. Klein, who discerns *five* configurations of Levitical singers, states, "I do not believe that these five stages can be convincingly assigned to five separate authors or redactors by literary-critical methods. What is more, the Chronicler thus seems to be able to tolerate a considerable amount of tensions in his traditions about the Levitical singers."<sup>11</sup> Moreover, as Knoppers points out, Gese bases his reconstruction on the MT, and fails to take evidence from the LXX into consideration.<sup>12</sup> Notably, MT Neh 11:17 and 1 Chr 9:16 mention Jeduthun, though LXX Neh 11-12 lacks Jeduthun and Asaph, calling into question stage 2 of Gese's reconstruction. Knoppers identifies other problems with Gese's reconstruction, concluding that "one could argue that the texts of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles diverge not so much (or simply) because they are written at various times, but (also) because they reflect different authorial judgments." For Chronicles, the singers participate with the priests as "full-fledged Levites."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Yet, cf. Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1-20* (AB 4; Garden City: Doubleday, 1993), 176-77, argues for the inverse, that the movement was toward increasing subordination. See discussion in Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 657.

<sup>11</sup> Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 348-49.

<sup>12</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 657.

<sup>13</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 658.



Others point to individual blocks of text, especially 1 Chr 1-9, 15-16,<sup>14</sup> and 23-27, to delineate pro-priestly and pro-Levitical perspectives. For example, several scholars attribute 1 Chr 15-16—a narrative about David’s preparations to bring the ark to Jerusalem—to an original pro-Levitical author, that was subsequently redacted by a priestly writer (e.g., 15:4, 11, 14). However, matters are not always clear. 1 Chronicles 23-27, often thought to be redacted by Levitical or priestly groups, may also reflect complementarity between Levites and priests. As Knoppers argues, these chapters advance the status of the Levites when compared with P and Ezekiel, but not in the manner of D (i.e., priests and Levites are not synonymous). However, Chronicles uses *priestly* diction and style to do so. 1 Chronicles 23-27 thus appears to be a priestly work in diction and style, yet it expands the realms over which Levites have access and authority. As Knoppers states concerning 1 Chr 23:28-32, which is generally thought to best represent a pro-priestly redaction of Chronicles,

Rather than constituting evidence for a pro-Priestly author or redactor of Chronicles, the summary of Levitical duties is evidence for the Chronicler’s own distinctive stance, a *via media* between the positions of Deuteronomy, the Priestly source, and Ezekiel.<sup>15</sup>

As Knoppers argues elsewhere, scholars that posit multiple redactions on the basis of alleged priestly or Levitical biases often fail to understand the Chronicler’s “ability to acknowledge and negotiate different ideological perspectives, and his capacity for pursuing his own agenda as he engages a variety of earlier biblical traditions.”<sup>16</sup> The dichotomy between pro-Levite and pro-priestly is “reductive and does not do justice to the complexity and subtlety of the Chronicler’s work.”<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Paul Hanson states correctly that “while the *de facto* superior

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<sup>14</sup> Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 187; Welch, *Post-Exilic Judaism*, 65.

<sup>15</sup> Knoppers, “Hierodules,” 71. Knoppers (72) gives other texts that support a “complementary” perspective of the priests and Levites in Chr. Cf. also some elaboration on this perspective in Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 820-26.

<sup>16</sup> Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9*, 92.

<sup>17</sup> Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 837.

status of the priests is not denied, the most significant action revolves around the Levites.”<sup>18</sup> Even Braun, who argues that additions to Chronicles were “more rather than less numerous,” concedes those additions “normally affect only the volume of the text, expanding themes and emphases already present.”<sup>19</sup> As such, distinguishing textual expansions from original compositions becomes difficult. While this study acknowledges the possibility of such textual expansions,<sup>20</sup> there do not appear to be compelling arguments for systematic and discrete pro-Levite or pro-priestly revisions that fundamentally subordinated or usurped the other’s status, or for distinct redactional layers that fundamentally changed the Chronicler’s emphasis on the complementarity of priests and Levites.<sup>21</sup> If anything, secondary expansions seem to confirm the complementarity of priests and Levites by systematizing both in duo-decimal arrangements.<sup>22</sup> Chronicles emphasizes the joint and unified actions of priests and Levites in far too many places to distinguish discrete pro-priestly or pro-Levitical redactions of the book.<sup>23</sup>

More convincing are the arguments of scholars such as Knoppers, Klein, and Schweitzer who resist assigning pro-priestly and pro-Levitical hands to texts on the basis of the implied status or authority of each group.<sup>24</sup> Schweitzer suggests that while the roles assigned to priests were indeed “superior”—if by superior one means that only they could

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<sup>18</sup> Hanson, “1 Chronicles 15-16 and the Levites,” 75.

<sup>19</sup> Braun, *1 Chronicles*, xxxii.

<sup>20</sup> E.g., between the lists of Levites in 1 Chr 23:12-23 and 24:20-31. The second list mentions only the Qohathites and Merarites, and not the Gershonites.

<sup>21</sup> For example, it is quite possible that 1 Chr 23:25-32 is secondary, based on its insistence (*contra* 1 Chr 23:3) that Levitical service began at age 20, and its mention of matters that presuppose ch. 25. On this, see Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 457.

<sup>22</sup> E.g., the extension of ch. 24 in vv. 20-31 (which extend the genealogies earlier in the ch.), and the expansions in 25:7-31. On duo-decimal arrangements in chs. 23-27, see further below.

<sup>23</sup> 1 Chr 13:2; 15:14; 23:2; 24:31; 28:13, 21; 2 Chr 5:5, 12; 7:6; 8:14; 11:13; 13:9-10; 17:8; 19:8; 23:6; 23:18; 29:4, 16, 26; 30:16, 21, 25, 27; 31:2, 4, 17-19; 34:30; 35:8-11, 14, 18.

<sup>24</sup> Knoppers, “Hierodules”; Klein, *1 Chronicles*; Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia*, 133. For other mediating positions, see Paul Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 269-79; idem, *The People Called: The Growth of Community in the Bible* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 300-311; Schniedewind, *The Word of God in Transition*, 165-170.

sacrifice and access certain parts of the temple—those roles were also restrictive, granting them *no* additional power beyond what was stipulated in the Torah.<sup>25</sup> The Chronicler also assigned the Levites new roles, divisions, and powers through divine, royal, and prophetic lines of authorization. It is conceivable that a *pro-Levite* work or redaction might support Levitical subordination to priests in certain domains, while granting them new and expanded powers in others.<sup>26</sup> Chronicles seems to advocate priestly authority over the altar while granting Levites authority in other matters, especially the ark and music. It is notable, however, that at least one text claims that the priests *and* Levites had not sanctified themselves as they should have (2 Chr 30:15), and none argue for an anti-priestly polemic there.

In short, recent scholarship exhibits a trend toward understanding Chronicles' perspective on priests as a complex unity.<sup>27</sup> The Chronicler appears to negotiate the perspectives resident in his sources to form a distinct priestly synthesis that is not easily disentangled. That synthesis expands the roles assigned to the Levites (especially as gatekeepers and singers), even grants them roles previously reserved solely for priests.<sup>28</sup> However, the Chronicler is not concerned with absolute priestly equality. Levites still serve as assistants to the priests in many respects. Moreover, I do not suggest that the Chronicler's priestly synthesis lacks internal tensions or disunities.<sup>29</sup> Because it draws from various

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<sup>25</sup> Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia*, 152-55.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Risto Nurmela (*The Levites, Their Emergence as a Second-Class Priesthood* [SFSH] 193; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998], 167), who contends that Chr reifies the inferiority of the Levites advocated in other biblical texts.

<sup>27</sup> This presupposes that Chr is a distinct literary unit with late redactions linking the book to Ezr-Neh. For expositions of separate authorship, see Japhet, "The Supposed Common Authorship," 330-71; idem, "The Relationship between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah," 298-313; H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 5-70; Knoppers, *I Chronicles* 1-9, 72-88.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. esp. 1 Chr 23:28-32. See discussion in Knoppers, "Hierodules," 62-64; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 457-58; Japhet, *Ideology*, 1-10.

<sup>29</sup> E.g., the use of differing qualifying ages for the priesthood (1 Chr 23:3; 23:24, 27; cf. Num 1:18-25; 4:23-47).

Pentateuchal and Deuteronomistic traditions pertaining to priests and Levites, and was also revised at points,<sup>30</sup> the book of Chronicles is not a simple unity.<sup>31</sup>

The significance of the “complementarity” between Levites and priests is considerable when approaching the issue of Yhwh’s supremacy and exaltation in the book. As observed in the previous chapter, the ark and the altar were the two domains of the temple that remained completely distinct and pure when Israel fell into religious apostasy. After Manasseh, who desecrated the temple, the altar was rebuilt and the ark returned, suggesting that they did not share in Israel’s apostasy.

Chronicles also contends that the ark and altar were the domains of Levites and priests respectively. As I argue below, the priesthood was arranged with each group having duties related to these domains. The Levites’ carried on the legacy of ark-bearing by “invoking” and praising Yhwh in music, and the priests carried out their duties through a perpetually active cult, emblemized in the altar. The sign of Yhwh’s greatness, Chronicles contends, is the fact that he receives such exalted and perpetual devotion by the entire priesthood. It is as a unified cult, a *oneness*, that the priests express divine grandeur. The elaborate ranks of priests and Levites together express Yhwh’s grandeur through what I call “ritualized fullness”—the liturgical reflection of the divine.

As a prelude to my investigation of the priesthood and Yhwh’s supreme uniqueness, I include here a chart which exemplifies cases where Chronicles modifies or omits texts from Samuel-Kings that deal with priests. I have underlined significant changes:

#### PRIESTHOOD IN SAMUEL-KINGS VS. CHRONICLES<sup>32</sup>

| Samuel-Kings                                       | Chronicles                                      |
|--|---|
| [Solomon] arose from facing the altar of the LORD, | Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD |

<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 433; Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 837-40.

<sup>31</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 93.

<sup>32</sup> Translations on this chart from the NRSV.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>where he had knelt with hands outstretched toward heaven; he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice. ...<br/>1 Kgs 8:54b-55</p>   | <p>in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands. <u>Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the court; and he stood on it.</u><br/>Then he knelt on his knees in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven. He said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant in steadfast love with your servants who walk before you with all their heart."<sup>33</sup><br/>2 Chr 6:12-14</p> |
| <p><u>King Ahaz sent to the priest Uriah a model of the [Damascene] altar, and its pattern, exact in all its details. The priest Uriah built the altar;</u> in accordance with all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus, just so did the priest Uriah build it, before King Ahaz arrived from Damascus.<br/>2 Kgs 16:10b-11</p> | <p>-<br/>(entire episode omitted)<sup>34</sup></p>  |
| <p>When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and <u>the senior priests, covered with sackcloth,</u> to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.<br/>2 Kgs 19:1-2</p>         | <p>Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed because of this and cried to heaven. (i.e., Hezekiah does <i>not</i> enter the temple and the priests are not in sackcloth)<sup>35</sup><br/>2 Chr 32:20</p>  |
| <p>So one of the [Israelite] priests whom they [the Assyrians] had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel; he taught them how they should worship the LORD.<br/>2 Kgs 17:28</p>  | <p>-<br/>(entire episode omitted—Bethel was in Benjamin/Judah)</p>  |
| <p>[Josiah] deposed the <u>idolatrous priests (הכמרים) whom the kings of Judah had ordained</u> to make offerings in the high places at the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem; those also who made offerings to Baal, to the sun, the moon, the constellations, and all the host of the heavens. ...<br/>2 Kgs 23:5</p>       | <p>-<br/>(omitting reference to Judean appointed pagan priests)</p>   |
| <p>He brought all the <u>priests (הכהנים) out of the towns of Judah ... The priests of the high places (הכהנים הבמות), however, did not come up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but ate unleavened bread among their kindred.</u><br/>2 Kgs 23:8-9</p>  | <p>-<br/>(omitting reference to decentralized priests)<sup>36</sup></p>   |
| <p>He brought out the image of Asherah from the house of the LORD, outside Jerusalem, to the Wadi Kidron, burned it at the Wadi Kidron, beat it to dust and <u>threw</u></p>   | <p>He broke down the sacred poles and the carved and the cast images; he made dust of them and scattered it <u>over the graves of those who had sacrificed to</u></p>   |

<sup>33</sup> Bronze platform added in Chr, possibly because Solomon's blessing from the altar would connote a priestly duty (blessing at the altar). On which, see Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 186. However, the reference to the altar could have been omitted because of homoioteleuton (2 Chr 6:12 and 13 end with the same phrase; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 46, 48), though such a large omission via homoioteleuton is unlikely. I discuss this text further below.

<sup>34</sup> Chr does not mention Uriah the priest in the narratives or genealogies.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. 2 Chr 13. In addition, Chr does not admit that Yahwistic priests ever served in the North.

<sup>36</sup> Moreover, for Chr, priests and Levites already served at the temple (e.g., 2 Chr 13).

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><u>the dust of it upon the graves of the common people.</u></p> <p>He brought all the <u>priests out of the towns of Judah</u>, and defiled the high places where the priests had made offerings, from Geba to Beer-sheba; he broke down the high places of the gates that were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on the left at the gate of the city.</p> <p>[At Bethel] Josiah turned, he saw the tombs [of priests] there on the mount; and <u>he sent and took the bones out of the tombs, and burned them on the altar</u>, and defiled it. . . .</p> <p><u>He slaughtered on the altars all the priests of the high places who were there [in Samaria], and burned human bones on them.</u> Then he returned to Jerusalem.</p> <p>2 Kgs 23:6, 8, 16, 20</p> | <p><u>them.</u></p> <p><u>He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and purged Judah and Jerusalem.</u></p> <p>2 Chr 34:4-5</p> |
|---|--|

Table 3.1

These examples prompt several comments in preparation for the following sections. First, though Chronicles portrays kings as cult-founders, they cannot wield their will over the cult. Ministering to Yhwh in the temple is the role of priests. Second, Chronicles omits references to Judean-appointed priests in Josiah's reform. This is likely part of Chronicles' broader association of *northern* kings with idolatry.<sup>37</sup> In addition, Chronicles omits the note that Josiah brought priests of Judean high places to Jerusalem, thus absolving Jerusalem's cult of wrongdoing or association with the "shrines," or "high places" (במות). While Chronicles admits that there were other Yahwistic shrines in Judah on one occasion (2 Chr 33:17), and other shrines throughout Israel's history, priests never served at them while the temple stood. Third, Chronicles omits all references to *northern* priests functioning in a Yahwistic capacity, claiming, in extension of tendencies already present in Samuel-Kings, that Yhwh's cult was inextricably bound to the priests functioning at the Jerusalem temple.<sup>38</sup> I return to these three features and their significance at relevant places in this chapter.

<sup>37</sup> 2 Chr 21:6, 13; 22:3-4; 28:2.

<sup>38</sup> By contrast, Judg 17-18 states explicitly that Levites remained in the North until the fall of Samaria. Cf. 2 Kgs 17:24-41.

A final contrast that cannot be derived through simple text comparison is that Chronicles—in contrast to the reforms in Samuel-Kings, where returning to Yhwh occurred when “reforms” concluded (e.g., 2 Kgs 23:25)—includes texts about the priests primarily during founding or restorative moments in the history of the nation.<sup>39</sup> The priesthood plays a constructive role in Chronicles. It is this constructive role, and its implications for understanding divine supremacy and sole divinity, that I explore in this chapter.

## II. THE DIVINE ELECTION, SELECTION (BY LOT), AND DESIGN OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Chronicles’ efforts to emphasize the priesthood’s unique stature and connection with divinity become evident in several ways. From the first nine chapters of Chronicles, one might suggest that the priesthood attained “international” significance in Chronicles by virtue of its central role in the genealogies.<sup>40</sup> Chronicles’ “segmented” and “linear” genealogies demonstrate an interest in establishing the priesthood’s central relationship with humanity (segmented) and its legitimate connection to its Levitical ancestor (linear).<sup>41</sup> Beyond its genealogical importance, Chronicles makes efforts to establish the Mosaic and Davidic basis of the priesthood’s organization. While scholars have devoted considerable efforts to explicating these sources of legitimation, Chronicles’ efforts to establish the divine authorization of priesthood receives less attention, despite their important role in the book.

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<sup>39</sup> Sam-Kgs includes more references to priests during times of apostasy, national calamity (e.g., the Assyrian exile or Sennacherib’s siege), or turmoil (Abiathar’s and Zadok’s wranglings in 1 Kgs 1; Jehu’s purge in 2 Kgs 10). In fact, the initial ascent of the kingship in Israel was in part due to the failure of the Shiloh priesthood in 1 Sam.

<sup>40</sup> On which see James T. Sparks, *The Chronicler’s Genealogies: Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1-9* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008). Sparks argues that Chr arranged the genealogies chiasmatically, with the central pivot on the cultic personnel in their duties (1 Chr 6:48-49); cf. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9*; Thomas Willi, *Chronik, 1 Chr 1-10* (BKAT 24/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2009); Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 20-21 fn. 172.

<sup>41</sup> On segmented and linear genealogies, see Robert R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 9; Sparks, *Chronicler’s Genealogies*, 17-18; Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 1-3; Johnson, *The Purpose of Biblical Genealogies*, 77-82.

In this section, I draw attention to Yhwh’s role in electing, selecting, and designing the priesthood. These divine acts do not appear in Samuel-Kings, and thus deserve attention as an appropriate entrée in to the book’s way of configuring the priesthood’s relationship to Yhwh.

#### A. DIVINE ELECTION

Chronicles is the only book besides Deuteronomy to state that Yhwh “elected” (\*בהר\*) the priesthood.<sup>42</sup> Elsewhere \*בהר as an elective term applies primarily to the election of the Davidic house and to Jerusalem as the place where Yhwh would place his name.<sup>43</sup> According to Chronicles, Yhwh indeed elects the Davidic house and city of Jerusalem,<sup>44</sup> yet the language of election also extends to Solomon as temple-builder,<sup>45</sup> the temple itself,<sup>46</sup> and the priesthood. Chronicles first mentions the priesthood’s election in the context of recounting the ark’s journey to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15):

Then David stipulated that none should carry the ark of (the) God except the Levites, for Yhwh chose (\*בהר) them to bear the ark of Yhwh and serve him/it (לשרתו) forever. (1 Chr 15:2)<sup>47</sup>

The Chronicler’s second mention of the priesthood’s election occurs in the narrative about Hezekiah’s cult reform (2 Chr 29):

My sons, do not become lazy now, for Yhwh has chosen (\*בהר) you to stand before him, to minister to him (לשרתו), to be his ministers (\*שרתו), and to make offerings. (2 Chr 29:11)

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<sup>42</sup> 1 Chr 15:2; 2 Chr 29:11; cf. Deut 10:8; 18:5. One possible exception from Ps is 65:4. Cf. also the “election” of Eli’s house, now nullified, in 1 Sam 2:28. See von Rad, *Geschichtsbild*, 64.

<sup>43</sup> On the Davidic line, see 1 Sam 10:24; 2 Sam 6:21; 1 Kgs 8:16; 11:34. For Jerusalem, see 1 Kgs 8:44, 48; 11:13, 32, 36, 14:21; 21:7; 23:27. Cf. the election of Israel in 1 Kgs 3:8. For recent studies on election, see Joel S. Kaminsky, *Yet Jacob I Loved: Reclaiming the Biblical Concept of Election* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007); Joel N. Lohr, *Chosen and Unchosen: Conceptions of Election in the Pentateuch and Jewish-Christian Interpretation* (Siphut 2; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009).

<sup>44</sup> 2 Chr 6:5-6; 12:13. Cf. the election of Judah in 1 Chr 28:4.

<sup>45</sup> 1 Chr 28:5-6; 29:1; See Braun, “Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder,” 59-62.

<sup>46</sup> 2 Chr 6:5, 34, 38; 7:12, 16. See Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 614.

<sup>47</sup> The 3ms antecedent in phrase לשרתו is ambiguous, and could refer to Yhwh or the ark.



These two texts follow a similar pattern and employ similar diction. The elected purpose of the priesthood is, on the one hand, related to ministering in Yhwh’s presence (at the ark or in sanctuary), and on the other, to serving him cultically. These Chronistic texts are likely based on Deut 10:8 and 18:5 respectively.<sup>48</sup>

At that time, Yhwh set apart (\*בדלל) the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of Yhwh’s covenant, to stand before Yhwh, to minister to him (\*שרת) and to bless in his name until this day. (Deut 10:8)

For Yhwh your God has chosen (\*בהר) Levi out of all your tribes to stand serving (\*שרת) in the name of Yhwh—Levi along with his sons for all days. (Deut 18:5)

Two observations are in order. First, 1 Chr 15:2 emphasizes the Levites’ privileged responsibility to bear the ark and minister before Yhwh (drawing on Deut 10:8). As Knoppers writes, “This is one of the clearest indications of the esteem in which the Levites are held (cf. Deut 33:8-10).”<sup>49</sup> Only they may bear Yhwh’s footstool on its journey toward the temple, a point that receives mention at several points in the book.<sup>50</sup> Second, Chronicles adapts Deut 18:5 to emphasize the elected tasks of *priests*—making offerings to Yhwh, which also corresponds to the temple’s election as a “house of sacrifice” (2 Chr 7:12) and ministering in his presence. We may thus speak of the joint election of the Levites and priests for service within their respective cultic domains. Levitical duties coalesce around the ark, while priestly duties pertain to the altar. Both domains are proximate to Yhwh’s presence, and as discussed in the previous chapter, are the domains that remained most untainted during Israel’s periods of apostasy. Though Levites and priests have duties beyond these domains, Chronicles (a) depicts a unified and complementary priesthood organized

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<sup>48</sup> As Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 297; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 351-52.

<sup>49</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 613. In Chr, Yhwh also elects Judah (1 Chr 28:4), David (1 Chr 28:4), Solomon (1 Chr 28:5-6; 29:1), the temple (2 Chr 6:5, 34, 38; 7:12, 16), and Jerusalem (Chr 6:5-6; 12:13), as noted by Knoppers (613-14).

<sup>50</sup> E.g., 1 Chr 6:31; 15:2-3, 12-14; 2 Chr 35:3. Cf. Deut 10:8.

around the temple's two most sacred furnishings, and (b) emphasizes Yhwh's authorization of this arrangement.

#### B. DIVINE SELECTION BY LOT

In addition to divine election, Chronicles also reports that a system of lot-casting was used to divine the duo-decimal “divisions” (מחלקות) of the priesthood (1 Chr 24:31), including its singers (25:8) and gatekeepers (26:13). The only other texts in the Hebrew Bible that mention duodecimal “divisions” (מחלקות) are texts in Joshua that describe the apportionment of tribal territories (Josh 14:2; 18:11; 19:51). The texts from Joshua and 1 Chr 23-27 attest to a system of lot-casting for determining the order of the “divisions” (מחלקות), emphasizing their divine arrangement. The significance of this connection should not be overstated, though the patterning of David-Solomon after Moses-Joshua developed in Chronicles may suggest an effort to depict David apportioning the priestly land and divisions for Solomon to implement.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the Chronicler also reports on the use of lots to allocate Levitical cities in 1 Chr 6:39-66[54-81], 25:9, and 26:14. The use of lot-casting in 1 Chr 24:5, 7, 31, and in 25:8, 9, 13-14, but not in 1 Chr 27 (for royal officials), may suggest a special focus on the divine superintendence of priestly divisions and their land allotments.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the use of lot-casting for Levitical (24:31) and priestly (24:3-6) lines attests to the conception of *one* priesthood selected by God for his service.

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<sup>51</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, “The Accession of Solomon in the Books of Chronicles,” *VT* 26 (1976):351-61.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. the use of selecting priests through extispicy in the Gudean dynasty. Ur-Ningirsu chooses priests through extispicy (E3/1.1.1.2 i 1 and E3/1.1.1.2 ii 5-8).

## C. DIVINE DESIGN

As discussed in ch. 2, David made preparations for the Jerusalem sanctuary, like its Pentateuchal predecessor, from a divinely revealed “pattern,” or “design” (תבנית).<sup>53</sup> The details of this divinely given תבנית appear in 1 Chr 28:11-19, and include the following features:

- (1) pattern for the shrine: rooms, courts, surrounding rooms, treasuries for the house of God and treasuries for dedicated gifts (vv. 11-12; cf. Exod 25:8-9)
- (2) pattern for sanctuary furnishings and officiates: divisions of priests and Levites, regulations for liturgical objects, prescribed weights, the plan for the ark’s cherubim (vv. 13-19; cf. Exod 25:8-31:11).

As Knoppers points out, the depiction of the divine תבנית follows the sequence found in the account of the tabernacle’s construction (i.e., shrine before furnishings; Exod 25:8-31:11).<sup>54</sup>

What is somewhat unusual about the תבנית in Chronicles, in contrast to Exodus, is that this תבנית also included Yhwh’s design for the priesthood and their duties:

David gave his son Solomon the plan (תבנית) ... for the *divisions of the priests* and the Levites, and for *every cultic duty* for Yhwh’s temple, and for all the cultic vessels Yhwh’s temple. (2 Chr 28:11a, 13)

The inclusion of priestly divisions and duties in the plan is not surprising, however, if considering that Chronicles devotes far more space to the account of David’s preparations

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<sup>53</sup> 1 Chr 28:11, 12, 18, 19; cf. Exod 25, 31; LXX 1 Chr 28:20 also adds a reference to the תבנית (παράδειγμα).

<sup>54</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 940-42. He offers three reasons why the Chronicler might pattern the temple’s construction after the divine תבנית for the tabernacle in Exodus. First, the late Persian period valued things antiquarian. Therefore the Chronicler links the temple to the ancient wilderness era. Second, the contents of David’s תבנית established a fundamental unity between the tabernacle, the First Temple, and the Second Temple. This proved important because the Chronicler’s temple includes furnishings found only in post-exilic sources. Finally, the temple carries and embodies the old symbols of national unity (e.g., the ark in the temple). By extension, Knoppers suggests, the new priestly and Levitical orders established by David’s תבנית have a precedent in the ancient tabernacle-era. In fact, the vessels from the tabernacle were to be enshrined in the temple (e.g., the lampstand and ark). Ironically, therefore, there was an ancient precedent for the Chronicler’s innovations, and the temple-staff were direct heirs of the tabernacle system. See Peter R. Ackroyd, “The Temple Vessels: A Continuity Theme,” in *Studies in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (ed. G. W. Anderson et al; VTSup 23; Leiden: Brill, 1972), 166-81; Wright, “The Deportation of Jerusalem’s Wealth.”

for the cult officiates and their tasks (1 Chr 15-16; 23-26) than to physical preparations for the temple itself (1 Chr 22, 29).<sup>55</sup> The language of priestly “divisions” (מחלקות) and “cultic duties” (מלאכת עבודה)<sup>56</sup> used here in 28:11-13 recalls the preceding organization of the priesthood by its “divisions” (מחלקות) and “cultic duties” (עבודה) in chs. 23-27.<sup>57</sup> The similarity in language for describing the cult in 23-27, and the plan in 28, may be to emphasize that David implements the cultic plan that he expects Solomon to uphold. That is, chs. 23-27 may be a “preview” of the divine plan that David hands Solomon. Chronicles draws attention to the fact that Solomon follows David’s plan exactly:

In accordance with the statues of his father David, Solomon appointed the divisions (מחלקות) of the priests, according to their duties (עבודתם), and the Levites, according to their functions—namely, praising and ministering before the priests as each day required—and the gatekeepers by their divisions (במחלקותם) at each gate. For thus was the command of David, the man of God. (2 Chr 8:14)

As such, the book of Chronicles may offer a window into the precise nature of the divinely revealed plan, though this is conjectural. Chronicles never states that David followed the תבנית in 23-27, though the similarity in language between those chapters and 28:11-19 suggests this connection.

Chronicles also reports that David received a “letter from God” that “gave [him] insight” (השכיל) for inaugurating the temple’s construction and service according to the תבנית.<sup>58</sup> In conjunction with 1 Chr 28:12, where David states that he received the תבנית “by

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<sup>55</sup> While Kgs devotes seventy-seven verses to the temple’s construction, Chr abridges the account considerably, leaving only thirty-nine verses, many of which are themselves abridged.

<sup>56</sup> This latter phrase (לכל מלאכת עבודת) echoes the statement about Oholiab’s and Bezalel’s skill for carrying out all the “tasks of service” (לכל מלאכת עבודת) for constructing the tabernacle. 1 Chr 28:21 makes a similar link with the temple’s artisans, stating in parallel lines that (a) the priests were ready to execute “every duty” (לכל עבודה) in the temple, and (b) that the officers were skilled (בהכמה) in “in all *sorts of work*” (לכל עבודה).

<sup>57</sup> For מחלקות, see 1 Chr 23:6; 24:1; 26:1, 12, 19; for עבודה, see 1 Chr 23:24, 26, 28, 32; 24:3, 19; 25:1, 6, 8; 26:30.

<sup>58</sup> See discussion of this letter in ch. 2.

the spirit” (בְּרוּחַ),<sup>59</sup> David ensures Solomon that the temple and its priesthood had divine origins, *and* that Yhwh endowed him as cult initiator with insight for its proper implementation. As Knoppers writes, “David is presented as an inspired figure, a leader privileged to receive revelation.”<sup>60</sup> This is especially important for two reasons. First, it establishes a divine point of origin for Jerusalem’s cult. As discussed in section IV below, Chronicles maintains that other priesthoods were human fabrications. Second, it establishes the legitimacy of Davidic innovations. One could contend, after all, that if the divisions of singers, gatekeepers, and twenty-four priestly courses, were simply post-exilic human innovations, then nothing really distinguished Jerusalem’s priesthood from any other pagan cult. Chronicles responds to this objection with a creative adaptation of the tabernacle construction accounts in Exodus. Like the tabernacle, the temple was infused with the divine spirit and designed based on a heavenly pattern. But even more importantly, the priesthood itself formed part of the design, distinguishing it from the profane self-appointed priesthoods that emerged in the North and among the nations (2 Chr 13). Chronicles also bolsters Davidic innovations by placing the “law of Moses” and the “law of David” on equal footing (e.g., 2 Chr 8:14; 23:18-19; 29:25; 35:15).

But even beyond its origins in the divine will, the Davidic arrangement of the priesthood in Chronicles originated in conjunction with the articulation of a divine hymn. This hymn, I suggest, expresses in paradigmatic form, the priesthood’s

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<sup>59</sup> Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 525, argues that *היה ברוח עמו* in 28:12 refers to what David “had in mind” because in texts like 1 Kgs 11:11, *עמו היה* refers to an “intention.” However, the comparison only strengthens the difference between the texts. What was in David’s mind was there “by the spirit,” does not refer to what was *ברוחו* (“in his spirit/mind”). More likely, the phrase refers to Yhwh’s revelation to David (cf. Ezek 11:24; 37:1). It is worth additional consideration that Chr has a way of saying something close to “intention.” In 1 Chr 22:7 David states *היה עם-לבבי* “I intended” to build the temple (cf. also 28:2; 2 Chr 6:7). Cf. also Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 931. Cf. the conflicting evidence from the LXX (*ἐν πνεύματι αὐτοῦ*; “in his spirit”) and Tg. (*ברוח נבואה דעמיה*), “by the Spirit of prophecy which was with him”).

<sup>60</sup> Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 931.

### III. THE PRIESTHOOD'S INAUGURAL HYMN (1 CHR 16:8-36)

#### A. PARADIGMATIC DUTIES

The ark's final ascent to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15) occurs with ceremonious fanfare. Levitical divisions and their families sanctify themselves to bring up the ark (15:12),<sup>61</sup> and organize themselves by family divisions. Moreover, Levitical musicians proceed according to their instrumental class of lyres, harps, cymbals, and voice, along with Levitical guards, in the company of priests blowing trumpets before the ark (15:16-24). When the ark arrives in Jerusalem, David "inaugurated thanksgiving to Yahweh by the hand of Asaph and his kindred"<sup>62</sup> by commissioning a thanksgiving hymn (16:8-36).<sup>63</sup> This thanksgiving hymn is a pastiche of three different psalms, and constitutes a doxological meditation on Israel's history:

16:9-22 (Ps 105:1-15; historical psalm)

16:23-33 (Ps 96:1b, 2b-9, 10b, 11a, 10a, 11b-13b; Yhwh-kingship psalm)

16:34-36 (Ps 106:1, 47, 48; historical psalm)<sup>64</sup>

Several features suggest that Chronicles envisions a paradigmatic role for this hymn in connection with the Levites ongoing cultic duties.<sup>65</sup> First, immediately preceding the hymn (v. 4), David appoints Levites in what become their permanent roles, to "invoke" (\*זכר\*), "give thanks" (\*ידה\*), and "praise" (\*הלל\*) Yhwh (cf. 1 Chr 15:16; 2 Chr 20:12; 35:2). The

<sup>61</sup> The imperative התקדשו "sanctify yourselves" occurs elsewhere in conjunction with the ark's transport (Josh 3:5; 7:13; 2 Chr 5:11).

<sup>62</sup> This translation of אָז נָתַן דָּוִד בְּרֵאשׁ לַהֲדוּת לַיהוָה follows that of Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 359.

<sup>63</sup> The formal reasons for labeling 1 Chr 16:8-36 a "thanksgiving hymn" include the call to praise/thanks (vv. 8-13) and grounds for praise/thanks (vv. 14-33). The hymn appends a concluding liturgy in vv. 34-36. See discussion in Mark A. Throntveit, "Songs in a New Key: The Psalmic Structure of the Chronicler's Hymn (1 Chr 16:8-36)," in *A God So Near: Essays on Old Testament Theology in Honor of Patrick D. Miller* (ed. Brent A. Strawn and Nancy R. Bowen; Winona Lake, WI: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 153-70.

<sup>64</sup> Note also the use of Ps 132:8-10 and Isa 55:3 in 2 Chr 6:41-42.

<sup>65</sup> 1 Chr 23:30-31; 25:3; 2 Chr 5:13; 7:6; 29:25-30; 30:21-22; 31:2. See discussion in Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 641-42; Watts, *Psalm and Story*, 161; Andrew E. Hill, "Patchwork Poetry or Reasoned Verse? Connective Structure in 1 Chronicles XVI," *VT* 93 (1983): 97-101; Trent C. Butler, "A Forgotten Passage from a Forgotten Era (1 Chr. XVI 8-36)," *VT* 28/2 (1978):142-50 [145].

repeated use of these terms in the hymn itself suggests its representative function (e.g., vv. 8, 10, 12).<sup>66</sup> Second, the hymn marks the first utterance of the “loyalty refrain”—“give thanks to Yhwh, for his love endures” (16:34)—a refrain that also occurs after the hymn to describe the priests ongoing duties (16:41), as the priests brought the ark into the temple (5:13), during the temple’s dedication (2 Chr 7:3, 6), and prior to the priests’ musical procession into battle (2 Chr 20:21).<sup>67</sup> Third, David appoints priests and Levites in their musical duties immediately before and after the hymn. He charges them to serve Yhwh “regularly” (תמיד; v. 4, 37) and “daily” (v. 37) through praise before the ark. Moreover, after appointing them in such roles, the Levites carry out David’s command by uttering the hymn in vv. 8-36. The hymnic celebration “marks the beginning of a continuing tradition,” and as such becomes a defining act of the cult.<sup>68</sup> Its contents thus deserve sustained attention.

## B. PARADIGMATIC HYMN

The literary arrangement of the hymn highlights several significant motifs, including the nations and divine judgment.<sup>69</sup>

|    |  |                       |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| A  | Call to Thanksgiving among the Nations (vv. 8-11)  | הודו ליהוה בעמים      |
| B  | Call for <i>Israel</i> to Remember Past Judgments (*שפט*) (vv. 14-22)                      | בכל־הארץ              |
| B' | Call for <i>Nations and Cosmos</i> to Sing of Present Rule and Judgment (שפט*) (vv. 23-33) | כל־הארץ               |
| A' | Call to Thanksgiving and concluding Liturgy by the Nation (vv. 34-36a)                     | הודו ליהוה ... כל העם |

<sup>66</sup> As Hill notes, “It is apparent that the composer’s choice of Psalms was determined by the activities recorded in xvi 4 when one notes the distribution of these terms (*zkr, ydh, hll* and *YHWH*) in the composite psalm” (Hill, “Patchwork Poetry or Reasoned Verse?” 99).

<sup>67</sup> See discussion in Shipp, “Remember His Covenant Forever.”

<sup>68</sup> Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 70.

<sup>69</sup> For a discussion of alternative literary structures, see Throntveit, “Songs in a New Key,” 168. For a study in the correlation between literary structure and meaning, see S. Bar-Efrat, “Some Observations on the Analysis of Structure in Biblical Narrative,” *VT* 30/2 (1980):154-173; As Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (BLS 9; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), 13.

The literary arrangement of the hymn highlights the correspondence between national and international praise to Israel's God. Its structure exhibits a thematic movement from a local focus on Yhwh's deeds for Israel (drawn from Ps 105) toward Yhwh's international reputation (drawn from Ps 96). The hymn calls upon Israel, the nations, and cosmos to acknowledge Yhwh who is exalted above all powers and who comes to judge the nations as king (vv. 31, 33).

The Levitical composition itself (16:8-36) takes on the character of a celebratory response לַפְנֵי יְהוָה (vv. 27, 30, 33), and includes cultic motifs (vv. 27-29) appropriate to the hymn's setting "before the ark" (vv. 4, 37). The expected responses appear as a litany of imperatives and jussives, calling upon Israel to "give thanks," "call," "make known," "sing," "muse," "boast," "rejoice," "seek," "search," and "remember" (vv. 8-12); calling all the nations to "sing," "proclaim," and "recount" (vv. 23-24), "ascribe," "bring tribute," "come," "worship," and "tremble" (vv. 28-30); and calling the heavens and earth to "tremble," "rejoice," "give cheer," "thunder," "exult," and "shout for joy" (vv. 31-33). In short, the hymn abounds with calls for response to the arrival of the enthroned king. These calls ripple outward from Israel to the nations and cosmos, soliciting responses from the farthest reaches of Yhwh's domain to join in the priestly chorus. Israel is to declare Yhwh's deeds "among the nations" (בְּעַמִּים; v. 8), for he comes to judge "in all the earth" (בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ; v. 14), a phrase then repeated in vv. 23, 30, 33. Then the "families of the nations" (מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עַמִּים; v. 28) are to praise Yhwh "among the nations" (בְּגוֹיִם; vv. 24, 31) and "among all peoples" (בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים; v. 24). In short, Israel's praise of the divine king commands the responses and participation of the nations and cosmos.

However, in this Levitical hymn, Israel's relationship with its wider world is also one of weakness and vulnerability. Israel's patriarchs had wandered "from nation to nation" (מִגּוֹי



אל־גוי; v. 20), dependent upon Yhwh’s ongoing protection from harm, and the final plea of the hymn asks for Yhwh to deliver Israel “from the nations” (מִן־הַגּוֹיִם; v. 35). Significantly, Chronicles draws these vulnerable aspects of Israel’s nationhood from Pss 105-106, texts which in their full psalmic form recount Yhwh’s deeds and Israel’s failings. Chronicles omits many details of Yhwh’s deeds for Israel and all references to Israel’s failings, leaving only the emphasis on Yhwh’s deeds for the wandering patriarchs and the memory of Israel’s defenselessness. The Chronicler’s literary arrangement of that history around the Yhwh-kingship psalm (adapted from Ps 96) here is significant. Israel’s weakness only highlights the power of God.<sup>70</sup>

In order to focus on the hymn’s characterization of divine supremacy, I will focus now on the adapted Yhwh-kingship psalm (1 Chr 16:23-33//Ps 96:1-13). However, the foregoing analysis provides an important backdrop for understanding this hymnic adaptation, and will factor again in my consideration of Israel’s identity as a small nation set among the powerful nations.

Verses 23-24 begin with a call for all the earth and nations to sing daily to Yhwh, proclaiming Yhwh’s glory throughout the earth. Verses 25-26 state two *reasons* that they should do so:

שִׁירוּ ... בְּשִׁירוֹ ... סִפְרוּ  
 כִּי גְדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהִלֵּל מְאֹד  
 וְנוֹרָא הוּא עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים  
 כִּי כָל־אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים  
 וַיְהוֶה שָׁמַיִם עֲשָׂה

Sing ... Bear tidings ... Declare ... (vv. 23-24)  
*Because* Yhwh is supreme, exceedingly praised;  
 He is feared beyond all gods.  
*Because* all the gods of the peoples are hand-made gods,

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<sup>70</sup> Another reason for deleting most of the salvation history originally contained in Pss 105-106, as Janzen suggests, is that “the Chronicler ... can now use the history narrative in this work to give examples of YHWH’s ‘marvelous works’ on Israel’s behalf.” David Janzen, *The Social Meanings of Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible: A Study of Four Writings* (BZAW 344; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 231.

But Yhwh made the heavens<sup>71</sup> (vv. 25-26)

The two causal clauses state reasons appropriate to an international audience,<sup>72</sup> namely, Yhwh's praiseworthiness above all the peoples' gods and the createdness of all the gods.

1. "BEYOND ALL GODS"

Though the idea of Yhwh's supremacy over the gods finds frequent mention in the Hebrew Bible, the specific phrase "beyond all gods" (על-כל-אלהים) is uncommon, occurring only three additional times in the Hebrew Bible: once in the parallel passage in Ps 96:4, and in each of the two Yhwh-kingship Psalms flanking Ps 96 (95:3; 97:9). The phrase על-כל-אלהים thus stands as a peculiarity of hymns celebrating Yhwh's kingship, leading some to claim that the phrase presupposes a divine council over which Yhwh rules as king.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, some biblical texts certainly depict a divine court populated with other divine beings.<sup>74</sup> Like the Ugaritic deity 'El, who sat at the head of the divine family and over

<sup>71</sup> On the relationship between v. 25, which seems to presuppose the existence of "the gods," and v. 26 which denies their existence, see my discussion of Deut 4:24-25 in my introductory chapter.

<sup>72</sup> On the two clauses as causal (introduced by כִּי) and not deictic ("indeed"), see Patrick D. Miller, *They Cried to the Lord: The Form and Theology of Biblical Prayer* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 359-60. Though less convincing, Knoppers (*1 Chronicles 10-29*, 634) translates כִּי deictically, as "indeed."

<sup>73</sup> Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 648. Ps 89:8[7] would fit better with Knoppers' claim that Yhwh is depicted as a superior god who presides over a divine council: Ps 89:8[7] "In the council of the holy ones [בְּסוּדֵי קֳדוֹשִׁים] God is greatly feared; he is more awesome than all who surround him."

<sup>74</sup> Studies of the divine council in the Hebrew Bible and its environs include Cyrus H. Gordon, "History of Religion in Psalm 82," in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies: Essays in Honor of W. S. LaSor* (ed. G. A. Tuttle; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 129-31; E. Theodore Mullen Jr., *The Assembly of the Gods: The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (HSM 24; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980); Patrick D. Miller, "Cosmology and World Order in the Old Testament: The Divine Council as Cosmic-Political Symbol," *HBT* 9 (1987):53-78; Heiser, "The Divine Council"; Simon B. Parker, "Sons of (the) God(s)" in *DDD*, 794-98; Christopher R. Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109 (1990): 229-47. H. H. Rowley, "The Council of Yahweh," *JTS* 45 (1944): 151-157; Edwin C. Kingsbury, "Prophets and the Council of Yahweh," *JBL* 83 (1964): 279-286; M. E. Polley, "Hebrew Prophecy Within the Council of Yahweh, Examined in its Ancient Near Eastern Setting," in *Scripture in Context: Essays in the Comparative Method* (Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 34; Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1980), 141-156; Christopher R. Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109/2 (1990): 229-47; Frank Moore Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Deutero-Isaiah," *JNES* 12 (1953): 274-277; Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 143-44; Baruch Halpern, "The Ritual Background of Zechariah's Temple Song," *CBQ* 40 (1978):167-190.

multiple tiers of beings, some texts depict Yhwh ruling among a royal court of subordinate divine beings (e.g., בני־אלים).<sup>75</sup> However, in this literary context, על functions like מאד in the preceding clause to denote excess,<sup>76</sup> or the exceeding nature of the fear Yhwh solicits, and not Yhwh’s authority over the אלהים. Yhwh *is already* supreme (גדול), this verse claims, on the basis of the reverent chorus that surrounds him, an appropriate point of emphasis in the hymn’s literary context. The gods are a foil for accentuating the abundant praise and fear Yhwh receives. In other words, Yhwh’s supremacy is demarcated by wide-ranging (from the nations and cosmos) and abundant praise (cf. Ps 95:3; 96:4; 97:9).

## 2. “HAND-MADE GODS”

While v. 25 kept the “gods” in its rhetorical system as a contrast to Yhwh’s praise and fear, the next verse turns on the “gods” directly, calling them אלילים. The term אלילים is usually translated “idols” or “worthless ones,”<sup>77</sup> though in most cases, writers employ the term as a dysphemism to deride the human-made origins of other gods.<sup>78</sup> For example, Hab 2:18 asks:

How does an image profit, since its maker creates it as an image—forming and casting falsehood? Indeed, the creator trusts his own creation, by making himself mute non-gods [אלילים].

In Jer 14:3, the sg. אליל pertains to the “creations” of false prophets. Similarly, Lev 26:1 refers to “making yourself” אלילים (cf. 19:4), and Isaiah speaks of אלילים as “works of human hands” (2:8, 18; 31:7). It is therefore appropriate to gloss אלילים using language that

<sup>75</sup> Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Ps 29:1; 89:8.

<sup>76</sup> On על as a preposition denoting excess, see *IBHS* §11.2.13d.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. LXX Ps 95:5(=MT 96:5), which translates אלילים as δαιμόνια, a term that re-enlivens their status as divine beings, yet clearly within a new framework (cf. LXX Deut 32:17, which compares שדים/ δαιμόνια with אלהים לא ידעום and לא אלה).

<sup>78</sup> Lev 19:4; 26:11; Ps 96:5; 97:7; Isa 2:8, 18, 20; 10:10; 19:1, 3 (unclear); 31:7; Ezek 30:13; Hab 2:18.

emphasizes their createdness, such as “human-made gods” (to retain the phonetic link with אלהים).

According to one line of reasoning, the two reasons for praising God in vv. 25-26 conflict. The first causal statement sets Yhwh as the object of praise and fear “beyond all gods” while the second states that they are “hand-made gods” (אליילים). How can gods be accorded existence and non-existence in the same context? Japhet ascribes v. 25 to “older formulations” that presupposed the existence of other gods, while v. 26 subscribed to the “monotheistic idea.”<sup>79</sup> Frank-Lothar Hossfeld claims similarly that Ps 96:5 (// 1 Chr 16:26) constitutes a theology of idol-polemic that contradicts v. 4 (// 1 Chr 16:26).<sup>80</sup> Because of this conflict, he deems the verse redactional. Psalm 97:7-9 employs similarly conflicting rhetoric. In v. 7 all idol-worshippers are put to shame as their gods “bow” to Yhwh (presumably toppling over), while in v. 9 Yhwh is exalted “above all gods” as a statement of his cosmic supremacy.

However, it is possible that a writer employs two different modes of “monotheizing” to serve one rhetorical point, namely, that Yhwh deserves *all* fear and praise. It is not necessary to make an historical argument to account for their coexistence in 1 Chr 16:25-26 or related Psalms. *Both* verses share an interest in the *status* and *relative power* of Yhwh vis-à-vis “the gods.” Yhwh belongs to a fundamentally different category, whether in terms of the fear and praise he inspires or his power to create. This is a common rhetorical strategy in the Hebrew Bible. Writers will ascribe provisional existence to gods only to rhetorically undermine them in the same context.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, it seems that inasmuch as biblical figures enjoin Israel to destroy its gods and idols, biblical authors enjoy the rhetorical destruction of

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<sup>79</sup> Japhet, *Ideology*, 44.

<sup>80</sup> Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 2* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 465.

<sup>81</sup> E.g., Ps 86:8, 10; Deut 4:34-35.

gods—watching them transform from real/apparently real to unreal. The writer of v. 26 rhetorically redefines the אלהים as אלילים, in a sense toying with his prey before destroying them, just as Ps 97:7 refers to other אלהים, but has them throw themselves down before Yhwh in a “self-undivinizing” act.<sup>82</sup> The hymn-writer in Ps 96//1 Chr 16 claims that the gods of the peoples are actually “hand-made gods” (אלילים), a term that mocks their claim to the status as אלהים.

### 3. “BUT YHWH MADE THE HEAVENS”

Returning to 1 Chr 16:26, we may note the poetic contrast between the *creator* Yhwh and the “hand-made gods” (אלילים):

Because all the gods of the peoples are human-made gods,  
But Yhwh made the heavens. (1 Chr 16:26)

Line A relegates the so-called “gods” to the status “human-made gods,” and thus restricts them to the human realm (among the nations), or rather, the realm subordinate to humans, since one’s creation is a subordinate entity. As such, the gods hardly warrant devotion. The critique also bears political implications insofar as the nations now lack divine sponsorship. By contrast, Yhwh (line B) exercises power by creating the heavens, the sphere from which he rules over all nations (cf. 2 Chr 20:6). While the nations create only non-gods, Yhwh made the heavens and rules the peoples. Moreover, the use of “heavens” instead of the more common “heavens and earth” underscores Yhwh’s supreme power over the domain typically associated with the gods, although in this case, that domain contains only one deity.

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<sup>82</sup> Hossfeld, *Psalms 2*, 475.

## 4. “BEFORE HIM . . . IN HIS PLACE”

After vacating the heavenly realm of other gods, the hymn shifts its focus toward what we might call Yhwh’s “substitute retinue.” If not other gods, what retinue now surrounds Yhwh? The following comparison between 1 Chr 16:27 and Ps 96:6 points us toward one possibility:

Splendor and majesty are before him  
Strength and joy are in his place (1 Chr 16:27)

הוד והדר לפניו  
עז וחדוה במקומו

Splendor and majesty are before him  
Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary (Ps 96:6)

הוד והדר לפניו  
עז ותפארת במקדשו

Lines A and B in v. 27 verse refer to specific divine qualities and their spatial locus. The phrase **הוד והדר** in line A (of both versions) denotes royal splendor and power, and specifically the resplendent radiance like that which enveloped Near Eastern kings and deities.<sup>83</sup> In the Chronicler’s hymn, splendor and power (or, majesty) stand “before him” (**לפניו**), a position of cultic significance in the poem (v. 29) and book more generally (2 Chr 2:3, 5; 2 Chr 29:11), and which might denote a position before Yhwh’s heavenly throne as well. By positioning these qualities “before him,” or “in his presence,” the poet fills the domain otherwise occupied by divine attendants, or worshippers, as the latter appear **לפניו** elsewhere in the hymn (vv. 29, 30, 33). If so, then Yhwh appears to be attended by his own attributes instead of other divine beings.<sup>84</sup> Yhwh’s splendor and majesty fill the divine vacuum. This suggestion gains strength when we consider the widely accepted view that Ps

<sup>83</sup> Cf. the use of this pair in Ps 21:6; 104:1; 111:3. On the relationship between **הוד והדר** and the Akkadian *melammu*, see Shawn Zelig Aster, “The Phenomenon of Divine and Human Radiance in the Hebrew Bible and in Northwest Semitic and Mesopotamian Literature: A Philological and Comparative Study” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2006), 258-331.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. the slightly different configuration in Ps 89:6-9.

96 “de-divinizes” Ps 29, substituting the משפחות עמים (“families of the peoples”;

96:7//16:29) for the בני אלים (“sons of the gods”; 29:1).<sup>85</sup> Joel Burnett notes,

personified attributes, are described as Yahweh’s attendants in the sanctuary: ... ‘Splendor and Majesty are before him ...’. It is clear that, in the poetic language of the Psalms, these references to personified divine attributes are compatible with monotheism.<sup>86</sup>

While I am resistant to Burnett’s larger suggestion that Ps 29 is de-facto incompatible with monotheism, his comments are well placed. Instead of a detached retinue of divine beings, the psalmist portrays Yhwh’s qualities as so abundant that they fill the expanse otherwise occupied by the gods.

Line B of v. 27 exhibits several changes to its psalmic parallel, retaining עז (strength) but supplying והדורה במקמו (“and joy in his place”) for ותפארת במקדשו (“and beauty in his sanctuary”).<sup>87</sup> The Hebrew word הדורה is a loanword derived from the Aramaic חדוּא.<sup>88</sup> Its use in the Hebrew Bible is restricted to this text and another in Neh 8:10, where it appears to function like שמחה as a term for cultic joy.<sup>89</sup> In the context of Chronicles, it refers to the joy of Yhwh’s worshippers before his ark/throne, and thus with cultic connotations. Indeed, the word paired with חדוּא (עז; “strength”) refers to the ark in Chronicles.<sup>90</sup> For example, 2 Chr 6:41 refers to the “ark of your strength [עז].” Also, the early part of 1 Chr 16:8-36 calls Israel to “seek Yhwh and his strength [עז], seek his presence [פניו] continually” (v. 11), which in

<sup>85</sup> On which, see Ginsberg, “A Strand in the Chord of Hebraic Hymnody.” However, one should not rule out the possibility that Ps 96 “divinizes” the families of the peoples insofar as they take part in worship of Yhwh.

<sup>86</sup> Joel S. Burnett, *A Reassessment of Biblical Elohim* (SBLDS 183; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 95.

<sup>87</sup> 4 Hebrew MSS of Ps 96:6 have הדורה instead of תפארת.

<sup>88</sup> HALOT, ad loc.

<sup>89</sup> See Gary A. Anderson, *A Time to Mourn, a Time to Dance: The Expression of Grief and Joy in Israelite Religion* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991); idem, “The Praise of God as Cultic Event,” in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel* (ed. Gary A. Anderson and Saul M. Olyan; JSOTSup 125; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 15-33.

<sup>90</sup> For the ark as Yhwh’s עז “strength,” see 16:11; 2 Chr 6:41; cf. Ps 78:61; Also Burnett, *Biblical Elohim*, 94; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 364-65 (following Johnstone, *1 Chronicles-2 Chronicles* 9, 193); Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 646. Note Saul’s failure to “seek the Lord” in 1 Chr 13:4 (cf. 15:13).

On Yahweh’s attributes as his divine entourage, see John Goldingay, *Psalms, Volume 3: Psalms 90-150* (BCOT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 104; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 2, 465.

context, enjoins the people to participate in the cultic assembly around the ark. As with other texts in Chronicles, seeking Yhwh means seeking his cultic presence. Thus, the phrase עז וזדורה likely denotes the ark and its accompanying cultic celebration. This idea certainly fits the context of 1 Chr 13-16.

Finally, the substitution of “place” (מקום) for “sanctuary” (מקדש) in v. 27 is clearly motivated by the temple’s absence at this stage in Chronicles’ history.<sup>91</sup> By employing this term, Chronicles also blurs the distinction between Yhwh’s exalted heavenly and earthly domains. The hymn moves thematically from Yhwh’s uncontested divine status over the heavens (vv. 25-27a) to his sacred presence on earth over the ark of his “strength” and at his “place” (vv. 27b-29), emphasizing the “harmonious relationship between the site of the people’s worship on earth and the site of Yhwh’s enthronement in the heavens.”<sup>92</sup> Yhwh sits on his (heavenly?) throne with his own attributes in attendance, and the joyful worship of the congregation in his earthly “place.”<sup>93</sup> The poet never summons the בני אלים to praise Yhwh in his heavenly domain (as in Ps 29) because Yhwh’s worshippers surround his ark (v. 27). In addition to his own attributes in heaven, the worshipping community replaces the divine retinue on earth.<sup>94</sup> Though commenting on the priestly literature, William Propp’s comments are appropriate:

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<sup>91</sup> The term מקום still possesses cultic connotations in Chronicles, referring to the Temple’s future location (1 Chr 21:22, 25) and Mt. Moriah as the מקום where Solomon built the temple (2 Chr 3:1).

<sup>92</sup> Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 647. Chronicles later claims that Yhwh resides “in heaven” (2 Chr 6:30, 33, 35) and in the temple (2 Chr 6:41). Ps 29, which Ps 96 adapts, remains focused in the heavenly sphere where Ps 96 (/1 Chr 16) shifts toward the sanctuary and the human sphere.

<sup>93</sup> Note the modification of במקדשו (Ps 96:6) to במקומו in 1 Chr 16:27, likely because the sanctuary was not yet constructed. The Chronicler changes the Psalmist’s “honor and majesty” (עז ותפארת, 96:6) to “strength and joy” (כח וזדורה), the latter of which is rare, but seems to have cultic connotations (Neh 8:10) similar to שמחה.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. the slightly different, though analogous, configuration in Deut 33:3-5, discussed by Mann (*Divine Presence and Guidance*, 180): “The description of these heavenly beings doing obeisance to Yahweh and carrying out his decisions clearly proclaims Yahweh’s sovereignty over all the heavenly host. Moreover, it is quite possible that ‘all the holy ones’ includes both the divine beings and the reference to Israel in the preceding tricolon, thus explicitly associating the ‘heavenly’ and ‘earthly’ armies of Yahweh.”



As kings of the earth, however, the gods' role is usurped by humanity and, ultimately, Israel, who become Yahweh's "assembly" (*qdbdt*) ... and "army" (*sdbd*). Israel is most G/godlike when worshiping at the Tabernacle [and, we might add, the ark].<sup>95</sup>

## 5. "TRANSFERRING" WEALTH TO THE ONE KING

After deactivating the gods of the nations and shifting the poetic focus toward worship at Yhwh's ark, verses 28-30 summon the nations to "render," or "transfer" (הבּו), "glory" and "strength" to Yhwh, and to bring tribute offerings to his holy place.<sup>96</sup> The emphasis on transferring glory and strength to Yhwh fits logically with the preceding verses' (vv. 23-27) claim that the nations have no effective divinities. Since the "gods of the nations" (אלהייהעמים) are human fabrications, Yhwh deserves the glory and praise previously ascribed to the "(non)-gods."

Critiquing "the gods" as gods of "the nations" has political implications,<sup>97</sup> expressed vividly here in vv. 28-30. Hence some biblical texts envision the nations responding cultically or politically to Yhwh upon realization that Yhwh is the only deity (e.g., Zeph 2). Since Chronicles appears to share in this view, we may note further that the reverse side of Chronicles' critique of "the gods" is the endorsement of entities (most notably the temple

<sup>95</sup> William Propp, review of W. Randall Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism*, *JAOs* 124/2 (2004):377-79 [378].

<sup>96</sup> Vv. 28-29 and their parallel in Ps 96:7-9a quote from Ps 29:1-2a, but replace the בני אלים with משפחות עמים. As Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 68, "it is not the heavenly beings who are called to assemble in the divine court, but the worshipping community which assembles before the Lord (that is, in the context in Chronicles, before the ark)."

<sup>97</sup> The precise phrasing אלהייהעמים occurs only in 1 Chr 16:25 and its parallel Ps 96:5, though the Hebrew Bible speaks also of the אלהייהגוים (Deut 29:17; 2 Kgs 18:33; 19:12; 2 Chr 32:14; Isa 36:18; 37:12), the אלהים associated with specific nations, and also presupposes a nation-deity link when referring to the אלהים (Exod 20:3; 23:13; Deut 5:7; 6:14; 7:4; 8:19; 11:16,28; 13:3,7,14; 17:3; 18:20; 8:14,36,64; 29:25; 31:18,20; Josh 23:16; 24:2,16; Judg 2:12, 17, 19; 10:13; 1 Sam 8:8; 26:19; 1 Kgs 9:6; 11:4, 10; 14:9; 2 Kgs 17:7, 35, 37f; 2 Chr 7:19; Jer 7:6,9; 11:10; 13:10; 16:11,13; 25:6; 35:15; Hos 3:1. For אלהיהם (their gods, usually in conjunction with other nations) Exod 10:7; 23:33; 29:46; 34:15; Lev 21:6; 26:44; Deut 7:16, 25; 12:2, 30; Josh 23:7; Judg 3:6f; 8:34; 9:27; 16:23; 1 Sam 12:9; 1 Kgs 9:9; 11:2; 20:23; 2 Kgs 17:7, 9, 14, 16, 19, 33; 18:12; 19:18; 1 Chr 10:10; 14:12; 2 Chr 31:6; 33:17; 34:33; Neh 9:3; 12:45; Ps 79:10; 115:2; Isa 37:19; Jer 3:21; 5:4; 22:9; 30:9; 43:1; 50:4; Ezek 28:26; 34:30; 39:22, 28; Dan 11:8; Hos 1:7; 3:5; 4:12; 5:4; 7:10; Joel 2:17; Amos 2:8; Zeph 2:7; Hag 1:12,14; Zech 9:16; 10:6; 12:5.

and priesthood) that facilitate and embody divine oneness. The call for the nations to bring Yhwh tribute allows the nations to enact tangibly the belief that Yhwh alone deserves honor. In other words, bringing offerings (מנחה) to Yhwh at his ark/temple becomes a way for the nations to *act out* monotheism in relation to the institutions that mediate his presence. As we will see later in this chapter, Chronicles rewrites the story of Hezekiah's deliverance from Sennacherib's attack in Kings to pursue this precise point.

Having transferred all glory from the “gods of the nations” to its rightful recipient (vv. 28-30), the nations will shout “Yhwh reigns” (v. 31). This declaration accords with their political act of tribute bearing and worship. Then in vv. 31-33 all creation responds with joy.

#### 6. THE SANCTUARY AS THE LOCUS OF THE SUPREME GOD

One additional feature of the Levitical hymn deserves attention. The claims about Yhwh's supreme uniqueness in 16:24-25 correspond with language that the Chronicler also employs to speak about the temple. Just as “Yhwh is supreme” (גדול יהוה) and feared “beyond all gods” (על־כל־אלהים; 16:25), so the temple would be great (הבית ... גדול) because God “is supreme beyond all the gods” (מכל־האלהים ... גדול; 2 Chr 2:4[5]). The correlation between these descriptions is hardly coincidental. Just as Yhwh's supremacy over the gods demands a cultic response from the nations in 16:25-30, so Solomon expects the temple to embody Yhwh's supremacy over the gods in 2 Chr 2:4[5]. Both David and Solomon thus devote themselves to the temple, a shift in emphasis from the books of Samuel and Kings. In short, the claims that 1 Chr 16:25 makes about Yhwh's supreme kingship become concretized in the temple project. David's entire reign becomes consumed with the augmentation of divine kingship, through giving the spoils of war for the temple, donating all his private wealth to the temple, commissioning a Yhwh-kingship psalm upon the ark's

arrival in Jerusalem (1 Chr 16:23-33), and transferring his royal power to Solomon for the purpose of building the temple.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The Levitical hymn (1 Chr 16:8-36) culminates the ark's arrival in Jerusalem, and constitutes what we might consider an inaugural hymn to Yhwh. In addition to this important literary location, its contents and resonance with other themes in the book suggest its cruciality for understanding the book's ideology of divine supremacy. Through this hymn, the Levites summon Israel to join in praise to the exalted God whose ark-shrine has arrived in Jerusalem. The movement of the ark toward Jerusalem forms an analogy with the movement of exiled Israel and the nations (16:35) toward the sanctuary in Jerusalem. The poem begins by calling Israel, as a people set "among the nations" (בְּעַמִּים), to praise Yhwh for keeping his promise to give Israel land (vv. 8-22). The next section of the poem calls for the nations and all creation to respond to the God about whom Israel testifies (vv. 23-33). Verses 23-33 exhibit two essential movements. First, they rhetorically deactivate the power of the gods who preside over the realms beyond Israel. Second, they summon the nations and cosmos to respond by transferring all honor, titles, and offerings to their rightful recipient. As such, the Levites serve as facilitators of, and participants in, praise to the supreme God. The acts of verbal praise and tangible offerings thus enact the claim that Yhwh is the supreme king of Jerusalem who reigns *in heaven and at the ark*—the loci that meet together as the heart of Yhwh's kingdom. The hymn suggests that in place of "the gods," Yhwh's own attributes and the continual praise of his people surround his exalted throne as a "substitute retinue." The inaugural Levitical hymn thus brings the most exalted claims about Yhwh into tangible connection with a particular place (Jerusalem/the ark), and lays

out tangible means through which humanity should respond to the exalted God of Israel—in the first place through offerings, and in addition through the ongoing praise of the Israelite people and their representative priests.

#### IV. DIVINE FULLNESS AND PERPETUITY: 2 CHR 2 REVISITED

In the previous chapter I argued that for Chronicles, the temple should not become Solomon’s legacy and monument, but should instead serve as a witness to *Yhwh’s* supremacy (2 Chr 2:3-5[4-6]). The temple retained its importance only as a place of *regular* dedication and offering to Yhwh, suggesting an analogy between a perpetual cult and Yhwh’s uncontainability or fullness. Chronicles repeatedly emphasizes the cult’s ongoing rituals.<sup>98</sup> Chronicles’ emphasis on ongoing and routinized rituals becomes especially evident in 2:3[4], which refers to the cult’s “continual” (תמיד) rites, which occur “morning and evening,” on “Sabbaths and new moons and the appointed festivals” as an “eternal duty.” An ongoing cult is what priests maintain precisely *because* Yhwh transcended the confines of the temple. There was an implicit analogy between ritualized fullness and Yhwh’s spatial fullness. Cultic-adorational and petitionary acts play a communicative role in asserting Yhwh’s supremacy above all other gods (2:4[5]) on a daily basis (2:3, 5[4, 6]). Although the temple could not contain a deity who was greater than the gods, it could express that “greater-than” quality in its ritualized fullness—that is, in the ongoing activities of Israel’s entire cult.

Other texts in Chronicles take up a similar line of thought, suggesting that ritualized fullness reflected the temple’s and Yhwh’s grandeur among the nations. In 1 Chr 22:5, David states that the temple needed to “become exceedingly great” above the nations. Therefore, David set about preparing its personnel and materials (1 Chr 23-28). Central to these

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<sup>98</sup> E.g., 1 Chr 16:6, 11, 37; 23:31; 2 Chr 2:4[5]; 13:10-12; 24:14.

preparations was his arrangements of the cult in temporally and *numerically* organized patterns:

For their station is to be alongside the sons of Aaron, for the service of Yhwh's temple ... and to stand each morning, thanking and praising Yhwh, and likewise in the evening, and whenever burnt offerings are offered to Yhwh, on Sabbaths, at new moons, and at appointed festival times, *according to their required number*,<sup>99</sup> regularly, before Yhwh. (1 Chr 23:28, 30-32)

The Chronicler reaches for every available term to depict the priesthood's ceaseless activity.

Moreover, the phrasing at the end of the verse ("according to their required number")

emphasizes the precise numbers required of them as they come "before Yhwh."

Temporal and numerically organized arrangements emerge strikingly in the seldom noticed duo-decimal priestly schemas in 1 Chr 23-27 and 2 Chr 35.<sup>100</sup> The following features deserve consideration:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| Ch 23 | 38,000 Levites with <b>24,000</b> in direct temple service <sup>101</sup><br>24 divisions of the tribe of Levi <sup>102</sup> |
| Ch 24 | 24 priestly divisions (authorized by Aaron) <sup>103</sup>  |

<sup>99</sup> במספר כמשפט עליהם. Cf. use of the phrase *במספר* for military divisions in Num 1-3.

<sup>100</sup> To my knowledge, no scholar has studied the importance of the duo-decimal system for the arrangement of chs. 23-27. Klein mentions the importance of 24,000 and 12,000 as schematic numbers in Chr in his article "How Many in a Thousand," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (ed. M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 270-82; Japhet never brings these numbers into synthetic consideration, though she observes the authors' attempt to establish "a system of singers parallel in every detail to that of priest and Levites, with the emphasis on the Davidic initiative for this parallel system" (*I & II Chronicles*, 444). Cf. Knoppers (*1 Chronicles 10-29*, 632-33), who discusses the tri-partite council of the king drawn from 12 princes, 12 Levites, and 12 priests (cf. 11Q19 57.11-14). For a discussion of duo-decimal courts in Second Temple literature, see Joseph M. Baumgarten, "The Duodecimal Courts of Qumran, Revelation, and the Sanhedrin," *JBL* 95/1 (1976): 59-78.

Most scholars discuss the arrangements in chs. 23-27 in terms of their contribution to understanding the redactional history of Chr. See, e.g., Williamson, "The Origins," 251-58; Knoppers, "Hierodules," 49-72; Martin Noth, *The Chronicler's History* (trans. H. G. M. Williamson; 1987; JSOTSup 50; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001 repr.), 31-33; Cross, "A Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration," 4-18. For a treatment of redactional issues, and an attempt to move beyond them, see Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 788-98.

<sup>101</sup> 1 Chr 23:3-6. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 412, points to the "typological" character of the numbers listed in vv. 3-6, all of which are multiples of four or six. Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 449, rightly points out that the Levites are divided by functions and not family or monthly divisions.

<sup>102</sup> 1 Chr 23:6-23. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 413, writes, "In spite of some difficulties in the details of the list [enumerated in vv. 6-23], it is easily seen that it contains twenty-four such fathers' houses: ten of Gershon, nine of Kohath and five of Merari. The number twenty-four is integral to the list and is not secondarily imposed on it." The number twenty-four accords with the statement that David organized the Levites *by divisions* in accordance with Levi's sons Gershon, Kohath, and Merari (v.3).

<sup>103</sup> 1 Chr 24:1-19. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 423-24, contends that the rotating courses of priests addressed a problem at the temple, namely, that "the number of available priests completely outweighed the needs of the single Temple." However, the rotating courses of Levites, gatekeepers, and singers does not seem

|       |   |
|-------|---|
|       | 24 Levitical divisions <sup>104</sup>   |
| Ch 25 | 24 chiefs of musicians, organized into 24 divisions, with 12 in each division = 288 <sup>105</sup>  |
| Ch 26 | 24 divisions of gatekeepers <sup>106</sup><br>24 (?) gatekeepers at any one time <sup>107</sup>   |
| Ch 27 | 12 divisions of 24,000 soldiers (= 288,000)<br>13 leaders of the tribes (not 12 because one leader each for priests and Levites)<br>12 managers of royal property |

Similar lay “divisions” appear as analogies to priestly divisions in 2 Chr 35:5 and 12, which may suggest a duodecimal system:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 2 Chr 35 | 24 (?) divisions of lay families for daily sacrifices <sup>108</sup> |
|----------|--|

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to stem from this problem, at least based on Ezr 2, which among the returnees lists a large number of priests (4289), but few Levites (74), singers (128) and gatekeepers (139). In any event, the schematization in 1 Chr 23-27 is at least partly schematic. Japhet does note that the genealogical lists enabled Chr to *include* large numbers of Levites, singers and gatekeepers within the ancestry of the “Levites.”

For a discussion of the origins and development of the twenty-four priestly courses, see the influential theory of Gese, “Zur Geschichte der Kultsänger am zweiten Tempel,” 222-34; Williamson, “The Origins of the Twenty-four Priestly Courses,” 251-68; Knoppers, “Hierodules,” 49-72; For post biblical references, see Jos. *Vita* 2; *Ant* 7:366; Tosefta, *Ta’anit* 4:2, 67d. The 24 priestly courses were very important in Qumran (e.g., 4Q 320; 322-24; 325; 328-29), on which see James VanderKam and Peter Flint, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance for Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 233, 259.

<sup>104</sup> 1 Chr 24:20-31. This list is most likely secondary, updating the list in 23:6-23 (e.g., note the elimination of the house of Eleazar son of Mahli in v. 28, and the fact that the Gershonites receive no mention but several genealogies are extended by a generation). See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 433; Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 837-40. Note the analogy between lot-casting system for the divisions of priests and Levites in v. 31.

<sup>105</sup> 1 Chr 25:8-31.

<sup>106</sup> 1 Chr 26:7-11.

<sup>107</sup> 1 Chr 26:17-18. There is some debate over the number of gatekeepers posted at one time, however. The discrepancy over numbers depends on how to take שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם, lit. “two, two” in 26:17. The second שְׁנַיִם is missing in the LXX and several MSS, though one could argue that it was dropped due to haplography, or that the LXX preserves the original. The only other occurrences of the sequence שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם appears is in Gen 7:9 and 15, where it means “pairs”, which could suggest “two at a time” like the NIV, or “two each,” referring to the temple’s storehouses (אֲסַפִּיִּים). This seems to be the best option, given that the ל affixed to אֲסַפִּיִּים can introduce the range in the “distribution ... of an entity to an entity” (*IBHS* §15.6b; Williams §103). However, the storehouses are not numbered, though Neh 12:25 lists six guards at these storehouses. If there are six guards, then the number of gatekeepers at one time is twenty-six. However, it is not certain that there would be consistency between these two books on this issue. Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 494-95, argues that we have “at least twenty-four gatekeepers required at any one time” (26:17-19), though again, this depends on the number of אֲסַפִּיִּים in the temple. Curtis, *Chronicles*, 295, suggests twenty-four gatekeepers, attributing it to the Chronicler’s “preference for the number 12, also twenty-four as a multiple of twelve.” Cf. also NJPS, which has twenty-four. Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 460, contends that there are twenty-two gatekeepers posted at one time (six on the east, four on the north, four on the south, two for the vestibule, and six on the west). However, Japhet’s proposal does not allow for the distributive sense of שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם + ל.

<sup>108</sup> 2 Chr 35:5. The text does not say explicitly that there were 24 divisions, only that the people were to arrange themselves by ancestral houses corresponding to the divisions (חֵלְקֵת) of the Levite. See discussion in Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1049. Japhet notes the study of O. Sperber, “Mishmarot and Ma’madoth (Priestly and Levitical Divisions),” *EncJud* 12 (1971), 83-93 [90-91]. Japhet contends, in favor of Chr’s separate authorship,

Beyond regulating the cult's schedule according to a 12-month system, the base-12 system has obvious connections to the Chronicler's "all Israel" emphasis, which receives sustained emphasis in the book.<sup>109</sup> As with the orderly apportionment of land according to *מהלקוח* in Joshua, the arrangement of priests is ideal in that those who represented *all* Israel served in a regular duo-decimal rotation.<sup>110</sup> This comports with Chronicles' idea that worship is deeply connected to temporal and numerically orderly patterns. Moreover, as Japhet points out, the use of similar numbers to depict the Levites and priests attests to their shared importance. Yhwh is to be worshipped and served by all Israel and with all priests and Levites in regular attendance, as a testimony to his greatness.

There is also a correspondence between cultic activity and divine supremacy at the end of the account of David's temple preparations. In 1 Chr 28 David hands off the divisions of the priests and Levites to Solomon (28:21). He then addresses the assembly of Israel beginning in 1 Chr 29:1, stating at the outset that the "task" (*מלאכה*) ahead is "great" (*גדולה*), for the palace was not for a human but for God.<sup>111</sup> Though also referring to the "task" of constructing the sanctuary (as 29:1-5 emphasizes), the use of *מלאכה* in the preceding chapters, as elsewhere in the book, denotes cultic "service" (*מלאכה*) at the

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that the twenty-four divisions found in chs 23-26, "represent a more advanced stage in the development of the cultic organization than anything reflected in Ezra-Nehemiah, and this applies also to the independence of the singers as a distinct class and the integration of the gatekeepers into the Levites" (26).

<sup>109</sup> 1 Chr 9:1; 11:1, 10; 12:38; 14:8; 15:3, 28; 18:14; 2 Chr 1:2; 7:8; 9:30; 10:3, 16; 12:1; 13:4, 15; 18:16; 24:5; Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*. Cf. also Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 46-47; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 46; David M. Howard Jr. (*An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books* [Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1993], 292) summarizes the data on "all Israel" in his book as follows:

No change from sources: 6 times  
 Change to "all Israel": 12 times  
 New in 1 & 2 Chronicles: 22 times

Notably, 14 references come in 2 Chr 10-36, after the kingdom split, and 5 come in chs. 29-36. "Thus, we see that one of the Chronicler's burdens was to keep the memory of 'all Israel' alive, even if it did not exist as a sociopolitical reality in his day" (292-93).

<sup>110</sup> 2 Chr 5:12; 2 Chr 7:6; 2 Chr 11:13.

<sup>111</sup> 1 Chr 29:1 reframes the statement of 22:5, though in the light of the preceding chapters.

temple.<sup>112</sup> In other words, the cultic service was to be great, because the palace was for God (29:1), just as the cult's wealth was to become abundant as an expression divine greatness (1 Chr 29:12, 14). Ritualized fullness expressed Yhwh's grandeur. Abundance, fullness, and constancy are central themes in the Chronistic conception of "the divine."

2 Chronicles 2:3-4[4-5] makes this point well. Significantly, vv. 3-4 are linked (via context and the phrase "I am about to build") in emphasis of the point that Yhwh's ceaseless cult bore witness to his supremacy. Verse 4 culminates the description of the cult in v. 3:

Look, I am about to build (אני בונה) a house for the name of Yhwh my God, to consecrate it for sweet-smelling incense and rows of bread before him regularly, and for (offering) Yhwh our God burnt offerings each morning and evening, on the Sabbaths, new moons, and appointed festivals. This is Israel's enduring duty. (v. 3)

The house which I am about to build (אני בונה) must be supreme, for our God is supreme beyond all the gods. (v. 4)

Claims about Yhwh were meant to take shape in ceaseless cultic practices and structured institutions, or, to use the language of 1 Chr 22-29, cultic "service" (מלאכה) and "divisions" (מהלקות).<sup>113</sup> Similarly, Abijah contrasts the ad hoc cult of non-gods with the ongoing temple rituals that characterized Yhwh-worship in Judah:

Whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull or seven rams becomes a priest to non-gods. But as for us, Yhwh is our God and we have not forsaken him. ... They [the priests] send up sacrifices to Yhwh, burnt offerings each morning and evening, along with sweet-smelling incense and rows of bread upon the pure table, and they light the golden lamp and its lights each evening. Indeed, we keep the charge of Yhwh our God, while you have forsaken him. (2 Chr 13:9b-11)<sup>114</sup>

Significantly, 2 Chr 2:3-4[4-5] and 13:11 both connect Jerusalem's ongoing, orderly, and lavish cult with statements about Yhwh's supremacy over other gods. Ritualized displays of cultic grandeur distinguish Judah's relationship to Yhwh as a relationship with *the* God. But

<sup>112</sup> In the preceding chapters, מלאכה typically refers to the "service" of priests and royal officials within the temple (1 Chr 23:24; 25:1; 26:29, 30; 27:26; 28:13, 19, 20, 21; cf. 1 Chr 23:4).

<sup>113</sup> On the role of the cult in attracting and maintaining Yhwh's presence, see Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 69-72.

<sup>114</sup> Emphasis mine. Both 2 Chr 13:11 (above) and 2 Chr 2:4 mention "burnt offerings," fragrant incense" and ceremonial "bread," that priests oversee "every morning and evening."



in order to explore this important text from 2 Chr 13 in further detail, it is essential to look more broadly at the Chronicler's narration of Israel's first king to threaten the unity and ceaseless activities of the Jerusalem cult.

## V. JEROBOAM'S REVOLT AND ITS CULTIC IMPLICATIONS

### A. PART I: THE FORMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH (2 CHR 11:13-17)

Following the division of Israel, 2 Chr 11:13-14 reports that all Levites left their territories, pasturelands, and property “in all Israel” to side with Rehoboam (cf. Num 35:2). Jeroboam *and* his sons had rejected them (\*זנה) from serving as priests of Yhwh and had appointed their *own* priests to serve the goat-idols (שעירים) and calves which he had made (\*עשה).<sup>115</sup>

In the book of Kings, Jeroboam contends that if the people continued going to Yhwh's temple in Jerusalem, they would likely turn back to Rehoboam, the Pharonic tyrant from whom they had recently escaped (1 Kgs 12:27). Hence, he pronounces that his golden calves delivered Israel from Egypt (v. 28). The people of Israel followed Jeroboam (v. 30) as he established new worship sites and appointed priests for the “temple of ‘Bamot” (בית במות) from “all sorts of people” who were non-Levites (v. 31).<sup>116</sup> Jeroboam inaugurated the new worship sites with a ceremony in which he offered celebratory sacrifices (vv. 32-33). Jeroboam's actions elicit two prophetic responses: one from a “man of God” in 1 Kgs 13, who predicts Josiah's desecration of Bethel (vv. 2, 32), and another from Ahijah of Shiloh in

<sup>115</sup> While most commentators assume that this passage refers to Jeroboam's expulsion of the Levites who served Yhwh, the passage only states that Jeroboam prevented them from serving in a Yahwistic capacity. The event is not portrayed as an *expulsion* until 2 Chr 13:9.

<sup>116</sup> Translation of Jonathan S. Greer, “Dinner at Dan: A Biblical and Archaeological Exploration of Sacred Feasting at Iron Age II Tel Dan,” (Ph.D. diss, The Pennsylvania State University, 2011), 25. Greer argues convincingly that the pl. במות is a Deuteronomistic gloss for an original יהיה בית, in reference to the shrine at Dan. Cf. the use of the sg. construct + pl. noun (בית הבמות) in 2 Kgs 17:29 and 32.

1 Kgs 14. The latter denounces Jeroboam for going after “other gods” (v. 9), and prophesies that his royal line will be cut off and the North eventually exiled (vv. 14-16).<sup>117</sup>

Chronicles’ account of the split between Israel and Judah differs in several respects.<sup>118</sup> First, Chronicles emphasizes how Judah became *stronger* during this period (2 Chr 11), even after a period of initial weakening (2 Chr 10). 2 Chronicles 11 reports that Rehoboam reinforced Judah militarily (vv. 5-12) and cultically (vv. 13-17), and seems to structure its account in emphasis of this point.<sup>119</sup> This contrasts markedly with the account in 1 Kings, which characterizes Rehoboam’s reign as a period of weakening and diminishment, militarily and cultically. Chronicles also recounts Rehoboam’s decline (12:2-6, 9-11), but only after he “abandoned Yhwh’s instruction” (12:1b; cf. v. 13). Second, Kings never describes the defection of Yhwh loyalists to Jerusalem. In fact, Kings describes how Jeroboam created golden calves, appointed priests, and established a festival to prevent those in the North from returning to Jerusalem to worship Yhwh (1 Kgs 12:25-33). Chronicles, on the other hand, reports that Jeroboam appointed other priests to replace the Levitical priests who went to Judah along with all those devoted to Yhwh. This is a striking subversion of Jeroboam’s intention in Kings (though not necessarily the intention of Kings’ author(s)), where Jeroboam established the cults in Bethel and Dan to *prevent* the very sort of defection that Chronicles recounts.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, 1 Kgs 12:31 never states explicitly that Levites stopped

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<sup>117</sup> It is likely that v. 14, which relates to the demise of Jeroboam’s royal line, and vv. 15-16, which relate to the exile of northern Israel, stem from different redactional layers. We cannot be certain that vv. 15-16 were available to Chr.

<sup>118</sup> For a study on the differences between the accounts of Jeroboam’s revolt in Kgs and Chr, including evidence from the LXX, see Amos Frisch, “Jeroboam and the Division of the Kingdom: Mapping Contrasting Biblical Accounts,” *JANES* 27 (2000):15-29; cf. also Gary N. Knoppers, “Rehoboam in Chronicles: Villain or Victim?” *JBL* 109 (1990):423-40.

<sup>119</sup> Chr uses of \*קָיָם (“to strengthen”) at the end of each section (vv. 12, 17), and then in the summary statement about Rehoboam’s kingdom in 12:1a.

<sup>120</sup> Though cf. the argument by Greer, “Dinner at Dan,” 34-36, that Jeroboam established the cult (at least according to the earliest traditions concerning Jeroboam’s revolt) in order to accommodate Northerners who also wanted to participate in the Jerusalem cult.

servicing as priests, and only mentions that Jeroboam appointed priests who were not Levites at his newly established shrines. It is not clear that the Levites (or priests) were disfranchised *en masse*.

Third, 1 Kings states that the Israelites went to worship at Bethel and Dan (12:30), while Chronicles omits Dan, and only mentions Bethel in Abijah's polemic against the North (2 Chr 13). The omission of Dan from Chronicles' narrative may stem from Dan's associations with the Levites in Judges 17-18. The "Levite" who serves Mica as priest in Judg 17-18 later joins with the roving Danites, and ends up in Dan as the first of a long line of priests, which continues on until the exile according to Judg 18:30. Dan might have held negative connotations for Jerusalem-centric Levites, especially since Kings claims that Levites persisted in the North until the Assyrian exile, and possibly beyond (2 Kgs 17:28).

Fourth, Chronicles reports that priestly and lay Yahwists from כל ישראל went to Jerusalem to sacrifice (2 Chr 11:16), stating more positively that Jerusalem retained the cult and Yhwh-loyalists in full numbers. The presence of "all Israel" in Judah forms an important part of Chronicles' vision for the inclusion of all Israel in Yhwh-worship, and also forecloses on the possibility that *any* Yhwh worship took place in the North (cf. 2 Chr 30:11, 18-21).<sup>121</sup> It may also be that "all Israel" was a necessary counterpart to the fact that the whole priesthood served at the temple, thus providing the basis for corresponding and complete lay and priestly divisions, which find mention in 2 Chr 35:5.

Fifth, Chronicles states that Jeroboam "and his sons" prevented the Levites from serving as priests, emphasizing the North's total and ongoing abandonment of Yhwh's cult which endured until the days of Hezekiah. Sixth, Kings suggests that Jeroboam established the cult in Bethel as a rival or supplement to Jerusalem, and that it included its own festival

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<sup>121</sup> According to 2 Kgs 17:27-28, Yhwh priests later served in the North.

and shrine. Chronicles' account remains Judah-focused, reporting only on those who came south to "seek" Yhwh through sacrifice (2 Chr 11:16). Whereas the text of Kings might leave room for Yahwistic worship, or at least a cult *like* Jerusalem's,<sup>122</sup> Chronicles removes that possibility and instead elaborates upon the unabated loyalty of all priests and Yhwh-devotees (2 Chr 13:10-12). In short, Jeroboam's revolt and secession provided the Chronicler with an opportunity to extol Jerusalem's cult.

A final difference deserves more sustained consideration. 2 Chronicles 11:15 states that Jeroboam appointed his own priests to serve "the שעירים and the calves" that he made. Kings never mentions the enigmatic שעירים (only the עגלי זהב; 1 Kgs 12:28), causing some scholarly speculation concerning their identity and function here in Chronicles. The Septuagint of 2 Chr 11:15 is even more expansive, referring to "the idols, the worthless things, and the calves" (τοῖς εἰδώλοις καὶ τοῖς ματαίοις καὶ τοῖς μόσχοις) that Jeroboam made, adding yet another object (τοῖς εἰδώλοις) to Chronicles' already expansive list. Most likely, the second object, τοῖς ματαίοις "worthless things", or "powerless things," is the term with which the LXX translator rendered שעירים, based on its use as a translation of שעירים in Lev 17:7, the only other text which discusses *sacrifice* to שעירים.<sup>123</sup>

The *identity* of the שעירים are not entirely clear. They most likely refer to some sort of hairy goat-idols or demi-gods, also called "satyrs" in later Greek and Roman sources.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> At least in the earliest textual layers (as Greer, "Dinner at Dan," 35).

<sup>123</sup> The Septuagint's expansion to *three* objects thus forms an analogy to Chr's expansion of Kgs' account to *two* objects (calves and שעירים), possibly reflecting an effort to further polemicize against Jeroboam's cult. Though outside the scope of the present project, one may note that some texts use the enumeration of such terminology to denounce cultic apostates. Exod 20:4 places פסל and תמונה in parallelism, whereas Deut 5:8 makes them into a construct chain כּל־תמונה פסל, and the Deut 4:16 expands this construct chain to פסל תמונת כּל־סמל "sculpted image of a figure of any statue." See Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11* (AB 5; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 205; Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Philadelphia: JPS, 1996), 49.

<sup>124</sup> The translation of שעיר as a "hairy goat-demon" is based on the homonym שעיר "hairy goat" and the Septuagint's translation δαιμόνια for שעירים in Isaiah. In Isa 13:21 and 34:14, the LXX renders שעירים as δαιμόνια ("demons" or "gods"). See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 668. Alternatively, שעירים might actually refer to

However, their *function* becomes clearer in the light of their appearance in Isaiah and Leviticus. First, Isa 13:21 and 34:14 associate the שעירים with other creatures in “hairy,” or “well-forested” and godforsaken regions.<sup>125</sup> The שעירים roam about with desert “howling creatures,” “hyenas,” “jackals” and “the Lilith.” When God enacts judgment on Israel, he allows the שעירים to roam their land, confusing the boundaries between domesticated and undomesticated spheres.

Second, Lev 17:7 associates the שעירים with non-centralized sacrificial slaughter. Just as the שעירים were aberrant and feared creatures of the outlying wilderness regions, so Leviticus deemed sacrifice in any place but the tabernacle aberrant שעיר-*worship* (or, “satyr worship”). According to Baruch Schwarz, “satyr worship” was just a derisive name assigned to profane slaughter once Yhwh’s fiery presence had taken up residence among them.

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“hairy goats” or hairy goat-like creatures that “appear in uninhabited and devastated surroundings ... which they haunt.”

“Satyrs” comes from the Greek Σάτυροι (never employed in the Septuagint). These woodland gods, or demon-companions to Bacchus, acquired a goat-like appearance in their later Roman adaptation. While the Greek satyrs had horse tails, their Roman counterparts had goat tails and lower bodies. Nevertheless, even the earlier Greek Satyrs had some iconographic associations with goats. The identification of the שעירים with these Greek and Roman divine companions is only made by comparison of features, and not by semantic correspondence. See B. Janowski, “Satyrs שעירים,” *DDD*, 1381-84.

Some also link the שעירים with the שדים, a term which appears to mean “demon,” based on the Akkadian cognate *šedu*, meaning “spirit,” or “demon.” See *CAD* Š/2, 256 and discussion in Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22* (AB 3a; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 1462. The שדים appear in Deut 32:17 and are identified as “non-gods” (לא אלהי), a phrase that also appears in reference to Jeroboam’s gods in 2 Chr 13:9. Targum Onkelos renders שעירים in Lev 17:7 as שדים, demonstrating that this association was present in later traditions. Notably, Ps 106:37 mentions that Israel was “sacrificing their children to שדים.” Chr awareness of Ps 106 is evident from the composite hymn in 1 Chr 16, which draws on Ps 106:1b and 47-48 in vv. 34-36. These texts do not prove Chr’s awareness of the association between the שדים and שעירים, but they at least suggest an awareness that שדים, like שעירים, were recipients of sacrifice (Ps 106:37; 2 Chr 11:15) and were identified as “non-gods” (Deut 32:17; 2 Chr 13:9).

The account of Josiah’s reform in Kings mentions that Josiah pulled down the במות השערים אשר פתח השער יהושע (“shrines of the gates that were at the entrance of Joshua’s gate”; 2 Kgs 23:8). The unusual plural construction in reference to a specific gate prompts some to emend במות השערים to במות השעירים “shrines of the satyrs.” For example, see Tadmor and Cogan, *II Kings* (AB 11; New York: Doubleday, 1988), 286-87. Otherwise, במות השערים refers to cultic installations at city gates across the country. Cf. Silvia Schroer, *In Israel gab es Bilder: Nachrichten von darstellender Kunst im Alten Testament* (OBO 74; Fribourg/Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 133.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. עזאזל “Azazel,” for whom the forsaken goat of Lev 16:8 was designated. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 1020-21; Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus* (JPSTC; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 102; David P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature* (SBLDS 101; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 21-25.

Though he does not explain the reason for the specific use of שְׂעִירִים as a priestly slight against decentralized slaughter, the reasons are likely related to their association with outlying regions and prohibited creatures. According to the author of Lev 17, Schwarz writes, “all sacrificeable animals had to be sacrificed” at the sanctuary. This injunction aimed to ensure that Israel presented all spilled blood to Yhwh before partaking of its flesh (Lev 17:6).<sup>126</sup> By prohibiting the slaughter of “sacrificeable” animals in outlying regions, Leviticus sought to prevent Yahwistic, and possibly non-Yahwistic, cults from arising in locales other than Jerusalem, and to designate as profane any region in which this took place.<sup>127</sup>

Chronicles contends that this had in fact happened in the North. Through his own actions Jeroboam decentralized the entire northern portion of the kingdom, prompting the Levites to emigrate south:

כִּי־עָזְבוּ הַלְוִיִּם אֶת־מִגְרָשֵׁיהֶם וְאֶחְזָתָם וַיֵּלְכוּ לַיהוּדָה וּלְיְרוּשָׁלַם כִּי־הִזְנִיחַם יִרְבַּעַם וּבְנָיו מִכֶּהֵן לַיהוָה:  
וַיַּעֲמְדוּ־לוֹ כֹהֲנִים לְבַמּוֹת וּלְשַׁעִירִים וּלְעִגְלִים אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:

The Levites even abandoned their common lands and holdings and went to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had prevented them from serving Yhwh as priests. So, Jeroboam appointed priests for the shrines and satyrs, and for the calves that he made. (2 Chr 11:14-15)

Jeroboam’s political defection alienated the Levites and priests geographically and spiritually from serving Yhwh at the Jerusalem temple. In this sense, he “prevented them from serving Yhwh as priests.” That is, Jeroboam would not let them worship at Jerusalem *and* keep their land holdings in the North. Jeroboam effectively re-shaped Israel’s political and sacred geography<sup>128</sup>—the evidence of which is the presence of satyrs, those beings that inhabit outlying and profane areas. By appointing his own non-Levitical priests and reconfiguring

<sup>126</sup> Baruch Schwarz, “‘Profane’ Slaughter and the Integrity of the Priestly Code,” *HUCA* 67 (1996): 15-42 [24].

<sup>127</sup> 2 Chr 13:9 critiques slaughter for priestly consecration in the North, and not slaughter as such.

<sup>128</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 669, rightly states:

Viewed from the perspective of the centralization of the cult, the legitimate priests and Levites could serve only in Jerusalem. Their only chance to realize their privilege to serve God was to move to the kingdom of Judah.

the cult, Jeroboam prevented the Levites from serving Yhwh, because Yhwh worship was inextricably bound to Jerusalem.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, for Chronicles, Jeroboam's actions only strengthened Judah relative to Israel (vv. 5, 11), eventually poisoning Judah for military victory against Israel (2 Chr 13:10-12). Divine strength coalesced in Judah, while the North weakened because of its association with high places, "outlying" satyrs, hand-made calves, and ultimately, its lack of divine presence (13:12).

The bond between Yhwh and the *whole* Jerusalemite priesthood thus endured the political schism instigated by Jeroboam, as Abijah emphasizes later in 2 Chr 13:10-11. Appropriately, faithful Israelites who wanted to "seek the Lord" also went to Judah with the Levites and priests, preserving the entire cult of Yhwh, the population in Judah, and loyal followers of Yhwh from Israel around the temple (2 Chr 11:16; 13:9; 15:9; cf. 30:25).<sup>130</sup>

#### B. PART II: ABIJAH'S POLEMIC AGAINST THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL (2 CHR 13:4-12)

Chronicles' next discussion of Jeroboam's revolt occurs in the context of Abijah's campaign against Jeroboam in 2 Chr 13.<sup>131</sup> The Chronicler uses adapted Deuteronomistic

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<sup>129</sup> Consonant with this interpretation, one may treat the *nyqtl* 7271 as a result clause (as above), succeeding logically from the previous situation (*IBHS* §33.2.1a): "So, Jeroboam appointed," explaining that Jeroboam appointed priests *after* and *because* all the sons of Levi went to Judah (cf. 1 Kgs 12:31). They abandoned their land and head to Jerusalem because of Israel's political alienation from Jerusalem, to which they were bound, and not because Jeroboam issued an order divesting them of their jobs in outlying regions (as in Kings' version of Josiah's reform; 2 Kgs 23:8-9). The logic of vv. 14-15, in this interpretation, is that (a) the Levites abandoned their land holdings, (b) because they could not serve as Jerusalemite (i.e., Yahwistic) priests from the North, (c) and due to their loyalty to Yhwh, not calves, satyrs, and shrines, (c) so Jeroboam appointed other priests to fill the void. However, there are not enough syntactical clues to make a firm judgment.

<sup>130</sup> Though Chr's "all Israel" emphasis is well-noted (cf. Williamson, *Israel*; Riley, *King and Cultus*, 198-99), the corresponding "whole priesthood" emphasis receives little discussion in secondary literature.

<sup>131</sup> 1 Kgs 15:1-8 presents Abijah (=Abijah) as an apostate king who only ruled for three years, which would ostensibly jibe with the Chronicler's so-called "theology of retributive justice." Nevertheless, Chr casts Abijah in favorable terms while acknowledging that he only reigned for a short time. Moreover, Chr devotes more than three times the amount of material to his reign than Kings, expounding in particular on the twice mentioned "war between Abijah and Jeroboam" in 1 Kgs 15:6 and 7b. The impetus for this campaign was the North's rebellion "against the kingdom of Yhwh in the hands of David's descendents" (13:8). This campaign by Abijah, as Japhet suggests correctly, fulfills Rehoboam's desire for a campaign against Jeroboam expressed in 2 Chr 11:1-4. On the possible historical background to Abijah's speech, see Gary N. Knoppers, "Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Zion: A Study in the early history of the Samaritans and Jews," *JR* 34/3-4 (2005):309-38.

formulae (1 Kgs 15:1-2 and 15:7-8), and the war between Abijah and Jeroboam, to frame his account of Abijah's polemic against Israel and war with Jeroboam:

Introduction (vv. 1-2a; cf. 1 Kgs 15:1-2)  
 War preparations (vv. 2b-3)  
 Abijah's speech to the North (vv. 4-12)  
 War between Abijah and Jeroboam (vv. 13-19)  
 Conclusion (vv. 22-23; 14:1; cf. 1 Kgs 15:7-8)

At the center of this narrative stands what some consider to be Chronicles' consummate theological statement—Abijah's impassioned speech against the North.<sup>132</sup> Abijah's speech consists of a two-fold critique, directed in particular at the North's opposition to Yhwh's kingship and Yhwh's priesthood. The parallelism between these two aspects of Abijah's critique is evident in the following literary outline of vv. 4-12:

- I. Prelude (v. 4)
- II. **Yhwh's Kingship** in Davidic Hands (vv. 5-8) – begins with הלא
  - A *Claim* – Davidic kingship over Israel by a covenant of salt (v. 5)
  - B *Conflict* – False kingship *via* Jeroboam based on illegitimate lineage/status and false counsel (vv. 6-7)
  - A' *Claim* reframed– Yhwh's rule in Davidic hands (v. 8a).
  - B' *Conflict* reframed– Opposing divine rule with golden calves that Jeroboam made for himself (opposition between false king/divine sponsor and divine king) (עשה לכם) (v. 8b)
- III. **Yhwh's Priesthood** (vv. 9-11) – begins with הלא
  - A *Conflict* – False priesthood by banishing priests and Levites and making own priests (תעשו לכם) like the nations (v. 9)
    - Result – priests of non-gods (Evidence – mode of consecration; v. 9)
  - B *Claim* – Yhwh is our God and Aaron's descendants are priests of Yhwh, and Levites serve them. (v. 10)
    - Evidence – daily ritual (v. 11a)
  - B' *Claim* reframed– We observe ritual requirements (v. 11b)
  - A' *Conflict* reframed– You have forsaken him (v. 11c)
- IV. Yhwh's Priestly Army – Yhwh with priests will achieve military victory (v. 12)

Several aspects of this literary arrangement deserve mention. First, Abijah directs his critique of the North against its institutions (kingship and priesthood). The priority of institutions in Abijah's critique aligns with the emphasis in 2 Chr 11, which in contrast to Kings, focuses first on Jeroboam's deviant priesthood. Second, Chronicles structures the conflict between

<sup>132</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 105, lists the distinctive Chronic features of this passage; cf. also Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 374; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 687; cf. Gary N. Knoppers, "Battling Against Yahweh: Israel's War against Judah in 2 Chron. 13:2-20," *RB* 100/4 (1990):423-40.



the north and south in terms of Jeroboam's *false* kingship and priesthood *Yhwh's* mediated kingship and priesthood. For instance, v. 5 states that "the kingdom of Yhwh is in the hands of David's descendants" (ממלכת יהוה ביד בני דויד), and v. 12 refers to "his [Yhwh's] priests."<sup>133</sup> This positions the central conflict as one between king Jeroboam and his cult on the one hand, and Yhwh and his cult on the other, with king Abijah acting more like a prophet of Yhwh than a king.

A clash of purely human institutions with divinely mediated institutions, therefore, constitutes the appropriate framework for understanding Chronicles' presentation of the difference between Israel and Judah. As Rudolph sums it up, "Judah has three important things ahead of Israel. The true God (האלהים 12α) is on its side, the divinely appointed dynasty ..., against which even a superior troop force cannot accomplish anything ... and the legitimate priesthood."<sup>134</sup> It is not surprising that among the geographical gains of this battle is the city of Bethel, the primary religious institution that opposed Jerusalem's hegemony during the period recounted. Its reincorporation into Judah at the end of the chapter undoubtedly bore theological significance for the cult-centric Chronicler.<sup>135</sup> Bethel also sat on the inside edge of what would become the Persian province of Yehud, which would have vindicated the Chronicler's contention that it had no religious role apart from

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<sup>133</sup> Moreover, it must be remembered that the Chronicler is less interested in the evaluation of kings as such, and more interested in the events of Yhwh's kingdom in the hands of its representative kings. This leads to the possibility of focusing on one particularly striking example of Yhwh's rule (v. 8) while leaving the evaluation of Abijah undecided. See Martin J. Selman, *2 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1994), 377; David G. DeBoys, "History and Theology in the Chronicler's Portrayal of Abijah," *Biblica* 71 (1990): 48-62. Another text that offers a striking alignment of Yhwh's rule with Judah vis-à-vis Israel is 2 Chr 25:7, where Amaziah tried to conscript Northern soldiers to fight against Seir, but was warned by a prophet not to "let the army of Israel come with you, because Yhwh is not with Israel—all the Ephraimites."

<sup>134</sup> Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 238. Translation mine.

<sup>135</sup> According to 1 Chr 7:28, Bethel belonged to Ephraim (as in Josh 16:2-3, 7) and not Benjamin, though its proximity to the border may have been cause for dispute (as in Josh 18:22; Neh 11:31). Bethel's presence within Yehud may have caused some concern because of its history as an emblematic apostate center, and thus Chr associates the town with the North during its period of idolatry under Jeroboam, but with the South once it was conquered by Abijah (2 Chr 13).

Jerusalem.<sup>136</sup> Its inclusion in Yehud may have served as a token of hoped-for cultic unification of “all Israel,” for as Chronicles contends, the Levites still had land holdings in the North (2 Chr 11:14).

Several additional features of the priesthood are significant, yet remain virtually undiscussed in the secondary literature on this passage. I will discuss aspects relevant to an understanding of the connection between the priesthood and Yhwh’s supremacy and sole divinity.

#### 1. HUMAN-MADE PRIESTHOODS

In the previous chapter, I argued that in Chronicles the temple embodied divine features, participating in Yhwh’s supreme uniqueness, and thus offered supporting evidence for the belief that Yhwh stood apart from all other gods and cults. Concerning the temple’s material uniqueness, I suggested that Chronicles emphasizes Yhwh’s role in creating the temple. Along these lines, Chronicles emphasizes Yhwh’s role in designing, electing, and forming the priesthood in ways that exhibit his fullness and perpetuity (as discussed in sections II and III of this chapter). Chronicles also contends that other priesthoods were simply human creations (2 Chr 13). They had no divine point of origin.

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<sup>136</sup> For an overview of the archaeology of Bethel, see W. Dever, “Beitin, Tell,” *ABD* 1:651-52; Oded Lipschits, “The History of the Benjamite Region under Babylonian Rule,” *Tel Aviv* 26 (1999):155-90; idem, “Demographic Changes in Judah between the Seventh and Fifth Centuries B.C.E.,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (ed. O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 323-76. Klaus Koenen, *Bethel: Geschichte, Kult, und Theologie* (OBO 192; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2003).

Several scholars recently argued that there was a temple at Bethel in the Persian period. Ernst Axel Knauf (“Bethel: The Israelite Impact on Judean Language and Literature,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, 291-350 [308]) thinks that Bethel was the cultic center of Judah/Yehud after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586, while Mizpah was the administrative center. There is good evidence that the site of Bethel survived into the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, though the existence of a temple is completely conjectural, lacking any archaeological support. Cf. Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers in *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8* (AB 25B; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 382. The textual support adduced by Knauf, such as Zech 7:2-3, where a delegation goes to Jerusalem to ask whether they should continue mourning, is unconvincing. If anything, Zech 7:2-3 demonstrates that a delegation from Bethel *lacked* a temple and deferred to the Jerusalem temple by mourning its destruction.

Several texts of which Chronicles makes use attest to a broader conceptual parallelism between *making institutions* and *making idols*, especially with regard to the Northern cult. For example, Hosea contends that Israel

made kings, but not with my sanction; they set up princes, but without my knowledge. With their silver and gold they made idols for their own destruction. Your calf is rejected, O Samaria. My anger burns against them. How long will they be incapable of innocence? (Hos 8:4-5)<sup>137</sup>

A. Gelston (following Rudolph) observes the parallelism between idolatry and king-making in this verse: “Since the time of Jeroboam I the two had been closely connected, and ... the connection of thought in viii 4 is that both king-making and idol-making were merely human activities.”<sup>138</sup> This correlation exists politically as well, since according to Hosea the golden calf became a symbol of the Northern state god, hence legitimating the “creation” of the Israelite king and administration. Gelston also observes Israel’s other idolatrous “creations” mentioned by Hosea, such as military alliances (8:8-10) and military fortifications (8:14). Gelston contends that Hosea 8 is a collection of oracles unified in their protest against Israel putting trust in alternatives to Yhwh, both political and religious. Notably, Hosea calls the “calf of Samaria” a “non-god” (לֹא אֱלֹהִים; 8:6), the same phrase Chronicles employs to depict the object of priestly dedication in the North (2 Chr 13:9).<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Translation adapted from Matthias Köckert, “YHWH in the Northern and Southern Kingdom,” in *One God – One Cult – One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives*, 357-394 [372].

<sup>138</sup> A. Gelston, “Kingship in the Book of Hosea,” in *Language and Meaning. Studies in Hebrew Language and Biblical Exegesis: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference held at London, 1973* (ed. James Barr; OtSt 19; Leiden, Brill, 1974), 71-85 [82]. Gelston points out that the close association between king-making and idol-making in these verses has even led some to suggest that Israel worshipped a deity called Melek, whose attendants were שָׂרִים (72). Cf. also, Köckert, “YHWH in the Northern and Southern Kingdom,” 357-394.

<sup>139</sup> Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 253, maintains that the phrase לֹא אֱלֹהִים in 2 Chr 13:9 refers to the satyrs of 11:15, and probably does not refer to the calves. However, the most logical antecedent for לֹא אֱלֹהִים is the calves in 2 Chr 13:8. Moreover, I contend that שַׁעִירִים in 11:15 is most likely a derogatory term to caricature Jeroboam’s cult as an outlier, and may in fact apply to the calves in that passage as well. The phrase וְלַעֲגָלִים in 2 Chr 11:15 could be read epexegetically as “that is, the calves.” The idea that Chr is introducing another entity is otherwise unusual.

One might also add to Gelston's observations that the prophet Hosea, like King Abijah in 2 Chr 13, takes issue with the North establishing and creating those things that lack Yhwh's authorization ("without my sanction ... without my knowledge" Hos 8:4-5).<sup>140</sup> Abijah's argument in 2 Chr 13 extends further than its prophetic predecessor, stating that the North had created something to supplant Yhwh's *sole* priestly representatives. Just as Hos 8:4-5 states that Israel made kings "without my sanction" and "without my knowledge," Jeroboam created a priesthood without the Levites and priests sanctioned by Yhwh. The initiative for Jeroboam's cult was purely royal and popular. Jeroboam made his own priests and shrines. Moreover, there was no divinely-mandated process of ordination, no Levitical or Aaronic pedigree, and no connection to the Jerusalem temple. Priests could even buy their way in: "Anyone who comes to consecrate himself with a young bull or seven rams becomes a priest to what are no-gods" (2 Chr 13:9b).<sup>141</sup>

Chronicles' identification between priest-making and idol-making becomes evident in the parallelism between Jeroboam's "making" his own priests and "making" his own gods:

You are certainly a large multitude, and you have the golden calves which Jeroboam made as your gods [עשה לכם ... לאלהים]. Did you not banish the priests of Yhwh—the sons of Aaron and the Levites—and then make yourselves priests [ותעשו לכם כהנים] as do the populations of the lands? (2 Chr 13:8b-9a)

The grounds for this parallelism and the Chronicler's narrative are already present in Hos 8, but also in Chronicles' sources. Kings states that Jeroboam made golden calves for Bethel and Dan, instituted a rival festival, built high places, and appointed priests from the whole population (1 Kgs 12:31-33). Jeroboam ויעש כהנים "made priests" just as he "made calves" and "made high places" (1 Kgs 12:31-33). Of this narrative, Nathan MacDonald writes:

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<sup>140</sup> As such, Hos 8 treats two important dimensions of "idolatry" in the Hebrew Bible, namely, (1) turning in appeal to alternative sources of power, and (2) pursuing objects that lack Yhwh's authorization.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. 1 Kgs 13:33; Jer 2:11; Ps 106:20; Hos 4:7; 1 Chr 29:5b, 31. Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 109, observes that in Exod 29:1, consecration for the priesthood required offering a young bull and *two* rams: "The increase to seven [in 2 Chr 13] may reflect the current practice in Jerusalem as well as the time of the schism, or possibly 'inflation' in the new kingdom of Jeroboam, enhancing for the Chronicler the idea that the office was for sale."

The Deuteronomistic perspective on the Northern cult is made explicit through the repetition of the keyword *'asab* 'to make' which occurs nine times in 1 Kgs 12:25-33. The cult – with its calves, house of the high place, priests, altar and festival – are entirely the result of Jeroboam's devising, a product of his own imagination.<sup>142</sup>

Kings' threefold reference to Jeroboam "making" *priests* (1 Kgs 12:31-32; 13:33), and the emphatic claim that Jeroboam created the entire cult himself likely spurred Chronicles' choice to identify Jeroboam's priests with the idols he made.

This point receives further substantiation by the fact that the language Chronicles employs to describe Jeroboam's "priest-making" (תעשו לכם) evokes important Pentateuchal prohibitions against "idol-making." In fact, the specific phrase תעשו לכם occurs only four other times in the Hebrew Bible, three of which bear directly on idolatry:<sup>143</sup>

לא תעשון אתי אלהי כסף ואלהי זהב לא תעשו לכם

Do not make gods of silver alongside me. And gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. (Exod 20:23)

אל־תפנו אל־האלילים ואלהי מסכה לא תעשו לכם אני יהוה אלהיכם

Do not turn aside to hand-crafted gods. Cast gods you shall not make for yourselves. I am Yhwh your God. (Lev 19:4)

לא־תעשו לכם אלילים

You shall not make for yourselves hand crafted gods ... (Lev 26:1).

In addition to the similarity in language with these texts, the close relationship between the phrase עשה לכם in 2 Chr 13:8b and the phrase תעשו לכם in 13:9a in reference to golden calves commends the analogy between idol-making and priest-making.<sup>144</sup> The phrase "you make for yourself" (ועשיתם לכם; 2x) also appears in Deuteronomistic prohibitions against making

<sup>142</sup> Nathan MacDonald, "Recasting the Golden Calf: The Imaginative Potential of the Old Testament's Portrayal of Idolatry," in *Idolatry: False Worship in the Bible, Early Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Stephen C. Barton; New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 22-39 [35].

<sup>143</sup> One may also note the use of the singular תעשה לך in Exod 20:4; 34:17; Deut 5:8 (each in reference to "making" idols). Yet, the phrase תעשה לך has other applications (cf. Exod 34:22; Deut 16:13, 21; 22:12; Jer 2:17; Prov 24:6), and does not imply an idolatrous creation on syntactical grounds alone. Rather, the constellation of themes related to illicit cult practices provides this connection.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. also the thesis of C. H. Park (*From Mount Sinai to the Tabernacle: A Reading of Exodus 24:12-40:38 as a Case of Intercalated Double Plot* [PhD diss, University of Gloucestershire, 2002]), who argues that the tabernacle construction narrative in Exod 25-40 is the primary plot while the golden calf construction narrative constitutes a countervailing subplot. The value of this analogy is its suggestion that the Hebrew Bible itself juxtaposes idol making with constructing aspects of the cult (in this case, the priesthood). See discussion in Pekka Pitkänen, "Temple Building and Exodus 25-40," in *From the Foundations*, 255-80.

idols after the “pattern” (תבנית; 5x) of anything Yhwh had made (Deut 4:16-18, 23).<sup>145</sup> The heart of these Deuteronomic prohibitions is the conviction that image-making and image-worship robs Yhwh of his creative and devotional prerogatives.<sup>146</sup> While in 2 Chr 13 invectives may have been aimed to delegitimize the Northern cult (in the Chronicler’s day, perhaps at the Mount Gerizim Temple) as an instance of idolatry, it also sought to preserve the uniqueness of what Yhwh himself created—the Jerusalem cult.<sup>147</sup>

A fourth text that employs the phrase לא תעשו לכם (Exod 30:37) prohibits Israel from making itself incense out of the same ingredients that priests used in the cult. Though not referring to idols, this prohibition nonetheless calls attention to the fact that certain kinds of craftsmanship were off limits to Israel because Yhwh already reserved them for holy purposes (cf. also weaving linen and wool).<sup>148</sup> A similar dynamic is at play in Chronicles’ perspective on the northern cult. Chronicles maintains (following Kings) that priest-making paid no regard for that which Yhwh created and appointed—the Levites and sons of Aaron.<sup>149</sup> In so doing, Jeroboam “circumvented and ignored” Yhwh’s elected priesthood.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Deut 4:16-18, 23 contains the highest concentration of the word תבנית in the Hebrew Bible, and also employs the phrase “make yourself” (לכם + עשה\*):

פְּנִיתְשַׁחְתוּן וְעִשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת כָּל־סֹמֵל תְּבִנִית זָכָר אוֹ נִקְבָּה: תְּבִנִית כָּל־בְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ  
 תְּבִנִית כָּל־צְפוּר כִּנְף אֲשֶׁר תְּעוֹף בְּשָׁמַיִם: תְּבִנִית כָּל־רֶמֶשׂ בְּאֲדָמָה תְּבִנִית כָּל־דָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־יִבְמִים מִתַּחַת לָאָרֶץ: ...  
 הַשְּׁמֵרוּ לָכֶם פְּנִיתְשַׁחְתוּן אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת עִמָּכֶם וְעִשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת כָּל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ יְהוָה  
 אֱלֹהֵיךְ:

[Watch out] lest you become corrupt by making for yourselves a sculpted form of any image, whether after the pattern of anything male or female, after the pattern of any beast which is on the earth, after the pattern of any winged bird which flies in the heavens, after the pattern of anything creeping on the earth, after the pattern of any fish which is in the waters below the earth. ... So be careful not to forget the covenant that the LORD your God made with you, and not to make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything that the LORD your God has forbidden you. (Deut 4:16-18, 23 NRSV)

<sup>146</sup> Notice that after the prohibitions on idolatry in Deut 4, Moses goes on to state that Yhwh uniquely formed Israel.

<sup>147</sup> The degree to which Chr’s polemic against the North was a reaction to the presence of a Jewish temple on Mount Gerizim is not entirely clear. See Magnar Kartveit, *The Origins of the Samaritans* (VTSup 128; Leiden: Boston, 2009), 216-225; Knoppers, “Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Zion.”

<sup>148</sup> On the Hebrew Bible’s critique of creativity more generally, see Michael Carasik, *Theologies of the Mind in Biblical Israel* (StBL 85; New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 93-138.

<sup>149</sup> Explored in section III below.

<sup>150</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 693.

## 2. A PRIESTHOOD LIKE THE NATIONS'

Chronicles pushes even farther in v. 9 to suggest that creating one's own priesthood was the way of עמי הארצות "populations of the lands" (2 Chr 13:9).<sup>151</sup> 2 Chronicles 13:9 is the only passage in the Hebrew Bible that compares Israel to the nations in terms of their self-appointed priesthood. Chronicles' comparison with the nations appears to draw its inspiration from several passages in Kings that pertain to the priesthood in the North. First, the parallel passages in Kings states that Jeroboam appointed priests "from a wide range of people" (מקצות העם) who were not Levites (1 Kgs 12:31; 13:33-34). Second, in 1 Kgs 13:33-34 a "man of God" states that because Jeroboam kept appointing his own priests his royal line would be destroyed.<sup>152</sup> Third, Ahijah then prophesies exile for Jeroboam's kingdom (14:15) because he made himself "gods of metal" (14:9). Fourth, in a text that reports on that prophesied exile (2 Kgs 17:28-32) Kings reports how the invading Assyrians exiled but eventually resettled a Yhwh-priest in Bethel to teach the Assyrians how to fear Yhwh. However, the Assyrians also "appointed from among themselves all sorts of people as priests of the high places" in Israel (17:32). And so, those in the North served Yhwh *and* the gods of nations, as such syncretism was "the manner of the nations from among whom [the Israelites] had been carried away" (17:33). The North thus served and bowed down to

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<sup>151</sup> 2 Chr 32:13 and 17 associate defunct deities with the עמי הארצות; Those deities contrast starkly with the "fame" of Yhwh and his King among הארצות in 1 Chr 14:17, 29:30, 2 Chr 12:8, 17:10, 20:29, and the temple among הארצות in 1 Chr 22:5. 1 Chr 5:25, recounts how Israel pursued the "gods of the lands" עמ ארצות that were already destroyed. The theme of defeated nations and their gods also emerges in 1 Chr 14:12; 2 Chr 25:14 and 28:23.

<sup>152</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 694, also notes that the use of מלא יד "to consecrate oneself" (2 Chr 13:9) borrows from 1 Kgs 13:33. Japhet writes that this "draws our attention again to the fact that the Chronicler draws heavily on the relevant source-texts even when he does not cite them in his story."

multiple gods “until this day” (17:34).<sup>153</sup> The characterization of the North as idolatrous persisted at least until the time when 2 Kgs 17 was written.

Chronicles apparently makes the connection between the language of 1 Kgs 12:31 and 17:32. These texts use identical language to describe Jeroboam appointing priests from “a wide range of the people” (מקצות העם; 1 Kgs 12:31) and the Assyrians appointing priests from “a wide range of their own people” (מקצות העם; 2 Kgs 17:32). These two texts would provide support for the Chronicler’s conclusion that the Northern cult was just like that of the “peoples of the lands” (כעמי הארצות; 2 Chr 13:9). Jeroboam’s cult lacked divine authorization in the form of priests and Levites, and lacked necessary ties with Jerusalem. Jeroboam made (עשה) his own priests to serve at shrines, just as the Assyrians later “made themselves” (ויעשו להם) priests of the shrines in service of other gods. Jeroboam’s actions thus anticipate the “Assyrianization” of Samaria. Chronicles does not acknowledge any Yhwh worship at Bethel (2 Kgs 17:28). The North worshipped with those who became “priest(s) to non-gods” (כהן ללא אלהים) rather than the “priests of Yhwh” (כהני יהוה; 2 Chr 13:9).

### C. CONCLUSIONS

Chronicles continues the vein of thought seen elsewhere in the book, which emphasizes the temple’s and the priesthood’s unique bond with the true God—a God praised ceaselessly by loyal priests. The Jerusalem temple, Aaronic priests, and Levites, were Yhwh’s uniquely chosen and authorized representatives. Chronicles recasts Jeroboam’s

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<sup>153</sup> Several other texts may have influenced the Chronicler’s presentation. Hezekiah’s prayer in Kings recounts how the Assyrians had burned the gods of the nations, because “indeed they were not gods at all [לא] אלהים המה” (2 Kgs 19:18 // Isa 37:19). Jeremiah 16 anticipates that the nations would come to Jerusalem and declare the futility of their own gods, which Jeremiah calls לא אלהים (Jer 16:19-20; cf. 2:11).



rebellion as a time that strengthened the Jerusalem cult, and which affirmed its bond with the true God. Jeroboam had decentralized the Northern cult, causing all priests and Yahwists to flee south in order to remain loyal to the temple. Chronicles maintains that the North was involved in “satyr worship,” for they were now cultic outliers. The Chronicler here follows a principle laid out in the previous chapter: Yhwh’s cult and non-Yahwistic cults operate in separate incompatible spheres. 2 Chronicles 13 carries forward the hints already present in Kings that Jeroboam’s establishment of priests was idolatrous by equating this act with the practices of the nations, which according to the Levitical hymn in 1 Chr 16, worshipped “handmade gods.”<sup>154</sup> Furthermore, Chronicles concludes that the Northern cult was on par with the nations who create their own cults and gods. In one fell swoop, Abijah associates the northern cult with those of the surrounding nations, and brings them all into association with non-gods (cf. 2 Chr 32).

It is notable, therefore, that Abijah contrasts “our God” with “non-gods.” There is no middle ground in his polemic which would grant each nation (much less the North!) its own god.<sup>155</sup> This is a subtle, but important, dimension of monotheism in Chronicles. Specifically, Judah’s unique relationship with Yhwh stood as a point of categorical difference from other institutions, nations, and so-called “deities.”<sup>156</sup> Chronicles thus leaves a domain of non-deities around Yhwh. As we will observe in the next section, it is an organized

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<sup>154</sup> אֱלִילִים; 1 Chr 16:26.

<sup>155</sup> Texts claiming that Yhwh is the *only* God usually pertain to unique acts that Yhwh has performed. 2 Chr 13 is a worthy passage to discuss in light of issues of henotheism. The idea that Yhwh is “our God” doesn’t lead to the idea that golden calves are “your God,” but rather, to the idea that your gods are “no gods” (לֹא אֱלֹהִים). More broadly, 2 Chr 13:9-11 sets up a contrast between the כֹּהֵנֵי יְהוָה and the כֹּהֵן לִלְאֵ אֱלֹהִים. Cf. 2 Chr 32:19, which contrasts the “God of Jerusalem” with “the gods of the other peoples of the world—the work of human hands.” Again, the unique relationship between Yhwh and Jerusalem trumps, and does not allow for, such relationships among the nations. Similar contrasts exist in the Deuteronomistic History, as discussed in ch. 5 of this study (e.g., regarding 2 Kgs 5:15).

<sup>156</sup> See K. L. Noll, *Canaan and Israel in Antiquity: An Introduction* (TBS 83; New York/London: Sheffield, 2001), 250.

priesthood that helps sharpen the distinctiveness of this domain in which Yhwh is exalted cultically.

## VI. CULT REFORMS AND PRIESTLY APPOINTMENTS

As with the Jerusalem temple, Yhwh's priests and Levites never commingled with idolatry, but remained functionally separate and related to Yhwh *at the Jerusalem temple*. Just as the temple closed its doors during periods of apostasy, so the priesthood ceased its operations. The most striking case is during Ahaz's reign, during which time the Judeans "shut the doors of the entrance and snuffed out the lamps. They did not offer up incense or make burnt offerings at the sanctuary to the God of Israel" (2 Chr 29:7). Just as the temple closed its doors during times of syncretism or cultic disloyalty, so priests ceased regular duties, serving only in a limited capacity as gatekeepers and guardians of the temple, essentially keeping the temple closed during times of apostasy (2 Chr 23-24). In other words, priests did not always function according to their designated duties or divisions (עבודות or מחלקות) during such periods. Moreover, priests also took part in the reforms, cleaning out the temple, carrying out cultic purges, and other duties. As argued in this section, their limited duties during the temple's closure, and their cultic activities during the reforms, constitute periods of liminality for the priesthood. They serve Yhwh but not according to their "design." I suggest that Chronicles uses priestly appointment narratives to mark the cult's new beginning and re-creation after such liminal periods. These narratives, in effect, emphasize the priesthood's categorical separation from illicit and idolatrous cultic realities.

As such, priestly (re-)appointment narratives only appear *after* the people rid Judah of such cultic elements and the people become re-consecrated.<sup>157</sup>

This section explores cultic reforms and restorations, arguing that Chronicles (a) emphasizes the priesthood's functional sanctity, and (b) uses priestly reappointment narratives to mark the boundary between worship of Yhwh and worship of other deities. These cult reforms and restorations highlight ways that Chronicles forges divides between Yhwh and non-Yahwistic reality and forges relationships with his elect priesthood. Having already discussed Rehoboam's and Abijah's reigns (2 Chr 11, 13), our investigation continues with the account of Asa's reform, which for the Chronicler, prepares the ground theologically for Jehoshaphat's actions.

#### A. ASA'S REFORMS (2 CHR 15)

Asa's reign marks a high point in Judean history (2 Chr 14-16). The Chronicler expands its *Vorlage* by forty-seven verses, and offers a number of distinctive elements to argue for the importance of cultic fidelity and a stable priesthood to ensure Israel's well-being. Azariah's prophetic speech (2 Chr 15:2b-7) emphasizes these themes. Azariah utters this speech after Asa defeated a million-man army from Ethiopia (2 Chr 14) and before Asa's cult reform in (2 Chr 15:8-19). The literary structure of Azariah's speech may be depicted as follows:

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| A  | Appeal to seek (*שׁוּר) Yhwh (v. 2b)                            |
| B  | Description of past apostasy and social fragmentation (vv. 3-6) |
| A' | Final appeal to be strong (*קוּר) and take courage (v. 7)       |

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<sup>157</sup> 1 Chr 15-16; 2 Chr 23; 29-31; 35. Though there were ad hoc roles for priests (esp. the chief priest and gatekeepers) during other periods, Chr distinguishes between such times and the *full functioning* of the cult (discussed further below).

Azariah's speech consists of an historical summary framed by an appeal for Judah to "seek" Yhwh (v. 2b), and to "be strong" (v. 7) and "take courage" (אל ירפּוּ יְדִיכֶם; v. 7). The heart of Azariah's appeal to reform the cult consists of the following historical summary:

For many days Israel did not have the true God (אלהי אמת), and did not have a teaching priest (כהן מורה), and did not have instruction (תורה). But in their distress they turned to Yhwh, the God of Israel; they sought (\*דרש\*) him and he was found by them. In those days, it was not safe to go out or come in, because there was great unrest among all the inhabitants of the lands. Nation was crushed by nation, and city by city, because God disturbed them with all kinds of unrest. (2 Chr 15:3-6)<sup>158</sup>

The details of this historical review resemble Israel's pre-monarchic period as depicted in the book of Judges.<sup>159</sup> As Dillard argues, the post-exilic community likely saw their own situation in the social instability enumerated in vv. 3-6.<sup>160</sup> Leslie Allen argues similarly that "just as Azariah was exhorting pre-exilic Judah by referring to past history, so also the Chronicler was challenging post-exilic Judah and using Azariah's address as his own."<sup>161</sup> Social and spiritual chaos defined the period of the Israelite judges. Israel achieved temporary deliverance by crying out to Yhwh, but found no lasting political solution.<sup>162</sup> As such, Judges points toward a deeper institutional problem that plagued Israel, namely, the absence of a king.<sup>163</sup> While there is considerable and valid debate about the extent to which Judges actually *endorses* the monarchy as a solution to its problems, it is notable that Azariah also

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<sup>158</sup> The reference to international strife in 2 Chr 15:6 echoes Isa 19:2, in which Yhwh resolves to "provoke Egyptians against Egyptians such that a man will fight against his brother, and man against his friend, city against city, and kingdom against kingdom."

In that text, the Egyptians purportedly cling to their idols, mediums, and spiritists for deliverance, but find themselves overpowered by another nation (Isa 19:1-4).

<sup>159</sup> Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 245, aligns the texts of vv. 3-6 with particular texts from Judges. V. 3a = Judg 2:11-14; v. 3bβ = Judg 17:5; v. 3bγ = Judg 17:6; 21:25; v. 4 = Judg 2:18; 3:9, 6:6bff.; 10:9bff; v. 5a = Judg 5:6; 6:2ff; v. 6 = Judg 8:5-9, 15-17; 12:4ff. However, he places v.4 after vv. 5-6. The Tg takes vv. 3-6 as a description of the time of Jeroboam, and not a description of the past. The LXX and Vul apply these verses to future events, as in Hos 3:4. See discussion of proposals concerning the referents in passage by Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 384, who nonetheless concludes that it seems to be a description of the period of Israel's judges.

<sup>160</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 120.

<sup>161</sup> Leslie C. Allen, "The First and Second Books of Chronicles: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," in *New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 3 (ed. Leander E. Keck *et al*; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 297-659 [538].

<sup>162</sup> The previous chapter in Chr states that Asa cried out to Yhwh when faced with the Ethiopian onslaught (14:11).

<sup>163</sup> Judg 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25.

points toward an institutional problem plaguing Israel in this period. However, instead of the absence of the monarchy, he refers to the absence of teaching priests to offer instruction (תורה). In other words, Azariah re-frames the pre-monarchic period as a time of weak *cultic* institutions, with no teaching priests to ensure Israel's adherence to the true God (אלהי אמת).<sup>164</sup> Ensuring knowledge of the true God required a stable and active priesthood.

Otherwise, social and religious disorder would result. As asserted elsewhere in Chronicles, Israel's national security depended on a strong cult (e.g., 2 Chr 11:17; 12:1; 13:12; 14:17).<sup>165</sup>

Several scholars have pointed out that 2 Chr 15:3 bears some affinities with Hos 3:4: “For the Israelites will dwell for many days without king or ruler, and without sacrifice or standing stone, and without an ephod or teraphim.”<sup>166</sup> However, *unlike* Hos 3:4 (or Judges), 2 Chr 15 suggests that the priesthood and torah, and not kingship, provided the leadership solution to Israel's geo-political strife. Though Chronicles does not devote the same attention to *teaching* that it does to music, sacrifice, and other priestly roles, 2 Chr 15:3 maintains Judah's ability to align itself with the true God depended upon teaching priests.<sup>167</sup> Such priests would safeguard Judah's alignment with the true God through instruction, the sure guarantee of societal unity.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Though difficult to determine the Chronicler's familiarity with Jer 10 on the basis of one text, it is worth noting that Jer refers to יהוה אלהים אמת in the midst of an idol polemic (Jer 10:10; cf. Wis 12:27).

<sup>165</sup> As these texts suggest, building and reforming were two central defensive measures taken by Israel's kings.

<sup>166</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 719; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 120; Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 384-85.

<sup>167</sup> Cf. the indictment of teaching priests in Mal 2:8.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. Mal 2:1-9; 10-12. This social concern is similar to the point made by Abijah in 2 Chr 13. When the north created its own priesthood apart from the one true priesthood—which rightly followed cultic prescriptions—polytheism and civil war followed. Chr's concern for societal, or “All Israel” unity explain why Chr agitates for unity or complementarity between priests and Levites.

Asa responded to Azariah's prophetic call to "seek" (\*דרש) Yhwh by instituting wide-scale cultic reform (vv. 8-19),<sup>169</sup> in which he eliminated the "shrines"<sup>170</sup> and removed all the "detestable idols" from Judah, Benjamin, and the captured towns in Ephraim (2 Chr 15:8).<sup>171</sup> Then he "restored Yhwh's altar" (ויחדש את־מזבחה יהוה) in front of the temple (v. 8), and gathered to it all Judah, Benjamin and Yahwists from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who joined with Asa because "Yhwh his God was with him."<sup>172</sup> After Asa's reform, Yhwh responds by giving them "rest all around" (v. 15). However, while Asa instituted reforms, he failed to make necessary priestly (re-)appointments, the precondition for mediating knowledge of "the true God" according to Azariah's speech (2 Chr 15:3; cf. Mal 2:6-7). As a result, conditions under Asa quickly deteriorate, as Israel falls into apostasy against Yhwh. Most egregiously, Asa sends articles from the temple to Ben Hadad of Syria in order to secure a treaty against Israel (2 Chr 16:1-3). The suggestion, therefore, is that reforms without priestly re-instatements can easily lose traction. The full realization of this vision does not occur until Jehoshaphat appoints teaching priests (2 Chr 17) and thus secures the kingdom. Azariah's prophecy in 15:2b-7 foreshadows Jehoshaphat's appointment of

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<sup>169</sup> See discussions in ch. 2. According to the Chronicler, "seeking" (\*דרש and \*בקש) Yhwh is incompatible with seeking other deities. In fact, "seeking" Yhwh often led to the destruction of other idols (1 Chr 10:13; 13:3; 2 Chr 14:3-5; 2 Chr 25:20; 34:3). 1 Chr 28:9b-10 is exemplary:

If you seek (דרש) Him He will be available to you, but if you forsake Him He will abandon you forever. See then, the LORD chose you to build a house as the sanctuary; be strong and do it. (1 Chr 28:9b-10 NJPS)

<sup>170</sup> According to 2 Chr 14:2, 4 [ET 3, 5], Asa cut down the shrines (במות). However, according to 2 Chr 15:17, Asa did *not* eliminate the במות during his lifetime. This reflects a juxtaposition between the Chronicler's interest in presenting total centralization as a feature of reforms, and yet his inclusion of conflicting texts from Kings (1 Kgs 15:14), where the elimination of the במות does not occur until the reign of Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:4, 22). Alternatively, it is significant that 2 Chr 14:2 refers to הנכר (foreign) altars and the במות, possibly reflecting the Chronicler's distinction between Yahwistic and pagan במות observed in 2 Chr 33:17. However, this latter view is tempered by the Chronicler's mention that Jehoshaphat eliminated the במות (2 Chr 17:6; without mention of הנכר), and then his statement in 2 Chr 20:33 (/ / 1 Kgs 22:44 [ET 43]) that he failed to destroy them. See discussion in Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 241.

<sup>171</sup> See Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 722, and idem, *Ideology*, 355-56, on Chr's "tendentious interest in depicting the territory of the Judean kings as constantly expanding northwards."

<sup>172</sup> The parallel text in 1 Kgs 15:13 does not mention the restoration of Yhwh's altar.

teaching priests in 2 Chr 17, the solution to Israel's alienation from the "true God." In short, monotheism required priestly infrastructure.

#### B. JEHOSHAPHAT'S REFORMS (2 CHR 17, 19)

The prophet Azariah had insisted that knowledge of the true God (אלהי אמת) depended upon teaching priests (2 Chr 15:3). Without them, society would fragment and unravel as it had during the days of Israel's judges. Though Asa removed all "loathsome idols" from Judah (15:8, 16), he failed to install teaching priests to secure the land from the reintroduction of idols. It is therefore significant that in 2 Chr 17:7-9 Asa's son Jehoshaphat completes the task by appointing "officers," "Levites,"<sup>173</sup> and "priests" to go through Judah to teach the people the law.<sup>174</sup> Jehoshaphat sends the teachers around Judah in the third year of his reign, or as soon as possible,<sup>175</sup> instituting a "torah reform."

This reform comprises the religious counterpart to Jehoshaphat's physical reinforcement of the land in 17:1-2 and 12-13, and his judicial reform in 19:4-7.<sup>176</sup> Chronicles thereby ensures that Jehoshaphat's reform and ensuing fame were not "secular" in origin or effect. Indeed, Chronicles goes on to state that "the fear of *Yhwh* fell on all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah" (17:10). Because the priests and leaders "go around Judah" (יהודה ... ויסבו; v.9) teaching torah, fear of *Yhwh* falls on the nations "around Judah" (סביבות יהודה; v.10). Jehoshaphat's torah reform thus effectively answers the need expressed

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<sup>173</sup> Typically, teaching was a role reserved for priests, not Levites (Hos 4:6; Jer 5:31; 18:18), according to some biblical texts. See Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 405; Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 385; Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 251. Chr seems to have different view, perhaps drawn from Deut where the whole tribe of Levi is credited with teaching law (33:10). Moreover, Deut grants judicial powers to officials in outlying cities (e.g., 16:18-20), which Chr may associate with teaching duties. Cf. also 2 Chr 35:3 where Levites teach. Rudolph (*Chronikbücher*, 251) credits the Chronicler's teaching "officials" to the author's non-biblical historical sources.

<sup>174</sup> Jehoshaphat does so *after* he forsakes the Baals (2 Chr 17:3) and rids Judah of high places and Asherim (17:6).

<sup>175</sup> On the symbolic function of "third year," see Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 749.

<sup>176</sup> Jehoshaphat places judges "in all the fortified cities of Judah," i.e., from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim. Cf. the correlation between physical and cultic reinforcements in 2 Chr 11:12 and 17.

in 2 Chr 15:3 for “teaching priests” to mediate knowledge of “the true God,” and provide security for the land.

Jehoshaphat’s reforms also included the appointment of priests, Levites, and leaders of households to judge in matters related to Yhwh and king (2 Chr 19:8-11). This arrangement draws explicitly from judicial laws in Deuteronomy (1:9-17; 16:18-20; 17:8-13),<sup>177</sup> which were designed to safeguard the judicial powers of Yhwh through his priests and tribal leaders, and to circumscribe the powers of the king.<sup>178</sup> As Deuteronomy states, “judgment belongs to Yhwh” (Deut 1:17), who as “God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty and awesome God, ... does not show favoritism or take a bribe” (Deut 10:17). The Chronicler’s dependence on this notion of priestly mediation of divine judgment becomes strikingly evident in 2 Chr 19:6-11: Yhwh would be “with you [i.e., the priests and leaders] in giving judgment;” priests and leaders were to “let the fear of Yhwh be upon you;” they would “give judgment for Yhwh” in the “fear of Yhwh” so that the people would incur guilt “before Yhwh.” Finally, Jehoshaphat concludes with hopes that “Yhwh will be with the upright.” As Dillard states, “Judicial authority in Israel ... depended upon and expressed the rule of Yahweh.” The judges “were agents of Yahweh who was present at their decisions.”<sup>179</sup> Chronicles ensures that through teaching priests/leaders and judicial priests/leaders, knowledge of the “true God” (2 Chr 15:3) pervades Judah and provides protection from the surrounding nations.

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<sup>177</sup> Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 402. However, Deut has judges in all cities, Chr limits them to the fortified cities.

<sup>178</sup> Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 402-03.

<sup>179</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 149.



## C. ATHALIAH'S REIGN AND JEHOIADA'S REFORM (2 CHR 22:10-23:21)

In the accounts of Kings and Chronicles, Athaliah sought the throne after the death of her youngest and only surviving son, king Ahaziah (2 Kgs 11; 2 Chr 22:10). In the tumultuous aftermath of Ahaziah's death at the hand of Jehu,<sup>180</sup> Athaliah sought to kill off the whole royal family in order to secure the throne for herself (2 Kgs 11:1; 2 Chr 22:10). She apparently succeeded in attaining the throne, though she did not eliminate all the royal family. According to 2 Kgs 11:2, Jehosheba, Ahaziah's sister, hid her nephew Jehoash (Joash in Chronicles) in the temple for six years while Athaliah ruled. In the Chronicler's rendering, Jehosheba was the wife of Jehoiada *the priest* (22:11), a detail not mentioned in Kings, but of obvious concern for the sake of the temple's sanctity (cf. 2 Chr 8:11).

The chief priest Jehoiada then masterminds a *coup d'état*. According to 2 Kgs 11:4, Jehoiada rallied the "Carians"—presumably foreign guards<sup>181</sup>—and the royal guard *into* the temple to make an oath with him to protect Joash in his bid for the throne. He stationed the guard around the palace and temple (vv. 5-7), and called "all the people" into the temple's courts (v. 5). When Jehoiada and the company of guards proclaimed Joash as king with loud celebration, Athaliah rushed into the temple and then tore her robes in distress once she realized her position (vv. 12-14). The rebels brought Athaliah outside the temple and put her to death by the horse gate of the palace, after which time they destroyed the temple of Baal and brought Joash into the palace with great celebration (vv. 15-21).

Chronicles' account differs in several significant ways from Kings' version of these events. First, Chronicles reports that Jehoiada made a covenant with the royal commanders (2 Chr 23:1), but omits the reference to the foreign Carian guards. The presence of

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<sup>180</sup> According to Chr, God brought about Ahaziah's death because he followed the council of Northern kings and his mother, the granddaughter of Omri.

<sup>181</sup> Heb. הַכַּרְיִי. Cf. 2 Sam 20:23; 2 Kgs 11:19. See *HALOT* ad loc.

foreigners in close proximity to the temple may account for this omission. Second, Jehoiada sends the guards throughout Judah to gather the Levites and family leaders to make a covenant at the temple and to acknowledge Joash as the legitimate king (vv. 2-3).<sup>182</sup> It is likely that Chronicles found Levitical guards far better suited than foreign guards for this temple assignment. Moreover, Chronicles includes all Judah in the *coup*, making it a popular decision (23:1-3) and demonstrating the unifying effect of reforms.

Third, Chronicles depicts the Levites and priests as guardians of the temple's sanctity, and not just of Joash (as in Kings). According to Chronicles, only "they [i.e., priests] were holy" (כי קדש המה) and therefore suited for this task (v. 6). They were to "keep watch" (שמר\*) to ensure that none except Levites and priests entered (vv. 6-7). Chronicles cleverly adapts the word שמר\* ("observe, guard") from Kings to make this point:

And two of your divisions which go off duty on the Sabbath shall keep watch (ושמרו) over the house of Yhwh for the king. (2 Kgs 11:7)

So do not let anyone enter Yhwh's temple except the priests and the Levitical guards. They may enter because they are holy. Furthermore, all the people should keep the watch/charge of Yhwh. (ישמרו משמרת יהוה). (2 Chr 23:6)

Chronicles modifies the context of שמר\* to refer to Yhwh's instructions about the temple's sanctity. Moreover, Chronicles adds instructions for the people. They were to keep an extra measure of vigilance against potential intrusions, or possibly, keep themselves from infringing on sacred space. Fourth, in Kings the commanders guard the ranks and king whereas in Chronicles Jehoiada instructs the *Levites* to guard the *temple* and king:

You [commanders] shall surround the king closely, each man with his weapon in hand. If any should approach the ranks, he shall be put to death. Stay with the king whenever he goes out or comes in. (2 Kgs 11:8)

The Levites should surround the king, each man with his weapon in hand. If any should approach the temple, he shall be put to death. Stay with the king whenever he goes out or comes in. (2 Chr 23:7)

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<sup>182</sup> The presence of family leaders *in* the temple (בבית האלהים) would have been problematic, and it is clear from vv. 6-7 that the family leaders were not admitted. Thus, the preposition ב likely means "at."

Thus, 2 Chr 23:6 and 7 enlist the Levites as temple guards for the sake of maintaining the temple's sanctity in addition to guarding the young king. As Japhet writes,

In Kings the trespasser is to be slain for political reasons, because of the danger he may pose to the success of Jehoiada's *coup d'état*; In Chronicles the same penalty has religious motives—to prevent the desecration of the Temple.<sup>183</sup>

Fifth, Chronicles reports that as the company with Joash announces him as king, the Levites lead a celebration with musical instruments (2 Chr 24:13), thus turning a palace *coup* into a religious ceremony. Finally, *after* destroying the temple of Baal, Chronicles adds several verses about the reappointment of priests. 2 Chronicles 23:18-19 recounts how Jehoiada assigned (וישם) care of the temple to the “Levitical priests” (הלויים הכהנים).<sup>184</sup> Their responsibilities were for the “burnt offerings” ordained by Moses and “rejoicing and singing” apportioned (חלק) by David. He also stationed (ויצמד) Levitical “gatekeepers” at the temple to keep out the “unclean.” Thus, Jehoiada returns the cult to its intended state, re-establishing the parity of priests and Levites (v. 18).

These revisions exhibit clearly the Chronicler's concern to forge a sharp divide between the period of apostasy under Athaliah and its new beginning under the auspices of Jehoiada (and Joash). The effect of Chronicles' modifications is to change a political *coup* into a religious reform.<sup>185</sup> Athaliah had committed apostasy, necessitating a complete overhaul of the cult. After removing Athaliah from the temple to kill her—thereby avoiding contamination of the temple (23:15)—and after the destruction of Baal's temple (23:17),

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<sup>183</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 832.

<sup>184</sup> Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 433, proposes to emend הלויים הכהנים with the insertion of a waw (following the LXX) = “the priests and the Levites.” However, the recurrence of this phrase in Chr (1 Chr 9:2; 2 Chr 5:5; 23:18; 30:27; cf. Deut 17:9, 18; 24:8; Ezr 10:5; Neh 10:29, 35; 11:20; Ezek 43:19), and the logic of this passage obviate the need for this emendation. The phrase הלויים הכהנים in v. 18 designates “the priesthood,” which was subdivided according to duties in the rest of the verse. Most likely, the “[Aaronic] priests” are the sacrificial officiates, with the Levites making music. On the original nature and importance of the phrase הכהנים הלויים in Chronicles, see Richard D. Nelson, *Raising up a Faithful Priest: Community and Priesthood in Biblical Theology* (Louisville: WJK, 1993), 138.

<sup>185</sup> Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 431; Riley, *King and Cultus*, 124-25.

Jehoiada reappoints priests, Levites, and Levitical gatekeepers (with the royal guard) according to their proper arrangements in the temple (23:18-20). The report on the priesthood's re-installation is emphatic; Jehoiada returned the cult to its original and fully-functioning state. He “appointed the divisions [מחלקות] of the Levites and priests”<sup>186</sup> that “David had arranged by divisions (\*חלק) for the temple of Yhwh ... as it is written in the torah of Moses ... through the hands of David” (v. 18).<sup>187</sup>

This priestly appointment narrative marks the beginning of Yhwh worship by the reappointment of priests in their functional capacities, supporting the contention that in Chronicles, the full priesthood ceased operations and required re-consecration after periods of religious apostasy. Yhwh's priesthood and Baal's did not “co-operate.”

#### D. HEZEKIAH'S REFORMS AND CEREMONY (2 CHR 29-31)

Chronicles records three distinct phases to Hezekiah's reform, one for the temple (2 Chr 29:12-19), one for the city (2 Chr 30:14), and another for the land (2 Chr 31:1). Only the latter phase has a parallel in Kings (2 Kgs 18:4). In Chronicles, priests and Levites from fourteen families carry out the first phase in the reform, as the temple was their domain. Kings' neglect of the temple in this reform is not surprising, as periods of apostasy did not generally create a need to restore the temple.<sup>188</sup> Chronicles' partition of Hezekiah's reform into three distinct phases that *begin* with the temple and emanate outward (chs. 29-31)<sup>189</sup>

<sup>186</sup> The phrase καὶ ἀνέστησεν τὰς ἐφημερίας τῶν ἱερέων καὶ τῶν Λευιτῶν (= ויעמד את־מחלקות הכהנים והלויים) “and he appointed the divisions of the priests and Levites” is lacking in the MT, though was most likely dropped due to homoioteleuton with הלויים. See discussion in Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 272; Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 433; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 178.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. 2 Chr 8:14, where Solomon also “appoints ... the divisions of the priests ... and the Levites” (ויעמד ... את־מחלקות הכהנים ... הלויים) (noted by Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 272).

<sup>188</sup> See my discussion of Hezekiah and the temple in ch. 2.

<sup>189</sup> Chr's second and third phases included all the people, again demonstrating the socially integrative effects of reforms and Chr's propensity for popular participation in cult events. See, e.g., 1 Chr 29:5b; 2 Chr 29:31; 30:22 (discussed by Riley, *King and Cultus*, 198-99).

would seem to countermand the principle that the temple and priesthood did not function until other cults were removed. Indeed, 29:35 states that after sanctifying the temple and reinstating priests and Levites, “the service of the house of Yhwh was restored,” and yet this occurred *before* the removal of foreign altars and decentralized cultic paraphernalia from the region (e.g., 30:14; 31:1). How does Chronicles handle this liminal period where Yhwh’s cult functioned alongside other cults?

An answer to this question emerges in consideration of the three priestly reinstatement narratives (29:25; 30:16; 31:2-4) that correspond to the three phases of reform. In the *first*, Hezekiah appoints Levitical musicians to play during a burnt offering that culminated the purification of the temple. The purpose of these offerings and songs was to consecrate the priests and people to Yhwh. 2 Chronicles 29:15 states that the priests needed to consecrate themselves in order to purify the temple for service. Once those priests and Levites responsible for purifying the temple had consecrated themselves, they performed the sixteen-day temple-purification (v. 16). Priests then performed sacrificial offerings to atone for the temple *and* people in vv. 20-23, and for “all Israel” in v. 24. None of these purifications or sacrifices required the regular rotation of priests and Levites. However, Chronicles reports that Hezekiah “stationed” (\*עמד; v. 25) the Levites “according to the commandment of David and Gad, the king’s seer, and Nathan the prophet.” Then, Hezekiah commanded the Levites to praise Yhwh “in accordance with the words of David and Asaph the seer” (v. 30).<sup>190</sup> While Hezekiah stationed the Levites in accordance with Davidic law, it becomes evident that the priests had not yet consecrated themselves in sufficient numbers to handle the congregation’s offerings (v. 34). The final statement in v. 35—“So, the service of Yhwh’s temple was reestablished” (ותכון עבודת בית־יהוה)—thus sits

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<sup>190</sup> Likely evoking the proclamation of the Yhwh-kingship hymn in 1 Chr 16:8-36, where David commissions the Asaphites to give thanks to Yhwh.

uneasily with the reality that Hezekiah appoints only the Levites, and that the priests were not consecrated in sufficient numbers. Chapter 30 increases the uneasiness, stating that all the Levites, priests, and congregation had not yet consecrated themselves (vv. 3, 15, 17-18).

So while in a *second* narrative one reads that the priests “stood in their positions, according to the law of Moses” (וַיַּעֲמְדוּ עַל-עַמְדָּם כַּמִּשְׁפָּט מֹשֶׁה) (30:16), it is clear that normalcy had not yet returned to the priesthood. This second account occurs after the people gather to Jerusalem for the Passover and remove the altars and incense altars from Jerusalem (v. 13). However, the Passover itself took place in the second month, and not “at its [designated] time” (בַּעַת הַהֵיָא),<sup>191</sup> and not everyone had consecrated themselves properly (vv. 17). Chronicles does not reflect negatively on these deviations from the appointed order. In fact, Hezekiah prays that Yhwh would accept the Passover offerings of those who had *not* offered them “according to the purity of the sanctuary” (וְלֹא כַטְהַרְתָּ הַקֹּדֶשׁ) (v. 19), and Yhwh responds with favor. Chronicles presents these deviations as *necessary* provisions during this time of ritual consecration and celebration, and during a time of reunification with Northerners who sought Yhwh (v. 18). The Passover extends for two weeks, as in the time of Solomon (2 Chr 7:8-9), since the Passover contributions were so abundant (2 Chr 30:23-26). God heeded people’s prayers and “healed” them, recognizing their wholehearted response to Yhwh and his sanctuary, and extended mercy to Judah and Israel (29:9; 30:6-9).

In short, Hezekiah’s priestly appointments in chs. 29-30 were provisional.<sup>192</sup> Hezekiah organized priests according to Davidic (ch. 29) and Mosaic (ch. 30) dictates, but not yet according to their complete divisional rotations—or ritualized fullness—detailed in 1 Chr 23-26. The priestly appointments in chs. 29-30 serve short-term purposes. In the first instance, Levites lead the people in consecratory worship (29:31), and in the second the

<sup>191</sup> For rabbinic discussions of this provisional alteration, see *Sanhedrin* 12a-b.

<sup>192</sup> Riley calls them “emergency” measures (*King and Cultus*, 137).

priests and Levites direct the congregation's Passover sacrifices. Both of these appointments are ad hoc and incomplete. They mark the completion of Hezekiah's first two reforms, and the beginning of the first two phases of the cult's reestablishment. The full appointment of priests "according to their divisions" (על־מהלקותם; 31:2) does not occur until ch. 31, *after* the three-phased reform.<sup>193</sup> As Japhet states, "Until [ch. 31] ..., only temporary arrangements for the clergy were taken care of."<sup>194</sup> 2 Chronicles 31:1 states that the people removed all the altars, pillars, Asherim and high places from Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh. Apostasy had disrupted the organized rhythm and arrangement of the cult. Only then does Hezekiah establish the "regular service of the temple personnel, with full rehabilitation of the damage done by Ahaz" (31:2).<sup>195</sup>

Thus, the *third* appointment narrative in 31:2-3 differs from those in chs. 29-30 in terms of its scope and completeness, yet compares in terms of its placement *after* the removal of illicit cultic objects. We may chart the three appointment narratives as follows:

| Text        | Appointees          | Authorization      | Timing                                   | Purpose                                    |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------------|--|--|
| 2 Chr 29:25 | Levites             | David, Gad, Nathan | After purification of temple             | Consecration of people for temple worship  |
| 2 Chr 30:16 | priests and Levites | torah of Moses     | After purification of Jerusalem          | Jerusalem Passover celebration             |
| 2 Chr 31:2  | priests and Levites |                    | After the purification of the whole land | Ongoing cult: daily, monthly and festivals |

Table 3.2

Only the third and final appointment narrative serves the ongoing/permanent purposes of the cult. In sum, while Yhwh worship and illicit cultic activities coexist in the Hezekiah narrative, a close look at chs. 29-31 suggests that priests and Levites assume their positions after the removal of proximate non-Yahwistic cultic

<sup>193</sup> It is important to recall here the organization of priestly מהלקות in 1 Chr 23-26 (e.g., 1 Chr 23:6; 24:1; 26:1; 27:1).

<sup>194</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 963.

<sup>195</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 963.

elements, and only resume their permanent and ongoing duties after their total removal. As such, the appointment of priests and Levites according to their mandated “divisions” marks the complete removal of illicit cults and the restoration of Yhwh’s cult.

#### E. JOSIAH’S REFORM (2 CHR 35)

As noted in ch. 2, Chronicles’ account of Josiah’s reform differs in details and chronological sequence from what one finds in Kings, such that illicit cult sites were removed *before* the temple resumed its operations.<sup>196</sup> Moreover, Chronicles reports that Manasseh purged the temple of its idols (33:15), and thus the account of Josiah’s reform has no record of any illicit images or idols in the temple (cf. 2 Kgs 23:4, 6). There were altars to Baal, cast images, sacred poles, and altars *around* Jerusalem and Judah. However, all of these were purged *before* he repaired and restored the temple.

Another interesting difference between Chronicles and Kings is that Chronicles lacks any mention of the **הַכַּמָּרִים** appointed by Judean kings (2 Kgs 23:5).<sup>197</sup> **כַּמָּר** was a common Semitic term for priests. Its biblical usage is unclear, though it may be an appellative that biblical writers applied derisively to Yahwistic priests who were also associated with Baal or the calf at Bethel (Hos 10:5; Zeph 1:4).<sup>198</sup> According to Kings, Josiah “eliminated” (**וְהַשְׁבִּיתָ**) the **כַּמָּרִים** that Judean kings appointed to serve at altars around Jerusalem. They sacrificed to “Baal, the sun god, the moon god, the constellations, and all the stars in the sky” (23:5-6), a

<sup>196</sup> Note the complex historical development of the account in Kings discussed by Barrick, *The King and the Cemeteries*; McKenzie, *The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 168-73.

<sup>197</sup> 2 Kgs 23 mentions five heretical acts by previous kings (23:5, 11, 12, 13, 15). Their omission is no doubt due, in part, to the desire to (a) vindicate previous Judean kings and (b) diminish the memory of their influence on the cult. See discussion in Michael LeFebvre, *Collections, Codes, and Torah: The Re-characterization of Israel’s Law* (LHB/OTS 451; London: T & T Clark, 2006), 62. For further discussion, see ch. 4.

<sup>198</sup> See Tadmor and Cogan, *II Kings*, 285-86; cf. “*kumru*” (*CAD* K, 534-35) from Mari and Old Assyrian, and Aramaic *kumrā*. Barrick, *The King and the Cemeteries*, 67-69, critiques the common assumption that the **כַּמָּר**-priests were “idoltrous priests.” It is possible that **כַּמָּרִים** refer to priests appointed directly by kings that were not deemed of proper lineage. The biblical evidence is admittedly thin. Thanks to Jonathan Greer for pointing me to this source.



list of deities that stand in partial parallel with the deities venerated in the temple prior to Josiah (23:4). In other words, according to Kings the כמרים served deities also served by (Yahwistic?) priests in the *temple*, and may have even included Yhwh priests among their ranks.

Furthermore, 2 Kgs 23:8 states that Josiah brought all the priests of Judean shrines (במות) to Jerusalem. This seems to contradict the narrator's statement that Josiah "eliminated" (והשבית) the priests (v. 25). However, 23:8 refers to כהנים "priests," and not כמרים, as in 23:5. The inference, therefore, is that Josiah brought the "priests" who served at shrines into *Jerusalem* (2 Kgs 23:8). 2 Kings 23:9 then reports that "the priests of the shrines [במות], however, did not come up to the altar of Yhwh in Jerusalem, but ate unleavened bread among their kindred."<sup>199</sup> This verse likely refers to Levites from the shrines who could not serve at the altar with the sons of Aaron (cf. Ezek 44:10), but had only subservient roles, though the text never identifies them as Levites. This idea stands in some conflict with Chronicles' emphasis on (a) the complementary unity of the priesthood before Yhwh, and (b) cult centralization since the time of David. Chronicles never mentions "priests" at the shrines, linking them solely with the temple. While Chronicles admits that Yahwistic sacrifice took place at the high places (2 Chr 33:3), it never states that priests served there. For Chronicles, the priesthood *always* remained centralized. In short, while Kings recounts the centralization of the priesthood under Josiah, Chronicles contends that the priesthood never decentralized. Though there existed periods of decentralized Yhwh worship while the ark of

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<sup>199</sup> These may have been Yahwistic priests who continued to serve at high places, as suggested by the use of "their brothers" אחיהם (2 Kgs 23:9). However, the implication of 2 Kgs 23:9 is that these priests only performed grain offerings (Lev 2:4). Chr never claims that priests or Levites sacrificed to Yhwh at the high places. See LeFebvre, *Collections, Codes, and Torah*, 62; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 448.

The במות might be better translated "sanctuary complexes," on which, see Greer, "Dinner at Dan," 25.

Yhwh was displaced (2 Chr 33:17), there is no indication that priests served anywhere but Jerusalem once the temple was built (cf. 1 Chr 16:39-40).

As with the first two phases of Hezekiah's reform, Manasseh's reform lacks the finality and permanence of Hezekiah's third phase (2 Chr 31:2-3). Manasseh never reinstates the priests and Levites according to their divisions and duties, even though he restores Yhwh's altar, performs offerings, and commands the people to worship. In fact, he only appoints officers for Judah's fortified cities (33:14). One might contend that Manasseh's reform also created a provisional state of worship, one which devolved quickly during the reign of Amon (33:21-25). While Manasseh reformed, he did not restore the cult to its original "design."

The cult does not achieve its ideal state until after Josiah reforms *and reinstates* the cult in a manner similar to its original Davidic and Solomonic formation:

He said to the Levites—who instruct all Israel and were consecrated to Yhwh—put the sacred ark in the Temple that was built by Solomon, son of David, king of Israel. You are no longer to bear it on your shoulders. Now serve Yhwh your God and his people Israel. Prepare your households according to your divisions [מחלקות], according to the letter [בכתב] of David king of Israel, and in accordance with the letter [במכתב] of Solomon his son. (2 Chr 35:3-4; cf. 2 Chr 8:14)

As with David in 1 Chr 15-16, and Solomon in 2 Chr 8, Josiah instructs the Levites to move from carrying the ark to forming themselves according to their מחלקות in preparation for a great Passover ceremony. The appointment of priestly divisions accords with the principle at work in the Hezekian narrative, namely, that the *full functioning* of the cult does not occur until the purgation finishes and priestly divisions are installed as designated by Yhwh (cf. 1 Chr 23-26). While there is an element of liminality to the transition from idolatry to Yhwh-worship, during which time priests play temporary roles (2 Chr 29-30; 2 Chr 33), the installation of priests according to their divinely mandated divisions marks the new era.

Though not dealing with the removal of illicit cultic items, the pattern of priestly liminality preceding their permanent appointments observed here in the Josianic narratives (and earlier in the Hezekian narratives) corresponds to a pattern that emerges in connection with Solomon. During the seven day temple dedication celebration (2 Chr 7:8-11), the Chronicler reports that “Solomon completed Yhwh’s temple and his royal palace.” However, the priests were not yet appointed according to their regular duties. In fact, during the temple dedication ceremony, all the priests and Levites “regardless of their divisions” (אין לשמור למחלקות) were present to witness Yhwh’s arrival (2 Chr 5:11-14; 7:6), and were “unable to carry out their duties” because of Yhwh’s overwhelming glory (5:14; 7:2). Only *after* the period of dedication, Chronicles reports in its *Sondergut* that Solomon set up the “divisions (מחלקות) of the priests, according to their duties (עבודתם), and the Levites, according to their functions ... and the gatekeepers by their divisions (במחלקותם)” (2 Chr 8:14-15). Then Chronicles reports that all the work of the temple was carried out “until it was completely finished” (ועד־כלתו שלם; 2 Chr 8:16). Provisional appointments were necessary to carry out the liminal activities of the cult during the temple’s dedication and celebration. However, the priesthood’s permanent appointment marked the temple’s final completion and the beginning of its regular cultic rhythm. While throughout the book priestly disorder accompanies events that the Chronicler evaluates as positive—festive celebrations, destruction of foreign cults, cult restorations—Chronicles also pursues orderly arrangements as a way of distinguishing the return of Yhwh’s cult to its intended state. While liminality marks the arrival of Yhwh’s presence, and the removal of other gods, permanent priestly orders were necessary for maintaining Yhwh’s ongoing presence.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> On which, see Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple*, 69-72

Accordingly, 2 Chr 35 goes to great lengths to emphasize the orderly and proper arrangement of priests and Levites. Thus, his Passover celebration differs from Hezekiah's. As Japhet observes, "Josiah's Passover is a different matter altogether. Josiah works to establish a permanent institution, built on solid administrative and organizational foundations, with a clear division of roles and an undisputed legal basis."<sup>201</sup> Josiah arranged the priests "according to their divisions" (35:2). Levites were to organize themselves according to their "fathers' families" in accordance with "their divisions," and in accordance with David's written instructions (35:4). The laity also received a rotational appointment corresponding to the divisions of priests and Levites (35:5).<sup>202</sup> Moreover, "the (temple) service was established" with priests "in their positions" and Levites arranged "according to their divisions" (35:10), while singers likewise stood "in their positions"<sup>203</sup> with "gatekeepers at every gate" (35:15). Everyone stood in their right place. It is not surprising, therefore, that 35:3-4 alludes to the *written* instructions of David and Solomon (במכתב; בכתב) that David received *in writing* (בכתב) from Yhwh himself (1 Chr 28:19). Josiah's priestly installation obtained its authority *in writing* from the plan David received from Yhwh himself.

Chronicles summarizes Josiah's accomplishments with the statement that "all the service of Yhwh [עבודת יהוה] was established on that day" (35:16). In the restored era, Yhwh's cult emerges in its pristine state, perfected in its form (by divisions) and functions (sacrificial and musical duties). Unlike Hezekiah's Passover, during which time he appointed priests in a

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<sup>201</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1045.

<sup>202</sup> In 2 Chr 35:5a Josiah orders the people to "stand in the sanctuary according to the divisions [פלגות] of the fathers' house, according to your kin, the laity." The Hebrew phrase denoting laity (בני העם) appears in vv. 7, 12, 13. As Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 1049, observes, the phrase occurs elsewhere only in 2 Kgs 23:6 and Jer 17:19. In the 2 Kings text, Josiah scatters the bones of pagan priests on the graves of the בני העם, whereas in Chr the laity receives a dignified organizational arrangement that corresponds to the priests and Levites.

<sup>203</sup> The language here applying to Levites, "in their positions" (על-מעמדם; v. 15), corresponds to the fact that priests stood "in their positions" (על-עמדם), illustrating once again the complementary roles of Levitical singers and priests that becomes evident throughout the book of Chr. These roles correspond to their duties as ark-bearers and altar officiants respectively.

temporary and ad hoc fashion, Josiah uses the Passover to reinstate the cult according to its prescribed divisions and duties.<sup>204</sup>

In sum, the account of Josiah's reform in Chronicles differs from Kings' account in which (a) Judean kings appoints pagan priests, (b) priests of high places transfer to Jerusalem, and (c) Levites serve in subordinate roles. For Chronicles, the Levites and sons of Aaron were *always* centralized and never apostate until the very end (2 Chr 36:14). Positively, Chronicles sharpens the transition between Yahwism and apostasy by depicting the reinstatement of priests and Levites in a unified and orderly arrangement, according to their respective ark-bearing/musical (2 Chr 35:3, 15) and sacrificial (35:10-11) duties.

#### F. CONCLUSIONS

In this section, I argued that Chronicles (a) advocates for a stable priesthood as the answer to Judah's international strife, (b) emphasizes the priesthood's functional sanctity, and (c) uses priestly reappointment narratives to sharpen the distinction between devotion to other gods and devotion to Yhwh in Jerusalem. Furthermore, (d) Chronicles' priestly reappointment narratives emphasize the full participation and formation of the priesthood (and Israel) in what I earlier referred to as Yhwh's "ritualized fullness."

Though not all of the reforms in Chronicles include formal priestly reappointment narratives, the six which do appear (Jehoshaphat's, Jehoiada's, Hezekiah's [3x], and Josiah's), do so *after* reforms take place, thereby marking the positive recreation of the cult and the full reinstatement of Yhwh-worship.<sup>205</sup> A pattern emerges in Chronicles whereby destruction of

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<sup>204</sup> The primary (re-)appointment narratives are found during the reigns of David (1 Chr 15-16; 23-26), Solomon (2 Chr 8:14), Joash (2 Chr 23), Hezekiah (2 Chr 31:2), and Josiah (2 Chr 35).

<sup>205</sup> 2 Chr 23:18-19; 35:2-5. One might even suggest that Chr presents even David as a reformer, whose appointment of priestly and Levitical "divisions" (מחלקות; 1 Chr 16:23-26) occurs after he destroys the Philistine gods (1 Chr 14:2). Though Chr does not present a close correspondence between David's "mini-

non-Jerusalemite cults forms the basis for the positive assertion of Yhwh's cult in its ritualized fullness, and in accordance with the original priestly "divisions" and "duties" established by David (1 Chr 23-26) and Solomon (2 Chr 8:12-15). If reforms marked the destruction of cultic rivals, and by derivation their gods, priestly appointment narratives marked the positive assertion of the Jerusalem cult, and the cultic grandeur of Yhwh. Without a fully functioning cult, Chronicles suggests, Judah's victories over non-Yahwistic cults would be unadorned, unexpressed, and without institutions to ensure Yhwh's remembrance and fame.<sup>206</sup> The manifestation of Yhwh's power and supremacy above "all gods" is perceptible in the cult (2 Chr 2:4[5]).

#### VII. LEVITES AS DIVINE VANGUARD AND HERALDS OF YHWH'S PRESENCE (2 CHR 20)

This penultimate section endeavors to examine one such instance from Jehoshaphat's reign wherein the priesthood marks, heralds, and participates in the expression of Yhwh's supreme power. Since the proclamation of Yhwh's goodness and power are paradigmatic in Chronicles' conception of the Levites' duties (as 1 Chr 16), this event holds special importance in the book.<sup>207</sup> 2 Chronicles 20 recounts the story of Jehoshaphat's battle against the Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites (though later, Seirites)<sup>208</sup> in which the

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reform" in 1 Chr 14 and his appointment of priests in 1 Chr 16, his roles as a "reformer" and cult initiator are notable.

<sup>206</sup> It deserves mention that Chr does recount the eventual apostasy of the priesthood in events that led to Judah's exile. In fact, 2 Chr 36:14 charges them with defiling (\*אָנְט) Yhwh's temple that he had sanctified. According to Chr's account, Yhwh kept sending his prophets to warn Judah "because he had compassion on his people and his temple" (36:15). Yet when they failed to listen, he sent the Babylonians to exile Judah and to give the land its "Sabbath" rest for seventy years: "All the days it lay desolate it rested, until seventy years were completed" (2 Chr 36:21; cf. 2 Kgs 24:14), a verse that appears to combine the notions of exile as a time when the land would enjoy its "Sabbaths" (Lev 26:34, 43) and Jeremiah's prophesied seventy year exile (Jer 25:12). While the text does not mention Levites, it does not absolve them from inclusion in the blanket indictment of *all* Israel's leadership in 2 Chr 36:14 for polluting the temple, mistreating the prophets, and provoking God's anger to the point where he had Nebuchadnezzar destroy the temple.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. also the theologically loaded battle accounts in 2 Chr 13 and 14.

<sup>208</sup> For a discussion of the discrepancy between the Meunites (2 Chr 20:1; cf. 26:7) and Seirites (2 Chr 20:10, 22-23), see Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 70-71; Philip R. Davies, "Defending the Boundaries of Israel

Levitical Korahites go before the army as a vanguard praising Yhwh. This story reveals an important institutional shift that occurs in Chronicles and has direct bearing on the priesthood's relationship to divine supremacy.<sup>209</sup> Specifically, 2 Chr 20 reveals how the Levites shifted from signaling Yhwh's presence as ark-bearers, to signaling Yhwh's exalted presence as musicians. This shift afforded the Chronicler an opportunity to depict the priesthood's role in exalting Yhwh as supreme deity through praise while they served as a divine vanguard in battle. But before delving into the details of 2 Chr 20, it will be helpful to sketch the motif of the divine and royal vanguard in its larger ancient Near Eastern milieu (section A.), and the way that Chronicles presents Levitical musical-duties as the logical extension of their ark-bearing duties (section B.).

#### A. VANGUARD MOTIF

In his study on divine presence and guidance in the Old Testament, Thomas Mann traces what he calls the “divine vanguard motif” in ancient Near Eastern military accounts of the Old Babylonian, Neo-Babylonian, and Neo-Assyrian periods. The “divine vanguard motif” refers simply to literary formulations of a deity or deities “going in front of” their human constituencies in battle.”<sup>210</sup> Mann’s study of this motif in ancient Near Eastern and biblical literature revealed a consistent emphasis on divine presence with human military forces and a related “typology of exaltation,” by which he means “the exaltation of a particular deity as well as the deity’s human protégé” or associated human partners (e.g.,

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in the Second Temple Period: 2 Chronicles 20 and the ‘Salvation Army’,” in *Priests, Prophets, and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp* (ed. Eugene Ulrich et al; JSOTSup 149; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 43-54 [46-47].

<sup>209</sup> For the story’s relationship to 2 Kgs 3, likely its impetus, see Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 291-93.

<sup>210</sup> Thomas W. Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance in Israelite Traditions: The Typology of Exaltation* (NES; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1977), 27.

Israel).<sup>211</sup> Though Mann’s approach tends to overplay “shared patterns” between biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature, the leading presence of a deity in battle is pervasive enough to warrant literary comparison. Mann observes several types of divine vanguard. Mythic literature refers often to the divine military entourage of high gods that surround and accompany those gods into battle. For example, in the *Enuma Elish* epic, both Tiamat and Marduk proceed into battle with various gods beside and before them as assistants and expressions of their (Tiamat’s and Marduk’s) power.<sup>212</sup> Likewise in the Assyrian royal annals, kings recount the divine vanguard that assists them in battle. Some texts refer to god(s) standing at the side of the king as he proceeds into battle. More often, the Assyrian annals report on god(s) going before (especially *ina mahri* and *ina pān(i)*) the king. For example,

At the command of Assur, the great lord, my  
lord, and Istar, lady of battle and combat,  
who goes before my widespreading armies ...  
I marched against Hanigalbat.<sup>213</sup>

With the great help of Ashur, Šamaš,  
Nabu, (and) Marduk ...  
Toward the lands of Zikirtu and Andia I turned the yoke  
of Nergal and Adad, the emblems which  
go before me.<sup>214</sup>

Still other texts deploy images of the terrifying splendor (*melammu*) and fearsomeness (*puluhtu*) of the gods or of their armament as employed by the king.<sup>215</sup> For example,

The splendor of Assur, my Lord, overwhelmed the enemies; terror and fear of the splendor  
of Assur, my lord, overwhelmed them.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 236-7. Mann adopts the phrase “typology of exaltation” from the study of William W. Hallo and J. J. A. van Dijk, *The Exaltation of Inanna* (YNER 3; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 64-68.

<sup>212</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 49.

<sup>213</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 64.

<sup>214</sup> “Letter of Assur,” 13-14, from Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 67. Cf. also the many examples provided by Sa-Moon Kang, *Divine War in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East* (BZAW 177; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), e.g., 40, 64-65, 101-02.

<sup>215</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 62.

<sup>216</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 65.



Cultic processions likewise employ the vanguard motif by parading images of gods throughout a city or into battle. The vehicles which transported the gods were often adorned by “precious metals and gems, and are often described as ‘brilliant, blazing, shining,’ and the like, thereby alluding to their role as media for divine appearance.”<sup>217</sup>

Several other scholars have observed that biblical traditions adopt and adapt the ancient Near Eastern vanguard motif.<sup>218</sup> As with its ancient Near Eastern counterparts, the biblical traditions contend that Yhwh-theophanies can occur in the form of a vanguard at the head of the army. Deuteronomy 20:4, and 31:6 and 8 state that Yhwh will go fight “with” and “before” the people as they enter the land. Deuteronomy 33 recounts how Yhwh appeared on Mount Sinai with “ten thousand holy ones” at his “right hand,” though in this case, to give a “fiery law” (cf. Judg 5:3-5). In 2 Samuel 5:24 and its parallel in 1 Chr 14:15, Yhwh goes out before the army of Israel, causing great noise among the balsam trees as he moved ahead to strike the Philistine army. Isaiah 45:2 speaks of Cyrus going “before” the people, adopting the Mesopotamian motif of a king leading his army in the vanguard with gods in front.<sup>219</sup> Of greatest relevance for our analysis of 2 Chr 20, however, is the use of the divine vanguard motif in narrative and liturgical contexts. Mann points to the frequent appearance of a “divine standard” at the head of an army in ancient Near Eastern iconography and literature.<sup>220</sup> Assyrian reliefs from Nineveh, for example, depict the divine standard carried by the king into battle. Depictions of the Assyrian war camp, moreover,

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<sup>217</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 76, following Armas Salonen, “Prozessionswagen der babylonischen Götter,” *StudOr* 13/2 (1946): 3-10 [6].

<sup>218</sup> Kang, *Divine War in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East*; Cf. the critical appropriation by Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *God at Sinai: Covenant and Theophany in the Bible and Ancient Near East* (SOTBT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 73-80.

<sup>219</sup> John Van Seters, *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers* (CBET 10; Kampen, NL: Peeters, 1994), 332.

<sup>220</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 74-95.

show priests offering food, drink, and incense to the standards.<sup>221</sup> The interplay of military and cultic motifs is evident. In addition to texts depicting divine presence at the head of the army, the Hebrew Bible also depicts the ark positioned as a divine standard, leading the way before Yhwh's army. As Mann argues, the ark takes on the role of the divine vanguard observed in other biblical and ancient Near Eastern texts wherein divine emblems were paraded before assemblies or preceded armies into battle.<sup>222</sup> The most significant examples come from the book of Joshua, where the ark goes ahead of the people as a vanguard (chs. 1, 3-5, 6).<sup>223</sup> In the account of Jericho's defeat (Josh 6), seven priests with trumpets proceed "before the ark" (v. 7), or "before Yhwh" (v. 8). On the seventh day circling the city, priests blew their trumpets to announce and enact Yhwh's ruin of the city (v. 20). Like the Assyrian reliefs, these texts interweave military and cultic themes. In Josh 3, the ark also proceeded before the people, borne by the Levitical priests. The people were to cleanse themselves ritually in preparation for this procession of Yhwh's ark across the Jordan, where he would give them the land of Canaan. Mann writes,

Clearly the central focus of the narrative ... is neither on the officers nor on Joshua, but on the ark. Once again we meet an example of the vanguard motif, when the ark 'passes over in front of' the people ... As a physical representation of the divine presence, it is also understood as a means of guidance: by its progression the people will know 'the way' ... to go (3.4).<sup>224</sup>

In addition to emphasizing Yhwh's presence with the Israelites as they entered the land, Mann also observes the "exaltation typology" in the recurrence of the rare divine epithet "Lord of all the land" (Josh 3:11, 13; cf. 2:9-11), which exalts Yhwh as "victor and lord over

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<sup>221</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 74-75 (cf. figures 1 and 3 on pgs. 265-66).

<sup>222</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 62, 76.

<sup>223</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 196-212.

<sup>224</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 197.

the gods of the defeated populations of Canaan,” and in the figure of Joshua as the exalted agent of divine presence (Josh 3:7; 4:14; cf. Exod 14:31).<sup>225</sup>

## B. LEVITICAL ARK-BEARING AND MUSICAL DUTIES

The ark disappears from war accounts in the book of Chronicles. Chronicles states three times that although the Levites’ duty was to bear the ark, that task came to an end after the ark entered its final place of rest in the sanctuary (1 Chr 6:16; 23:26; 2 Chr 35:3).

Accounts of war punctuate the story of the ark’s transference to Jerusalem (1 Chr 14, 18-20), though the ark never accompanies Israel in battle. Although the ark never sees war, and the Levites no longer carry the ark, the traditions wherein the Levites (and priests) accompany the ark in battle leave a clear imprint on the Chronicler’s history, and particularly, in the account of Jehoshaphat’s war in 2 Chr 20. This section explores the adaptation of the divine vanguard motif in 2 Chr 20. It suggests first that the Levitical musical divisions perform functions similar to those of the earlier ark-bearing Levites (section i.). It contends further that Levitical and priestly music in 2 Chr 20 signals Yhwh’s supremacy and victory over the nations (section ii.).

### 1. LEVITICAL MUSIC AS THE LOGICAL EXTENSION OF ARK-BEARING

Chronicles insists that Yhwh ordained the Levites to bear the ark (1 Chr 15:2, 15, 27; cf. 2 Chr 35:3). Indeed, the ark’s initial journey toward Jerusalem faltered, according to the Chronicler, because it was not carried by the Levites as stipulated in the Pentateuch (15:2,

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<sup>225</sup> Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance*, 196-97, 203.

13).<sup>226</sup> David remedies this error by appointing Levites to carry the ark (15:12), and appointing Levites to “make music with musical instrument” and to “sing with joy” (15:16) alongside the ark on its journey. In other words, he exceeds the Pentateuchal requirement that Levites carry the ark by also including priestly musicians to accompany the ark. Priests blow trumpets before the ark and additional Levites serve as the ark’s gatekeepers (15:24).

Once the Levites and priests deposit the ark in the city of David (16:1), the Levites’ service continues in the form of music (16:4-6). They continue to perform choral and instrumental duties that they previously carried out *in the ark’s presence*, as stated already in Chronicles’ first mention of the Levites:

These [Levites] are the men whom David appointed to oversee the music in Yhwh’s temple, once the ark came to rest. They served at the tabernacle of the tent of meeting with song until Solomon built Yhwh’s temple in Jerusalem. And they took their posts as ordered for their duties (1 Chr 6:16-17 [31-32]).

Chronicles also conveys a logical continuity between ark-bearing and musical duties in the account of the ark’s final journey to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:1-16:6).<sup>227</sup> Chronicles punctuates its narrative of the ark’s final transfer to Jerusalem with lists (illustrated below with arrows) of priestly divisions. These lists illustrate the institutional shifts taking place amidst the cults shift toward Jerusalem:

**I. Assembly (15:3-10)**

David assembles “all Israel” and priests to carry the ark (15:3-4)

→ *List* of ark-bearing priestly/Levitical orders (15:5-10)

**II. Consecration and Initial Transport (15:11-24)**

David assembles priests and Levites to consecrate themselves to carry the ark (15:11-14), and the Levites begin transport (15:14).

David has Levites appoint musicians (15:16)

→ *List* of associated musical orders (15:17-24)

**III. Transport and Arrival (15:25-16:6)**

Procession and Arrival with sacrifice, music, and “all Israel” (15:25-16:3)

→ *List* of musicians to remain with the ark (16:4-6)

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<sup>226</sup> Num 1:50; 4:15-20; 7:9; Deut 10:8; 18:5. While the Levites could transport some sacred objects on ox carts, the most sacred vessels were carried on poles. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 614-15, 619, discusses this in more detail.

<sup>227</sup> Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 60.

The Chronicler includes *one* list of priests and Levites associated with the ark's transport, and then *two* lists that describe musical Levitical orders associated with the ark's transport.<sup>228</sup> By punctuating the ark narrative with these lists, the Chronicler achieves three effects.<sup>229</sup> He demonstrates that the ark was carried by Levites in accordance with Mosaic law (Deut 10:8; cf. Num 4:15). He demonstrates that the Levitical musical orders were instituted in the context of adherence to Mosaic law concerning the ark (15:4-11). Finally, he establishes fixed musical orders within the context of the ark's transference. David's command that the Levites appoint their brothers as musicians is therefore grounded historically in the ark's epic journey into the city of David. The ark transferred from Obed-Edom's tent to Jerusalem, while the Levites also transfer from ark-bearers to musicians. Chapters 15-16 thus constitute a period of liminality between these two primary duties. By inserting the three lists of musical orders in 15:4-11, 15:17-24, and 16:4-6, the Chronicler marks sharply the shift from ark-bearing to musical duties during a period of cultic and national transition and liminality (e.g., ark and altar were in two places).<sup>230</sup> The Chronicler draws attention to the Levitical

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<sup>228</sup> That 15:4-10 may be secondary only reinforces the "takeover" of musical roles from ark-bearing roles. See Hanson, "1 Chronicles 15-16 and the Chronicler's Views on the Levites," 69-77.

<sup>229</sup> For lists as a rhetorical strategy, see James W. Watts "Story, List, Sanction: A Cross-Cultural Strategy of Ancient Persuasion," in *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks* (ed. Carol Lipson and Roberta Binkley; Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), 197-212.

<sup>230</sup> On which, cf. Roy A. Rappaport's study, "The Obvious Aspects of Ritual" in *Ecology, Meaning, and Religion* (ed. Roy A. Rappaport; Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1979), 173-221. Rappaport explores how rituals facilitate change through "analogic" (liminal) and "digital" (distinguishable) processes. Just as a thermometer is an analogic instrument that can trip a digital on-off switch, so the ritual is a digital representation of an analogic process (e.g., entering a community). The digital aims at a reduction in vagueness created by an analogic instrument. Analogic entities can change imperceptibly, but digital entities change through discontinuous leaps, even if small. "Reduction of the continuous and complex to the binary through ritual occurrence is also important in the transition of individuals from one state or condition to another" (185). So, ritual imposes on nature distinctions that are much sharper than nature's own distinctions (e.g., ritualizing distinctions between seasons). In addition, ritual creates liminal periods that may be infinitesimally small or even hours, days or months. At such intersections of time, the "befores" and "afters" of ritual may merge and result in a highly affective period of activity in which boundaries are obliterated (186-87; cf. my discussion of celebrations in Chr). Regarding Chr, it is worth considering by analogy how the insertion of highly schematized lists, marking ritual orders, function within a narrative that describes a liminal, or analogic, process of change from the ark to the temple, from David to Solomon, and (for Chr's readers), from the exile to Second Temple period. Moreover, the priestly reappointment narratives discussed in the previous section illustrate one way that Chr

musical duties by listing their ranks in the midst of an ark-bearing narrative. Levites transport the ark to Jerusalem as David appoints them in new roles. Climactically, the ark's journey to the city of David concludes with the Levitical hymn in 16:7-36, after which David assigns Levitical *singers and guards* to remain with the ark (vv. 37-38), while the priests remain at Gibeon (vv. 39-40).<sup>231</sup> Moreover, while ark-bearing duties shifted to musical duties, the ark's "guards" took up gatekeeping duties in the temple.

In addition to the desire to show continuity amidst change, the absence of the ark during the Second Temple period might stand behind Chronicles' presentation of music as the logical extension of Levitical ark-bearing duties.<sup>232</sup> Despite the ark's absence, the Levites still signaled Yhwh's presence through regular music. Kleinig observes that in the Pentateuch, priests were to blow trumpets before the ark as a way of "bringing [Israel] to remembrance" (הזכיר) before Yhwh (Num 10:9-10).<sup>233</sup> The trumpet blast, like the battle cry, served to remind Yhwh of his people (Num 10:9-10; Josh 6:5; Judg 7:20; 1 Sam 17:20, 52; 2 Chr 13:15) so that he would intervene on their behalf. The Chronicler consistently depicts priestly trumpets with accompanying Levitical music to emphasize this link with trumpeting priests in Pentateuch (1 Chr 13:8; 15:17-24, 28; 16:4-6; 2 Chr 5:12-13; 7:6; 20:28; 23:13; 29:26-28).

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uses a "digital" process to mark an analogic change, represented by the liminality of cultic life "between" non-Yahwistic and Yahwistic cultic service. Cf. Roy A. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 86-106. Thanks to Dan Cantey for pointing me to Rappaport's 1979 study.

<sup>231</sup> However, the Levites also went with the priests (vv. 41-42).

<sup>232</sup> The most thorough treatment of this topic is John W. Kleinig's, *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles* (JSOTSup 156; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); Cf. Von Rad, *Gesichtsbild*, 107; Thomas Willi, "Evokation und Bekenntnis: Art und Ort der chronistischen Vokal- und Instrumentalmusik," in *Sprachen – Bilder – Klänge Dimensionen der Theologie im Alten Testament und in seinem Umfeld: Festschrift für Rüdiger Bartelmus zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (AOAT 359; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2009), 351-62. Willi discusses the "signal-effect" of the priests, who showed the gathered community Yhwh's presence, and also the priests role in evoking Yhwh's presence through song.

<sup>233</sup> Kleinig, *The Lord's Song*, 36.

However, the priestly tasks in relation to the ark and battle in Chronicles also include bringing Yhwh to remembrance before Israel, through praise, thanksgiving, and adoration.<sup>234</sup>

He [David] appointed certain of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, to invoke, to thank, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel. (1 Chr 16:4 NRSV)

Significantly, at the culmination of the ark's journey here in 16:4, David appoints the Levites to tasks that continue when the ark rests in the temple. At present they invoke, thank, and praise Yhwh *before* the ark, though later they do so at the temple and in battle (2 Chr 20).

David leaves priests, Asaph, and seven Levitical musicians before the ark to invoke, thank, and praise Yhwh (16:4), just as seven priests blow trumpets before the ark on its final ascent (15:24).<sup>235</sup> The expressed duties of the Levites shift from ark-bearing (1 Chr 15:2) to verbal tasks that can be carried out near the ark, but which do not involve carrying the ark.<sup>236</sup> As Adam Welch suggests, David appoints skilled musicians as the “logical heirs” of the ark-bearing Levites.<sup>237</sup> While the Levites will no longer carry the ark of divine presence, and

<sup>234</sup> Note the use of Levitical and priestly music “before the ark” in 1 Chr 15:24; 16:4, 6, 37 (2x); 2 Chr 5:6.

<sup>235</sup> The presence of seven Levites and priests evokes the divine vanguard in Josh 6:4, which consisted of seven priests, and emphasizes Yhwh's *presence* with the choral and trumpeting ranks. See Curtis, *The Books of Chronicles*, 217; Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 624. That Chr also includes seven Levites speaks to the book's larger efforts to emphasize the complementarity of the priests and Levites.

<sup>236</sup> In this connection, 1 Chr 13:6 refers to the “the ark of God the LORD, who is enthroned between the cherubim—the ark that is called by his name.” This final phrase **שם אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא שָׁם** finds no other attestation in the Hebrew Bible, but may convey the idea of calling or invoking Yhwh's name *over the ark* as a way of declaring his presence. The LXX translation—**ὅϛ ἐπεκλήθη ὄνομα αὐτοϛ** “*on* which his name is called”—seems to communicate this idea.

<sup>237</sup> Adam C. Welch, *The Work of the Chronicles: Its Purpose and Date* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 78. The responsibilities of the Levitical chief (שָׂר) Chenaniah may suggest a further connection between ark-transport and singing. 1 Chr 15:22a states that Chenaniah was **שָׂר-הַלְוִיִּים בַּמִּשָּׁא** a phrase that might be rendered “a Levitical chief in matters of transportation,” though **מִשָּׂא** can also refer to lifting up the voice in song. The rest of v. 22 states that Chenaniah was in charge of song (**יֹסֵר בַּמִּשָּׂא**) because was skilled (**כִּי מְבִין הוּא**), which seems to refer to singing. Accordingly, Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, 304) interprets **מִשָּׂא** in reference to music, though Klein (Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 355) thinks it refers to “bearing” the ark because of the larger context (so also Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 63). The context of this passage allows for both possibilities (as Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 609). Notably, v. 27 states that the Levites were “bearers” (**הַנֹּשְׂאִים**) of the ark, and with them was Chenaniah “the chief of the *lifting up* by the singers” (**הַשָּׂר הַמִּשָּׂא הַמְשַׁרְרִים**), playing off both senses of the verbal root **נָשָׂא**. This literal translation emphasizes the overlap in their duties, made explicit through the duty of the otherwise unaffiliated Chenaniah. Chenaniah does not show up in the genealogies, unless we are to associate him with the Chenaniah in 1 Chr 26:29, who with his sons was assigned duties as a secular judge. If so, his duties here in 15:22 and 27 are completely unrelated. See further M. Gertner, “Masorah and the Levites: An Essay on the History of a Concept,” *VT* 10 (1960):241-72. Though Klein thinks that

priests will no longer blast their trumpets in the lead, together they herald Yhwh's presence through music.

Accordingly, several texts depict the coordination of music-making with the physical descent of Yhwh's presence. 2 Chronicles 5:11-13 reads as follows:

So it happened, when the priests came out of the sanctuary—for all the priests were present (they had sanctified themselves without regard to divisions)—that the Levitical musicians, all of them, from Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and their brothers, clothed in linen, with cymbals, stringed instruments, and lyres, were standing east of the altar. One hundred and twenty priests were with them sounding the trumpets. And *as one* (כֹּאֶחֶד), those sounding the trumpets and music, were making sound as *one chorus* (קוֹל־אֶחָד), praising and giving thanksgiving to Yhwh. **When raising the sound** on the trumpets and with cymbals, and with the musical instruments of the song, and **while praising Yhwh**—for he is good, his mercy endures—a cloud filled the temple, the temple of Yhwh.<sup>238</sup>

Significantly, v. 13 indicates that Yhwh's glory filled the temple precisely when the instrumental and choral music reached its apex. The unified (אֶחָד; 2x) chorus of priests and Levites crescendos as the cloud of divine presence filled the temple. Japhet notes how this scene creates a sense of totality and magnitude during the ark's installation. *All* Israel was present to accompany the ark on its journey; priests from *all* divisions consecrated themselves; and *all* Levitical singers from the three divisions joined the trumpeting priests to praise and offer thanksgiving to Yhwh with one voice (קוֹל־אֶחָד).<sup>239</sup> Chronicles associates Yhwh's presence with a sense of ritualized fullness. If one uses the numbers indicated in 1 Chr 25, 288 musicians were present with 120 trumpeting priests, achieving a priestly symphony around the ark. Whereas priests and Levites would typically serve on a rotating basis, the ark's installment called for a special unified coordination of the entire cult, confirming the Chronicler's conviction that Yhwh was exalted by a unified and full-orbed cult. Fullness and unity are the markers of divine supremacy.

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מְשֻׁרְרִים was mistakenly added by the MT, it is present in all other versions and manuscripts. The LXX refers to Χωρευντας ὁ ἄρχων τῶν ᾠδῶν τῶν ἁδόντων, "Chenenias, the master of the songs of the singers."

<sup>238</sup> The entirety of this passage, following the word "holy" in the first line, constitutes Chr's expansion of its *Vorlage* (1 Kgs 8:10; Cf. also 2 Chr 35:25-30). In other words, Chr adds a Levitical portion to its *Vorlage*.

<sup>239</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 579.



In another text, Chronicles depicts the descent of Yhwh’s presence in connection with the “loyalty refrain” (“for his mercy endures ...”), Levitical music, and priestly trumpet blasts:

When Solomon had finished praying, fire descended from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of Yhwh filled the temple. ... When all the Israelites saw the fire descend, and the glory of Yhwh upon the temple, they bowed prostrate upon the ground, worshipped, and praised Yhwh—“for he is good, his mercy endures.” ... And the **priests** were standing at their posts along with the **Levites**, with the musical instruments of Yhwh, which king David had made for offering thanksgiving to Yhwh—“for his mercy endures”—and through which David offered praise in song. Opposite them, the priests were blowing the trumpets, and all Israel was standing by. (2 Chr 7:1-6)

In sum, Levitical music enabled Chronicles to depict the arrival of Yhwh’s presence in the cult, while also conveying continuity between the Levites’ earlier role as ark-bearers and their new roles as musicians. Moreover, the descent of Yhwh’s glory occurs in the midst of a united cult.

## 2. THE LEVITICAL VANGUARD IN 2 CHR 20

As Jehoshaphat prepared for battle, he recognizes this important role for priestly musicians:

After consulting with the people, he appointed singers to Yhwh, who would praise (his) holy splendor [להדרת קדש]. While marching ahead of the warriors they said: “Give thanks to Yhwh, for his mercy endures.” (2 Chr 20:21)

What is immediately striking about this text is that the Levitical singers<sup>240</sup> proceed ahead of the army, yet without the ark, as one might expect in an account where priests go into battle

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<sup>240</sup> The “singers” in this scene almost certainly refer to Levites, given (a) the presence of the Levitical singers in v. 19, (b) the “loyalty refrain,” used most typically by the Levites (1 Chr 16:41; ), and (c) the use of משררים in consistent reference to Levitical musicians in Chr. 1 Chr 6:18; 9:33; 15:16-19, 27; 2 Chr 5:12-13; 29:28; 34:12; 35:15; cf. 1 Chr 6:16-17. The polel ptc. משררים is a technical term in Chr, referring to cult officiates specifically designated for the task of music (cf. the qal ptc. שרות in 2 Chr 35:25). Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 797, suggests that this is a “democratized” procession of all the people. While all the people participate, the משררים likely refer to Levitical singers, who lead the people as elsewhere in Chr.

V. 19 refers to the “Levites, the children of the Kohathites, even of the Korahites” to denote those who proceed into battle. Elsewhere in Chr, the Korahites are gatekeepers (1 Chr 9:19; 26:1), though here they take on the role of singers as in a number of Psalms (Pss 42-49). See discussion in Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 299; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 796; Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 75.

(Josh 6-7). Instead, they go before the army *singing and praising* God, positioning themselves where ancient Near Eastern standard-bearers and Israelite ark-bearers belong in (military) procession.<sup>241</sup> Additionally, the singers employ the same loyalty refrain (“... for his mercy endures”) uttered in connection with the descent of Yhwh’s presence in the temple (2 Chr 5:11-13; 7:1-6 [2x]), and in connection with Levitical duties at the ark (1 Chr 16:41; cf. v. 34). In other words, Chronicles depicts the priests as a musical vanguard, announcing Yhwh’s presence with the army.

Chronicles employs an unusual phrase להדרת־קדש “(his) holy splendor” to describe the object of Levitical praise. The almost identical phrase בהדרת־קדש “in (his) holy splendor” appears in 1 Chr 16:29 (// Ps 96:9) and Ps 29:2, which Ps 96 and 1 Chr 16 adapt.<sup>242</sup> In the earlier of these texts, Ps 29:2, the psalmist calls upon the בני אלים “sons of (the) god(s)”<sup>243</sup> to worship Yhwh “in (his) holy splendor,” suggesting a heavenly scene. Several scholars argue on the basis of the parallel term *hdrt* in Ugaritic that the Hebrew phrase בהדרת־קדש refers to

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<sup>241</sup> See 6:8, where priests go with trumpets before the Levites and ark. Cf. also Num 14:44; Josh 3:11. Rudolf Smend, *Yahweh War and Tribal Confederation: Reflections on Israel's Earliest History* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 70, observes a thinness to the biblical evidence for the idea that the ark functioned as a war palladium in early Israel. Nevertheless, he affirms that it nevertheless served as an occasional expression of Yhwh’s intense presence in war. The ark could substitute for Yhwh’s actual presence, but was not an essential feature of divine war. For Holy War motifs, patterns, and deviations from patterns in 2 Chr 20, see Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 74-75.

<sup>242</sup> These are the only texts where the feminine noun הדרה occurs in the Hebrew Bible. See F. M. Cross, “Notes on a Canaanite Psalm in the Old Testament,” *BASOR* 117 (1950):19-21; idem, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic. Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 152-55; J. Tropper, “Ugaritic Dreams. Notes on Ugaritic *d(h)rt* and *hdrt*,” in *Ugarit, Religion and Culture. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Ugarit, Religion and Culture, Edinburgh, July 1994: Essays Presented in Honour of Professor John C. L. Gibson* (ed. N. Wyatt, W. G. E. Watson, and J. B. Lloyd; UBL 12; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996):305-313; Kleinig, *The Lord's Song*, 176 fn. 2; D. Pardee, “On Psalm 29: Structure and Meaning,” in *The Book of Psalms: Composition and Reception* (ed. Peter W. Flint and Patrick D. Miller; VTSup 99; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 153-81; Chaim Cohen, “Biblical Hebrew-Ugaritic Comparative Philology: The Comparison of BH הדר/הדרת = Ug. *hdrt*,” in *ErIsr: Frank Moore Cross Volume* (ed. Baruch A. Levine et al; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1999):71-77.

For a discussion on the relationship between Ps 29, and Ps 96 and 1 Chr 16, see H. L. Ginsberg, “A Strand in the Cord of Hebraic Hymnody,” *EI* 9 (1969):45-50.

<sup>243</sup> If the *mem* in אלים is enclitic, then the phrase would read “the sons of El,” on which, see David Noel Freedman and C. Franke Hyland. “Psalm 29: A Structural Analysis,” *HTR* 66/2 (1973): 237-256 [242].

Yhwh's theophanic arrival, hence the plausible renderings "in (his) holy theophany,"<sup>244</sup> or "when he appears in his sanctuary."<sup>245</sup> The seven-fold repetition of קוּל in Ps 29 underscores Yhwh's dramatic arrival,<sup>246</sup> in what Mays calls a "veritable litany on 'the voice of the Lord,' which accumulates verbal impressiveness in its growing crescendo."<sup>247</sup> Verses 3-9 recount the theophanic arrival of Yhwh and the ecological impact of his voice on the world as it "thunders over the mighty waters" and then "breaks cedars," "makes the wilderness tremble," "bends large trees," and "strips leaves off the trees." Finally, v. 10 recounts the reaction of those in the temple—they exclaim "glory!" In short, Yhwh's theophany joins company with an impressive acoustic display, which culminates in a worshipful response.

Psalm 96:9 and its parallel 1 Chr 16:29 depend literarily on Ps 29, though they make several significant changes. They call on "families of the nations" (rather than the בני אלים) to worship Yhwh and bring him tribute in his *temple*, or in the case of 1 Chr 16 "before him," referring to Yhwh's ark in Jerusalem. Psalm 96 and 1 Chr 16 thus suggest an *earthly* cultic scene, striking closer to the cultic-military setting of 2 Chr 20.<sup>248</sup> Psalm 96 and 1 Chr 16 depart from Ps 29's emphasis on Yhwh's powerful voice as it arrives in the world, but nonetheless retain the theophanic atmosphere by referring to the nations "trembling" before Yhwh as he arrives to "judge the world" (96:9-10; 1 Chr 16:30, 33). For these poets, Yhwh's arrival sends nature into a state of ecstatic jubilation (e.g., "the trees of the forest sing for joy" 96:12; 1 Chr 16:33), and not just frightened panic, though they retain the emphasis on Yhwh's dramatic arrival *as king* (97:7-10; 1 Chr 16:28-31).

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<sup>244</sup> So Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 359-60, following Peter R. Ackroyd, "Some Notes on the Psalms," *JTS* 17 (1966): 393-96.

<sup>245</sup> Freedman and Hyland, "Psalm 29," 238.

<sup>246</sup> On the significance of seven, and its use in Ugaritic poetry (which seems to underlie Ps 29), see Freedman and Hyland, "Psalm 29," 241 fn. 5.

<sup>247</sup> James L. Mays, "Psalm 29," *Int* 39/1 (1985): 60-64[60].

<sup>248</sup> The temple was not yet built according to Chr.

By observing this larger background to 2 Chr 20, one may note a striking adaptation of the themes from these psalms. First, Jehoshaphat instructs the priests to praise Yhwh with the refrain “for his faithfulness endures” (כי לעולם חסדו), a refrain used first in the Levitical hymn just discussed (1 Chr 16:34; cf. v. 41) and in texts accompanying the arrival of Yhwh’s presence (2 Chr 5:13; 7:3, 6). Second, Jehoshaphat summons the Levitical singers to praise “(his) holy theophany” (להדרת־קדש) on the field of battle (v. 21). However, instead of bearing the ark, the typical priestly emblem of Yhwh’s presence, they signal Yhwh’s “holy theophany” with praise. As Jehoshaphat stated, Yhwh would be with the people in battle (v. 17). The phrase להדרת־קדש likely refers to Yhwh’s dramatic presence as it arrives in battle.<sup>249</sup> Indeed,

**Right when they [the Levites] started in with a celebratory cry and praise,** Yhwh set an ambush against the Ammonites, Moabites, and the Seirites who had come against Judah, and they were routed. (2 Chr 20:22)<sup>250</sup>

Like Ps 29, 2 Chr 20 focuses on the “acoustics” of Yhwh’s arrival. Verse 22 coordinates the Levites’ singing and Yhwh’s dramatic arrival, emphasizing that Yhwh performed his military victory at the precise moment that the Levites raised their song. One might thus say that Levitical music heralds or designates Yhwh’s theophanic visitation, much as they would “invoke” Yhwh’s name before the ark in 1 Chr 16:4, in recognition and praise of his supreme divinity (vv. 8-36).<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> The modification of the phrase השתחוּו ליהוה בהדרת־קדש “worship Yhwh in holy splendor” to מהללים להדרת־קדש “praising (his) holy splendor” may represent a conflation of two aspects of the earlier texts, namely, ליהוה and בהדרת־קדש. If so, Chr might be saying that the Levites praise Yhwh’s holy splendor as it appears in the field of battle, as suggested by the simultaneity of their music and Yhwh’s military victory.

<sup>250</sup> Interestingly, this verse correlates the noun רנה, usually a spontaneous cry of celebration, with תהלה, “praise [music].” Cf. the present verse with 2 Kgs 3:15, which refers to music that accompanied Elisha’s prophecy about Yhwh’s impending victory. 2 Chr 20 may build its account on 2 Kgs 3, though with significant modification. On this position, see discussion by D. L. Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy: Studies in Deutero-Prophetic Literature and Chronicles* (SBLMS 23; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), 70-71, who also observes the use of a prophetic oracle in both texts (Elisha and Jehaziel respectively).

<sup>251</sup> The ark is associated with the invocation of Yhwh’s name in 2 Sam 6:2 and 1 Chr 13:6.

Third, the battle scene in 2 Chr 20 retains the emphasis of the earlier poems on Yhwh's arrival *as victorious king over the earth*. He arrives to judge the nations on behalf of Israel.<sup>252</sup> Yhwh's victory over the opposing nations forms a direct response to Jehoshaphat's lament expressed earlier in the chapter.<sup>253</sup>

Jehoshaphat said, "Yhwh, God of our ancestors, are you not indeed the God in heaven? And are you not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand is power and might (בידך) (כח וגבורה), and there is no one who is able to oppose you (ואין עמך להתיצב).<sup>254</sup> O our God, will you not judge them! For we are powerless (אין בנו כח) before this great multitude coming against us. We do not know what to do, for our eyes are upon you. (2 Chr 20:6, 12)

The powerlessness of the people (אין בנו כח) contrasts sharply with the power of Yhwh (בידך) (כח), who rules the nations unopposed. Jehoshaphat's rhetorical questions address key characteristics of Yhwh from David's prayer in 1 Chr 29, another text from the Chronicler's own hand.<sup>255</sup>

Are you not God in heaven / do you not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations / power and might are in your hand (2 Chr 20:6)

All that is in heaven and earth belongs to you / ... you rule over all / all power and might are in your hand (1 Chr 29:11)

David's prayer (1 Chr 29) piles up a series of totalizing statements that communicate Yhwh's sole possession of power and rule, just as 2 Chr 20:6 emphasizes Yhwh's power and rule over all kingdoms. 2 Chronicles 20:6 modifies the merism "heaven" and "earth" from 1 Chr 29 to read as a more fitting political merism "heaven" and "all the kingdoms of the

<sup>252</sup> The adaptation of Ps 29 among the Yhwh kingship songs attests to this emphasis. Cf. also Peter C. Craige's argument that Ps 29 is a "Hebrew victory hymn" ("Psalm 29 in the Hebrew Poetic Tradition," *VT* 22/2 [1972]:143-151 [144]).

<sup>253</sup> On the formal features of this prayer, see Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 72-73.

<sup>254</sup> The use of עמ is unusual, yet cf. 2 Chr 14:11, where a similar construction occurs (אין-עמך לעזור; particle of non-existence + עמך + infc.). The force of עמ may be on accompaniment, so as to emphasize that Yhwh acted alone. Such an idea would fit the context of 20:6, which states that Yhwh is "indeed God in heaven (עתה הוא אלהים בשמים). Alternatively, עמך may be a comparative ("no one like you"), on which, see *HALOT*, ad loc.

On the inf. להתיצב denoting ability, see Joüon §124; *IBHS* 36.2.3f; the prepositioned בידך emphasizes Yhwh as the one who possesses power ("in *your* hand ..."), see Joüon §154.

<sup>255</sup> Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, 789) observes and delineates these connections.

nations.”<sup>256</sup> The use of an exclusivity clause *אין עםך* (lit. “there is no one with you”) in connection with this merism emphasizes the religio-political nature of Yhwh’s omnipotence. There is no room for other political or divine actors with or like Yhwh.<sup>257</sup> Yhwh’s absolute supremacy distinguishes him categorically. Therefore, Israel need not fight, as Jehoshaphat communicates in 20:17, “This *battle* is not for you to fight. Station yourselves and stand to watch the deliverance of Yhwh for you, O Judah and Jerusalem.” Yhwh’s sole deliverance is underscored by the fact that the Judean army only encounters dead bodies when they reach their enemy (v. 24). By assuming the position reserved for the divine vanguard and raising the standard of praise as Yhwh defeats the nations, the Levites signal Yhwh’s response to Jehoshaphat’s impassioned plea in 2 Chr 20:6-12 and his assurance in v. 17 that “Yhwh is with you.” The account thus affirms with 1 Chr 29:11-12 and 1 Chr 16:31 that Yhwh indeed rules the nations with all power and might.<sup>258</sup> For the beleaguered Judeans, *only* Yhwh had the capacity to act because all power resided in him. As Kleinig suggests, “praise was their [the Israelites] chief defense against the enemies that threatened their survival.”<sup>259</sup>

### C. CONCLUSIONS

The shift from ark-bearing to music afforded the Chronicler an opportunity to show continuity between the old traditions of the Levites bearing Yhwh’s ark in the wilderness and

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<sup>256</sup> Cf. Beentjes, *Tradition and Transformation*, 66; idem, “King Jehoshaphat’s Prayer: Some Remarks on 2 Chronicles 20:6-13,” *BZ* 38 (1994): 264-70.

<sup>257</sup> Cf. the nearly identical use of *אין עםך* in 2 Chr 14:10 by Asa in a similar context of geopolitical threat.

<sup>258</sup> The collocation of these divine attributes, as several scholars have noted, exhibits several parallels with David’s prayer in 1 Chr 29, most significantly where David states, “Everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. You are the ruler of all things” (vv. 11b-12a). Both prayers center on Yhwh’s control and supremacy over “all” and joins this appeal conceptually to the Davidic precedent. Yhwh’s supremacy exists over several heavenly and earthly domains, expressed clearly in 1 Chr 29:11b (*כל בשמים ובארץ לך יהוה*), and also in Jehoshaphat’s parallel assertions that Yhwh is “God in heaven” (*אלהים בשמים*) and that he also rules “all the kingdoms of the nations” (*כל ממלכות הגוים*; 2 Chr 20:6). See, Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 258; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 297.

<sup>259</sup> Kleinig, *The Lord’s Song*, 178; cf. also Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 75.

in battle, and their new role as Yhwh's attendants in music.<sup>260</sup> The Levites were still Yhwh's attendants, but they now signaled his presence in the cult and battle through music. Kleinig summarizes this point well:

It had previously been the practice for the priests to lead the army with their trumpets ... and for the people to sound the battle cry at the blast of the trumpets... Moreover, in the past, the ark had been brought into battle by the Levites .... On this occasion, however, the priestly trumpeters were supplemented by the temple musicians, while the refrain for thanksgiving supplanted the battle cry. *The Levitical choir thus acted as the vanguard of the army.* With them the LORD himself stood at the head of the army. His attendance, however, was secured by the invocation of his name in sacred song rather than by the presence of the ark.<sup>261</sup>

But this transition does not occur without shifts in the nature of their roles. Most significantly, the Levites acquired explicitly adorational, or “iconic” roles. They herald Yhwh's presence through praise and signal his solitary deliverance, even as they participate in its embodiment. As with the temple, the Levites did not confine Yhwh, but signal his supreme divinity, kingship, and power through adoration of Yhwh as he achieves victory over the nations of the lands.

In addition, this scene provides an example of how Chronicles makes gestures toward possibilities for the experience of divine power in post-exilic society. Though the precise lines between Chronicles' narration about the past and its rhetorical goals for the present are difficult to discern with certainty, several aspects of this narrative might have resonated in Chronicles' own time. For example, Israel could no longer witness Yhwh's military victories over its enemies. Yehud had no standing army, no king to lead into battle, and little political autonomy to assert. In such a context, Chronicles emphasizes the experience of divine power and victory over the nations and gods through the medium of worship and adoration. 2 Chronicles 20 depicts the priesthood—in the midst of “all Israel”—and the temple as key markers of Yhwh's defeat of the nations, and the assertion of

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<sup>260</sup> Haran, *Temples and Temple Service*, 276-88, argues that the ark was destroyed by Josiah's time.

<sup>261</sup> Kleinig, *The Lord's Song*, 177 (emphasis mine).

his supreme kingship. Through these institutions, Israel experienced the incomparable power of Yhwh, just as the cultic singularity of the Jerusalem temple signaled Yhwh's supremacy over the nations and the gods (1 Chr 22:5; 2 Chr 2:4). Israel met Yhwh's supreme power amidst priestly-led worship.

#### VIII. CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

This chapter explored several aspects of the priesthood's participation with and manifestation of Yhwh's supreme and sole divinity. Part II examined the unique election, selection, and design of the priesthood. For Chronicles, the temple's priesthood could trace its origins and design to Yhwh's divine **תבנית** (design) given to David, which he delivered to Solomon and eventually Hezekiah. Yhwh's role in setting up a unique priesthood correlates with emphases elsewhere in the book on Yhwh's role in initiating and creating *one* unique cult. The priesthood's divine point of origin contrasts with the priesthods of the nations (as discussed in part V). Part III examined the inaugural priestly hymn (1 Chr 16:8-36). David appoints the Levites in what become their defining roles in the book (vv. 1-7; 37-42), praising, thanking, and invoking Yhwh at the sanctuary. The hymn itself emphasizes Yhwh's supreme and sole divinity, drawing explicit attention to the exceeding praise and offerings he receives and is due. Levitical responsibilities to extol Yhwh's supreme divinity thus claim a prominent place in Chronicles. Part IV explored ways that priestly activity exhibits aspects of Yhwh's fullness and perpetuity, two divine features that receive recurrent emphasis in the book. Part V examined the Chronicler's conception of Jeroboam's revolt and its relationship to Yhwh's sole divinity. Chronicles highlights the priestly dimensions of the religious split between Israel and Judah, and does so in a way that emphasizes the inauthentic qualities of the northern cult. Jeroboam prevented Levites and priests from serving cultically, and thus



they fled south along with all Yahwists. Jeroboam created his own gods and priesthood, just like the “nations of the lands.” The resulting configuration was one in which Yhwh’s full-orbed cult in Jerusalem stood apart from the North and all nations as the sole locus of divine power and kingship, which Yhwh demonstrated by defeating the north (2 Chr 13:15-18). In connection with my examination of the temple in ch. 3, one may observe that Chronicles forges a fundamental contrast between Yhwh as the creator of a living and active cult, and the North/nations who only serve human creations, which were devoted to non-gods. This contrast explains why Chronicles emphasizes so strongly Jerusalem’s retention of an active priesthood that served daily, monthly, and for each festival. Jerusalem cult was Yhwh’s one unique creation. Significantly, 2 Chr 2:3-4[4-5] and 13:11 both connect Jerusalem’s ongoing, orderly, and lavish cult with statements about Yhwh’s supremacy over other gods. Ritualized displays of cultic grandeur distinguish Yhwh as *the* God.

Relatedly, section VI explored ways that cult reforms mark the boundary between idolatry and Yhwh-worship. Idolatry necessitated reform, but reforms (and some celebrations) created liminal periods in which Yhwh’s cult and idolatry coexisted. However, during those periods, Yhwh’s cult did not yet according to its original design. Priestly re-appointments, however, provided the Chronicler with a means of resolving tensions created during such liminal periods, and of sharpening temporally the distinction between Yhwh’s cult and the “foreign” cults that so pervaded Judea throughout its history, and into the Chronicler’s contemporary context. The establishment of the priesthood in all of its ritualized fullness marked Yhwh’s victories over rival cults and the “gods.” While Chronicles is not mechanical in maintaining sharp boundaries between the Yhwh cult and pagan cults in each narrative, one may tentatively suggest that the book’s attention to liminal cultic arrangements *and* orderly restoration provided Chronicles’ post-exilic audience with two

important models of expressing divine preeminence appropriate to their context. First, Yhwh's preeminent power and presence could be expressed and experienced "in-between" periods of apostasy and total loyalty, in Yhwh's victory against rivals in battle, in the destruction of rival cults, and through periods of cultic celebration. Second, Yhwh's preeminent power and presence could be expressed and experienced in the stasis that characterized the cult's orderly and ongoing operations, in which the distinctions between non-Yahwistic and Yahwistic worship became absolute. Section VII focused on the story of Jehoshaphat's victory over Moab, Ammon, and Seir in 2 Chr 20 to show a case in which the Levites serve militarily as heralds of Yhwh's supreme uniqueness. This text illustrates the Levites crucial transition from ark bearers to musicians, and in particular, the exercise of their responsibility to praise Yhwh as the only one able to save.

## CHAPTER 4

## KINGSHIP AND DIVINE EXALTATION

Chronicles offers some of the most striking biblical claims regarding the exalted status of the Davidic ruler. According to Chronicles, David and Solomon sat on the divine throne, and ruled directly over Yhwh’s kingdom.<sup>1</sup> The following five texts exhibit the human king’s exalted status, though the phenomenon they express exceeds these texts alone:

I will station him [Solomon] in my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever. (1 Chr 17:14)

*cf.* Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me [Yhwh]; your throne will be established forever. (2 Sam 7:16)

And from all my sons—indeed Yhwh gave me many—he chose my son Solomon to sit on the throne of Yhwh’s kingdom over Israel. (1 Chr 28:5, *no Urtext*)

So Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king in place of his father David. He prospered and all Israel obeyed him. (1 Chr 29:23)<sup>2</sup>

*cf.* 1 Kgs 2:12 - So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established. (1 Kgs 2:12).

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Chr 17:14; 28:5; 29:23; 2 Chr 9:8a. Cf. Ps 45:6, though it is not absolutely clear that the human king is in view in this text. Cf. also Isa 9:5[6]. For discussions of the complicated relationship between human and divine kingship in Israel and the aNE, see Nicole Brisch, ed., *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East and Beyond* (OIS 4; Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008); David O’Connor and David P. Silverman, eds., *Ancient Egyptian Kingship* (PA 9; Leiden: Brill, 1994); Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962); Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955);

<sup>2</sup> See discussion in Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 514-15. Chr *never* refers to the “throne of David”, and instead has the “throne of the Lord” or the “throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel” (1 Chr 28:5), or the “throne of Israel” (2 Chr 6:10, 16 // 1 Kgs 8:20, 25) or simply the “royal throne in Israel” (1 Chr 22:10; 2 Chr 7:18 // 1 Kgs 9:5).

Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the LORD your God. (2 Chr 9:8a)

*Cf.* Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. (1 Kgs 10:9a)

And now you dare to assert yourselves before Yhwh's kingdom, which is in the hands of David's sons. (2 Chr 13:8a, no *Urtext*)

In Chronicles, as Klein states, “kingship is equated with the kingdom of God ... and is inalienably linked to the Davidic dynasty (1 Chr 17:13).”<sup>3</sup> According to Brian Kelly, the Davidic covenant “constituted Israel as the earthly manifestation of the kingdom of God, in a reality manifested by the temple, appointed for atonement and prayer, and the Davidic line, the personal expression of God’s rule.”<sup>4</sup> This chapter explores this unique configuration of Davidic and divine kingship, and suggests several additional ways beyond the throne motif wherein the Davidic king embodied and participated in Yhwh’s exalted kingship. *Functionally*, the king exercised divine rule within Yhwh’s kingdom, acting in a divine capacity. *Positionally*, the king shared the divine throne, and thus became co-recipient of actions directed at Yhwh. In a few cases, the king even manifested regal qualities characteristic of Yhwh himself.

However, in addition to royal exaltation, Chronicles exhibits a countervailing tendency to delimit the king’s power in relation to the cult, emphasize the demise of various kings at the height of their power, and to narrate the assertion of divine power against the king. As such, Chronicles exhibits ambivalence toward the exaltation of the Davidic king. In particular, the book identifies Yhwh’s enduring kingship with the Davidic dynasty, yet that same dynasty was historically unable to manifest the ideals of divine kingship. Moreover, the exaltation of the Davidic ruler came into conflict with parallel efforts to exalt the cult and

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<sup>3</sup> Klein, “Chronicles, Book of 1-2,” in *ABD*, 1:992-1,002 [1,000].

<sup>4</sup> Brian E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSupp 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 241.

temple. The king's status on the divine throne stood in tension with his inability to exercise freely his power in the cult.

Chronicles' attempts to grapple with these tensions between exalted divine kingship and human rule become evident in several ways. First, Chronicles idealizes deference to divine rule through the cult, making it a constitutive characteristic of kings whom Yhwh exalts. Most notably, David concludes his reign by donating his wealth for the temple project and with a prayer that extols Yhwh as divine king.<sup>5</sup> Second, several rulers face ruin at the height of their success,<sup>6</sup> even though they participate uniquely as co-recipients of benefits directed at Yhwh (tribute, worship) or of qualities also ascribed to Yhwh. In other words, the humbling of Judah's kings belongs not only to a pattern of "retribution" in the book of Chronicles,<sup>7</sup> but more broadly to the book's emphasis on the need for royal deference and submission to divine rule by eschewing foreign alliances (e.g., 2 Chr 16:7, 12)<sup>8</sup> and seeking only Yhwh. Third, Yhwh is involved directly in raising up foreign rulers to judge Judean kings who form alliances with other rulers. Fourth, the Chronicler depicts strict boundaries protecting the cult from royal infringement. While rulers serve as cult initiators, reformers, and founders, they do not hold absolute power over the temple. Thus, while Chronicles offers some of the most soaring biblical claims regarding the king's status and participation in divine rule, it also places the king in check vis-à-vis divine rule. As a result, Chronicles suggests only periodic instantiations of Yhwh's supremacy in Judean kings after Solomon.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. the *Realpolitik* that characterized David's last days in 1 Kgs 2:1-11 (Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 963). Cf. also the poems celebrating divine sponsorship of kingship in David's "last words" (2 Sam 23:1-7).

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Rehoboam (2 Chr 12:1-4), Asa (2 Chr 16:9), Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:35-36), Hezekiah (2 Chr 32:25), and Josiah (35:21).

<sup>7</sup> Discussed frequently in the secondary literature. See, e.g., Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 44-45; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 76-81; Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*; Robert North, S.J., "The Theology of the Chronicler," *JBL* 82/4 (1963): 369-81[372-74].

<sup>8</sup> Which were often forged by pillaging the temple (e.g., 2 Chr 16:1-6).

To explore these dynamics relating to the embodiment of Yhwh's exalted kingship in Judean kings, this chapter proceeds in discussion of three aspects of Chronicles. The first section discusses Chronicles' depiction of divine kingship in 29:11-20, which is part of the Chronicler's *Sondergut*. This unique text concludes the account of David's reign, and emphasizes Yhwh's sovereign kingship in connection with his sole divinity and power. The second section complements the first by considering royal participation in divine rule. It explores Chronicles' depiction of David and Solomon, the two kings in the book who share the divine throne. Additionally, the second section examines Chronicles' depiction of human and divine rule in the reigns of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah. Because of their unique participation in divine rule, the lines distinguishing divine from the human king becomes remarkably blurred in several episodes. The third section examines strategies that Chronicles employs to differentiate between human and divine rule, particularly, through the use of foreign rulers.

I. THE SUPREME KING: DAVIDIC DEVOTION AND THE PRACTICES OF MONOTHEISM (1 CHR 29:10-19).

A. DAVID'S DEVOTION TO THE ARK

Chronicles features two compositions that extol divine kingship (1 Chr 16:8-36; 29:10-19).<sup>9</sup> I discussed the first composition (1 Chr 16:8-36) extensively in the previous chapter. At this point, it is important to observe that this first text precedes Chronicles'

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<sup>9</sup> See Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 532, on the framing effect of these compositions. An outline of these chapters is as follows.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Ch. 16     | David installs priests before the ark and commissions Levites to praise Yhwh     |
| Ch. 17     | Davidic promise (with emphasis on Solomon's role as temple-builder) and response |
| Chs. 18-20 | Davidic wars (collecting materials for the temple; e.g., 18:8, 10-11)            |
| Ch. 21     | David's census and selection of temple site                                      |
| Chs. 22-27 | Material and administrative preparations   |
| Ch. 28-29  | Public selection of Solomon as successor   |

account of the Davidic covenant (1 Chr 17), offering a strong statement of divine kingship as a prelude to the offer of a Davidic dynasty.

The Levitical hymn also sits at the culmination of the narrative depicting the ark's journey to Jerusalem (1 Chr 13-16), and may also be seen as David's impetus. David appointed the Levites to thank, praise, and invoke Yhwh (1 Chr 16:1-7; 37-42) as supreme king (discussed in ch. 3). Divine-kingship motifs also punctuate the scenes preceding the Yhwh-kingship hymn (1 Chr 16:8-36) by virtue of the ark's presence with "all Israel."<sup>10</sup> Indeed, it is the "the ark of *the* God who is invoked by the name 'Yhwh enthroned among the Cherubim'" (13:6)<sup>11</sup> that accompanies Israel's procession to the new capital Jerusalem. Chronicles' fascination with the "ceremonial" nature of the ark-throne's advance lends a regal tenor to chs. 13-16.<sup>12</sup> "All Israel," the priests, and Levites join David in musical procession to bring the ark to Jerusalem, indicating the unanimous affirmation and societally unifying effects of Yhwh's kingship (13:5, 8; cf. 2 Sam 6:1).<sup>13</sup> Just as all Israel rallied to make David king (1 Chr 12:38), so they rally in procession around the divine king. The geographical region from which Israel comes to join the procession—"from the Shihor of Egypt to Hamath approach" (13:5)—reflects the scope of the regions mentioned as unconquered by Joshua in (Josh 13:2-5).<sup>14</sup> As Japhet contends, "The Chronicler takes this very picture, the broadest boundaries of the land, to depict the territory in which the people of

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<sup>10</sup> According to Chr, the tabernacle still resided at Gibeon (1 Chr 16:39; 21:29; 2 Chr 1:3, 13), where sacrifices occurred at its altar.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Sam 6:2 differs slightly, having יהוה צבאות ישב הכרובים עליי (the ark of God, on which is invoked the name 'Yhwh enthroned on the Cherubim') instead of את ארון האלהים יהוה יושב הכרובים אשר־נקרא שם (the ark of the God Yhwh, who is enthroned on the Cherubim, (and) who is invoked there). 4QSam<sup>a</sup> lacks the reduplicated שם, while Chr lacks צבאות. Knoppers (*I Chronicles 10-29*, 580-81) suggests plausibly that אשר־נקרא שם experienced a transposition in Chr, and belongs instead *before* יהוה יושב הכרובים, yielding "the ark of God, which is invoked by the name 'Yhwh enthroned upon the cherubim.'" My translation adopts this suggestion.

<sup>12</sup> As Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 332. The "martial overtones" of 1 Sam are downplayed while cultic elements receive emphasis in chs. 13-16.

<sup>13</sup> See Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 629-33, for aNE parallels to the installation of a deity in a new city.

<sup>14</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 277-78.

Israel are actually settled; not at the end of David's rule and after all his military campaigns, but at the very beginning of his reign."<sup>15</sup> The procession of the divine king to Jerusalem takes place with *all* Israel from *all* territories in attendance.

While the ark rested for three months in Obed-Edom's home, Chronicles takes the opportunity to report on David's international success as leader of Israel, and his destruction of foreign "gods." 1 Chronicles 14:1-2 reports that Hiram of Tyre took the initiative to send David materials and laborers to build him a palace, an act that David attributes to divine favor and desire to exalt his kingdom.<sup>16</sup> David then routs the Philistines at the Valley of Rephaim (14:9) after he "inquired of God" (וַיִּשְׁעַל דָּוִד בַּאֱלֹהִים; 14:10).<sup>17</sup> According to Samuel's account, the Philistines "abandoned their idols [עַצְבֵיהֶם]" at Baal-perazim and David *carried them away* (1 Sam 5:21). If read in the context of the book of Samuel, one might see David's actions as retribution for the Philistines' taking the ark of God (1 Sam 4:10-11).<sup>18</sup> According to Chronicles, however, David and his men *burn* the Philistine "gods" (אֱלֹהֵיהֶם; 1 Chr 14:12) instead of carrying them off in victory.<sup>19</sup> David's actions in Chronicles thus comport with Deuteronomic injunctions to *burn* foreign gods and cult objects (Deut 7:5, 25; 12:3). Moreover, the change from עַצְבֵיהֶם ("their idols") to אֱלֹהֵיהֶם ("their gods") in 1 Chr 14:12 links David's military defeats explicitly with Yhwh's victory over "the gods," though the presence of τοὺς θεοὺς αὐτῶν in LXX 2 Sam 5:21 may suggest a gloss by the Hebrew scribe of Samuel rather than a change in Chronicles. In either case, David is a loyal king who

<sup>15</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 278. Notably, the three similar geographical depictions in the book occur in conjunction with the temple's (re-)dedication (2 Chr 7:8; 30:1, 5). See Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 51-52; Braun, *I Chronicles*, 175.

<sup>16</sup> 1 Chr 14:2 adds the word לְמַעַלָּה (exceedingly) to its *Vorlage* (2 Sam 5:12).

<sup>17</sup> Language that the Chronicler employs to speak negatively of Saul (שָׂאוּל) who went to "seek [לְשָׂאוּל]" a necromancer instead of God. 1 Chr 10:13.

<sup>18</sup> As Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 289. For discussion of the iconic features of this text, and ways that the ark functioned as an image of the divine, see Levtow, *Images of Others*, 132-43.

<sup>19</sup> Emphasis mine. 4QSam<sup>a</sup> breaks off before this verse.



destroys foreign “gods” and seeks the ark. Several texts in Chronicles emphasize the defeat of foreign “gods,” and not just nations.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, Chronicles’ revision of Samuel, where the men carry off the idols/gods, portrays David as the first in a prestigious line of Judean reformers (Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoiada, Hezekiah, Josiah) who destroy “foreign” cults and restore Yhwh’s cult and temple. Appropriately, 1 Chr 14 concludes with a report on David’s victory amidst another Philistine attack, one in which he again “inquires of God” (14:14) and Yhwh receives international recognition (14:17).<sup>21</sup>

In sum, Chronicles includes stories about David’s and Yhwh’s international achievements, the defeat and destruction of the Philistine gods, and David seeking after God/the ark, within the ark narrative (chs. 13-16). By relocating these events from their original location in 2 Sam 5:11-26—where they occur *before* David’s attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem—Chronicles links David’s success and disdain for false gods with his total loyalty to Yhwh’s throne. Forsaking the gods, seeking the ark, and international fame are three themes that coalesce in the Levitical hymn to Yhwh that culminates chs. 13-16 (16:8-36; discussed in ch. 3).

#### B. DAVID’S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT (1 CHR 29:10-19)

Yhwh’s supreme kingship become even more pronounced in David’s last words in Chronicles, the prayer of 29:10-19. In concert with the Levitical hymn of ch. 16, David’s prayer lays out concrete means of responding to Yhwh *qua* supreme divinity. This final prayer follows immediately after the account of abundant freewill offerings for the temple (vv.1-9), and the large block of material stretching from chs. 23 to 28, which details David’s

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<sup>20</sup> 1 Chr 5:25 (though note the ambiguous antecedent to אֱשֶׁר); 2 Chr 25:14; 28:23; 32:13, 17.

<sup>21</sup> This verse contains several syntactical ambiguities that I discuss below.

preparations for the temple. The prayer marks the completion of David's preparations and praises Yhwh for supplying the goods to make it possible.<sup>22</sup>

This prayer, like many others in the Hebrew Bible, begins with praise (vv. 11-15) before explicating its motivation (vv. 16-17) and making petition (vv. 18-19).<sup>23</sup> The prayer consists of three sections, each demarcated by an introductory vocative addressing Yhwh:<sup>24</sup>

|                                    |                          |            |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Doxology                           | ברוח אתה יהוה אלהי ישראל | vv. 10b-12 |
| Presentation of freewill offerings | ועתה אלהינו              | vv. 13-17  |
| Petitions                          | יהוה אלהי אברהם          | vv. 18-19  |

In the first section of his prayer, David eulogizes Yhwh's possession of *all* supreme qualities and powers (vv. 10b-12):

לך יהוה הגדלה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד  
כי־כל בשמים ובארץ

לך יהוה הממלכה והמתנשא לכל לראש  
והעשר והכבוד מלפניך  
ואתה מושל בכל

ובידך כח וגבורה  
ובידך לגדל לחזק לכל

To you, Yhwh, belong the utmost greatness, power, beauty, splendor, and majesty.<sup>25</sup>  
*indeed* all that is in heaven and earth.<sup>26</sup> (29:11a)

To you, Yhwh, belong the kingdom, and the preeminence as ruler over all.  
*and* all wealth and honor are from your presence,  
and you rule over all (29:11b-12a)

*and* strength and power are in your hand,  
and it is in your power to exalt and to strengthen all. (29:12b)

<sup>22</sup> Again, Chr emphasizes that the goods for the temple come from God's own hand and at his initiative.

<sup>23</sup> On the structure of prose prayer in the Hebrew Bible, see Miller, *They Cried to the Lord*, 337-57.

<sup>24</sup> Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 532. On the use of the vocative address to Yhwh as an organizing feature of the Chronicler's prayers, see Samuel Eugene Balentine, *Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-human Dialogue* (OBT; Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 98-101. Cf. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 963; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 504).

<sup>25</sup> The translation "the utmost" comes from the presence of definite articles with the abstract nouns, which in context denotes Yhwh's worthiness of all supreme qualities. On the use of a definite article for marking a distinctive class, or superlative, see Williams, §88; *IBHS*, 13.6a; 14.5c.

<sup>26</sup> Against the MT, I suggest placing the first לך with the second line, which lends greater balance to the first two bicola.

Stylistically, the opening eulogy employs a rhetorical device that Japhet calls “*gibbub*,” or “accumulation,” a simple “listing [of] a series of words—more or less synonymous—with the conjunctive *waw*.”<sup>27</sup> The reason for these choices in attributes in v. 11a is not immediately clear, and their significance may lie more in their cumulative effect than in the individual meaning of each attribute. Verse 11a employs the definite article ׀ to mark each attribute, though the articles lack antecedents (cf. 1 Chr 17:19). Like the noun כּל, repeated 10 times in this prayer, ׀ underscores Yhwh’s *total* possession of supreme qualities. “The supremacy,” and “the power ...” belong to him. As Johnstone states, “One senses that David is struggling with the furthest limits of human speech as he piles up the attributes and the synonyms.”<sup>28</sup> By ascribing such totalizing qualities to Yhwh alone, and by emphasizing the wide scope of Yhwh’s powers, Chronicles depicts a cosmos in which Yhwh is the *only* sovereign power. That is, Chronicles engages in an *implicit* form of monotheizing.

Verses 11-12 break down into three literary units, each of which begins with a statement of divine ownership (marked by a 2ms ׀ suffix) and ends with a statement of totality (marked by כּל). Conceptually, these units exhibit a logical development. Verse 11a praises Yhwh for the supreme qualities he possesses, culminating with the statement that *all* such qualities in heaven and earth belong to him. After enumerating his supreme qualities, the second unit (vv. 11b-12a) emphasizes Yhwh’s power as ruler over “all,” and ties his possession of wealth to his position as cosmic king. The third literary unit addresses the impartation of divine benefits to others (v. 12b). Yhwh possesses all supreme qualities as ruler, and as such, he is the sole provider of strength and power to others.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 509.

<sup>28</sup> Johnstone, *1 Chronicles-2 Chronicles 9*, 287.

<sup>29</sup> Asa’s and Jehoshaphat’s prayers of appeal draw on the language of this prayer in emphasis of the same point (2 Chr 14:10; 20:6; cf. 25:8).

Verses 10-12 indicate that there is an economic component to Yhwh's supremacy, one which compels tangible responses through gifts to Yhwh at the sanctuary (cf. 16:29). David's "royal speech" (29:1-5) that precedes his prayer (vv. 10-19) takes up this theme by acknowledging publicly his donations to the temple.<sup>30</sup> Significantly, David attaches cultic significance to the act of donation. David asks, "who is willing to consecrate himself to Yhwh this day?" (מי מתנדב למלאות ידו היום ליהוה) (v. 5). The phrase "consecrate himself," literally "fill his hand," is an idiom otherwise reserved for priestly consecration in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>31</sup> In response to David's speech, the people follow his lead through joyful and generous gifts (vv. 6-9). Thus, David becomes a model for how to respond to Yhwh *qua* supreme king.

David continues the theme of giving in the second portion of his prayer (vv. 13-17), which focuses directly on the freewill offerings that David and the people had given Yhwh. Verses 13-16 of the prayer alternate between statements about Yhwh's magnificence and wealth, and human contingency and transience. David inquires, "who am I, and who are my people ... to give freely?" recognizing that "from your own hand we give to you."<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, Solomon asks a very similar question with regard to temple-building in 2 Chr 2:5[6]. Both rulers diminish their own significance when faced with Yhwh's grandeur. David also acknowledges that "we are strangers ... sojourners" and "all our days are like a shadow," when considering that "all is from your hand, and everything belongs to you." The assertion of Yhwh's ownership, and Israel's identity as "strangers before you and sojourners before you" (גרים אנחנו לפניך ותושבים) in v. 15 draws on the notion in the Holiness Code that

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<sup>30</sup> David's earlier speeches are found in 1 Chr 13:1-4; 15:11-13; 22:2-19; 28:1-10. See discussion in Mark A. Throntveit, *When Kings Speak: Royal Speech and Royal Prayer in Chronicles* (SBLDS 93; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987).

<sup>31</sup> Exod 28:41; 29:9, 35; Lev 8:33; 16:32; 21:10; Num 3:3; 1 Kgs 13:33; 2 Chr 29:31.

<sup>32</sup> Solomon asks a very similar question with regard to temple-building in 2 Chr 2:5[6]. Both rulers diminish their own significance when faced with Yhwh's cultic grandeur.

“the land/earth is mine [Yhwh’s], and you are strangers and sojourners” (לי הערץ כִּי־גֵרִים) (ותושבים; Lev 25:23).<sup>33</sup> Because Yhwh claims possession of the land, Israel finds itself with an utterly contingent identity when considered from the perspective of Yhwh. They remain as strangers in their own land.<sup>34</sup> Just as “foreigners were sometimes granted royal protection to reside in the capital (1 Sam 22:3-4; 27:3; 2 Sam 15:19), so David acknowledges that he and his people are living in Israel by the gracious dispensation of Yahweh.”<sup>35</sup>

Moreover, David compares the days of human life to a “shadow” (צל; 29:15b), which lacks permanence and therefore “hope” (תקוה). This is an image of transience that one would find more typically in laments (Ps 39:2; 144:4). In context, the image of transience and landlessness augments the idea of Yhwh’s complete ownership, what Samuel Balentine calls “praise in counterpoint.”<sup>36</sup> And though David could have spoken of the royal self-permanence he achieved through the promises to his son Solomon, he identifies with all Israel’s “landlessness” and contingency.<sup>37</sup> In a sense, David’s generous donations to the temple constitute what one might call a cultic-lineal model of dynastic succession, where the king’s future security and permanence find achievement only in giving to God through the cult. David’s and his son’s legacy depended on their dedication to the temple’s construction, a conviction enacted in David’s case by giving enormous personal wealth. The successful transfer of kingship from David to Solomon becomes apparent in the next chapter of Chronicles, where Solomon offers 1,000 burnt offerings to Yhwh as the first act in his reign

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<sup>33</sup> Chr also exhibits familiarity with the Holiness Code when speaking of the land taking its Sabbath rest in 2 Chr 36:21 (cf. Lev 25:4; 26:34). Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 504, contends that 1 Chr 29:15 draws directly on Ps 39:12: כִּי גֵרִים אֵנָּה לְפָנֶיכֶם תּוֹשְׁבִים כָּל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ // כִּי גַר אָנֹכִי יִמָּךְ תּוֹשֵׁב כָּל אֲבוֹתַי. The semantic and syntactic similarities are indeed pronounced, though it appears that Chr presses this language about human transience into the framework provided by Lev 25, concerning God’s ownership of the land/wealth.

<sup>34</sup> Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 185.

<sup>35</sup> Daniel J. Estes, “Metaphorical Sojourning in 1 Chronicles 29:15,” *CBQ* 53/1 (1991):45-49 [47].

<sup>36</sup> Balentine, *Prayer in the Hebrew Bible*, 102. Balentine observes the use of similar rhetoric in the prayers of Asa and Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 14:11; 20:6, 12; cf. 1 Chr 17:16).

<sup>37</sup> It is important to note that David is speaking here of landlessness vis-à-vis Yhwh’s claim to the land, and not vis-à-vis the nations. Israel is not landless from the point of view of the nations.

(2 Chr 1:6), and expresses his desire to build the temple immediately after the enumeration of his great wealth (1:11-19). Moreover, the token symbol of royal succession from David to Solomon becomes the temple's blueprints (1 Chr 29:11-18), the account of which stands at the structural center of the royal succession narrative in chs. 28-29.<sup>38</sup> In short, David concludes his reign by publicly divesting himself of his personal wealth, giving Solomon plans for the temple, and by offering a prayer extolling Yhwh as supreme king and owner of all wealth.

### C. CONCLUSIONS

Before proceeding in our study of the human king's participation in Yhwh's royal supremacy, several general observations about the coordinated effect of the inaugural Levitical hymn (1 Chr 16:8-36) and David's final prayer (1 Chr 29:10-19) deserve mention. First, the two compositions exhibit clear literary coordination through the use of at least five shared ideas.<sup>39</sup> (A) They both appeal to Israel's landless ancestors (16:20; 29:15) and refer to Israel as exiles or wanderers (16:35; 29:15). (B) Both compositions contrast Israel's powerlessness with Yhwh's kingship and ownership of all things (16:23-33; 29:11-12). (C) Both texts affirm Yhwh's global preeminence (16:25-26; 29:11). (D) Both speak of making gifts or offerings to Yhwh (16:29; 29:14, 17). (E) Both end with petitions (16:35; 29:18-19).

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<sup>38</sup> As Throntveit "The Idealization of Solomon," 411-27 [423]. Throntveit suggests the following chiasmic outline of 28:1-29:6:

- A Princes; gifts (28:1)
- B People addressed (28:2-8)
- C Solomon charged (28:9-10)
- X Pattern of temple delivered (28:11-19)
- C' Solomon charged (28:20-21)
- B' People addressed (29:1-5)
- A' Princes; gifts (29:6)

<sup>39</sup> Adapted from, and expanding on, the three themes discussed by Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 532, following Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 185-86.

The literary and thematic links between these two compositions suggests their purposeful role in introducing and delineating the nature of divine rule in Chronicles. They deploy doxological rhetoric in celebration of Yhwh’s kingship and sole divinity. 1 Chronicles 16 states explicitly that Yhwh’s universal power as creator and king nullifies other claims to divinity. Though 1 Chr 29 lacks language typically associated with monotheism (in *explicit* terms), David’s rhetoric leaves no room for other sovereign beings. *All* belongs to Yhwh, and thus *all* are contingent upon or derivative of Yhwh’s rule. 1 Chronicles 29 subsumes all reality beneath Yhwh by virtue of Yhwh’s ownership and *rule* over all things, just as 1 Chr 16 subsumes reality beneath Yhwh by virtue of his creating all things. One may also note that both texts almost completely ignore human kingship, which is remarkable when compared with David’s last hymn in 2 Sam 23:1-7, a hymn of self-justification and acknowledgement of Yhwh’s role in granting David military victories and an eternal house. By contrast, David’s final prayer in 1 Chr 29 emphasizes Yhwh’s eternal rule. Despite David’s enormous wealth and power, David adopts a stance of self-abnegation and personal divestment. In fact, in his last speech to the assembly of Israel (29:1-5), immediately preceding his prayer, David recounts all the “personal” wealth he gave out of “my pleasure in my God’s temple” (v. 3). In short, David defers publicly to divine kingship both in the commissioned hymn to the divine king (1 Chr 16) and in his final prayer (1 Chr 29). Rather than using these as opportunities to offer an *apologia* for his own kingship,<sup>40</sup> each text serves as an *apologia* for Yhwh’s kingship, and as a summons for the nation and Solomon to give themselves in support of the temple, the visible manifestation of divine rule.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 963.

<sup>41</sup> On the relationship between divine rule and the temple, see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 629-33.

## II. PARTICIPATION: SHARED HUMAN AND DIVINE KINGSHIP

Given Chronicles' propensity to highlight the king's deferential subordination to the temple,<sup>42</sup> it may appear disjunctive that Chronicles also offers Judean kings unprecedented adulation. As noted in the beginning of this chapter, several of the Chronicler's texts claim that David and Solomon sat on Yhwh's throne, or within Yhwh's kingdom, claims never made elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>43</sup> In the following section, I consider the significance of these claims, and describe the broader phenomenon of Davidic participation in divine kingship that they embody. Then, I delineate several ways that Chronicles attempts to reconcile such participation with the historic failures of kings to measure up to the status inherent in their office.

### A. DAVIDIC PARTICIPATION IN DIVINE KINGSHIP

#### 1. DAVID EXALTED AS MILITARY COMMANDER

Immediately upon his ascent to the throne, and his endorsement by "all Israel" (1 Chr 11:1), a mighty army of Israel gathers around David. Chronicles spends nearly two chapters detailing the various warriors and tribes that support David in his military exploits (chs. 11-12). "All Israel" (11:1, 11) joins with David such that he grows "more and more powerful [גדול], for Yhwh of Hosts was with him" (יהוה צבאות עמו; 11:9//2 Sam 5:10).<sup>44</sup>

Chronicles' rare use of the term "hosts" (צבאות; 11:9)<sup>45</sup> corresponds with the description of

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<sup>42</sup> Expressed most powerfully in 1 Chr 29:19, but cf. 1 Chr 28:7, 9; 2 Chr 6:16; 7:17-18; See also Williamson, "Eschatology," 140-42.

<sup>43</sup> With the possible exception of Ps 45:6.

<sup>44</sup> This "assistance formula" (יהוה ... עמו), as Klein (Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 302) refers to it, locates the source of David's ascent as king with Yhwh, and also identifies David's rise in greatness with Jerusalem. Cf. the use of the formula in 1 Chr 9:20; 22:11, 16, 18; 28:20; 2 Chr 15:2, 9. Also, one may note similar language applied to Jehoshaphat in 2 Chr 17:12: "Jehoshaphat became more and more powerful; he built forts and store cities in Judah."

<sup>45</sup> The term יהוה צבאות appears here and in 1 Chr 17:7, 24, each of which has parallels in Sam (2 Sam 5:10; 7:8, 26).



David's army as a "divine camp" (מחנה אלהים; 12:23), a phrase not found in Chronicles' *Vorlage*. As Braun argues, "the degree to which the Chronicler's conception of warfare verges upon that of holy war suggests that the possibility of understanding David's army as nothing less than the army of God ought not to be lost here."<sup>46</sup> Whether one understands the phrase מחנה אלהים as a reference to David leading Yhwh's army, or simply a "mighty army,"<sup>47</sup> the emphasis falls on David's mounting strength, and on God's presence as the enabling cause (cf. 11:9). As Chronicles states later, "David knew that Yhwh had established him as king over Israel and that his kingdom had been highly exalted [נשאת למעלה] for the sake of his people Israel."<sup>48</sup>

After Yhwh defeated the Philistines (ch. 14), we read in another of Chronicles' textual pluses that "David's reputation went out into all the lands, and Yhwh put his fear (פחדו) upon all nations" (14:17).<sup>49</sup> Though the installation of divine fear among enemies is a common holy war motif, the antecedent of פחדו is here ambiguous. "His fear" could refer to fear of Yhwh, or fear of David, that fell upon the nations.<sup>50</sup> De Vries argues that the text refers to fear of Yhwh, while Knoppers contends that it refers to the nations' fear of David because of the expectation in 14:2 that David's kingdom would become highly exalted. Klein argues, perhaps rightly, that it is best "to let the ambiguity and ambivalence of the text stand."<sup>51</sup> Chronicles' uses of the term פחד in explanation of Jehoshaphat's military victories

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<sup>46</sup> כמחנה אלהים (1 Chr 12:22[23]). See Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 166, who writes, "the degree to which the Chronicler's conception of warfare verges upon that of holy war suggests that the possibility of understanding David's army as nothing less than the army of God ought not be lost here (cf. 2 Chr 13:13-18; 14:9-15 [and note the terminology of v. 13])."

<sup>47</sup> As Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 566, who interprets אלהים as a superlative.

<sup>48</sup> 1 Chr 14:2; Chr adds the emphatic למעלה ("exceedingly") to its *Vorlage* 2 Sam 5:12; cf. 2 Sam 23:1. Chr frequently employs the idiom למעלה ("exceedingly"), often, as a way of stating the abundance that results from divine favor, or human efforts to extol Yhwh (1 Chr 14:2; 22:5; 29:3; 29:25; 2 Chr 1:1; 17:12; 20:19; 26:8).

<sup>49</sup> Cf. 2 Sam 5:17-25.

<sup>50</sup> Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 343, following De Vries, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 140.

<sup>51</sup> Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 343. Cf. Deut 2:25; Exod 15:14; Josh 6:27. According to Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 343, "lands" may refer to other nations and the "lands of Israel" (1 Chr 13:2) invited to bring the ark to Jerusalem.

may explain the ambiguous construction. Chronicles states that “fear of Yhwh” (פחד יהוה) comes upon all the lands such that they avoid war with *Jehoshaphat* (2 Chr 17:10). Later, the “fear of God” (פחד אלהים) seizes the kingdoms of the lands because of the victories Yhwh had won for Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:29). In other words, fear of *Yhwh* is an appropriate response to the actions of Yhwh’s royal agents (cf. 1 Sam 11:6-8). With one possible exception (2 Chr 19:7), פחד in Chronicles always refers to the fear of *Yhwh* that descends upon the nations, though Judean kings are usually the active agents (1 Chr 14:17; 2 Chr 14:13; 17:10; 20:29).

The term פחד occurs only once in Samuel-Kings (1 Sam 11:7), and Chronicles’ use of the term comes closer to its use in the Pentateuch.<sup>52</sup> In several Pentateuchal texts, פחד denotes the fear of Israel that Yhwh caused to fall upon the nations (Exod 15:16; Deut 2:25; 11:25; cf. Ps 105:38). In these cases, פחד denotes a response to Yhwh that Yhwh could evoke through his agent Israel, by placing his dread upon them. In fact, in Deut 2:25, 11:25, Yhwh “places” (נתן\*) “fear” (פחד) of Israel “upon” (על) the nations, striking close to the formulation in Chronicles, where Yhwh “places” (נתן\*) “his fear” (פחדו) “upon” (על) all the lands. This would suggest that 1 Chr 14:17 refers to the fear of *David* that Yhwh places on the surrounding lands. Usage of פחד elsewhere in Chronicles, however, suggests that the term is used to associate the king with the emanation of Yhwh’s own “terror.” For Chronicles, it may be that fear (or terror) of David *was* the fear of Yhwh expressed through David’s military victories.

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Yet the emphasis is on non-Isr nations here, confirming the statement in 1 Chr 17:8 // 2 Sam 7:9: “I [Yhwh] was with you wherever you went, and I cut off all your enemies before you. I will make for you a name like the name of the great ones who were in the land.” Cf. also 14:2

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Josh 2:9 where אימתכם “fear of you [Israel]” fell upon the nations.

2. THE DAVIDIC COVENANT AND/AS THE REVELATION OF YHWH'S SOLE DIVINITY (1 Chr 17:16b-27)

According to three texts in Chronicles, the gift of kingship to David is linked to the expression of Yhwh's sole divinity (1 Chr 17:20, 26//2 Sam 7:22, 28; 2 Chr 6:14a//1 Kgs 8:23a). Two of these texts occur within David's prayer in response to Nathan's oracle (1 Chr 17:16b-27// 2 Sam 7:18b-27) and thus deserve our consideration. In order to examine these statements in the context of this prayer, it is first necessary to address differences between Chronicles and its source texts, in order to sharpen the book's distinct emphases. However, text-critical evidence urges caution against attributing all textual differences between MT Samuel and MT Chronicles to the latter. A comparison of MT Samuel, MT Chronicles, and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> highlights quite a few differences in the prayers (with underlined emphasis below), though I suggest a more limited number of modifications in MT Chr based on text-critical judgments (discussed in fns.).

| MT 1 Chr 17:16b-24  | MT 2 Sam 7:18b-26  | 4QSam <sup>a53</sup> |
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| <p>v. 16b Who am I, Yhwh God, and what is my house that you have brought me this far?</p> <p>v. 17 And this was small in your sight, O <u>God</u>, such that you spoke concerning the future of your servant's house?</p> <p><u>And you have looked upon me as if (upon) the succession of an exalted man,</u> Yhwh God.<sup>54</sup></p> | <p>v. 18b Who am I, Yhwh Lord, and what is my house that you have brought me this far?</p> <p>v. 19 And this was <u>still</u> small in your sight, <u>Yhwh Lord</u>, such that you spoke concerning the future of your servant's house.</p> <p>And (is) this the decree for a human, O <u>Lord</u> Yhwh?</p> |                      |

<sup>53</sup> For critical editions and studies of 4QSam<sup>a</sup>, see F. M. Cross, D. Parry, and E. Ulrich, *Qumran Cave 4. XII:1-2 Samuel* (DJD XVII; Oxford: Clarendon, 2002); Andrew Fincke, *The Samuel Scroll from Qumran: 4QSam<sup>a</sup> Restored and Compared to the Septuagint and 4QSam<sup>b</sup>* (STJ D XLIII; Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 2001); S. J. Stephen Pisano, *Additions or Omissions to the Books of Samuel: The Significant Pluses and Minuses in the Masoretic, LXX and Qumran Texts* (OBO 57; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984); Ulrich, *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*; idem, ed., *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcripts and Textual Variants* (VTSup 134; Leiden: Brill, 2010).

<sup>54</sup> MT Chr v. 17 contains a plus, וַיִּרְאֵינִי כְתוּר הָאָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה, against the 2 Sam 7:19, translated lit. "You have looked at me as with the searching of an exalted man." Several commentators emend the Qal וַיִּרְאֵינִי to a Hiph וַיַּרְאֵנִי, and כְתוּר (as turning) to בְתוּר (in the stature, or appearance, of a human), for a translation like, "you have caused me, someone of human stature, to see into the future [הַמַּעֲלָה]" (Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29*, 678; Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 373). The emendations seek to resolve the awkwardness of the Heb. phrasing here,

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| <p>v. 18 So what more can David add to you, <u>concerning the honor (accorded to) your servant?</u> For you know your servant.<sup>55</sup></p> <p>v. 19 <u>Yhwh</u>, for the sake of <u>your servant</u>,<sup>56</sup> and according to your will you have accomplished this extraordinary thing, making known <u>all (your) extraordinary deeds</u>.<sup>57</sup></p> | <p>v. 20 So what more can David add by speaking to you?<br/>For you know your servant, <u>Yhwh Lord</u>.</p> <p>v. 21 For the sake of <u>your word</u> and according to your will you have accomplished this extraordinary thing, making (it) known <u>to your servant</u>.</p> |  |
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translated literally as “you have looked upon me as the turning of humanity, which is upward.” Klein also emends כְּתוּר to בְּתוּר, but translates it as the “turning” of a generation, thus “the generation of humankind to come.” The Heb MSS also struggle with this word, and several have בְּתוּר for כְּתוּר. Klein’s translation thus takes הַמַּעֲלָה as a temporal, “that which is afterward.” However, Chr uses מַעֲלָה almost exclusively as a term denoting “excess” or “abundance.” In fact, מַעֲלָה is a distinctly Chronistic idiom (1 Chr 14:2; 22:5; 23:17; 29:3; 29:25; 2 Chr 1:1; 17:12; 20:19; 26:8), though usually as לַמַּעֲלָה (Outside of Chronicles, מַעֲלָה refers almost exclusively to “steps.”) Several scholars contend that the MT may work as it stands. For example, Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, 339) finds the aforementioned emendations “substantially and orthographically weak,” and thus prefers to treat the MT text as is, following the NJPS with “you regard me as a man of distinction.” However, such translations do not deal adequately with כְּתוּר, which I tentatively translate as “as if (upon) the succession,” referring to the dynastic status imputed to David by Yhwh. Cf. 1 Chr 10:14; 12:23.

The phrase וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הָאָדָם in 2 Sam 7:19 is not explainable strictly in terms of text-critical development, with the exception of תּוֹרַת, which may have given rise to Chr’s כְּתוּר, though this is highly conjectural and does not explain וְזֹאת. It appears, therefore, that without any textual support, 1 Chr 17:17 MT represents a deliberate gloss on 2 Sam 7:19, which may have originally lacked 19b. Notably, both 1 Chr 17:17b and 2 Sam 7:19b address David’s exaltation.

<sup>55</sup> V. 18 contains a plus, לְכַבֹּד אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ, “concerning the honor of your servant,” or “concerning the honor (accorded to) your servant” lacking in 2 Sam 7:20, which reads לְדַבֵּר אֵלַיךְ “to say to you.” McCarter (*II Samuel*, 234) conjectures that 2 Sam 7:20 adds לְדַבֵּר to resolve a difficulty created by dropping אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ due to homoioteleuton after אֵלַיךְ. According to this proposal, Chr’s MT preserves the earlier Heb. עוֹד דּוֹיֵד אֵלַיךְ. וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הָאָדָם shortened to וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הָאָדָם לְכַבֹּד אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הָאָדָם in MT Sam. LXX Chr has τί προσθήσει ἔτι Δαυιδ πρὸς σὲ τοῦ δοῦλάου: “What shall David add to you to glorify?” and appears to read a Heb. text with לְכַבֹּד (as Klein, *I Chronicles*, 373) but without the object עַבְדְּךָ. Klein reads the LXX here as a partial correction by LXX Chr toward the MT Sam (which also lacks עַבְדְּךָ after אֵלַיךְ). Arguing similarly, Richard L. Pratt (“Royal Prayer and the Chronicler’s Program” [PhD diss., Harvard Divinity School, 1987], 108-09) concludes that MT Chr and LXX Chr are more primitive. Thus, the reference to honoring David may have been present in an earlier form of 2 Sam 7:20, though this proposal remains tentative.

<sup>56</sup> V. 19 has בְּעִבּוֹר עַבְדְּךָ “for the sake of your servant” where 2 Sam 7:21 has בְּעִבּוֹר דְּבָרְךָ “for the sake of your word.” LXX<sup>B</sup> 2 Sam 7:21 reads διὰ τὸν δοῦλον σου “for the sake of your servant,” aligning with MT Chr, whereas LXX<sup>L</sup> 2 Sam 7:21 seems to conflate MT Sam and Chr with διὰ τὸν λόγον σου καὶ διὰ τὸν δοῦλον σου “for the sake of your word and for the sake of your servant.” MT Sam may have exchanged עַבְדְּךָ for דְּבָרְךָ, “a more suitable partner for וְכִלְבֶּךָ,” according to Pratt (“Royal Prayer,” 110), giving rise to the Lucianic resolution. Less certain, though conceivable, is the proposal to repoint וְכִלְבֶּךָ (and according to your will) as וְכִלְבֶּךָ (and your dog/servant), a designation that occasionally functioned as a synonym for servant (so Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 132; e.g., 2 Sam 3:8; 2 Kgs 8:13). Perhaps Chr found “your dog” and “your word” disjunctive and therefore substituted “your servant” for the latter, in which case MT Sam preserves the earlier Heb. LXX 1 Chr 17:19 likely results from haplography (κατὰ τὸν δοῦλον σου κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν σου → κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν σου), suggesting that it too followed a Heb. text like MT Chr. Because of the overlap between LXX<sup>B</sup> Sam and MT Chr, it is most likely that Chr preserves an earlier Heb., though this is not certain.

<sup>57</sup> MT Chr has לְהַדְיֵעַ אֶת־כָּל־הַגְּדֻלוֹת “to make known all (your) extraordinary deeds,” where MT Sam reads לְהוֹדִיעַ אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ “to make known [to] your servant.” It is possible that Chr omits אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ through haplography אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ אֶת־כָּל־הַגְּדֻלוֹת, which would suggest that the Chronicler’s Heb. Vorlage read literally, “made

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| <p>v. 20 Yhwh, there is none like you, and no God except you, in keeping with all that we heard with our own ears.</p> <p>v. 21 And who is like your people Israel, a unique nation on earth which <u>the (true) God</u> went to redeem as a people for himself,<sup>58</sup> to make your reputation <u>extraordinary</u> and awesome by driving out nations from before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt?</p> <p>v. 22 And you <u>appointed</u> your people Israel as your people forever. And you, Yhwh, have become their God.</p> <p>v. 23 So now, Yhwh, <u>let this word be forever established</u> that you have spoken concerning your servant and his</p> | <p>v. 22 <u>Therefore you have become exalted</u>, Yhwh <u>Lord</u>, for there is none like you, and no God except you, in keeping with all that we heard with our own ears.</p> <p>v. 23 And who is like your people, like Israel, a unique nation on earth, whom <u>God</u> went to redeem as a people for himself, and to establish his reputation, and to perform <u>for you great</u><sup>59</sup> and awesome deeds <u>for your land</u>, (by driving out) nations <u>and their gods</u> before your people whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt?<sup>60</sup></p> <p>v. 24 Thus you <u>established</u> your people Israel as your people forever. And you, Yhwh, have become their God.</p> <p>v. 25 So now, Yhwh <u>God</u>, <u>keep</u> forever the word which you have spoken concerning your servant and his house,</p> | <p>v. 22<br/>...] we heard with our own ears.</p> <p>v. 23 And who is like your people, like Israel, a unique nation on earth, whom <u>God</u> went to redeem as a people for himself, and to establish his reputation, and to perform great and awesome deeds <u>for your land</u>, (by driving out) nations <u>and gods</u> before your people whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt?</p> <p>v. 24 Thus you <u>established</u> your people Israel as your people forever. And you, Yhwh, have become their God.</p> <p>v. 25 So now, Yhwh <u>God</u>, <u>keep</u> forever the word which you spoke concerning your</p> |
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known to your servant all great deeds” (so Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 373). This leaves the MT Chr plus הגדלות. Conceivably, MT Chr rewrote על־כן גדלת “therefore you are exalted,” which currently begins MT 2 Sam 7:22, as כל גדלות “all (your) extraordinary deeds.” The fact that על־כן גדלת is missing from MT 1 Chr 17:20 strengthens this suggestion. However, this leaves the shift from על־כן to כל unexplained, except for the vestigial כ and ל. Pratt (“Royal Prayer,” 111) argues that MT Chr suffered corruption somewhere in the tradition, and leaves no room for intentional change. In my view, an earlier Heb. of Chr likely contained the phrase את־עבדך, though MT Chr adapted גדלת (purposefully or inadvertently) from the next verse, producing a new text with a new meaning. Cf. the use of הגדלו in Josh 24:17, which may have influenced Chr here.

<sup>58</sup> Where 2 Sam 7:23 has הלכנו־אלהים, translated either “gods” or “god went,” Chr (v. 21) has הלך האלהים, using the definite ה to make אלהים a proper name with a singular verb. Though a few exegetes suggest that the sg. הלך is earlier, Pratt, “Royal Prayer,” 113, rightly states that “It would appear that the ambiguity of an original hkw would best account for the variety of witnesses.” Cf. Julius Wellhausen (*Der Text der Bücher Samuelis* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1871] 173) and Samuel R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel: With an Introduction on Hebrew Palaeography and the Ancient Versions, and Facsimiles of Inscriptions* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1890), 278. On the pl. אלהים + sg. verb see GKC §145i; Joüon §150f.

<sup>59</sup> The Heb. לעשות גדולה in MT Sam 7:23 agrees with 4QSam<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> Note the omission of the phrase ואלהיו from 1 Chr 17:21b. Thus, instead of “you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, nations, and their gods,” 1 Chr 17:21b has “you redeemed from Egypt (and) nations.” LXX 2 Sam 7:23 has *σκαπηματα* “dwelling places” or “tabernacles” instead. The LXX is likely (mis)reading אלהים for אלהיו, which is confirmed by the appearance of אלהים in 4QSam<sup>a</sup> (see Ulrich, *The Qumran Text*, 71). It thus appears that Chr follows a Heb. text that already contains אלהים. Pratt (“Royal Prayer,” 116) suggests that *if* MT Chr followed a *Vorlage* like 4QSam<sup>a</sup>, its omission of ואלהיו (or אלהים) might have resulted from haplography (גוים ותכונן → גוים ואלהים ותכונן), though one cannot rule out ideological motivations.

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| <p>household and do just as you have said.</p> <p>v. 24 <u>So that it will be established</u>, and your reputation will be exalted forever, (that others will) say “Yhwh of Hosts, <u>God of Israel is God for Israel</u>, and the house of your servant David <u>is established before you.</u>”</p> <p>v. 25 For you, O <u>God</u>, have unveiled a plan <u>to build your servant a house.</u></p> <p>Therefore your servant has found (strength) to pray before you.</p> <p>v. 26 Now, Yhwh, you alone are God, for you declared this good thing to your servant.</p> <p>v. 27 And now, you <u>have shown willingness</u> to bless the house of your servant such that it will abide before you forever. For you, Yhwh, <u>have blessed</u> it and <u>will continue blessing</u> it forever.</p> | <p>and do just as you said.</p> <p>v. 26 So that your reputation will be exalted forever, (that others will) say, “Yhwh of Hosts is God <u>over</u> Israel, and the house of your servant David <u>will be established before you.</u>”</p> <p>v. 27 For you, O <u>Yhwh of Hosts</u>, God <u>of Israel</u>, have unveiled a plan to your servant, <u>saying, “I will build you a house.”</u> Therefore your servant found it <u>in his heart</u> to pray <u>this prayer to you.</u></p> <p>v. 28 Now, <u>Lord</u> Yhwh, you alone are God, and <u>may your words prove reliable</u>, for you spoke this good thing to your servant.</p> <p>v. 29 And now, <u>be willing</u> to bless the house of your servant such that it will abide before you forever. For you, <u>Lord</u> Yhwh, have spoken and <u>may your blessing bless</u> the house of your servant forever.</p> | <p>servant and his house, and do just as you said.</p> <p>v. 26 So that your reputation will be exalted forever, (that others will) say, “Yhwh of Hosts is God <u>over</u> Israel, and the house of your servant David <u>will be established before you.</u></p> <p>v. 27 For you, O <u>Yhwh of Hosts</u>, God <u>of Israel</u>, have opened the ear of your servant by <u>saying, “I will build you a house.”</u> Therefore your servant has found it <u>in his heart</u> to pray <u>this prayer to you.</u></p> <p>v. 28 Now, <u>Lord</u> Yhwh, you alone are God, and <u>may your words prove reliable</u>, for you spoke this good thing to your servant.</p> <p>v. 29 And now, <u>be willing</u> to bless the house of your servant such that it will forever abide before you. For you, <u>Lord</u> Yhwh, and <u>may your blessing bless</u> the house of your servant forever.</p> |
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Table 4

Whether by the Chronicler’s design, scribal accident, or both, MT Chronicles exhibits a series of differences from MT Sam. Most scholars follow the judgment of Rudolph that the only deliberate changes occur in vv. 27-29,<sup>61</sup> and that the rest are attributable to scribal mistakes or changes already present in the Chronicler’s Hebrew *Vorlage* (e.g., the statement in v. 18 about the honor accorded David), which aligned quite often with

<sup>61</sup> E.g., Throntveit, *When Kings Speak*, 56-58; Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 132; Yet cf. Pisano, *Additions or Omissions in the Books of Samuel*, 277.

LXX Sam and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> against the MT.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, we witness several additional changes in MT Chr that lack any such explanations. Several changes may be deliberate, or unconsciously guided by Chronistic idioms, especially since they employ terms of significance elsewhere in Chronicles (e.g., מעלה, גדול).<sup>63</sup> Lacking any textual traditions to the contrary, it seems that Chronicles added the words “and you have looked upon me as if (upon) the succession of a man of distinction” in v. 17, and may modify 2 Sam 7:21-22a in v. 19 to read “to make known extraordinary deeds to [or through] your servant”<sup>64</sup>:

1. V. 17 וראיתני כתות האדם המעלה “and you have looked upon me as if [upon] the succession of an exalted man” (cf. 2 Sam 7:19b וזאת תורת האדם “and [is] this is the custom for a human”).
2. V. 19 להדיע את־כל־הגדלות “making known all [your] extraordinary deeds,” in reference to Yhwh’s covenant with David (cf. 2 Sam 7:21 להודיע את־עבדך “making [it] known [to] your servant”).

Noticeably, these additional differences revolve around *David’s exaltation* as a result of Yhwh’s dynastic covenant. This unity of focus may suggest an intentional series of changes by Chronicles, though already its source connected Yhwh’s sole divinity and incomparability to his giving the covenant to David (1 Chr 17:20, 27//2 Sam 7:22, 28; 2 Chr 6:14a//1 Kgs 8:23a).

The textual differences in Chronicles bring the revelation of Yhwh’s גדלות through David in v. 19 into harmony with Yhwh’s revelation of his שם גדלות through Israel in v. 21. That is, Yhwh reveals his glory through great deeds performed on behalf of and through

<sup>62</sup> On which, see Ulrich, *The Qumran Text*; McKenzie, *The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History*.

<sup>63</sup> See discussion in the above footnotes.

<sup>64</sup> Assuming, in this latter instance, that Chr omits את־עבדך through haplography.

Israel and David. Notably, both occurrences of גדלות are additions to, or modifications of, Chronicles' source text. One may summarize the content of vv. 19-21 as follows:

- David's uniqueness: Yhwh's "great deed(s)" (הגדלות) revealed through David in the covenant (v. 19)
- Yhwh's uniqueness: No God but Yhwh, and none beside him (v. 20)
- Israel's uniqueness: Yhwh's "great name" (שם גדלות) revealed through Israel during the exodus (v. 21)

The relationship between these statements, suggested by the entire context of the prayer, is as follows. First, there is an explicit analogy between Yhwh's and Israel's incomparability (אין כמוך ... ומי כעמך), and between Yhwh's sole divinity and Israel's absolute uniqueness (ואין אלהים זולתך ... גוי אחד בארץ; 1 Chr 17:20-21//2 Sam 7:22-23).<sup>65</sup> This text, and its parallel in Samuel, are the only occurrence of the formulation "unique nation" (גוי אחד) in the Hebrew Bible (1 Chr 17:21; 2 Sam 7:23). The parallelism between Yhwh's sole divinity and Israel's uniqueness illustrates the derivative uniqueness of Israel by virtue of its relationship with Yhwh.<sup>66</sup> Yhwh's uniqueness was tied to the uniqueness of nation he created. The indications of Yhwh's absolute uniqueness, and by derivation, Israel's, were the salvific deeds he performed in leading the nation out of Egypt (1 Chr 17:20-23//2 Sam 7:22-24). Israel thus reflected and participated in that categorically unique status as recipient of divine actions on its behalf, and on the basis of its consequent relationship to Yhwh. Yhwh's and Israel's uniqueness were mutually formed.

Second, David takes the tradition of Yhwh's supremacy revealed in the exodus, and applies it further to the royal covenant Yhwh established (17:23-27//2 Sam 7:25-29). David prays, "let this thing [i.e., the covenant] be forever established" (v. 23) *so that* "your reputation will be exalted forever" (v. 24). In other words, David calls upon God to establish

<sup>65</sup> Cf. also 2 Chr 5:13 and 2 Chr 30:12.

<sup>66</sup> It is also noteworthy that Chronicles employs this language of derived uniqueness to speak of Solomon (בני אהרן; 1 Chr 29:1) and the Jerusalem altar (מזבח אהרן; 2 Chr 32:12).



*through him* what he had established *through Israel*, namely, his reputation as sole deity (vv. 20, 26). Yhwh proved his sole divinity and extraordinary name (שם גדלות) by rescuing Israel from Egypt (v. 21). So now he performed an extraordinary thing (הגדלות הזאת) with David (v. 19). In 1 Chr 17:26, David suggests that this had indeed happened already.<sup>67</sup> “Now, Yhwh, you are the true God [אתה-הוא האלהים], for you declared this good thing to your servant” (1 Chr 17:26). By making the royal covenant, Yhwh had affirmed his reputation as sole divinity. The unique relationship between Yhwh and Israel, established during the exodus, becomes focused on the king through covenant. The relational configuration between the supreme deity and exalted nation (Israel) narrows to that of exalted deity and exalted king.

In sum, the adaptation of David’s prayer in Chronicles contributes rhetorically to the book’s presentation of divine oneness and its institutional instantiations. As observed, Chronicles (with Samuel-Kings) contains three references that link Yhwh’s sole divinity with his giving of the Davidic covenant (1 Chr 17:20, 26//2 Sam 7:22, 28; 2 Chr 6:14a//1 Kgs 8:23a). These texts assert that Yhwh is the supreme deity on the basis of his “great deeds” for Israel during the exodus, and in continuity with those deeds, his “great deeds” through David. In the monarchic period, the Davidic covenant becomes one of Yhwh’s mighty deeds. David’s prayer emphasizes his humility and unworthiness as “servant” (through rhetoric of deference; vv. 17-19), but also emphasize David’s honored and exalted status as recipient of Yhwh’s “great deeds” (גדלות), which in this case applies to the Davidic promises. Chronicles’ additional contribution to this emphasis, I suggest, consists of weaving together more tightly the fabric of divine and human exaltation (esp. in vv. 17, 19). David becomes

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. 2 Sam 7:28-29, where David petitions Yhwh to keep his promises to bless his house. In Chr, it was a present reality.

exalted because Yhwh makes a covenant with him. This weaving together of divine and human exaltation comports with Chronicles' unique claim earlier in the chapter that David's son would rule in *Yhwh's* house and kingdom (v. 14). Fittingly, therefore, David stood in amazement at Yhwh having made him an "exalted man" (v. 17). David praises Yhwh as "the true God" because he did so (v. 26), and, according to Chronicles, David praises Yhwh for "making known all [his] extraordinary deeds" through him (v. 19). Moreover, Chronicles suggests (*contra* Samuel) that David's exaltation had become a present reality, affirming that Yhwh had blessed his house and would continue to do so (vv. 26-27; cf. 2 Sam 7:28-29).<sup>68</sup>

It is altogether appropriate, therefore, that David moves in v. 20 from wonderment at his own exaltation to awe at Yhwh's supreme uniqueness. For Chronicles, they represent logically related processes. Mark Boda's words summarize well:

David's humility is ... expressed through his self-designation as 'your servant,' a title first given him by the Lord himself (17:4) and one that appears three times in this first section (17:17, 18, 19) [of David's prayer]. This clearly defines the relationship as one of master-servant, suggesting his submission to God. Ironically, throughout the Old Testament it is the ones who submit themselves to such a relationship who are ultimately honored the most (Moses, Joshua, the prophets), for the worth of the servant is derived from the worth of his master, and in this case this worth is infinite.<sup>69</sup>

Yhwh's unrivaled status proceeds from his extraordinary deeds toward/through David. But even further, David reflects in v. 21 upon the correlating uniqueness of Israel, which came into being because it too became a beneficiary of Yhwh's "great deeds" (גדלות) during the exodus. In short, David's and Israel's exaltation serve as responses to, and reflections of, Yhwh's own exaltation. They participate in Yhwh's exalted status as unique recipients of his favor.

Consonant with the theme of Davidic exaltation in this prayer, one may note finally that Chronicles changed אלהים to הֵאלהים in v. 21, a semantic modification common in

<sup>68</sup> See above chart for textual differences in vv. 26-27 vs. Sam.

<sup>69</sup> Excerpt, Mark J. Boda, *1-2 Chronicles* (CBC 5a; Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2010), 156.

Chronicles and LBH more generally, but which effectively distinguished אלהים as *the* God. In context, the move accords with the content of v. 20, which states that Yhwh is the only deity, and brings the name אלהים into congruence with David's phrasing in v. 26, a more overtly monotheistic phrase יהוה אתה-הוא האלהים that Chronicles certainly employs to distinguish Yhwh as "the true" God.<sup>70</sup> Of this text, Knoppers notes that whereas in v. 25 David referred to "my God" in connection with Yhwh's promise to build him a house, David "underscores Yhwh's power and sovereignty" in v. 26 "in connection with the divine capacity to realize that promise."<sup>71</sup> Chronicles' emphasis on divine uniqueness also raises questions as to whether Chronicles' omission of ואלהיו at the end of v. 21 was deliberate. Klein wonders whether it was a monotheistic correction, though it is difficult to determine with confidence if it were not a scribal omission.<sup>72</sup> The omission of ואלהיו might have been a scribal error that *incidentally* supported the statement about Yhwh's sole divinity in v. 20 (אין זולתך), or, the Chronicler's *Vorlage* had אהלים ("tents") as 4QSam<sup>a</sup> and LXX Sam, and Chronicles omitted it due to its nonsensical fit with the context.<sup>73</sup>

### 3. CO-RECIPIENT OF WORSHIP?

On several occasions, Chronicles blurs the lines between actions directed at Yhwh and actions directed at the king such that they share an exalted status. A particularly intriguing instance of blurred lines between divine and human royal exaltation occurs immediately preceding Solomon's coronation. We read,

<sup>70</sup> 2 Chr 33:13; cf. 1 Kgs 8:60; 18:24, 39; 2 Kgs 19:15. On the force of the definite article + אלהים, see Williams §88; *IBHS* §13.6a.

<sup>71</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 685.

<sup>72</sup> Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 384.

<sup>73</sup> As McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 51. Indeed, v. 20 keeps the אלהים "in the system" with the comparative acclamation יהוה אין כמוך, the shorter version of the expression יהוה אלהי ישראל found in Solomon's dedication prayer (2 Chr 6:14//1 Kgs 8:23).

Then David said to all the assembly, “Bless Yhwh your God.” So all the assembly blessed Yhwh, God of their ancestors, bowing to worship (ויקדו וישתחוּ) Yhwh and king. (1 Chr 29:20)

What is the significance of the congregation’s actions in this scene? Do the people worship Yhwh and king as equals? The verbal stems \*הוה and \*קדד constitute a common hendiadys in the Hebrew Bible as a way of expressing deferential prostration toward God or humans (Gen 24:26, 28; Exod 4:31; 12:27; 34:8; Num 22:31; 2 Chr 29:30; Neh 8:6). Thus, several scholars contend that the assembly’s bowing and worshipping David is similar to other texts where the roots קדד and הוה combine to express deferential prostration, like 1 Chr 21:21 (/ / 2 Sam 24:20) where Ornan prostrates himself before David,<sup>74</sup> or 2 Chr 24:17 (without *Vorlage*) where officials do obeisance before Joash, or 1 Kgs 1:16 and 31 where Bathsheba twice prostrates herself before David. David falls prostrate before Saul (1 Sam 24:9), and Saul bows prostrate to Samuel’s spirit (1 Sam 28:14). Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible Joseph’s brothers bow reverentially before him in Gen 43:28. In short, the idiom \*קדד + \*הוה is not necessarily a cultic act, but rather an act of yielding submission. According to this line of reasoning, translating the hendiadys as “worship” is appropriate only insofar as the people ascribe great worth to Yhwh and the king, or insofar as the acts denoted by the verbal pair occur in cultic contexts.

However, the foregoing view ignores the uniqueness of this scene. It is unprecedented insofar as a human (David) *and* Yhwh receive the same acts of ritual prostration.<sup>75</sup> As Japhet contends, “such a close conjunction of God and king in an act of

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<sup>74</sup> On which, see Lydie Kucová, “Obeisance in the Biblical Stories of David,” in *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A. Graeme Auld* (ed. Robert Rezetko, Timothy H. Lim, and W. Brian Aucker; VTSup 113; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 241-60.

<sup>75</sup> Heb. \*קדד always serves as a preparatory act for “worship” (\*הוה) (see *HALOT* ad loc). One should note, however, the extraordinary incident in Dan 7:46, where Nebuchadnezzar “fell upon his face and paid homage” to Daniel, and even offered grain offerings to him. Significantly, Nebuchadnezzar follows these acts with declarations concerning the greatness of Daniel’s God: “Truly your God must be the God of gods and

worship ... is not found elsewhere in the Bible.”<sup>76</sup> It is not only the acts, but the recipients and context that determine the significance of \*קדד and \*הוה. That Yhwh and David are co-recipients of ritual obeisance speaks strongly to the exalted status of the king in Chronicles. Several contextual features suggest why this is so. First, Chronicles states only three verses later that Solomon “sat on Yhwh’s throne in place of his father David” (v. 23), indicating that David sat previously on the same throne. The close proximity of this claim to v. 20 may account for the worship and obeisance directed at Yhwh and David. As Japhet observes, Chronicles *never* refers to the “throne of David”, but instead speaks of the “throne of the Lord” or the “throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel” (1 Chr 28:5), or the “throne of Israel” (2 Chr 6:10, 16; cf. 1 Kgs 8:20, 25) or simply the “royal throne in Israel” (1 Chr 22:10; 2 Chr 7:18; cf. 1 Kgs 9:5).<sup>77</sup> By eliminating references to the Davidic seat of power, and identifying it instead with God’s throne within the theocracy, Chronicles indicates that the divine office-bearer was uniquely positioned for obedience and reverence also directed at Yhwh himself. Second, v. 20 suggests that David *qua* king plays a dual role as cult leader and exalted recipient of worship. Therefore, he is and *is not* on par with Yhwh in this scene. On the one hand, David directs the congregation to “bless” Yhwh in v. 20a, and they did “bless Yhwh” and *not* David; but on the other hand David receives the congregation’s worship with Yhwh in v. 20b as bearer of the divine royal office. David played both roles. He was Israel’s deferential king, who pointed away from himself to exalt the divine king (as in his preceding prayer), but also Israel’s concrete representative of the exalted divine ruler.

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Lord of kings” (Dan 2:47 NJPS). The combination of acts of devotion toward Daniel and praise of God attests to his mediatorial status as a “revealer of mysteries.” Cf. also Dan 7:14, 27; 12:3.

<sup>76</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 512; Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 36, also notes the significance of two referents for these verbs of cultic worship (though she mistakenly cites 1 Chr 29:23 rather than 29:20). Cf. also Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles: Volume 1*, 289.

<sup>77</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 514-15.

B. SOLOMONIC PARTICIPATION IN DIVINE KINGSHIP<sup>78</sup>

Chronicles' account of the reigns of David and Solomon occupies nearly half of the book (1 Chr 10:14-2 Chr 9:31). The book treats their reigns as a unity, joined together through a series of royal speeches (1 Chr 13:1-4; 15:11-13; 22:2-19; 28:1-10; 29:1-5; 2 Chr 2:2-9[3-10]; 6) designed rhetorically to inspire support for the temple.<sup>79</sup> Chronicles also stitches together the account of David's and Solomon's reigns using the resumptive phrase "Yhwh made Solomon exceedingly great" (1 Chr 29:25 and 2 Chr 1:1) on either side of the Davidic regnal formula in 1 Chr 29:26-30. The two-fold use of this phrase ויגדל יהוה in reference to Solomon attests to the continuing exaltation of David's royal house, and is set within the context of Chronicles' emphasis on the united commitment of David and Solomon to the temple.<sup>80</sup> Yhwh's exaltation of David continued in Solomon, just as Yhwh "exalted" Joshua in the eyes of Israel (Josh 3:7; 4:14) after the death of Moses. Chronicles' account (*contra* 1 Kgs 1-2) bears witness to a smooth transfer of power from David to Solomon, and a national consensus that Solomon *alone* was worthy of the throne. As with David, Solomon commanded the loyalty of "all Israel" and served as a "catalyst of national unity."<sup>81</sup> "All Israel" celebrates the coronation of Solomon as king, "all Israel obeyed him," and "all the officers, mighty warriors, *and even all the sons of King David*, gave their support to King Solomon" (1 Chr 29:22-24).

In addition to continuity with David's prominence and ability to unify Israel, Chronicles associates Solomon's accession to Yhwh's throne as a form of participation in divine qualities:

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<sup>78</sup> For a study of Solomon's exaltation in Chr, see Throntveit, "The Idealization of Solomon as the Glorification of God," 411-27.

<sup>79</sup> See discussion in Throntveit, *When Kings Speak*, 114-25.

<sup>80</sup> Using the phrases ויגדל יהוה את־שלמה למעלה למעלה and ויגדלהו למעלה ... ויהוה in 1 Chr 29:25 and 2 Chr 1:1 respectively.

<sup>81</sup> This latter phrase comes from Jacob Wright, "David in Samuel and Chronicles," forthcoming. See, e.g., 1 Chr 12:39-41[38-40]; 13:5.

So Solomon sat on Yhwh's throne as king in place of David his father. . . . And Yhwh exalted Solomon exceedingly (ויגדל ... למעלה) in the presence of all Israel. He endowed him with royal splendor [הוד מלכות] such as no king of Israel possessed before him. (1 Chr 29:23-25)

Yhwh had “exalted” Solomon beyond David.<sup>82</sup> While the book of Kings applies incomparability statements to Hezekiah in terms of his incomparable trust, and Josiah in terms of his unprecedented reforms, Knoppers observes that Chronicles makes no such statements for kings other than Solomon (2x; 1 Chr 29:25; 1 Chr 1:12). This “has the effect of individuating Solomon’s reign,” distinguishing it as “the highpoint in Israelite history.”<sup>83</sup>

1 Chronicles 29:25 also attributes הוד “splendor” to Solomon. Though royal acquisition of הוד was clearly not unprecedented, Solomon possessed such splendor in unprecedented abundance. Shawn Aster contends that הוד מלכות denotes divine legitimacy and royal power, concepts that correspond exactly with the Akkadian notion of *melam šarrūti*. Akkadian texts employ the phrase *melam šarrūti* to refer to the elevation of a king’s status beyond other “crowned kings,” and as such, his “royal legitimacy.”<sup>84</sup> This idea fits well with the current scene in that Chronicles emphasizes Solomon’s unquestioned royal legitimacy (*contra* 1 Kgs 1-2). According to Chronicles, הוד marked Yhwh’s unquestioned legitimacy as divine—in contrast to all the so-called gods—and distinguished him as king over “all” (16:27; 29:11). The Chronicler’s use of this term thus suggests that he considers it a shared royal quality of Yhwh and Solomon that emphasized the legitimacy of their royal status. This is an important point for Chronicles to make when depicting Solomon’s coronation (1 Chr

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<sup>82</sup> As Benaiah prays in 1 Kgs 1:37, 47. For other texts that speak to Solomon’s exaltation, see 2 Chr 1:1; 1:12; 2:11. On David’s exaltation, see 1 Chr 14:2.

<sup>83</sup> Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 957.

<sup>84</sup> Aster, “The Phenomenon of Divine and Human Radiance,” 270-71.

29:22-25). As Johnstone states, “God precisely endows Solomon with elements of his own sovereignty ... the ‘greatness’ and the ‘splendor’ of kingship.”<sup>85</sup>

In addition to Solomon’s unique “royal splendor,” Chronicles develops the theme of his occupancy of the divine throne. The first statement to this effect occurs already in Nathan’s oracle to David 1 Chr 17:14, which modifies significantly its source text:

והעמדתיהו בביתי ובמלכותי עד־העלם וכסאו יהיה נכון עד־עולם  
I will station him in my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established  
forever. (1 Chr 17:14)

ונאמן ביתך וממלכתך עד־עולם לפני כסאך יהוה נכון עד־עולם  
Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before you;<sup>86</sup> your throne will be  
established forever. (2 Sam 7:16)

One major difference from Samuel’s account is that Chronicles focuses on Solomon’s reign and not the Davidic house. Rather than “your [David’s] throne,” Nathan tells David that Yhwh would appoint *Solomon* king and that “his throne” would be established forever.<sup>87</sup> The reasons for this alteration become apparent when considering another major difference in the verse. Solomon would rule as king “in my house and my kingdom” (v. 14). The Chronicler here collapses the distinction between the divine and Israelite kingdoms, and

<sup>85</sup> Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles: Volume 1*, 287, notes, “God precisely endows Solomon with elements of his own sovereignty over the universe (the ‘greatness’ and the ‘splendor’ of kingship; cf. v. 30).”

<sup>86</sup> LXX and several MSS have לפני (before me [Yhwh]).

<sup>87</sup> McKenzie, *The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 64, argues that one cannot be certain that the changes in 1 Chr 17:14 are theologically motivated. Though he concedes that Chr’s textual difference accords with the book’s general *Tendenz*, he finds that “the textual evidence is simply too diverse to allow the variant suffixes in this verse to be explained as the result of theological bias.” Notably, LXX 2 Sam 7:16 has ὁ οἶκος αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ “his house and his kingdom” (against the MT Sam), suggesting that it was reading an underlying Heb. ביתו ומלכותו. Given that Chr frequently agrees with the LXX against the MT, it is plausible that the Chronicler was reading a Heb. text similar to the LXX’s. Furthermore, given that “suffixes are especially susceptible to scribal error,” especially so in the case of *naw* and *yod*, an error by the Chronistic scribe becomes plausible. McKenzie notes that among the four cases in which there is textual variance regarding suffixes, two exhibit variation between the first and third person. However, there is compelling evidence to suggest a deliberate change here. Most significantly, when David recalls the dynastic oracle at a later point, he states that Yhwh chose Solomon “to sit on the throne of Yhwh’s kingdom” (על־כסא מלכות יהוה; 1 Chr 28:5), a text that has no *Vorlage* in Chr. The only antecedent for this statement is 1 Chr 17:14, a point made stronger by the reference to 1 Chr 17:12 in 2 Chr 28:6a, and to 1 Chr 17:13 in 1 Chr 28:6b. David’s evocation of 1 Chr 17:1 in 1 Chr 28:5 also combines the reference to Yhwh’s “kingdom” (מלכות) and Solomon’s “throne” (כסא), stating that he would sit on the “throne of Yhwh’s kingdom” (כסא מלכות יהוה). Additionally, as Knoppers (*I Chronicles 10-29*, 666) observes, there is distinctly Chronistic diction in this verse (e.g., the use of hiph. עמד, noted by Curtis and Masden, *The Books of Chronicles*, 32 #89). Finally, one may suggest that McKenzie’s argument regarding *naw* and *yod* cuts both ways. The change could have provided Chr with an economical means of reframing its *Vorlage* such that Solomon sat over the divine kingdom.



shifts the emphasis away from the Davidic palace toward the divine palace and its permanence by speaking of Yhwh’s “house.” The meaning of Yhwh’s “house” in this text is unclear, and could refer to the royal house or the temple. Most likely, Chronicles intends to blur the distinction between the two houses in emphasis of the larger point that the primary purpose of the royal house was to serve the divine house. As Schniedewind states, “An eternal promise to the Davidic dynasty is now paired with a promise for an eternal temple.”<sup>88</sup> An additional indication that Chronicles redirects attention from the Solomonic palace to the Divine palace occurs in 2 Chr 1:18 (2:1), which reads, “Then Solomon determined to build a house for the name of Yhwh, and a house for his kingdom” (ויאמר שלמה לבנות בית לשם יהוה) (ובית למלכותו). The 3ms antecedent at the end of this phrase, and the nature of the “house” there in view is unclear. The same wording occurs in the mouth of Hiram in 2 Chr 2:11[12]. The intervening verses—including his letter exchange with Hiram—pertain only to Solomon’s preparations for the *temple*, none of which mention the cedar palace. As Japhet states, “One could hardly find more convincing evidence than this [i.e., the absence of any reference to a palace] that these letters are the fruit of the Chronicler’s own pen.”<sup>89</sup> The syntax of 2 Chr 1:18 and 2:11 leaves open the possibility that either the conjunctive ׀ is epexegetical,<sup>90</sup> or that the antecedent for the 3ms object suffix on למלכותו is Yhwh (“for Yhwh’s kingdom,” indicating that the temple was for Yhwh’s kingdom). While other texts in Chronicles (e.g., 2 Chr 8:1) express awareness of Solomon’s palace, at the very least, the silence of the present texts on the subject of the palace underscores the cultic orientation of Solomon’s kingdom. Moreover, by altering the verb אמן\* (2 Sam 7:16) to עמד\* (1 Chr 17:14),

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<sup>88</sup> Schniedewind, *Society and the Promise to David*, 132.

<sup>89</sup> Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 544.

<sup>90</sup> On which, see *IBHS* §39.2.4.

Chronicles “indicates the appointment of an official to his new position.”<sup>91</sup> Yhwh would appoint Solomon as king within *Yhwh’s* kingdom.

In the account of Solomon’s exchange with Hiram (2 Chr 1:18-2:17[2:1-18]), Chronicles reworks Kings’ version of Hiram’s blessing to emphasize the cultic benefits of Solomon’s wisdom.

Blessed be Yhwh ... because he gave King David a wise son ... who will build a house for Yhwh and a house for his kingdom (2 Chr 2:11)  
*cf.* Blessed be Yhwh this day, because he gave David a wise son to rule over this great people (1 Kgs 5:21b).

Whereas in Kings Solomon received his wisdom for judicial purposes, Chronicles states that Solomon received his wisdom (2 Chr 1) to benefit the temple and “his kingdom.”<sup>92</sup> The ambiguity of the phrase “his kingdom” (2 Chr 2:11b) in Hiram’s blessing is palpable, especially given Chronicles’ near silence on the royal palace in the ensuing narrative,<sup>93</sup> and by omitting the account of the palace’s construction from Kings. Perhaps the ambiguity is intentional, in that the parallel blessing from the Queen of Sheba in 2 Chr 9:8a draws explicit attention to Solomon’s occupancy of *Yhwh’s* throne, a feature that I discuss below (cf. 1 Kgs 10:9a).

1 Chronicles 28:5 also addresses Solomon’s role as exalted ruler of the divine kingdom:

ומכל-בני כי רבים בנים נתן לי יהוה ויבחר בשלמה בני לשבת על-כסא מלכות יהוה על-ישראל  
 And from all my sons—indeed Yhwh gave me many—he chose my son Solomon to sit on the throne of Yhwh’s kingdom over Israel.

<sup>91</sup> Beentjes, *Tradition and Transformation*, 39. So also Riley (*King and Cultus*, 75) who contends that the hiph. \*עמד, used here in 1 Chr 17:14, usually means “stationed for duty,” and in this case, in the temple: “The oracles culminate in the promise that Solomon will be a vassal to Yahweh, stationed for duty in the Temple.”

<sup>92</sup> Moreover, by arranging the account of the temple’s construction after the account of Solomon’s visit to the tabernacle in Gibeon, where God endowed him with wisdom (2 Chr 1), the Chronicler emphasizes the *cultic* benefit of his wisdom, as opposed to Kings, which emphasizes the *political and judicial* benefit of Solomon’s wisdom (1 Kgs 3). Chr connects 1 Kgs 3:15 seamlessly with 5:12. The temple, as Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, 536) notes, is the “*raison d’être* for Solomon’s accession and his first priority of action.” See Roddy L. Braun, “Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder: The Significance of 1 Chronicles 22, 28, and 29 for the Theology of Chronicles,” *JBL* 95/4 (1976): 581-90.

<sup>93</sup> Chr mentions Solomon’s palace four times (2 Chr 1:18, 11; 8:1; 7:11), though without description. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 145.

This text has no parallel in Samuel-Kings, and advances themes introduced in the Davidic promise recounted in 1 Chr 17:14. The focus turns toward David's *son* Solomon, and not the Davidic house as such.<sup>94</sup>

Another detail consonant with Chronicles' "throne" ideology is found at the outset of Solomon's royal dedicatory speech (2 Chr 6:13). The narrator portrays Solomon raised up on a bronze platform, information not recorded in Kings' account (1 Kgs 8:54), though it was possibly dropped due to homoioteleuton,<sup>95</sup> or added by a later editor of Chronicles to place Solomon away from the altar in the temple court.<sup>96</sup> In any case, the imagery it depicts fits well within the Chronicler's ideological matrix, and especially the book's emphasis on the king's exaltation *and* his deference to the cult:

Solomon had made a bronze dais, having placed it in the middle of the court. Its length was five cubits, its width five cubits, and its height three cubits. He stood upon it, spread out his hands, and blessed (Yhwh) while on his knees before the assembly of Israel. (2 Chr 6:13)

Helen Dixon, following a connection already observed by Margaret Cool Root, surveys a range of proposals, and suggests that Chronicles purposefully evokes the Achaemenid ideal of the "king on high," and in particular, iconography of the ruler supported from beneath by

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<sup>94</sup> Chr is the only book in the Hebrew Bible to mention Yhwh's election of a post-Davidic king (1 Chr 28:5, 6, 10; 29:1).

<sup>95</sup> As Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 213; McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 89; Braun, *2 Chronicles*, 46, 48. However, given the large amount of material purportedly omitted in Kgs via homoioteleuton, the two-fold use of the phrase ויפרש כפיו ("he spread out his hands") in 2 Chr 6:12-13 might also be seen as resumptive repetition, a characteristic technique employed by the Chronicler to add material to his source text (see Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Israelite History in Chronicles*). Moreover, as Kalimi argues (277-78), the text exhibits several features characteristic of the Chronistic author, including, the term עזרה ("platform"), which appears only 9x in the Hebrew Bible, 3x in Chr and 6x in Ezek. Though disputable, he also points out that 2 Chr 6:13 twice employs a noun before cardinal numbers (אמרת שלוש), a feature allegedly common in LBH. On the latter point, see also Robert Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (HSM 12: Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1976), 58-60; yet cf. the critique of Gary Rendsburg, "Late Biblical Hebrew and the Date of 'P'," *JANES* 12 [1980]:65-80 [71]), who states that "LBH does not show a proclivity" to preposition the noun.

<sup>96</sup> As Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 590, who contends that 2 Chr 6:13 was an "intentional" insertion intended to locate Solomon away from the altar, in "the court" (העזרה), in contrast to his position "before the altar" in v. 12.

the full array of his subjects.<sup>97</sup> The image of the “king on high,” Dixon argues, was disseminated throughout the Persian Empire and was adapted on coins, stamps, and other iconography within Persian Yehud itself. By depicting Solomon high on a platform, Dixon contends that Chronicles means to place him in a

mediating position, raised between the people of Israel (whom he faces) and YHWH (to whom he addresses his dedicatory speech). Solomon is being supported by his people, not physically as dais bearers, but in spirit through their presence and attention.<sup>98</sup>

Like the Persian ruler Darius, who stands on a raised dais with hands outstretched to Ahura Mazda,<sup>99</sup> Solomon is simultaneously exalted and subordinated, displaying his dual role as supreme king held high by “all” and willing subject of his God. Solomon could not just stand among Israel as he welcomed Yhwh to his new home. Instead, he is set up a royal dais in the temple’s court, an image reminiscent of Achaemenid throne stands that supported the “king on high.”<sup>100</sup> However, in 2 Chr 6:13 takes Solomon’s subordination one step further than the Achaemenid reliefs by depicting him on his knees.<sup>101</sup> Appropriately, Solomon begins his dedication by declaring Yhwh’s incomparability, “O Yhwh, God of Israel, there is none like you, a god in heaven and on earth ...” (יהוה אלהי ישראל אין כמוך אלהים בשמים) (ובארץ). Yhwh’s exalted uniqueness thus mirrors the physical image of Solomon’s exaltation among the people; yet, Solomon expresses his subordination to divine rule by kneeling in appeal in the temple’s court.

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<sup>97</sup> For a discussion of the “king on high,” see Margaret Cool Root *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art: Essays on the Creation of an Iconography of Empire* (AI 19; Leiden: Brill, 1979), 130-61 [esp. 159].

<sup>98</sup> Helen Dixon, “Writing Persepolis in Yehud: Achaemenid Kingship in Chronicles,” in *Images and Prophecy in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean* (ed. Martti Nissinen and Charles Carter; FRLANT 233; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), 163-194.

<sup>99</sup> Among other places, on the left top register of Darius’ tomb. See Dixon, “Writing Persepolis,” 194.

<sup>100</sup> Cool Root, *King and Kingship*, 159, notes that the “proportions [of Solomon’s platform] correspond remarkably with those of the platforms represented on the Achaemenid reliefs of the temple façade and the central building [at Persepolis].”

<sup>101</sup> 1 Kgs 8 never depicts Solomon going into the kneeling position, though 8:54 states that he had been kneeling before the altar.

The Queen of Sheba offers the last word on Solomon’s occupancy of the divine throne:

יהי יהוה אלהיך ברוך אשר חפץ בך לתתך על־כסאו למלך ליהוה  
 Praise be to Yhwh your God, who has delighted in you, placing you upon his throne as king  
for Yhwh your God. (2 Chr 9:8a)

יהי יהוה אלהיך ברוך אשר חפץ בך לתתך על־כסא ישראל  
 Praise be to Yhwh your God, who has delighted in you, placing you upon the throne of  
Israel. (1 Kgs 10:9a)

The queen’s words echo those of Hiram earlier, who observed similarly how Yhwh elected Solomon in order to build the temple (2 Chr 2:10). Chronicles’ rewording of Kings does not subvert the earlier text, but rather places “the throne of Israel” within a new theological and international framework. Israel’s throne was not just an international curiosity. It was the imminent locus of divine rule.

So what accounts for this unique emphasis on Solomon’s occupancy of the divine throne? There are multiple levels at which Solomon’s exaltation and uniqueness might have made sense, though I focus on three possibilities here. First, Solomon was the unique temple-builder, selected by God to manifest the divine kingdom. Yhwh chose (\*בחר\*) Solomon “to build a house for the ark” (1 Chr 28:10; 29:1), “to sit on the throne of Yhwh’s kingdom,” and as “my [Yhwh’s] son,” to build his divine father a “temple and courtyards” (29:5-6). Second, Chronicles deemed Solomon’s reign unsurpassed within Israel and among the nations. Solomon is the one “uniquely elected by God” (אחד בחר־בו אלהים; 29:1), a phrase that emphasizes his distinctive purpose vis-à-vis other kings.<sup>102</sup> 1 Chronicles 29:25 states that Solomon was unsurpassed by all Israel’s kings, and 2 Chr 9:23-24 states that Solomon’s wisdom and wealth exceeded that of all the *earth’s* kings (cf. 1 Kgs 4:34) such that they brought him yearly tribute. Moreover, Solomon’s reign witnessed the attainment of Israel’s

<sup>102</sup> It is worth recalling Chr’s use of מזבח אחד (“unique altar” 2 Chr 32:12), גוי אחד (“unique nation” 1 Chr 17:21 // 2 Sam 7:23). Cf. 1 Chr 12:39; 2 Chr 5:13; 30:12.

hoped-for territory, wealth, influence, and unity. As such, it stood as the truest expression of Yhwh's kingdom. Third, and perhaps most significantly, Solomon built the *divine* palace (בִּירָה), and brought the ark to its final resting place. In this sense, Solomon represented the completion of a task to which the Chronicler and certain constituents within the post-exilic community set themselves—namely, the establishment of the temple as a rallying point for the scattered people of God and the nations. If there is a dynastic hope in Chronicles, as the persistence of the dynastic promise may suggest, the account of David-Solomon defined the parameters of the future king's responsibilities primarily in cultic terms.

#### C. DAVIDIC-SOLOMONIC RULE: SYNTHETIC AND SUMMARY REFLECTIONS

The reigns of David and Solomon (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9) hold a unique and prominent position in the Chronicler's history. Chronicles takes the accounts of David and Solomon from Samuel and Kings, and expounds upon, or forms a caricature of, those aspects of their reigns that express and embody divine rule most completely. They ruled over a unified kingdom as occupants of the divine throne, and dedicated themselves completely to the tasks of preparing for and building the temple.<sup>103</sup> These aspects of their reigns encompass

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<sup>103</sup> Some commentators suggest that the reference to Solomon's rule on Yhwh's throne and in Yhwh's "house," or "temple," signals that Judean kingship found its logical end in the cult, thereby offering a rationale for the dissolving of kingship in the post-exilic period. See, e.g., Otto Plöger, *Theocracy and Eschatology* (Richmond: John Knox, 1968); Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, xiii-ix; Riley, *King and Cultus*, 157-204). Wellhausen's (*Prolegomena*, 128) communicates this idea with its negative evaluation: "See what Chronicles has made out of David! The founder of the kingdom has become the founder of the temple and the public worship ... the singer and master of ceremonies at the head of a swarm of priests and Levites; his clearly cut figure has become a feeble holy picture, seen through a cloud of incense." In addition to historical considerations, there are grounds for thinking that Chr imagines an end to royal hopes in the post-exilic period. For example, Chr emphasizes more than Kgs that the persistence of the Davidic line was dependent upon the king's obedience (1 Chr 22:12-13; 29:7-10; 29:19; 2 Chr 6:15-17; 7:17-18). As Schniedewind (*Society and Promise*, 132-33) contends, there is a clear effort to extend Davidic promises to the temple. Chr recontextualizes the Davidic promise within a narrative about the preparation for the temple (chs. 17-29), and recasts the reigns of David and Solomon in terms of temple preparation. While there are clear connections between the royal house and temple in Chr, the references to *Solomon's* and *David's* thrones enduring forever gives one pause, and at the very least points toward an unresolved tension in the book (1 Chr 17:14; 2 Chr 6:16; 7:18). In addition, other texts in Chr affirm the eternity of David's and Solomon's dynasty (1 Chr 22:10; 28:6-7; 2 Chr 13:5-8; 21:7; 23:3) and

two ways that David and Solomon relate to Yhwh's kingship. First, both kings *embody* divine kingship by ruling over his exalted kingdom as exalted representatives. In addition to sharing the divine throne, Chronicles emphasizes that both kings embody divine uniqueness and supremacy as recipients of the dynastic covenant. Through God's covenant to David, which was confirmed in Solomon, Yhwh revealed his uniqueness and sole divinity (1 Chr 17:20, 26//2 Sam 7:22, 28; 2 Chr 6:14a//1 Kgs 8:23a). The Davidic covenant was on par with the exodus as one of Yhwh's "extraordinary deeds" (גדלות; 1 Chr 17:19, 21), and distinguished Yhwh as an incomparable deity (2 Chr 6:14). Chronicles continues this theme that was present in his sources, but draws further attention (esp. in 1 Chr 17:17, 19) to the king's exalted status as recipient of the dynastic promises. In the case of Solomon, we have just observed that Yhwh endowed Solomon with unique qualities, a unique purpose as temple-builder, a unique status vis-à-vis Israel's other kings, and a unique status on Yhwh's throne. These combined features suggest that Chronicles employs the reign of Solomon as a way to express the exalted features of divine kingship. Specifically, *a unified, wealthy, and temple-centered kingdom expresses Yhwh's kingdom and supreme rule*. Solomon's and David's reigns represent a unique phase in Israel's history, a "single, unified event within the divine economy for the

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Yhwh's commitment to keeping a "lamp" for David and his sons (2 Chr 21:4-7). For arguments in favor of dynastic hopes in Chr, see von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild*, 135; Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*, 158-67; Williamson, "Eschatology," offers a cogent argument for an enduring Davidic hope, though the conditional elements of the covenant are not totally explained by his theory. According to Williamson ("Eschatology," 149), "In [the Chronicler's] opinion, the promise to David, confirmed by Solomon's obedience, was of eternal validity." However, it seems possible that "eternal validity," or Yhwh's "perpetual" dynastic promise did not mean that the Davidic king would never cease to be on the throne, as indeed Chr's contemporary reality suggests. "Eternal" may also carry the sense of "continuously offered." In addition, the degree to which Chr allows for a foreign king to take up the role of the Davidic king—either as a temporary compromise or an enduring shift—is open to debate. Williamson's claim that the dynastic promise is "permanent and indestructible" ("Eschatology," 147) may overstate the case. See P. B. Dirksen, "The Future in the Book of Chronicles," in *New Heaven and New Earth, Prophecy and the Millennium: Essays in the Honour of Anthony Gelston* (ed. Peter J. Harland and Robert Hayward; VTSup 77; Brill: Leiden, 1999), 37-51. According to Dirksen, "the view that the Chronicler does not intend to convey any specific hope for the future best accounts for the evidence" (44). While I do not share Dirksen's pessimism, the book does not appear to make a clear *apologia* for a future king. Cf. the similar perspective of North, S.J., "The Theology of the Chronicler," 380.

life of the nation.”<sup>104</sup> It was a phase for the Chronicler that best instantiated the supreme rule of Yhwh and therefore deserved to be lifted up and magnified.

Second, both kings *defer* publicly to the divine king. Such deference occurs most clearly as David concludes his life (1 Chr 29). Through his personal divestment of wealth and public prayer, David casts his legacy in terms of temple preparation and deference to Yhwh as king, and emphasizes Yhwh’s sole rule over Israel and the nations. David and Solomon similarly express deference through preparation, personal divestment of wealth, and the construction of the temple. In their royal speeches, prayers, and actions, both kings emphasize their dedication to the temple, and rally the people toward the same purpose.<sup>105</sup> One may also observe, based on my discussion in the previous chapter, that as David diminishes himself before Yhwh when receiving the covenant (1 Chr 17:16b “Who am I, Yhwh God ...?”), so Solomon diminishes his role as temple builder when faced with Yhwh’s grandeur in the cult (2 Chr 2:5[6] “... who am I that I should build this temple?”). In short, while Yhwh exalts David and Solomon in extraordinary terms, the two kings diminish themselves before Yhwh.

#### D. POST-SOLOMONIC PARTICIPATION IN DIVINE KINGSHIP

After Solomon, only one text equates divine and human kingship:

And now you plan to resist the kingdom of Yhwh, which is in the hands of David’s descendants. (2 Chr 13:8a)

Abijah affirms that the Davidic line constituted a unique embodiment of Yhwh’s kingdom, even though he points toward the *cult*, and not himself, as the proof of his claim (v. 10-11).

Besides this statement, Chronicles lacks any mention of the kingdom in the hands of Davidic

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<sup>104</sup> Williamson, “Eschatology,” 140-41.

<sup>105</sup> Throntveit, *When Kings Speak*, 114-25.



kings, and never again mentions the divine throne beyond Solomon. Thus, 2 Chr 13:8a introduces, or points to, a tension within 2 Chr 10-36. After Solomon, the realization of divine rule through human kings is more ambiguous and partial, and Israel lacks any figure—except, perhaps, Hezekiah<sup>106</sup>—to embody divine rule as completely as David and Solomon. While the kingdom of Yhwh might be in Davidic hands according to Abijah (2 Chr 13:8a), the rest of 2 Chronicles suggests that it is only for fleeting periods. 2 Chronicles 10-36 introduces another theme, hinted at already in the book’s earliest chapters, wherein Yhwh exercises his rule *against* Davidic kings. As such, the pattern of royal exaltation and deference joins with a pattern of royal self-exaltation and humiliation. Nevertheless, we witness additional embodiments of divine rule that require consideration before turning to discuss ways that Yhwh turns against Judean kings. Among post-Solomonic kings, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah deserve special focus for their unique capacity to embody aspects of Yhwh’s supreme kingship that received attention in the hymnic and liturgical compositions of 1 Chr 16 and 29. The remainder of this section will examine their reigns as exemplary instances of divine-human royal supremacy.

#### 1. JEHOSHAPHAT

Jehoshaphat’s reign commands far greater attention in Chronicles than in Kings. Chronicles devotes four entire chapters to Jehoshaphat’s reign (chs. 17-20), the same space allotted to its treatment of Hezekiah (chs. 29-32), and two more than Josiah (chs. 34-35). Kings offers only the standard introductory and concluding notices about Jehoshaphat’s reign (1 Kgs 15:24; 22:41-50), and otherwise treats only his joint ventures with the Israelite

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<sup>106</sup> The emphasis on “all Israel” during his reign may suggest a return to the golden Davidic-Solomonic era. See discussion in Throntveit, *When Kings Speak*, 121-25; Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 119-25.

kings Ahab and Joram (1 Kgs 22; 2 Kgs 3) and the prophet Elijah (2 Kgs 3).<sup>107</sup> The Chronicler's account focuses on Jehoshaphat's priestly-judicial reforms in chs. 17 and 19, and his military exploits in chs. 18 and 20. These chapters present a successful Jehoshaphat insofar as he sought Yhwh and fortified Judah with priests and torah. Through these deeds Jehoshaphat gained international honor and security. However, insofar as Jehoshaphat made alliances with Ahab (19:1-3) and Ahaziah (20:35-37) he suffered defeat.

Jehoshaphat thus engages in two conflicting political policies, each of which revolve around his relationship to the divine king.<sup>108</sup> His *first* policy is to align himself with the divine king and to fortify Judah physically and spiritually against attack from other nations. 2 Chronicles 16:12 records that Jehoshaphat turned from the ways of his father Asa, “who did not seek [\*דַּרְשׁ] Yhwh” (2 Chr 16:12). Jehoshaphat did not “seek [\*דַּרְשׁ] the baals” (17:3), but “sought” (\*דַּרְשׁ; 17:4) God by eliminating the high places (17:6)<sup>109</sup> and fortifying Judah (17:1). Jehoshaphat appointed troops in all the fortified cities *and* appointed officials, Levites, and priests to teach torah “in all the cities of Judah” (17:7-9). Jehoshaphat's kingdom thus recalls Rehoboam's, which was “strengthened” (\*חֹזֶק) through the construction of fortified cities (13:12), and “strengthened” (\*חֹזֶק) by the presence of Levites and priests (11:17). Through military prowess and commitment to cultic reforms and restorations, Jehoshaphat

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<sup>107</sup> Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 277-78.

<sup>108</sup> My argument regarding these two policies bears some similarities with Knoppers' assessment, though independently of his analysis (Gary N. Knoppers, “Reform and Regression: The Chronicler's Presentation of Jehoshaphat,” *Biblica* 72 [1991]: 500-24). Knoppers writes, “In my view, the Chronicler constructs Jehoshaphat's reign to underscore the merits of an independent Judah relying upon YHWH alone and the demerits of a dependent Judah encumbered by alliances” (501).

<sup>109</sup> Despite this contrast of Jehoshaphat and Asa, the two patterns that I delineate for the reign of Jehoshaphat, that of alliance with the divine king and alliance with foreign kings, appear to be patterned after (or in conjunction with) the reign of Asa in 1 Chr 14:1b-16:14. Both kings are said to have removed the high places (2 Chr 14:3-5; 17:6) *and* not to have removed them (2 Chr 15:17; 2 Chr 20:33); both kings utter prayers to Yhwh when faced with foreign invasion (2 Chr 14:11; 20:6-12); both see the fear of Yhwh fall upon the nations (14:14; 20:29); both forge alliances with foreign kings (Asa with Ben-Hadad or Aram in 2 Chr 16; Jehoshaphat with Ahab and the Northern Kingdom in 2 Chr 18); and both kings undergo censure from prophets (Hanani in 2 Chr 16:7-9; Jehu in 19:1-3) who were father and son. See discussion of some of these features in Boda, *1-2 Chronicles*, 313; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 129-30.

secures Judah from surrounding threats. Because of his zealous commitment to Yhwh, Jehoshaphat acquired “great wealth ... honor ... [and] tribute” (17:5), “became more and more powerful,” and arranged a standing army of 1.16 million in Jerusalem alone (vv. 13-19). Chronicles attributes such extraordinary success to Yhwh’s presence with Jehoshaphat. “Yhwh was with Jehoshaphat” (v. 3) and “Yhwh established Jehoshaphat’s control over Judah” (v. 5). Jehoshaphat enjoyed the protection and beneficence of Yhwh without a need for any outside alliances. But beyond divine assistance, 2 Chr 17:10-11 indicates that Jehoshaphat’s spiritual reform enabled him to emanate divine qualities, and participate in divine benefits:

The fear of Yhwh (פחד יהוה) fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands which surrounded Judah, such that they did not make war with Jehoshaphat. Some from the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat offerings and silver as tribute. Even the Arabs brought him flocks: 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats.

The cause and effect in this verse is suggestive. The “fear of *Yhwh*” (פחד יהוה) falls upon the nations and so they bring *Jehoshaphat* tribute and refrain from engaging him in war.

Chronicles uses the idiom “fear of Yhwh” (פחד יהוה) elsewhere to denote the extension of Yhwh’s rule over the nations through the figures of David (1 Chr 14:17) and Asa (2 Chr 14:13[14]). The response of “offerings and silver as tribute” (מנחה וכסף משא) with 7,700 rams and goats may even suggest that they had cultic purposes, given that Chronicles employs מנחה in reference to cultic offerings, and multiples of seven animals from the flock appear as cultic offerings on several occasions in Chronicles (1 Chr 15:26; 13:9; 2 Chr 15:11; 29:21-22; 30:24), though one cannot be certain. The context is political, though the fear inspired by Yhwh fell upon the nations. 2 Chronicles 17:12 goes on to state that Jehoshaphat’s power “kept growing exceedingly” (הלך וגדל למעלה), as a large army gathered to him in support and

he accumulated great wealth,<sup>110</sup> confirming that indeed, Yhwh was with him (1 Chr 17:3).<sup>111</sup> In short, Yhwh responds to Jehoshaphat's loyalty by assisting and exalting him, such that he came to participate in the benefits directed at Yhwh.

In addition to becoming a recipient of benefits directed at Yhwh, Chronicles also depicts Jehoshaphat (lit. "Yhwh has judged") as a facilitator of Yhwh's judicial authority. True to his name, Jehoshaphat concedes first of all that Yhwh is judge even though humans engage in judicial duties. Chronicles' account of Jehoshaphat's reform draws heavily from the book of Deuteronomy, which lays out Yhwh's role as executive judge over the juridical affairs of the nation (Deut 1:17; 10:17; 16:18-20; 19:17). Chronicles' own spin on Deuteronomy is to afford the king the role of judicial founder and reformer.<sup>112</sup> Jehoshaphat appoints judges to settle disputes and make decisions "for Yhwh" who would "be with you when you render judgment" (19:6). Jehoshaphat reminds judges that Yhwh "takes no bribes" (19:7) and so they were to render judgment in the "fear of Yhwh" (19:9). After recounting the formation of Jehoshaphat's judicial infrastructure, Chronicles reports that he faced a threat from an eastern coalition of nations (20:1). Initially, the relationship between ch. 19 and ch. 20 appears thin. Jehoshaphat reforms the judiciary in ch. 19, and then goes to war in ch. 20. However, these chapters bear a significant theological congruency that relates to Yhwh's role as judge. Faced with this international threat, Jehoshaphat appeals to Yhwh as divine judge, asking "will you not judge them?" הלא השפט־בם (20:12). Jehoshaphat also identifies Yhwh as king, claiming that Yhwh held power over the nations:

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<sup>110</sup> Wealth is an important way of signifying divine favor and exaltation in Chr, see 1 Chr 22:11, 13; 29:23, 28; 2 Chr 7:11; 14:7[6]; 26:5; 31:21; 32:20. Cf. 2 Chr 13:12; 24:20.

<sup>111</sup> Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles: Volume 2*, 78, rightly observes that the statement "Yhwh was with Jehoshaphat" (2 Chr 17:3) "hides a wealth of meaning." In particular, divine sponsorship of Jehoshaphat plays a central thematic role in the Chronicler's account of his reign.

<sup>112</sup> Tiño, *King and Temple*, 77, traces specific links between Deut 16:18 and 2 Chr 19:5, and between Deut 17:8-9 and 2 Chr 19:8-11. He notes discrepancies between the two accounts, specifically in that Deut 17:8-9 does not distinguish between "matters of the King" and "cultic matters." Cf. G. N. Knoppers, "Jehoshaphat's Judiciary and 'the Scroll of the Torah,'" *JBL* 113 (1994):59-80.

Yhwh, God of our ancestors, are you not indeed the God in heaven? Are you not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations [ואתה מושל בכל הממלכות הגוים]? In *your* hand is power and might [וביִדְךָ כַח וּגְבוּרָה], and there is no one with you who is able to oppose you.<sup>113</sup> (2 Chr 20:6; cf. 1 Chr 16:33)

Jehoshaphat's words also hearken back to the language of David's prayer:

To you, Yhwh, belong the utmost greatness, might [גְבוּרָה], ... To you, Yhwh, belong the kingdom [הַמְּמַלְכָה], and the preeminence as ruler over all. ... You rule over all [ואתה מושל] [בְּכָל], and you possess power and might [וביִדְךָ כַח וּגְבוּרָה] ... (1 Chr 29:11-12)

Both of these texts lack parallels in Samuel-Kings and are widely accepted as part of the Chronicler's *Sondergut*. The shared language here is striking. Jehoshaphat, whom the Chronicler consistently portrays in Davidic terms, prays to God using language from David's prayer, and subsequently becomes exalted like David (2 Chr 20:30). In both texts the Judean king credits "the kingdom," "rule," "power and might" to Yhwh, following in the pattern of royal deference to the divine king. However, Jehoshaphat's prayer adds the phrase מַמְלֻכּוֹת הַגּוֹיִם not only to complete the parallel with בְּשָׂמִים, but also to address his current situation of threats from surrounding nations.<sup>114</sup>

In response to Jehoshaphat's prayer, Yhwh routs the enemy.<sup>115</sup> Consequently, "fear of Yhwh fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands" (פָּחַד // פָּחַד אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־מַמְלַכּוֹת הָאָרְצוֹת) (פָּחַד אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־מַמְלַכּוֹת הָאָרְצוֹת; 2 Chr 20:29), repeating the phrase from 2 Chr 17:10 in connection with Jehoshaphat, and 1 Chr 14:17 in connection with David.<sup>116</sup> Through use of these lexical patterns, Chronicles portrays Jehoshaphat as a David-like king who ascribes *supreme* kingship to Yhwh, and who thus sees victory over the nations—the very realms over which Yhwh rules. Thus, Chronicles frames the account of Jehoshaphat's reign with a state of peace and

<sup>113</sup> See discussion of this text in the previous chapter.

<sup>114</sup> On the relationship between 1 Chr 29:12 and 2 Chr 20:26, see Beentjes, *Tradition and Transformation in the Book of Chronicles*, 65-66 in his chapter "Aspects of Innerbiblical Interpretation in 2 Chronicles 20" (pp. 61-77).

<sup>115</sup> See discussion of priestly elements in this scene in the previous chapter.

<sup>116</sup> 1 Chr 14:17 states that David's reputation was over "all the lands" (בְּכָל־הָאָרְצוֹת) and Yhwh put "fear of him [Yhwh/David] on all the nations" (פָּחַדוֹ עַל כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם).

fear of Yhwh upon the nations (17:10; 20:29; cf. 2 Chr 14:11; 15:15). The king who expresses Yhwh's supreme rule embodies it as well.

Jehoshaphat also embraces a second and more destructive policy—alliance with foreign kings (2 Chr 18:1; 20:35). For Chronicles, Jehoshaphat's partnership with other kings constituted an affront to Yhwh's power and rule. Jehoshaphat's ally Ahab proves unable to avert the decree of doom from Yhwh, who was "seated upon his throne, with all the host of heaven standing in attendance at his right and left hands" (2 Chr 18:18). Divine kingship was not synonymous with Judean kingship in all circumstances, despite Chronicles' exalted claims to this effect. For instance, Jehu son of Hanani the seer rebukes Jehoshaphat for allying himself with Ahab and "those who hate Yhwh" in an effort to defeat Aram (19:2). As punishment, he experiences Yhwh's wrath at Aram's hands. Likewise, Eliezar prophesies against Jehoshaphat when he allied himself with Ahaziah to build ships for trade with Tarshish (20:37). According to the Chronicler, Yhwh destroyed Jehoshaphat's ships so that they could not set sail. In both instances, Jehoshaphat sought to defend himself against, or expand into, the international scene through political alliances. Yhwh thwarts both plans.

In sum, this section examined two conflicting political policies embraced by King Jehoshaphat. First, he aligned himself with the divine king by fortifying Judah physically and religiously. He defers to Yhwh's kingship, shares in Yhwh's international success and fame, and receives tribute because fear of Yhwh had fallen upon the nations. As in the Yhwh-kingship compositions of the Davidic narrative (chs. 16 and 29), such agreement with divine rule has tangible economic results. In the case of Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah later, economic responses *to Yhwh* result in actions of deference and subordination *to Yhwh's mediator*, the Judean king. Second, Chronicles also recounts how Jehoshaphat repudiates divine kingship by allying with other kings (2 Chr 18:1; 20:35). Such alliances repudiate Yhwh's exclusive

claim to kingship, and his sole prerogative in empowering the Judean ruler. Though Jehoshaphat embodies divine rule, he also becomes the recipient of divine judgment, drawing out the full significance of his name, יהוֹשָׁפָט (Yhwh has judged).

## 2. HEZEKIAH

Hezekiah is the second in our study of two post-Solomonic kings to participate in the mediation of divine kingship. The account of Hezekiah reflects acute awareness of the relationship between divine royal supremacy and material wealth, and the notion that bringing wealth to the Judean king enacted the belief that Yhwh was the only God who ruled the nations.

As observed earlier in this chapter, the Levitical Hymn (1 Chr 16:8-36) and David's prayer (1 Chr 29:11-20) affirm that all things come from and belong to God. These affirmations received emphasis in 1 Chr 16 through the eight-fold repetition of כָּל, and its ten-fold repetition in 1 Chr 29. *All things* belonged to and under Yhwh as a marker of his lavish kingship. Accordingly, Chronicles exhibits a propensity to use wealth to indicate the success of Judean kings, just as it marked the success of the divine king.<sup>117</sup> These claims about Yhwh in 1 Chr 16 and 29 found their practical instantiation through the joyful giving of lavish donations, a practice that the Chronicler emphasizes far more than Samuel-Kings.<sup>118</sup> Scholars have noted the expanded role that wealth plays in Chronicles vis-à-vis

<sup>117</sup> 1 Chr 22:11, 13; 29:23, 28; 2 Chr 7:11; 14:7[6]; 26:5; 31:21; 32:20. Cf. 2 Chr 13:12; 24:20.

<sup>118</sup> 1 Chr 16:29; 29:6, 9, 17; 2 Chr 31:4-19; 32:23. On joyful donations in Chr, see Muffs, *Love and Joy*, 183-86.

Samuel-Kings, but rarely connect this to corresponding claims made about Yhwh and the cult.<sup>119</sup>

One exemplary passage that demonstrates the correspondence between Yhwh's supremacy and his accumulation of wealth is the Chronicler's account of Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem. In 2 Chr 32:10-15, Sennacherib mocks the people and Hezekiah for putting trust in Yhwh. The evidence of Yhwh's weakness, according to Sennacherib, was that Hezekiah had gotten rid of his "shrines and altars" (v. 12) and demanded worship at "one altar" (מזבח אחד).<sup>120</sup> Using repeated taunts, Sennacherib claims that because none of the nations' gods could escape his or his predecessor's power (v. 13), how much less could Israel's god (v. 14, 15). According to vv. 16-19, Sennacherib continued his boasting, making similar boasts about the inability of Hezekiah's god to deliver Israel from his power. Chronicles contends that Sennacherib and his servants had spoken against Yhwh and his servant (Hezekiah; 32:16).<sup>121</sup> In v. 17, Sennacherib compares Yhwh to "the gods from the nations of the lands who did not rescue their people from my [Sennacherib's] power" (אלהי גוי הארצות אשר לא הצילו עמם מידי). The Chronicler then offers his own interpretation of these taunts in v. 19, drawing special attention to the Assyrians' mistaken assumptions about God:

וידברו אל-אלהי ירושלם כעל אלהי עמי הארץ מעשה ידי האדם

Thus they spoke about the God of Jerusalem like the gods of the nations of the earth, the work of human hands. (2 Chr 32:19)

<sup>119</sup> Gary N. Knoppers, "Treasures Won and Lost: Royal (Mis)appropriations in Kings and Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (ed. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 181-208.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. מִזְבַּח זֶה in Kgs and Isa. Chr also adds ועליו תקטירו "and offer sacrifices upon it," using a favorite Chronic term for describing the Jerusalem cult (\*קטר; 1 Chr 6:49; 23:13; 2 Chr 2:3, 5; 13:11; 26:16, 18; 29:7, 11; 32:12; cf. its use in reference to illicit cultic activity in 25:14; 26:19; 28:3-4, 25; 34:25). With *one* exception, \*קטר carries wholly negative connotations in Kgs, typically in reference to burning incense at the "shrines" (1 Kgs 9:25; cf. 11:8; 12:33; 13:1, 2; 22:44; 2 Kgs 12:4; 14:4; 15:4; 35; 16:4, 35; 16:4, 13, 15; 17:11; 18:4; 22:17; 23:5, 8).

<sup>121</sup> See the discussion of the Chronicler's literary methods here in Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 988-89.



Chronicles thus offers its own critique. The Assyrians wrongly equated Yhwh with the gods of the nations by supposing that he was like other human creations.<sup>122</sup> The Chronicler's statement not only relativizes the nations' gods, but also Sennacherib's victories. The reason for his international success is that the nations lacked divine sponsorship.

In 2 Chr 32:16-23, the Chronicler makes several additional changes to the accounts of Kings and Isaiah that relate to my examination of divine supremacy.<sup>123</sup> First, he omits the references in 2 Kgs 18:14-16 (not in Isa) to Hezekiah's spoiling the temple and paying tribute to Assyria. Moreover, he omits the reference to Hezekiah's alliance with Egypt (2 Kgs 18:19-22; Isa 36:4-7). Both of these omissions are consistent with Chronicles' conviction that foreign alliances and tribute payment are affronts to Yhwh's power (2 Chr 16:7-10; 18:1; 20:35). Second, he interprets the visit of the Babylonian envoy (2 Chr 32:31) as a test of Hezekiah's heart, but omits references to Hezekiah displaying his wealth to the envoy (2 Kgs 20:12-15; Isa 39:1-4) and Isaiah's prophecy that his wealth would therefore be carried off to Babylon (2 Kgs 20:16-17; Isa 39:5-7). The Chronicler depicts the wealth of nations coming only *into* Jerusalem with no hint that Hezekiah sets himself up to pay out.

The direction in which wealth moves is critical in Chronicles. Indeed, when Yhwh soundly defeats the Assyrians the nations bring “tribute/offerings [מְנַחֵה] to Yhwh in Jerusalem and precious things to King Hezekiah of Judah” (v. 23).<sup>124</sup> This event receives no

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<sup>122</sup> This monotheizing claim is unique to the Chronicler, though his sources employ explicit monotheistic rhetoric. In fact, the accounts of Sennacherib's invasion in Kgs (2 Kgs 19:18) and Isa (37:19) include these taunts in the prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah. Kgs and Isa even go beyond the Chronicler's account by having Hezekiah state explicitly that “Yhwh ... you alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the earth and sky” (2 Kgs 19:15 // Isa 37:16). It is abundantly clear that the Chronicler's sources employ monotheistic rhetoric. However, it is important to note the distinctiveness of the Chronicler's monotheizing. In the first place, the Chronicler resists the Assyrian's categories quite explicitly. Yhwh did not belong in the categories of “gods of the nations” because they were human creations.

<sup>123</sup> Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 255-56, discusses these. Cf. Mary Katherine Hom, “The Characterization of the Assyrians in Isaiah: Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives” (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2009).

<sup>124</sup> The use of מְנַחֵה nicely captures the cultic (“offering”) and political (“tribute”) connotations of the nations' (Heb. רַבִּים—either “great ones” or simply “many”—and “the nations” הַגּוֹיִם) contributions to Yhwh.

mention in Kings or Isaiah. However, it aligns clearly with Chronicles' ideology. First, Yhwh and Hezekiah become co-recipients of the nations' actions. Just as fear of Yhwh fell upon the nations such that they brought מנחה to Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 17:10-11), and as Yhwh's fear fell upon the Ethiopians such that Asa spoiled his enemies (2 Chr 14:14), so the nations bring מנחה to Yhwh and gifts to Hezekiah after his defeat of the Assyrians. Second, Chronicles uses wealth and gifts as indications of Yhwh's international power and supremacy,<sup>125</sup> especially in the Yhwh-kingship compositions (1 Chr 16:8-36; 29:11-20). The Levitical hymn in 1 Chr 16 calls on the nations to "transfer" (\*יהב) all glory and power to Yhwh by bringing מנחה (vv. 28-29) to his sanctuary. Similarly, David boasts that everything in heaven and earth belongs to Yhwh, that all things come from Yhwh (29:14), and that Yhwh owns all the abundance used for his own temple (v. 16; cf. 2 Chr 1:12). Likewise, Hiram acknowledges that Yhwh made heaven and earth and gave Solomon the very means for building his temple (2 Chr 2:12). Here in 2 Chr 32, the Chronicler makes explicit that Hezekiah's great wealth came from Yhwh ("God had given him great wealth"; v. 29), including his silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields, grain, wine, oil, cattle, and sheep (vv. 27-29).<sup>126</sup> In short, wealth belonged to Yhwh and came from Yhwh. Bringing him wealth was a means of enacting that belief in concrete terms, and in some cases, of acknowledging Yhwh's divine supremacy.

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<sup>125</sup> The theme of the wealth of nations recurs throughout the Hebrew Bible, and especially in the exilic and post-exilic literature. See the classic analysis of the Zion traditions by Hans Wildberger, "Die Völkerwallfahrt zum Zion, Jes. II1-5," *VT* 7 (1957) 62-81; Additional studies that address the role of the wealth of nations in connection with Jerusalem include Edzard Rohland, "Die Bedeutung der Erwählungstraditionen für die Eschatologie der alttestamentlichen Propheten" (Theol. diss., Heidelberg, 1956), 142; Matthew J. Lynch, "Zion's Warrior and the Nations: Isaiah 59:15b-63:6 within Israel's Zion Traditions," *CBQ* 70/2 (2008):244-63 [249-50].

<sup>126</sup> The Chronicler's emphasis on Hezekiah's proud heart (vv. 24, 31) is likely connected with his failure to acknowledge the source of his wealth, for although Hezekiah was "exalted in the sight of all nations" who brought him wealth (v. 23), he "did not respond according to the benefit done to him" (v. 24).

In 2 Chr 32:19, the Chronicler uses the streaming wealth of the nations to signal the nations' discovery that Israel's God was utterly unlike their created "gods." The gifts of the nations consequently become emblematic responses to Yhwh's supremacy. The progression of vv. 15-23 suggests this connection. Immediately after the narrator states that Sennacherib compared Yhwh to the created gods of the nations, we read about Yhwh's miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem (v. 21), Sennacherib's death in the temple of his obsolete god (v. 21),<sup>127</sup> and then the gifts of the nations combined with a statement about Yhwh's and Hezekiah's international exaltation (v. 23):

- v. 15-19 Sennacherib and Assyrians equate Yhwh and the human-made gods of the nations
- v. 20-21a Yhwh destroys the Assyrian forces
- v. 21b Sennacherib dies in the temple of his god, who cannot protect him
- v. 22-23 Nations bring gifts/offerings to Yhwh in his temple in Jerusalem, and gifts to Hezekiah.

Yhwh soundly refutes Sennacherib's boast, and vindicates his own supreme divinity vis-à-vis the nations. To exhibit the folly of Sennacherib's claim, Chronicles casts the story of Sennacherib's defeat in such a way that the nations end up bringing their wealth to Yhwh immediately after recognizing that he is the only true God. The parallel accounts in Kings and Isaiah contain no record of the nations bringing "tribute/offerings [מְנַחֵה] to Yhwh in Jerusalem and precious things to King Hezekiah of Judah" (v. 23). But these actions are crucial for Chronicles, for they vindicate Yhwh's status as the only god *not* created by human hands and therefore the only one worthy of international recognition and tribute/offerings.<sup>128</sup> The entire Deuteronomic corpus never records nations bringing tribute *to Yhwh*.<sup>129</sup> Wealth always came to the Davidic king and usually as a form of political

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<sup>127</sup> Chr deletes the name of the god "Nisroch" from his source (2 Kgs 19:37), on which, see Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History*, 87.

<sup>128</sup> V. 20 makes clear that Sennacherib's comparison between Yhwh and the created gods of the nations is what prompted Hezekiah's and Isaiah's prayer: "because of this ..." (referring to the comparison).

<sup>129</sup> In Sam-Kgs, tribute gifts are typically political exchanges between human vassal and overlord (2 Sam 8:2-6; 1 Kgs 5:1; 10:25; 2 Kgs 17:3-4; 20:12), whereas Chr emphasizes their cultic usefulness.

payment. Moreover, in connection with Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:15; 20:13), מנחה carried wholly negative connotations. But whereas in Kings Hezekiah pays tribute to Sennacherib of Assyria from the *temple* and *palace* (2 Kgs 18:15-16), in Chronicles, the nations bring tribute and gifts to *Yhwh* and *Hezekiah* (2 Chr 32:23). In addition to this subversion of Kings' account, the Chronicler's account offers a more overtly theocratic and positive interpretation of the nations' wealth (not singling out the Babylonian envoy). Just as the Queen of Sheba recognized that Solomon sat on *Yhwh's* throne ruling on *his* behalf (9:8), so the nations bring their tribute/offerings directly to Yhwh who dwelled in the temple, and also bring gifts for Hezekiah his king.<sup>130</sup> The Chronicler's reason for portraying the nations' direct dealings with Yhwh is likely because their gods were just exposed as "the work of human hands." The Chronicler seized upon the account of Sennacherib's international embarrassment to highlight Yhwh's cultic exaltation by the nations. Yhwh had revealed himself as the living God, illustrating through history one of the key acts Chronicles expressed earlier in the Yhwh-kingship portion of the Levitical hymn.

For all the gods of the peoples are hand-made gods, but Yhwh made the heavens. ... Render to Yhwh, O families of the peoples, render to Yhwh glory and strength. Render to Yhwh the glory due his name, bring tribute and come into his presence, worship Yhwh in his holy splendor. (1 Chr 16:26-29)

Thus, the nations tangibly enact the Chronicler's acclamations (e.g., in 1 Chr 16 and 29) that all wealth belongs to Yhwh *because he is the supreme God*. Recognition of the gods' createdness leads to a massive transference of wealth to the one true God.<sup>131</sup>

Thus, Yhwh *and* Hezekiah become recipients of the nations' gifts—gifts that epitomize Yhwh's supremacy over the gods of the nations. Whereas Sennacherib made

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<sup>130</sup> Analogously, it is worth recalling the Chronicler's adaptation of the promise to David from a promise to establish "your [David's] house and your kingdom" (2 Sam 7:16) to a promise to confirm David in "my [Yhwh's] house and my kingdom" (1 Chr 17:14). For a full discussion of such changes, see Schniedewind, *Society*, 119-139.

<sup>131</sup> The costliness of the materials for constructing those deities is a point of focus in Isaiah's and the psalmist's idol polemics (e.g., Isa 40:19; 41:7; Ps 115:4; 135:15).

boasts “against Yhwh, *the* God, and against Hezekiah his servant” (על יהוה האלהים ועל יחזקיהו) (עבדו; 32:16) because he destroyed the nations’ gods, now the nations bring tribute and gifts “to Yhwh at Jerusalem ... [and] to Hezekiah King of Judah” (ליהוה לירושלים ... ליחזקיהו מלך) (יהודה; 32:23a). The result of such donations, as elsewhere in Chronicles, is royal exaltation. The ambiguous subject in 32:23b once again blurs the line that distinguished the divine and human king. Having brought gifts to Yhwh and Hezekiah, the Chronicler reports that “Thereafter *he* [i.e., either Yhwh or Hezekiah] was exalted in the sight of all the nations [וינשא] [לעיני כל־הגוים].”

### III. DIFFERENTIATING HUMAN AND DIVINE RULE

While at their best, the Davidic kings in Chronicles operated in a role that was supportive of, but distinct from, the cult. Insofar as kings “seek” Yhwh, especially by devoting themselves to the cult, Chronicles offers only praise. David and Solomon prepare the way for and inaugurate the Jerusalem cult, and other kings reform and restore the cult after periods of apostasy. In Chronicles, Solomon blesses the people from a bronze platform rather than the altar (1 Kgs 8:54b-55; 2 Chr 6:13), thus locating the king in the courtyard rather than the altar;<sup>132</sup> Chronicles sets the anointing of Solomon and Zadok in the same scene, thereby distinguishing their distinctive spheres (1 Chr 29:22; cf. 1 Kgs 1:39; 2:35).<sup>133</sup> David cannot build the temple because he “shed much blood,” and Solomon declares his

<sup>132</sup> Cf. 1 Chr 16:1. There is some suggestion that 1 Chr 16:1 changes the sg. “David” to “they” (referring to Levites), in order to distance David from immediate acts of cultic sacrifice (as in 2 Sam 6:17). See discussion by Willi, *Chronik als Auslegung*, 127; Noth, *The Chronicler's History*, 168; Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 314. Cf. 1 Chr 21:26.

<sup>133</sup> Japhet (*I & II Chronicles*, 514) interprets this verse as a strong statement concerning Zadok’s status; cf. Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 541, who suggests that Chr may “be an attempt to emphasize the joint roles of king and priest known from other postexilic passages such as Hag 1:12-14; Zech 6:12-14; and Jer 33:17-18.” However, Chr does little in the way of developing the notion of a diarchy. One might see this text as a late addition, as Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 187.

own unworthiness to even build the temple (2 Chr 2:3-5). Chronicles omits the account of Hezekiah entering the temple (2 Kgs 19:1; 2 Chr 32:20), and Jotham is evaluated positively for not entering the temple (2 Chr 27:2).

However, as kings infringe upon cultic space and violate the temple's sanctity, Chronicles' distinctive view becomes even more noticeable. For example, Uzziah comes down with a horrible skin disease for strutting proudly into the temple (2 Chr 26:16) "with a censer in his hand" (v. 19) to offer incense, the explicit domain of the priesthood.<sup>134</sup> The disease appears on his forehead as he stands "before the incense altar" and "before the priests" (v. 19), in direct confrontation with the cult. Because of his violation and disease, Uzziah becomes "cut off from the House of Yhwh" (26:21) and had to be buried outside the city (26:22-23).

In addition to delimiting royal power in connection with the cult, Chronicles emphasizes Yhwh's direct role in raising up foreign kings in judgment against Israel. Regarding Saul's death at the hand of the Philistines, Chronicles states that "Yhwh killed him" (1 Chr 10:14). Yhwh "abandons [the leaders of Judah] to the power of Shishak" of Egypt (2 Chr 12:5). Yhwh "stirred up the spirit [ויער יהוה ... את רוח] of the Philistines and Arabs" against Jehoram, who made high places throughout Judah (2 Chr 21:16). King Neco speaks of the "God [of Israel], who is with me [i.e., Neco]" in opposition to Josiah (2 Chr 35:21).

Yhwh also orchestrated Israel's exile by the Assyrians and Judah's exile by the Babylonians. The Chronicler states that "The God of Israel stirred up the spirit (ויער ... את)

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<sup>134</sup> In the Pentateuch, offering incense is typically the domain of priests (Exod 30:1-10; Num 16:40; 18:1-7). In 2 Chr 29:11, it is the Levites who are said to offer incense, though the entire tribe (including the Aaronids) is likely in view. As Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 210-11, observes, "It was the offering of incense that formed the climax of the condemnation of Jeroboam" (1 Kgs 12:33).

רוח) of King Pul of Assyria, the spirit of King Tigath-pilneser of Assyria” (1 Chr 5:26).<sup>135</sup>

Chronicles reports that Yhwh “sent Judah and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar” (1 Chr 6:15) and states later of the same events that Yhwh brought Nebuchadnezzar in judgment against Judah and “gave everything into his power” (הכל נתן) (בידו; 2 Chr 36:12-13). Yhwh “brought the King of Babylon against” Judah and “gave them over to his power” (2 Chr 36:17). In other words, Chronicles develops a fairly extensive vocabulary for speaking about Yhwh’s agency in bringing foreign rulers and powers against Judah.<sup>136</sup>

When Amaziah of Judah hired Israelite soldiers for war against Seir, a prophet warns him that “Yhwh is not with Israel, [nor with] all the Ephraimites” (אין יהוה עם־ישראל כל בני) (אפרים; 2 Chr 25:7). Though he succeeds militarily against Seir, Amaziah brings back their gods to offer them incense and worship in Jerusalem (v. 14). The next time Amaziah goes to war—*against Israel*—he is defeated, for “it was from God, in order to deliver him into [Israel’s] hands, for they [the Judeans] sought [\*דַּרְשׁוּ] the gods of Edom” (v. 20). Thus, while Yhwh was with Judah and “was not with” Israel (v. 6), Yhwh could then turn Israel against Judah when Amaziah gave cultic devotion to other gods. Yhwh’s kingdom was not unconditionally in the hands of Judah’s kings (cf. 2 Chr 13:8).

Chronicles also highlights ways that Yhwh’s foreign agents could topple some of the greatest Judean kings at the height of their power. We observe a pattern of success followed by international disrepute in the reigns of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah, the only kings besides David and Solomon for whom the Chronicler offers high praise. Asa buys the protection of Ben-hadad against Israel (2 Chr 16:1-6), and God punishes him with constant

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<sup>135</sup> Cf. 2 Kgs 15:19, 29 (deportation under Pekah); Isa 37:7 refers to God “putting a spirit” (נותן בו רוח) in Sennacherib, who would hear a report and return to his own land.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. also, Japhet, *Ideology*, 50-52.

war (2 Chr 16:9). Jehoshaphat allies himself with Ahaziah at the peak of his reign, thereby acting “wickedly” (2 Chr 20:35). Yhwh judges him by destroying his ships bound for Ezion-geber (20:36). Hezekiah became proud after deliverance from Sennacherib, incurring Yhwh’s wrath (2 Chr 32:25). Though he escapes international humiliation from the Assyrians, God uses the Babylonian envoys to “test him, to know what was in his heart” (32:31), an oblique reference to Hezekiah’s flaunting of Jerusalem’s wealth to the Babylonian envoy (cf. Isa 39; 2 Kgs 20). Josiah opposed Neco, God’s own agent and spokesman, leading to his own death (2 Chr 35:21). Besides David and Solomon, who play unique roles as cult founders, Yhwh employs foreign rulers only to stamp out the arrogant ambitions of Israel’s own kings.<sup>137</sup>

In fact, 2 Chr 12:8 distinguishes explicitly between the foreign ruler God employs and the direct exercise of divine rule through the Davidic monarch. When Rehoboam and all Israel became arrogant on account of their great power and thus faced Yhwh’s wrath through Shishak of Egypt (12:1-4). By humbling himself, Rehoboam and Judah’s leaders escape the full force of Yhwh’s judgment (12:5-8), though not before “becoming his [Shishak’s] slaves, so as to learn the difference between serving me [Yhwh] and serving the kings of other lands” (כי יהיו־לו לעבדים וידעו עבודתי ועבודת ממלכות הארצות) (12:8). Here the Chronicler distinguishes categorically between divine kingship and foreign kingship, even though v. 7 makes clear that Yhwh could unleash his anger through his agent Shishak. The implication is that Yhwh could enlist foreign kings without granting them the same symbolic role within Yhwh’s kingdom that he grants to the Davidic king.

Things appear to change with Cyrus, however. Chronicles contends that Israel’s land remained desolate until the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy and that it experienced Sabbath rest (2 Chr 36:21). Cyrus marks the beginning of the new era following the land’s

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<sup>137</sup> On royal arrogance in Chr, see Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 201, 210-12.



rest with his spirit-inspired prophecy that “Yhwh, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah” (2 Chr 36:23 NRSV). This is the first time that Chronicles aligns Yhwh’s use of foreign rule with anything but judgment on Judah. Yhwh had transferred *all* the kingdoms of the earth to Cyrus and given him the task required of Judean kings—building (and sponsoring) the temple.<sup>138</sup> There is no tension between the foreign ruler and divine rule as in 2 Chr 12:8. There is a new locus for the mediation of divine political power in Cyrus, though he plays a fairly traditional Judahite royal role as founder and sponsor of the cult. Like Solomon, he comes to power with a divine mandate to build the temple. Yhwh “appoints” (פקד) Cyrus to build the temple, a term used elsewhere in Chronicles to speak of the Judean king’s sacral duties (e.g., פקד in 1 Chr 21:5).<sup>139</sup> In the end, Chronicles raises questions about the possibility of a foreign ruler sitting on Yhwh’s throne. Yhwh hands power of “all the earth’s kingdoms” to Cyrus, who takes up the Davidic task of temple sponsorship—a royal prerogative that Chronicles seems not to abandon (2 Chr 13:5; 21:7; 23:3)—though he does not come from the Davidic line.<sup>140</sup> At best, Cyrus’ reign represents a new occupant on the divine throne, though Chronicles never says so explicitly. At worst, Cyrus is a necessary compromise. He fulfills the duty of kings, and suggests a way for Judeans to conceptualize foreign rule in a society where, for the time being, no king sat on the Davidic throne. Divine rule did not lack human mediation, though the current arrangement was provisional.

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<sup>138</sup> 2 Chr 36:23 employs the phrase כל־ממלכות הארץ from Ezr 1:1 in contrast to Chr’s preferred phrase מלכות הארצות (כל־) (1 Chr 29:30; 2 Chr 12:8; 17:10; 20:29). Cf. use of כל־ממלכות הארץ in 1 Kgs 10:20; 2 Kgs 19:15, 19. This difference may point toward the adaptation of Ezr 1:2-3a in 2 Chr 36:23, and not the other way around.

<sup>139</sup> Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles: Volume 1*, 275.

<sup>140</sup> See William H. Shea, “An Unrecognized Vassal King of Babylon in the Early Achaemenid Period,” *AUSS* 9/2 (1971):99-128 [113], who discusses the shift in Cyrus’ title from “King of Lands” to the “King of Babylon, King of Lands.”

## IV. CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

This chapter examined the human king's participation in Yhwh's supreme kingship in Chronicles. Part I explored David's final prayer (1 Chr 29:10-19), a unique Chronicist composition that emphasizes Yhwh's exclusive kingship and sole divinity, claims echoed at a critical juncture in the speech of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:6). David exalted Yhwh as king and ruler over all, the supreme God whose deeds and power exceed all others. David's prayer accentuates Yhwh's *total* possession of rule, power, and authority, and by counterpoint, his own powerlessness. By repeating the particle כל ("all" 10x in 1 Chr 29:10-19; cf. 8x in 1 Chr 16:8-36), enumerating exclusive divine qualities (29:11-12), and affirming Yhwh's possession of all things (1 Chr 29:12, 14), Chronicles emphasizes the uncontested nature divine rule. However, humans "retain strength" (29:14), insofar as they contribute joyfully and generously to Yhwh's palace (בִּירָה; 29:1, 19). By giving joyfully *for the temple* (29:14, 17, 19) they enact the claim that Yhwh rules and owns all things.

Part II explored royal participation in divine kingship. Chronicles portrays David and Solomon as exemplary kings who model the kind of joyful devotion, worship, and generosity toward the temple expressed in David's prayer (1 Chr 29:10-19). Through such actions, David and Solomon defer to Yhwh's rule as it was embodied in the cult. Relatedly, both kings become exalted recipients of the dynastic covenant, the giving of which demonstrated Yhwh's sole divinity. I also suggested that David's prayer of response to the dynastic oracle (1 Chr 17) brings royal exaltation and divine sole divinity into clearer focus than its *Vorlage* in Samuel (cf. 2 Chr 6:14-17). Additionally, David and Solomon are the *only* kings to share the divine throne, ruling as Yhwh's exalted agents over his kingdom. Chronicles' account of David and Solomon thus bears witness to the development of a paradigmatic, or

emblematic, role for the Davidic-Solomonic period. Their combined reigns become a unique embodiment of the one kingdom of God over a unified Israel.

Despite the fact that subsequent kings do not embody divine rule so perfectly, Chronicles suggests that the link between Yhwh's kingdom and the Davidic kingdom endured, or at least remained a possibility for brief periods (2 Chr 13:8a). Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah both receive acclaim and tribute otherwise reserved for Yhwh himself. Jehoshaphat proclaims Yhwh's exclusive kingship and power (2 Chr 20:6), and achieves victory over the nations. Moreover, the nations bring wealth to Yhwh *and* Hezekiah in recognition of Yhwh's sole divinity. Both kings exhibit what Johnstone calls a "sacramental" model of kingship.<sup>141</sup> They instantiate divine rule on earth through their obedience to divine law and dedication to the cult. As such, they become exalted co-recipients of international reverence, wealth, and acclamation.

Yet, as I argued in part III, Yhwh also judged Judean kings by asserting his power to "stir up" foreign kings against Judah. Though these foreign kings (besides Cyrus) do not manifest the ideals of divine kingship embodied in David and Solomon, Chronicles indicates that Yhwh's kingship exceeds the bounds of Israel (2 Chr 20:6). By demonstrating the persistence of divine kingship despite the failure of Judean kings, Chronicles communicates that the Judean king is vital, but not intrinsic, to the manifestation of divine rule. But insofar as they exalted themselves, Yhwh exercises his regal power against Israel (e.g., 2 Chr 32:25-26). Cyrus leaves open the possibility of foreign agents fulfilling the roles delegated to Judean kings without negating the Davidic promises.

In addition, one may note several similarities and differences between conceptions of kingship in Samuel-Kings and those in Chronicles. First, Chronicles adopts the perspective

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<sup>141</sup> Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles: Volume 1*, 275.

of its sources that the Davidic covenant revealed Yhwh's sole divinity (1 Chr 17:20, 26//2 Sam 7:22, 28; 2 Chr 6:14a//1 Kgs 8:23a), though not without modification. Second, Chronicles almost completely omits the history of the Northern kingdom. The reason is not because it wants to deny its historic connection to Judah. Rather, the Northern kingdom *as a discrete kingdom* lacked any institutional or symbolic role in the expression and mediation of divine rule.<sup>142</sup> As 2 Chr 25:6 states, "Yhwh is not with Israel" (cf. 2 Chr 13).<sup>143</sup> The instantiation of divine rule remained possible only with *one* king in *one* place, though even there for brief periods. Human kingship could embody divine kingship, but was not its exclusive expression.

Third, Chronicles lacks an account of the political transition from judicial to monarchic rule such as one finds in Samuel-Kings. The only transitions that occur are the transference of divine rule from Saul to the Davidic kings (1 Chr 10:14), and then to Cyrus, couched in language of "turning over" (סבב) or "handing" (נתן ליד) kingship from one agent to the next.<sup>144</sup> There is *one* enduring kingship that transfers and endures.<sup>145</sup> Chronicles' historical narrative is monarchic through and through, even though set within the widest parameters of human history stretching back to Adam. This is perhaps the closest that Israelite authors come to a "primordial" notion of kingship found in other ancient Near

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<sup>142</sup> With the possible exception of 2 Chr 18 (// 1 Kgs 22), which depicts Micaiah ben Imlah consulting Yhwh for the Northern King Ahab. Notably, however, 2 Chr 17:7 mentions a Micaiah (an admittedly common name) from *Judah* who teaches torah in the cities of Judah.

<sup>143</sup> Of course, this did not foreclose on the possibility of Yhwh employing Israel against Judah (2 Chr 25:20).

<sup>144</sup> On which, see Peter Machinist, "The Transfer of Kingship: A Divine Turning," in *Fortunate the Eyes that See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of his Seventieth Birthday* (ed. Astrid B. Beck et al; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 105-120. Machinist argues that \*סבב refers to divinely superintended transference of rule from one individual or group to another (118). He suggests that in contrast to Mesopotamian examples of divinely orchestrated transfer of power, Israelite and Islamic cultures depict one deity as responsible for political change, yet usually with an eye to cosmic states of affairs.

<sup>145</sup> Cf. Reinhard Gregor Kratz, *Translatio imperii: Untersuchungen zu den aramäischen Danielerzählungen und ihrem theologisch-geschichtlichen Umfeld* (WMANT 63; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991).

Eastern contexts.<sup>146</sup> Yet, Chronicles writes during a period when Israel had transitioned *from* the monarchic palace to the divine palace/temple as the center of society. While Chronicles does not extinguish hopes for a future Davidic king, we do witness a profound deference to the cult on the part of the king. Jonathan Dyck argues, perhaps rightly, that the Chronicler leaves open the future of the dynasty: “In the meantime (and this includes the Chronicler’s own time) what is required of the people is an unambiguous commitment of loyalty to Yahweh as expressed in loyalty to his temple.”<sup>147</sup> One might say that Chronicles subordinates kingship to the cult much as Deuteronomy subordinates kingship to law (Deut 18), though without raising fundamental questions about the legitimacy of the institution. Chronicles thereby reconfigures the king’s relationship to the cult toward that of cult initiator, founder, and promulgator. Chronicles deals constructively with the institutional shift to foreign rule. In this way, Chronicles offers a way of imaginatively delimiting the monarchic powers of even a foreign king by asserting the power and authority of contemporary (post-exilic) institutions—especially the temple and priesthood, but also the prophet.<sup>148</sup> Nonetheless, Chronicles does so without foreclosing on the possibility of a future Davidic ruler in whom Yhwh would “establish” his reputation as the incomparable and only deity (1 Chr 17:20, 26; 2 Chr 6:14a). In short, Chronicles left open the possibility of a future Davidic king that would allow existing institutions to retain their current centrality.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> See, e.g., the “Eridu Genesis” and the primordial institution of kingship (*COS* 1.514a-b) and the “Sumerian King List” (*ANET*, 265-66). Cf. also Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*.

<sup>147</sup> Jonathan E. Dyck, *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler* (BIS 33; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 155.

<sup>148</sup> Though I do not address systematically the institution of “prophecy” in Chr—because it lacks the same organizing and focusing roles given the temple, priesthood, and kingship—its presence in the book is nonetheless striking. See Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*.

<sup>149</sup> I.e., Chr seems to allow for a messianic interpretation, without overtly espousing such a position. On the apparent “absence” of messianism in Chr, see Joachim Becker, *Messianic Expectation in the Old Testament* (trans. D. E. Green; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1980), 80; For an argument that Chr retains dynastic hopes, see Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*, 158-67; Dyck, *Theocratic Ideology*.

In closing, it is worth noting several differences between Chronicles' theological configuration of kingship and Chronicles' depiction of the temple and priesthood. In contrast to Chronicles' presentation of the temple and priesthood, Judean kings lack an essential or intrinsic connection to divine supremacy. As I argued, when the temple was operative, it almost *always* embodied Yhwh's supreme uniqueness. Even when ultimately defiled and destroyed (2 Chr 36), Chronicles employs the motif of exiled temple vessels to suggest a preserved remnant (much as Kings ends with the remnant King Jehoiachin in Babylon; 2 Kgs 25:27-30).<sup>150</sup> Chronicles does not trace the plight of the Davidic line into exile as Kings does with Jehoiachin in Babylon. Like the temple, the priesthood remained defined by acts that embodied divine uniqueness and supremacy, and which signaled Yhwh's incomparability. Chronicles lacks the same process of differentiation between Yhwh and the cult that one finds between Yhwh and the king, as expressed most clearly in Uzziah's inability to infringe upon priestly prerogatives, and his subsequent banishment from the temple (2 Chr 26:21). However, as a point of absolute continuity with Chronicles' conception of the temple and priesthood, Chronicles maintains that supreme uniqueness belonged uniquely to the *divine throne*—which never receives mention beyond Solomon (a point often overlooked), and which rarely takes on concrete form. That is, the institution of kingship retains its uniqueness. Like the temple and priesthood, Yhwh's throne was an institution that endured exile, accessible to Israel yet simultaneously distinct and transcendent. Moreover, insofar as rulers supported the temple and cult, without infringing on their power, Yhwh's rule and power over the nations might even become evident in a

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<sup>150</sup> 2 Chr 36:17-21 inverts the sequence of temple destruction followed by deportation of vessels found in its *Vorlage* (2 Kgs 25:8-17), possibly to emphasize that they were not burned or damaged in the temple's destruction. On which, see Ranier Albertz, *Die Exilszeit: 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr* (BE 7; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2001), 21; Louis Jonker, "Exile as Sabbath Rest: The Chronicler's Interpretation of the Exile," in *Exile and suffering: a selection of papers read at the 50th anniversary meeting of the Old Testament Society of South Africa OTWSA/OTSSA, Pretoria, August 2007* (OTS 50; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 213-228 [217].

foreign ruler. Finally, like the temple and priesthood, kingship only *periodically* embodies Yhwh's exalted status. Retaining the distinctiveness of the divine throne indeed involves relishing the *rare* occasions in Israel's history where divine and human realms merged. In this sense, Chronicles is not a brute assertion of legitimacy, especially when the Davidic-Solomonic ideal set the bar so high, and later kings only *partially* realize the ideals of Yhwh's kingdom. In short, divine supremacy was only occasionally realized via the Davidic kings in the past. It remained a contemporary possibility, but was a given. In this manner, Chronicles walks a line between the absolute dichotomy between (1) the bifurcation of divine supremacy and Israel's particularities (ala Koch et al) and (2) the absolute identification of monotheism and Israel's focal institutions (ala Brueggemann et al).

## CHAPTER 5

### SYNTHETIC CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to address two fundamental questions: *In what kind of theological world does monotheistic rhetoric emerge in the book of Chronicles? How does Chronicles conceive the interrelation and interaction between Yhwh qua supreme deity and Israel's particularist commitments to the temple, priesthood, and kingship?* In address of these questions, I suggest that (a) Chronicles depicts a highly integrated divine and institutional world, such that (b) expressions of divine supremacy and sole divinity have correlate expressions and manifestations in and through Israel's focal institutions (the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king). I also argued (c) that monotheism is a process embedded within broader practices of divine exaltation. Chronicles integrates these three aspects, such that exalting Yhwh entails exalting the institutions that are integrally related to his "being" as it is known and experienced by Israel. Chronicles engages in a wide-scale and variegated process of integrating divine and institutional reality (e.g., 1 Chr 22:5; 29:11; 2 Chr 2:4[5], 8; 3:5), such that Israel's central institutions (temple, priesthood, and kingship) can be said to participate in and express divinity, and to reflect Yhwh's distinctiveness and "oneness." Attention to the book's portrayal of Israel's central



institutions, and the way that they interact with Yhwh's identity, enables one to discern and trace the book's patterns and logic of divine exaltation.

I suggested a three-fold approach to understanding monotheism in Chronicles that I will review in the next three sections. First, I proposed that the book engages a variety of monotheizing modes, or ways of forging divisions between Yhwh and the rest of (or salient parts of) reality. I also observed a number of ways in which Chronicles drove analogous divisions between *institutions* and the rest of reality. Toward that end (second), I suggested that the process of monotheizing operates differently depending on the given configuration of a narrative world. Finally, I proposed the need to consider the rhetorical function(s) of Chronicles' monotheistic discourse, and divine-institutional configurations.

#### I. MODES OF MONOTHEIZING

*What are the ways that a given text forges divisions between Yhwh and all else such that he is "one/alone"?* This study revealed a diversity in the range of modes by which Chronicles monotheizes. Chronicles lacks a distinguishing mode, such as one might find in books like Deutero-Isaiah, which makes frequent and explicit denials of other deity's divinity and power. This is not surprising, given the wide ranging traditions that Chronicles incorporates into its history. Still, several "explicit" monotheizing modes stand out. First, according to several texts, Yhwh is supremely unique on the basis of the covenant he established with David (1 Chr 17:20, 27; 2 Chr 6:14a//1 Kgs 8:23a). Each of these texts has parallels in Samuel-Kings (2 Sam 7:22, 28; 1 Kgs 8:23a) though each figures differently, or in modified form, in its Chronistic context. In the case of 1 Chr 17, the Chronicler brings the revelation of Yhwh's "great deeds" (גדלות) through Israel into connection with Yhwh's "great deeds" (גדלות) through David (vv. 19-21). Israel *and* David become means of Yhwh revealing his

glory and sole divinity through great deeds. Additionally, the Chronicler's rewriting of its source in 2 Chr 6:41-42 frames the prayer (with 6:14a) as a request for Yhwh to recall David's commitment to the cult, and in turn, to manifest his supreme presence in the temple and through faithfulness to the Davidic covenant.

Second, several texts explicitly emphasize the createdness of other gods. The poetic pastiche in 1 Chr 16 extols Yhwh as creator and the gods of the nations as human creations (אֱלִילִים; 16:26). In Abijah's polemical speech against the North (2 Chr 13:9) and the assessment of Sennacherib's polemics against Hezekiah (2 Chr 32:19) also distinguish Yhwh from the hand-made gods of the nations, which serves as a basis for extolling Yhwh's cult, and in the latter case, the king. One might also add 2 Chr 2:4[5] to this list, because it evokes an idol-polemic text (Ps 135:5)<sup>1</sup>, and other texts where David "burns" the gods of the Philistines (1 Chr 14:12), or God "destroys" the gods/peoples of the land of Canaan (1 Chr 5:25).<sup>2</sup> Yhwh's distinct role as creator has its negative outcome in the idea that the "gods" can be destroyed, and its positive outcome in the idea that he has created certain institutions to instantiate his supremacy and sole divinity (as reviewed in part B below).

Interestingly, in texts where Chronicles draws on or adapts explicitly monotheistic language from Samuel-Kings (1 Chr 17:20, 27//2 Sam 7:22, 28; 2 Chr 6:14a//1 Kgs 8:23a; 2 Chr 32:19//2 Kgs 19:18), the exalted "agent" of Yhwh is the Davidic king. This is not slavish dependence on sources, however, since Chronicles (a) usually alters or changes the texts it adapts, (b) directs the king's purposes toward the temple, and (c) exalts the king as

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<sup>1</sup> There is an important lexical relationship between Pss 115 and 135, alluded to by Chr, and 2 Chr 32:19, namely, their use of the phrase מַעֲשֵׂי יָדַי "works of hands" in reference to the "gods of the nations." 2 Chr 32:19 appears to draw from the content of Hezekiah's prayer in 2 Kgs 19:18, which also refers to the מַעֲשֵׂי יָדַי.

<sup>2</sup> The antecedent for the particle אֲשֶׁר in 1 Chr 5:25 is ambiguous, and it seems intentionally so. Yhwh had destroyed the nations *and* their gods. The "folly" of following defeated/destroyed gods emerges elsewhere in Chr (e.g., 2 Chr 25:14-15; 2 Chr 28:23).

ruler within the divine kingdom. Chronicles inherits and develops the connection between Yhwh's and the king's exaltation already present in the DH.

Implicit modes of monotheizing also figure prominently in Chronicles. Implicit modes of monotheizing deny other gods any (meaningful) existence, though they do not necessarily refer to other gods. Instead, they push other deities out of a given narrative world by accentuating the totalizing power, grandeur, and capacities of Yhwh. For instance, David's prayer emphasizes Yhwh's possession of all power, authority, and rule as a way of emphasizing his worthiness to receive Israel's worship and offerings (1 Chr 29:11-20). The ten-fold use of כָּל ("all") in vv. 11-19 reinforces this point. Though not addressing the existence of other gods, David's prayer leaves no domain, power, or material possessions for other deities, effectively pushing them from the prayer's rhetorical world. Similarly, Asa and Jehoshaphat appeal to Yhwh on the basis of his exclusive ability to deliver, and the inability of any power to oppose him (2 Chr 14:11; 2 Chr 20:6-12). Jehoshaphat's prayer draws upon David's monotheistic prayer to remind Yhwh of his exclusive right to kingship and his sole possession of power (2 Chr 20:6; 1 Chr 29:11-12). In the latter text, the Levites take on the role of expressing and enacting Yhwh's sole intervention. Other texts in Chronicles state simply that Yhwh is *the* God (2 Chr 15:3; 2 Chr 33:13) without mentioning other deities. In short, these texts leave no domain, power, or material for other deities, effectively pushing them from the text's rhetorical world.

As already suggested in my discussion of Chronicles' modes of monotheizing, understanding Yhwh's exaltation and sole divinity requires attention to the "agents," or "proxies," that bolster and participate in Yhwh's unique status. Just as grandiose statues can be used to manifest a deity's status, so Chronicles meditates on Israel's grandiose institutions which manifest Yhwh's supreme status. In Chronicles, the temple, priesthood, and Davidic

king join in the process of sharpening and defining the ways in which Yhwh is categorically unique. As such, Chronicles' conception of divine exaltation and sole divinity requires attention to the institutions that bore Yhwh's individuality, and which frequently facilitated responses to Yhwh. According to Chronicles, "seeking Yhwh" often meant "seeking the temple."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, bringing gifts to, worshipping, or fearing Yhwh simultaneously involved the performance of those actions in reference to the Davidic king who sat on the divine throne. Thus, I suggested the need to examine the "configurations of monotheism" in Chronicles.

## II. CONFIGURATIONS OF DIVINE EXALTATION

*How does Chronicles configure and elucidate the relationships between Yhwh qua exalted deity and the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king?* Answering this question occupied much of chs. 2-4. Drawing on Mark Smith's explorations in deity-temple homologies, I argued that Chronicles depicts Israel's central institutions as mediating embodiments of divine power. The lines distinguishing Yhwh and the rest of reality were reinforced by the institutions that embodied and manifested his character. That is, Chronicles uses its portrayals of Israel's institutions to augment Yhwh's distinctiveness. In ch. 2, I argued that the temple participated functionally, qualitatively, and materially in divine uniqueness and supremacy. *Functionally*, Chronicles constructs its narrative such that the Jerusalem temple remained "operationally" loyal to Yhwh alone, and "operationally" distinct from the cults of other gods. When engaged in non-Yahwistic worship, the temple closed temporarily. Similarly, the temple reopened after the cessation and eradication of non-Yahwistic cults from Judah. Moreover, commencement of Yhwh worship coincided with the re-formation of the cult in its daily operations. In short,

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<sup>3</sup> Discussed in ch. 3.

Chronicles contends that the temple's cult almost never commingled with idolatry, either temporally or spatially. Moreover, Chronicles suggests in this presentation that turning to other gods involves rejecting the temple. Conversely, embracing Yhwh means destroying other gods (thereby revealing their createdness) and then seeking his cultic presence. The temple thus functioned when Yhwh was the *only* deity Judah followed, a clear affirmation of henotheistic ideals.

The temple's *qualitative* distinctiveness referred to the temple's participation in Yhwh's own supreme qualities, and hence moves more clearly toward participation in Yhwh's sole divinity. The Chronicler argues that just as the gods of the nations are human creations, so are the cults in which they are embedded. Such cults stood as an explicit and implicit contrast between to the creator God and his mediating temple. Several texts in Chronicles link explicitly and implicitly Yhwh's "greatness," or "supremacy" (גדול), to the temple's supremacy (גדול; 1 Chr 22:5; 29:1, 11; 2 Chr 2:4). Chronicles also invokes language from idol-polemic Psalms (Pss 115, 135) in 2 Chr 2 to suggest that the temple instantiated Yhwh's superiority over other gods, and that it was a divine creation with an animate cult. Unlike the "sense-less" icons of the nations, Yhwh's temple was perpetually and dutifully active. In extension of the temple's *functional* uniqueness, I suggested that the temple embodied and reflected Yhwh's supremacy only when operating in distinction from Israel's apostasy. That is, the temple's functional and qualitative uniqueness was periodic, and as such, the manifestations of divine supremacy were limited. *Materially*, the temple's construction and substance originated with Yhwh, and became connected with unique manifestations of Yhwh. As such, Chronicles emphasizes the need to support the temple through generous donations. In short, the temple in Chronicles was deeply connected to

divine reality, and as such, became an agent of divine exaltation, a means of expressing Yhwh's distinctiveness, supremacy, and centrality for all Israel.

In ch. 3, I examined ways that Chronicles forged unique bonds between the priesthood and Yhwh *qua* supreme deity. Chronicles configures Yhwh-priesthood relationships differently from Yhwh-temple relationships. First, while the priesthood is also uniquely elected, selected, and designed by Yhwh, its role was more explicitly to *express* than to *embody* divine supremacy. Chronicles uses a composite thanksgiving hymn to epitomize the Levites' primary duties to praise, thank, and invoke Yhwh's supremacy (1 Chr 16:8-36). In this hymn, the Levites summon Israel, the nations, and creation to extol Yhwh as supreme king and creator, who is surrounded by his worshippers as a "substitute retinue" (vv. 25-27). I suggested that this hymn plays a paradigmatic role in characterizing the Levites' musical duties and roles (e.g., 2 Chr 23:18; 29:30). Second, Chronicles suggests that the priesthood expressed Yhwh's grandeur and supremacy in the form of "ritualized fullness," or adoration of Yhwh as supreme deity through a fully staffed, and perpetually active cult of adoration and sacrifice to Yhwh. Two passages in particular emphasize this priestly duty. In Solomon's speech to Hiram (2 Chr 2) and Abijah's polemic against the North (2 Chr 13) Chronicles uses descriptions of the priesthood's ritualized fullness to substantiate claims that Yhwh is the true God who is exalted above the non-gods of the nations. Third, Chronicles uses priestly appointment narratives to mark temporally the positive reassertion of Yhwh's cult after periods of apostasy, just as door-opening, ark-replacement, and altar-replacements marked the temple's restoration and distinctiveness in relation to other gods. Again, Chronicles widens the gulf between Yahwistic and non-Yahwistic cults, suggesting that they operate in separate incompatible spheres. This is one way that Chronicles creates the conditions for the expression and maintenance of monotheistic claims. Finally, I examined a

narrative wherein the priesthood serves as a herald of Yhwh's un-opposable power and dominion (2 Chr 20). In this divine-war narrative, the priests carry out their duty to announce Yhwh's supremacy.

Chapter 4 focused on Chronicles' configuration of divine and human royal relations. I observed that David ends his life with a prayer extolling Yhwh's exalted kingship and exclusive possession of all power and wealth (1 Chr 29). This text depicts David as one who abdicates kingship to Yhwh, who has no heavenly or earthly rival, and who, as supreme deity, receives gifts and offerings from Israel. David becomes the model "donor" to the temple, divesting his wealth in order to exalt Yhwh as supreme deity. Thus, David's kingship becomes distinguished not only by temple preparations, but also by deference to Yhwh as (the only) king who owns all and deserves all praise. Solomon continues in the path charted by his father, by devoting himself to the cult and giving generous offerings to the temple. Solomon became a co-recipient of worship with Yhwh and shared uniquely in his "royal splendor" (1 Chr 16:27; 29:11, 25). In addition, David and Solomon share uniquely in divine rule by sitting on the divine throne over Israel. This remarkable claim sets their combined rule in sharp relief against the rest of Israel's kings, none of whom share the divine throne (explicitly). However, I explored ways that Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah participate in Yhwh's uniqueness. Each becomes a recipient of tribute-gifts directed at Yhwh himself, and in Hezekiah's case, in recognition of Yhwh's sole divinity.

My study of homological configurations of monotheism and exaltation suggests that for Chronicles, the move to exalt Yhwh as (the) supreme deity did not result in a move away from "particularist" concerns. Moreover, it did not result in a departure from concrete representations of the deity. Indeed, Chronicles augments and develops the iconic function of Israel's temple, priesthood, and king. In other words, monotheism and divine exaltation in

Chronicles moves *toward* representation and physical manifestation. Chronicles' depiction of the Israelite cult and king thus complicate sharp polarities between "abstract monotheism" and "idolatry," or between monotheism and "polytheistic fetishism."<sup>4</sup> In the introduction, I noted a scholarly tendency to dichotomize monotheism and institutions, or at least the institutions that defined Israel as a nation-state, which runs roughly parallel to these polarities. Israel did not "discover" monotheism, so some scholars suggest, until it broke free of the particularities that defined its national life in the land (temple, kingship, cult, and military). If institutions, like icons, focus, concretize, and manifest divine power, then it becomes an easy move to associate monotheism with de-institutionalized and "universal" religion—as Koch, Lemaire, and others suggest.<sup>5</sup> The destruction of the "idols" allegedly coincided with the destruction of Israel's institutions.<sup>6</sup> However, Chronicles uses Israel's particularist institutions to support and augment Yhwh's distinctiveness. The temple, priesthood, and king were *evidence* of Yhwh's exalted status, and were not just *in tension* with his exaltation. If, as I argued, Chronicles deepens the homological congruency between Israel's core institutions and Yhwh, one must avoid too easy an association between divine supremacy/monotheism and aniconism. In fact, as argued in ch. 2, the temple could itself become an agent in manifesting Yhwh's superiority over the images of the nations. By alluding to Ps 135:5, part of an idol polemic, Chronicles represents Yhwh through the temple, and does not advocate a *carte blanche* dismissal of divine-imaging as such. Similarly,

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<sup>4</sup> Levtow (*Images of Others*, 4) notes that such dualities are "anachronistic" in that they presuppose a "complete separation between physical and nonphysical realms or between opposing pairs such as mind and body or 'spirit' and matter." Accordingly, the so-called "error" of idolatry, according to Levtow, consists in "mistaking" the symbol of the icon for the deity itself (6). Instead, "Israelite polemical representations of iconic cult are not evidence of opposing world views and static new conceptualizations of transcendent deity; they are evidence of dynamic acts of power that operated within the monistic, iconic environment of ancient West Asia" (16).

<sup>5</sup> Discussed in ch. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Levtow, *Images of Others*, 9.



bowing before and giving to the human king—as occupant of the divine throne—became a way of bowing before and giving to Yhwh.

In his study on iconism, Nathaniel Levtow observes helpfully that icon parodies in the Hebrew Bible did not just underscore the powerlessness of the nations’ deities. They also denied that the nations possessed or conferred power through ritual.<sup>7</sup> That is, icon-parodies involved attacks on the nations’ political potency, as part of a larger ancient Near Eastern practice and discourse related to the abduction, destruction, and damage of divine images between variously opposed groups/nations.<sup>8</sup> Though Levtow does not make this point, there is a positive side to such negative polemics, when considered historically from the side of those whose images (and institutions) were abducted or destroyed. That positive side consists of the re-assertion of national strength and divinely invested power through rebuilding the institutions that were perceived to signal and manifest divine power. One might see here a point of relevance for the Chronicler’s audience. Specifically, after the defeat by the Babylonians, Israel could again assert its national power—once stripped physically and symbolically by the Babylonians—through the temple and cult that manifested Yhwh’s power. For Chronicles, Yhwh’s temple was created by Yhwh himself and furnished with potent displays of “ritualized fullness.” Accordingly, Chronicles depicts the assertion of Israel’s cultic potency vis-à-vis other nations’ kings (e.g., Hiram) and when faced with international threats against other nations (e.g., 2 Chr 20). The assertion of royal potency required, at least for the present, reimagining the relation between divine rule over all nations and the manifestation of that rule through Cyrus and the cult.

In sum, Chronicles configures Israel’s primary institutions such that the exalted priesthood and Jerusalemite king served and bolstered the temple. The three primary

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<sup>7</sup> Levtow, *Images of Others*, 57.

<sup>8</sup> Levtow, *Images of Others*, 16-18.

institutions exhibit an inner unity and oneness, insofar as Chronicles configures the priesthood and king in the service of the temple. These institutions were unified in their effort to convey divine preeminence through ritual performance, donating wealth, and offering music at the temple. Thus, my study offers evidence for the constructive and unified interaction between divine supremacy and institutional realities. It contests a prevalent scholarly view according to which the most exalted claims about Yhwh came into inevitable conflict with Israel's national/particular commitments, or divine manifestations, and deepens the work of scholars who recognize that some of the Hebrew Bible's most exalted claims about Yhwh included exalted claims about Israel.<sup>9</sup> Chronicles followed its sources in identifying divine exaltation with Israel's and the king's exaltation (2 Sam 7:22-23, 25-28; 1 Kgs 8:23-24), but also extends the implications of divine preeminence to the temple and priesthood. Centralized institutions became the occasion for exalted claims about Yhwh, and exalted claims about Yhwh translated into exalted views of Israel's institutions. I argued that claims about Yhwh and Israel's focal institutions worked together and reinforced one another, in part, because they were seen to bear homological similarities. The temple, priesthood, and Davidic king bore fundamental similarities with Yhwh's "being," and had their origins in the divine will.

Of course, there exists another scholarly perspective according to which close associations between divine and institutional supremacy carries with it an "ideological temptation" to which Israel most often succumbed,<sup>10</sup> and which led to violence and

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<sup>9</sup> Kaminsky and Stewart, "God of all the World," 139-63; Moberly, "How Appropriate is 'Monotheism,'" 216-34.

<sup>10</sup> Walter Brueggemann, "'Exodus' in the Plural (Amos 9:7)," in *Many Voices, One God: Being Faithful in a Pluralistic World* (ed. Walter Brueggemann and George W. Stroup; Louisville: WJK, 1998), 7-26.

oppression.<sup>11</sup> This temptation, which Walter Brueggemann labels “*mono-ideology*,” insists on “the singularity, peculiarity, and privilege of Israel as a political entity in the world,” and leads Israel to “imagine itself as privileged, in every sphere of life, as Yahweh’s unrivaled and inalienable partner.”<sup>12</sup> When monotheistic theology becomes wedded to notions of election, the partnership becomes most susceptible to misuse. Though suggesting two dichotomous social scenarios, John Goldingay imagines similarly destructive results when monotheism and human institutions convene:

Mono-Yahwism could be socially functional, but in more than one way. It could encourage the development of an egalitarian community. It could do the opposite. When there is one God and God is king, and this one God is brought into association with a human king as vice-regent, *that is a recipe for hierarchy and oppression*. Likewise monotheism could be a recipe for particularism or universalism. To insist that there is only one God could imply an openness to other peoples, whose worship must be the worship of this one God, or it could imply intolerance of them as a people who worship no-gods instead of the one God.<sup>13</sup>

While Goldingay is right to resist limiting monotheism to *one* social configuration, he nevertheless suggests that “Mono-Yahwism” results in egalitarianism and tolerance *unless* brought into conjunction with Israelite institutions—and specifically, kingship. Indeed, Goldingay, Brueggemann, and others suggest that the alliance of monotheism and institutions led invariably to an absolute identification of divine and state/religious power. As observed in this study, Chronicles follows Samuel-Kings in applying the language of divine “choosing” (\*בחר\*) to the Davidic house and Jerusalem,<sup>14</sup> but extends those privileges

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<sup>11</sup> Assmann, *The Price of Monotheism*, Regina M. Schwartz, *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997); cf. R. W. L. Moberly, “Is Monotheism bad for you? Some Reflections on God, the Bible, and Life in the Light of Regina Schwartz’s ‘The Curse of Cain,’” in *The God of Israel*, 94-112; See McConville, *God and Earthly Power*, 14-15. Cf. the discussions of the dangers perceived in Israel’s election traditions, discussed by Jeremy Cott, “The Biblical Problem of Election,” *JES* 21 (1984):199-228, cited in Joel Kaminsky, “Did Election Imply the Mistreatment of Non-Israelites?” *HTR* 96/4 (2003):397-425; idem, “Election Theology and the Problem of Universalism,” *HBT* 33/1 (2011):34-44; Joel N. Lohr, “Taming the Untamable: Christian Attempts to Make Israel’s Election Universal,” *HBT* 33/1 (2011):24-33.

<sup>12</sup> Brueggemann, “‘Exodus’ in the Plural (Amos 9:7),” 16-19.

<sup>13</sup> Excerpt, John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology: Volume Two: Israel’s Faith* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 40. Emphasis mine.

<sup>14</sup> 2 Chr 6:5-6; 12:13. Cf. the election of Judah in 1 Chr 28:4.

to Solomon as temple-builder,<sup>15</sup> the priesthood,<sup>16</sup> and the temple itself.<sup>17</sup> The divine-institutional bond only strengthens in Chronicles. However, the nature of Chronicles' divine-institutional configuration is more complex than an absolute identification between divine preeminence and the temple, priesthood, and kingship. While some texts in Chronicles, if taken on their own, seem to succumb to the temptation Brueggemann identifies, Chronicles shows that institutional participation in divine supremacy was possible within a framework that also allowed for (and at times demanded) differentiation. First, while Chronicles draws close connections between divine and institutional supremacy, it also offers resistance to the notion that those connections were indissoluble or always fully realized. Chronicles seems less interested in investing Israel's institutions with permanent rights to divine power than in exploring the historic reasons, possibilities, and conditions for their manifestation of divine power. For instance, Chronicles insists that while the Judean monarch *could* sit on the divine throne, Yhwh could also exercise his royal power in raising up kings against Israel (2 Chr 12:8). Moreover, Chronicles delimits the king's power and adequacy in relation to the cult and emphasizes the demise of various kings at the height of their power. Second, while the temple maintained a privileged place within the divine economy, it could not restrict Yhwh, and was susceptible to closure because of human impurity, idolatry, and sinfulness. Thus, the temple, priesthood, and king only *periodically* embody Yhwh's preeminence. Their privileged and elect status did not join them intrinsically with the expression of divine power. Chronicles also depicts the periodic dissociation from Israel's institutions as a way of expressing divine uniqueness. Finally, as a larger methodological point, it deserves emphasis

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<sup>15</sup> Chr is the only book in the Hebrew Bible to mention Yhwh's election of a post-Davidic king (1 Chr 28:5, 6, 10; 29:1). See Braun, "Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder," 59-62.

<sup>16</sup> 1 Chr 15:2; 2 Chr 29:11; cf. Deut 10:8; 18:5. One possible exception from Ps is 65:4. Cf. also the "election" of Eli's house, now nullified, in 1 Sam 2:28. See von Rad, *Geschichtsbild*, 64.

<sup>17</sup> 2 Chr 6:5, 34, 38; 7:12, 16. See Knoppers, *I Chronicles 10-29*, 614.

that monotheism—even as it becomes identified with institutions—does not result inevitably in simplistic legitimations of power. As we have seen, Chronicles does not set out to endorse the status quo. In the words of Schweitzer, Chronicles envisions a “better alternative reality.”<sup>18</sup> As I suggest, this alternative reality is one in which Israel’s focal institutions mediate and embody the oneness and supremacy of God, and catalyze the unification of Israel.

### III. RHETORIC OF EXALTATION

Having explored the complex and multifaceted world of divine-institutional relationships in Chronicles, I made several suggestions toward answering the question, *how do claims about divine and institutional exaltation function in Chronicles?* I argued that for Chronicles, Yhwh is the exalted deity who is worthy of devotion, as evident in those institutions that mediate his power. As such, Chronicles contends that the Jerusalem temple, priesthood, and king were—or could become—the loci of ongoing divine power and of continuity with the great God of the past. Chronicles argues for the power of those institutions in commanding the loyalty and worship of all Israel and carrying its society into a future devoid of the syncretism and idolatry that characterized its past. Moreover, by depicting periods in which divine and institutional “greatness” (גדול) merged, the book offers concrete “performances” of the vision it advances. Also, by linking Yhwh’s and the temple’s supremacy, Chronicles could emphasize the need to support the temple economically as a way of expressing Yhwh’s unique status. Although Yehud lacked the traditional markers of *national power* (army, king, major land holdings), it could still signify national potency by augmenting the temple and giving with joy. Conversely, without any military achievements or divinely sponsored king to

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<sup>18</sup> Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia*, passim.

mark *divine power*, Chronicles points toward the possibilities of perceiving and experiencing Yhwh's power through his magnificently adorned, and internationally celebrated, temple and ongoing cult. I do not presume to reduce the book's rhetorical aims and functions to these points alone. Nonetheless, my study points the way toward the importance of considering the purpose of claims about Yhwh and divine-institutional relationships in the book's rhetorical strategy. Chronicles deserves a place in discussions about the shape of Jewish conceptions of God in the post-exilic period, and in particular, about the shape of divine exaltation rhetoric and ideology as they interacted with the institutions at the forefront of Jewish hopes and experiences in the land.

APPENDIX  
 DIVINE-INSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY AND MONOTHEISM  
 IN SAMUEL-KINGS AND CHRONICLES

Throughout this dissertation, I have offered a number of points of comparison between texts in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. Nonetheless, I have not yet stepped back to compare the distinct ways that each corpus integrates and advances its conception of divine preeminence, and in particular, what configurations of reality support and result from exalted conceptions of Yhwh. Though a full-scale treatment of monotheism in Samuel-Kings is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I will here examine several monotheistic passages from Samuel-Kings in order to provide further points of reference for comparison with notions of divine and institutional preeminence in Chronicles. I have chosen five passages from Samuel-Kings as a control group for the comparative study, four of which derive from Juha Pakkala's study on monotheism in DH,<sup>1</sup> in which he finds only four monotheistic texts in all

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<sup>1</sup> Pakkala operates with a restricted definition of monotheism. See ch. 1 for a critique of the restriction of monotheism to texts with an "explicit denial of the existence of other deities" ("The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," 163). He identifies six monotheistic texts in the entire Deuteronomistic corpus, only four of which derive from Sam-Kgs: Deut 4:32-40; 7:7-11; 2 Sam 7:22-29; 1 Kgs 8:54-61; 18:21-40 and 2 Kgs 19:15-19. He does not treat Deut 32:36-42 and 2 Kgs 5:1-19, and I will include the latter in my analysis of Sam-Kgs. Pakkala offers two brief sentences on 2 Kgs 5:15, 17 in his book *Intolerant Monolatry*, 164, and presumably, understands the passage to be "monolatrous." The *sbema*' (Deut 6:4-5) is certainly relevant to discussions of monotheism, though whether it originally referred to Yhwh as the only deity, or was only later received as such

of Samuel-Kings (I add 2 Kgs 5:1-19 as a fifth). Apart from Pakkala's problematic developmental schema, in which he posits a sharp contrast between "nationalistic" monotheism in DH and "universalistic" monotheism in Deutero-Isaiah, his study provides a useful point of departure for a comparison with Chronicles. The texts he identifies allow for preliminary comparison with the approach of Chronicles that I outlined in ch. 1.<sup>2</sup> Though the texts Pakkala examines appear in passages deemed "redactional" and "late," the comparison still holds. The intent here is not to examine the *revision* of Samuel-Kings in Chronicles, but to compare broadly the configurations of divine preeminence within these two works. This exercise is by necessity brief, but will hopefully point the way toward possibilities for theological comparison between these and other biblical works. I have arranged the comparison according to three categories: (1) the relationship between monotheism and nation, (2) the relationship between monotheism and the temple, and (3) the geography of monotheism (i.e., monotheism and the land).

## I. THE NATION AND MONOTHEISM

### A. SAMUEL-KINGS

According to Pakkala, the defining feature of monotheism in the DH is its "nationalism":

Although other gods are assumed to be non-existent, the other nations are not invited to join the Israelites in their worship of Yahweh. One would expect that monotheism

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(cf. Zech 14:9), is open to debate. Cf. Yair Hoffman, "The Concept of 'Other gods' in the Deuteronomistic Literature," in *Politics and Theopolitics in the Bible and Postbiblical Literature* (ed. Henning Reventlow (Graf.), Yair Hoffman, and Benjamin Uffenheimer; JSOTSup 171. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994) 66-84.

<sup>2</sup> I employ the terms "Deuteronomist" and "Deuteronomists" as convenient designations for the group(s) responsible for collating and editing the books of Deut-Kgs, whose perspective finds its consummate expression in Deut, while recognizing that there may have been considerable diversity within this group. Notably, some expressions of monotheism in the book of Kgs contrast strikingly with the Deuteronomic emphasis on centralization. For example, in 2 Kgs 5 Naaman anticipates sacrifice to Yhwh outside of Israel, and in 1 Kgs 18, Elijah offers a sacrifice to Yhwh on Mount Carmel. Admittedly, at least in the latter instance, Yhwh's fire from heaven consumes the *altar* as well as the sacrifice in this latter instance (1 Kgs 18:38; see discussion in Richard Nelson, *First and Second Kings* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1987), 118.



undermines nationalism, but this does not seem to be the case. The Israel-centered approach of the nomists continues in monotheism.<sup>3</sup>

Pakkala claims that such nationalism finds expression in all but one monotheistic text (2 Kgs 19:15-19) in the corpus, and includes such ideas as Israel's unique election (2 Sam 7:24; cf. Deut 4:37; 7:7-9) and Yhwh's deeds on behalf of Israel (2 Sam 7:23). According to these texts, Yhwh's sole divinity finds proof in Yhwh's unique relationship with Israel, and not humanity more generally.<sup>4</sup>

Pakkala observes correctly the link between monotheistic expressions and Israel's self-identity as a unique nation. As discussed in ch. 4, Samuel draws an explicit analogy between Yhwh's sole divinity and Israel's absolute uniqueness ( ואין אלהים זולתך ... גוי אחד ) (אין כמוך ... ומי כעמך; בארץ; 2 Sam 7:22-23//1 Chr 17:20-21).<sup>5</sup> It was through Yhwh's salvific deeds for Israel that Yhwh proved himself as the supreme deity. Yhwh "earned his reputation" by delivering Israel from Egypt and from "nations and their gods." Israel thus reflected and participated in Yhwh's categorically unique status on the basis of its relationship to Yhwh. As Brueggemann writes,

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<sup>3</sup> Pakkala, "The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," 175. Cf. Fritz Stolz, *Strukturen und Figuren im Kult von Jerusalem: Studien zur altorientalischen, vor- und frühisraelitischen Religion* (BZAW 118; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970); idem, "Monotheismus in Israel," *Monotheismus im Alten Israel und seiner Umwelt* (ed. O. Keel; BiBB 14; Fribourg: Schweizerisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1980), 144-89; idem, "Der Monotheismus Israels im Kontext der altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte—Tendenzen neuerer Forschung," *Ein Gott allein? JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalische Religionsgeschichte* (ed. Walter Dietrich and Martin A. Klopfenstein; OBO 139; Fribourg/Göttingen: Editions universitaires/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 33-50. For Stolz, the Deuteronomists sought to work out the social implications of their theology through forms of "imminent" divine governance.

<sup>4</sup> Pakkala then makes the rather dubious claim that beyond this "preliminary stage" of monotheism advocated by the "nomists" and their successors lies the monotheism of Deutero-Isaiah, in which Israel becomes more open to the possibility of other nations worshipping Yhwh ("The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," 175). It is the "nationalistic" focus that leads Pakkala to plot the Deuteronomist's monotheism on the "preliminary" end of monotheism's development, when "all the consequences of this view have not yet been drawn" (175). In my view, one cannot chart monotheism's path in terms of a movement from nationalism/particularism toward internationalism/inclusivism. Nor can one find a non-particularist universalism in the biblical text.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Sam 7:23 and its parallel in 1 Chr 17:21 are the only occurrence of גוי אחד in the Hebrew Bible. The parallelism between Yhwh's sole divinity and Israel's uniqueness illustrates the derivative uniqueness of Israel by virtue of its relationship with Yhwh. One may also note Chr's unique use of בני אחד in 1 Chr 29:1 and מזבח אחד in 2 Chr 32:12 (cf. also 2 Chr 5:13 and 2 Chr 30:12).

Israel's incomparability is derivative from and shaped by the singular, irreversible, incomparable commitment of Yahweh to Israel. Thus we arrive not only at mono-theism but also mono-ethnism, or mono-people.<sup>6</sup>

This notion of shared uniqueness between Yhwh and Israel has correlates in the book of Deuteronomy, where Moses extols Israel as a unique nation because of its possession of law and wisdom (4:7-8), its terrifying encounter with Yhwh at Sinai (4:33), and chiefly because of the awesome wonders performed on its behalf during the exodus (4:34, 37-38).<sup>7</sup> Because of these things, Israel “would come to realize that Yhwh alone is God, there is none except him [יהוה הוא האלהים אין עוד מלבדו]” (4:35), and Israel would recognize that “Yhwh is the true God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is none other” (יהוה הוא האלהים בשמים ממעל ועל-הארץ מתחת אין עוד).

Israel's deliverance also forms the basis for claims about Yhwh's supreme uniqueness in Solomon's temple dedication prayer and blessing. Solomon frames his temple prayer (vv. 22-53) with parallel reflections on Yhwh's uniqueness (v. 23) and Israel's uniqueness derived from the exodus (v. 53). The latter text lacks representation in Chronicles:

And he said, “Yhwh, God of Israel, there is none like you, a God in heaven above and on earth below, one who keeps the covenant and faithfulness to your servants who walk before you with all their heart. (v. 23)<sup>8</sup>

... [vv. 24-52] ...

For you separated them [i.e., Israel] as your own possession from all the peoples on earth, just as you had declared through Moses your servant, by bringing your servants out of Egypt, O Lord Yhwh.” (v. 53)

In addition, Solomon prays that Yhwh would respond to Israel's pleas for deliverance, leading the nations to recognize that “Yhwh alone is God, none other” (יהוה הוא האלהים אין עוד; 1 Kgs 8:59-60).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Brueggemann, “‘Exodus’ in the Plural (Amos 9:7),” 17.

<sup>7</sup> Brueggemann, “‘Exodus’ in the Plural (Amos 9:7),” 18.

<sup>8</sup> Following the translation suggested by MacDonald, “1 Kings VIII 23: A Case of Repunctuation?” 115-17.

<sup>9</sup> As in Israel's exodus from Egypt (2 Sam 7:24).

Echoing Solomon's words of appeal, Hezekiah later makes an appeal for Yhwh to "deliver us from his [Sennacherib's] power so that all the earth's kingdoms may know that you alone are God, O Yhwh" (הושיענו נא מידו וידעו כל־ממלכות הארץ כי אתה יהוה אלהים לבדך) (2 Kgs 19:19).<sup>10</sup> This text, mentioned by Pakkala, also lacks parallel in Chronicles. It recounts Hezekiah's prayer of appeal to Yhwh when confined to Jerusalem by the besieging Assyrian army.<sup>11</sup> In his prayer Hezekiah affirms Yhwh's supremacy on the basis of his deeds in the past and the future. Hezekiah asserts that "you alone are God [אתה־הוא האלהים לבדך] of all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth" (v. 15). Continuing with the theme of creation, Hezekiah also acknowledges that the "gods" destroyed by the Assyrians were really "non-gods, indeed, the work of human hands" (לא אלהים המה כי) (אם־מעשה ידי־אדם; v. 18). The second premise for Hezekiah's monotheistic prayer is eschatological salvation. Hezekiah concludes his prayer by asking Yhwh to *save* in order that "all the earth's kingdoms will know that surely you alone are God" (כי אתה יהוה אלהים לבדך; v. 19).

Hezekiah's request is similar to David's, where after receiving Nathan's oracle he praises Yhwh as sole deity for his deeds in the past (2 Sam 7:22) and asks that he would "confirm" his reputation by acting similarly toward himself in the future (7:25-29). David thus asks Yhwh to prove his sole divinity by maintaining the royal covenant (2 Sam 7:22-23, 25-28). This focusing in on David's derivative uniqueness occurs as Samuel recounts Israel's shift from a tribal confederation to a monarchic polity. Solomon later praises God as the incomparable deity because he fulfilled David's request (1 Kgs 8:23-24).<sup>12</sup> The relational

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<sup>10</sup> I discuss this text more fully below.

<sup>11</sup> Pakkala, "The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," 169-70.

<sup>12</sup> Notably, Solomon uses "incomparability" language, even though his utterance is patterned after the "monotheistic" exclamation of David in 2 Sam 7:22-28. There does not appear to be an implied regression in Yhwh's status between these texts.

configuration between the supreme deity and exalted nation (Israel) thus becomes focused on the figure of the Davidic king.

In Hezekiah's prayer, national deliverance becomes focused and epitomized in the city of Zion. Isaiah's prophetic oracle in response to Hezekiah's prayer takes the form of a Zion hymn (2 Kgs 19:21-28//Isa 37:22-29), framed as a contest between Zion/Yhwh and Assyria. Notably, Isaiah's oracle recounts how *Zion* taunted Assyria ("she scorns you ... she despises you ... she shakes her head at you"; v. 21) in response to Assyria's taunt against *Yhwh* (v. 22-23). In other words, Zion takes on the role of the impenetrable divine opponent. This text may be an *ex eventu* reflection on the uniqueness of Zion vis-à-vis the nations. Because Zion sustained and averted an attack from the most powerful empire on earth, it became a suitable representative of Yhwh's global preeminence. Put another way, Zion served as a proxy for divine uniqueness and strength.<sup>13</sup>

Kings does not develop its incipient Zion theology to the extent of Isaiah,<sup>14</sup> and in fact blunts any such notion in its final form by including the account of the Babylonian envoy sent by Merodach-baladan (2 Kgs 20:12-19). Because Hezekiah flaunts the palace's wealth to the Babylonians, Isaiah prophesies that all of Hezekiah's wealth and some of his children would be carried off to Babylon (vv. 16-18). This allusion to the demise of Zion

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Ps 48, 46.

<sup>14</sup> On which, see Leslie J. Hoppe, *The Holy City: Jerusalem in the Theology of the Old Testament* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000), 57-71, 99-110, 28-31; Christopher R. Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah: A Reassessment of Isaiah 36-39* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); Barry G. Webb, "Zion in Transformation: A Literary Approach to Isaiah," in *The Bible in Three Dimensions* (ed. David Clines, Stephen Fowl and Stanley Porter; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 65-84; William J. Dumbrell, "The Purpose of the Book of Isaiah," *TynB* 36 (1985): 111-28; Ronald E. Clements, *Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem: A Study of the Interpretation of Prophecy in the Old Testament* (JSOTSup 13; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984); idem, "Zion as Symbol and Political Reality: A Central Isaianic Quest," in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken* (ed. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 1997), 3-17; Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology Volume II: The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions* (trans. D. M. G. Stalker; New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 147-75, esp. 174-75.

leaves a distinct question mark over the possibility of Zion's ongoing role in defending and representing Yhwh's supremacy over the nations.<sup>15</sup>

It is noteworthy that in the three preceding texts from Samuel-Kings (2 Sam 7:22-23; 1 Kgs 8:22-53, 59-60; 2 Kgs 19:15, 19), in addition to three other texts from Deuteronomy (4:34-35; 7:8-9; 32:36-39), *Yhwh proves his sole divinity by delivering Israel from Egypt or a similar distressful situation*.<sup>16</sup> In other words, in five of the six monotheistic passages in the DH studied by Pakkala, plus one additional text that he does not treat (Deut 32:36-39),<sup>17</sup> Yhwh proves his sole divinity through one-of-a-kind acts of national salvation.<sup>18</sup> The national dimensions of DH's monotheism are analogous to those observed by MacDonald in Deuteronomy itself:

[In Deuteronomy] it is ... claimed that 'YHWH is God,' or 'god of gods.' This claim to be a unique divinity is based not on creation, or YHWH's role in parceling out the nations to other gods, but on YHWH's faithfulness, mercy and jealousy demonstrated by his election of Israel. In his particular actions for his people, YHWH shows that he is God. We might say ... that YHWH's claim to be God is not primarily an ontological claim, but more a soteriological one (though such a claim carries with it ontological implications).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The prophetic oracle during Manasseh's reign reaffirms the certainty of Jerusalem's demise (2 Kgs 21:10-15).

<sup>16</sup> Pakkala connects these texts in Deut and the DH as part of a single "nomistic" redactional layer (*Intolerant Monolatry*).

<sup>17</sup> Deut 32:36-39 reads,

For the LORD will vindicate His people and take revenge for His servants, when He sees that their might is gone, and neither bond nor free is left. He will say: Where are their gods, the rock in whom they sought refuge? Who ate the fat of their offerings and drank their libation wine? Let them rise up to your help, and let them be a shield unto you! See, then, that I, I am He; There is no god beside Me (אֲנִי הוּא וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי). I deal death and give life; I wounded and I will heal: None can deliver from My hand. (NJPS; Cf. 2 Chr 20:6 [וְאֵין עִמָּדִי ...]).

<sup>18</sup> These texts build differently on the premise of divine uniqueness derived from Yhwh's unique acts of deliverance, for example, by extolling Yhwh's ability to give the land (4:38), keep covenant with Israel (Deut 7:8-9), offer deliverance in the future (Deut 32:36-39), answer Israel's petitions (1 Kgs 8:59-60), and deliver Zion from the Assyrians (2 Kgs 19:15, 19).

<sup>19</sup> Excerpt, MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism'*, 215. For a critique of MacDonald on this point, see Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 66-71. MacDonald repeats this contrast between ontology and soteriology in his article "Monotheism and Isaiah," 51-54. Bauckham (66) argues that MacDonald leaves open the question of whether Deut claims that Yhwh has uniqueness apart from his specific acts of salvation, or *because of* those actions. In favor of the former view, Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 70, points to texts in Deut that assert Yhwh's unrivaled power in the cosmos (e.g., Deut 10:14), suggesting that Yhwh has a prior or basic claim to unrivaled power of which his actions for Israel are particular instances. Bauckham states that

MacDonald argues similarly regarding Deutero-Isaiah, noting that several prominent monotheistic texts climax with soteriological claims. For example, Yhwh's sole divinity is evidenced by the fact that "none can deliver from my hand" (Isa 43:11-13), and in Isa 45:22 Yhwh says "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and none other."<sup>20</sup> MacDonald concludes, "The monotheism of Second Isaiah is soteriologically, not ontologically, orientated."<sup>21</sup> Deutero-Isaiah does not express Israel's incomparability using explicit formulas like 2 Sam 7:22-23, yet it nonetheless asserts that Yhwh specially created, delivered, and formed his people, and that those actions formed the basis for claims about Yhwh's sole divinity.<sup>22</sup>

In sum, the few monotheistic texts just surveyed from Samuel-Kings (a) link Yhwh's sole divinity with his unique acts of national deliverance, and (b) predicate Israel's unique identity among the nations on those acts of Yhwh. Moreover, the expression of Yhwh's utter uniqueness is tied to a larger rhetorical goal of convincing Israel that Yhwh *alone* was,

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[i]t would be his [Yhwh's] specific acts on Israel's behalf that would create ... universal recognition, and recognition of the one God, Creator and Lord of all, would be inseparable from recognition of his special relationship to his covenant people ... Jewish monotheism is characterized by its way of relating YHWH's particularity as Israel's God to his universality as Creator and sovereign Lord of all (84).

Notably, however, Deut only links Yhwh's sole divinity to his power as creator in one text (Deut 4:32). Some texts speak of Yhwh "establishing" or "making" a name for himself (e.g., 2 Sam 7:22-23 (//1 Chr 17:21-22; cf. Isa 63:14), stating that Yhwh is incomparably unique because he redeemed Israel וְלִשְׁמוֹ לֹ שֵׁם "to make a name for himself." This phrase may have the connotation of Yhwh's setting up monuments of his reputation (cf. 1 Sam 7:12). If Yhwh's "reputation" is the content of his incomparability and transcendent uniqueness, it was acts like the exodus through which Yhwh's reputation came into being. As such, the exodus is not just a particular instance of his pre-existing supremacy according to these texts, but the means by which he rose to supremacy.

<sup>20</sup> MacDonald, "Isaiah," 51.

<sup>21</sup> MacDonald, "Isaiah," 59. MacDonald's contrast between ontology and soteriology does not exclude the possibility that Isaiah's monotheism operates with a functional ontology, where Yhwh's power to act, or claim as the only *effective* divinity, constitutes his claim to "being" vis-à-vis the other gods (see p. 51). That is, the only "real" god is an active and powerful god. In Isaiah's case, Yhwh's "effectiveness" finds its consummate demonstration in the exodus (hence, the call for a new exodus).

<sup>22</sup> Along these lines, a few scholars suggest that Deutero-Isaiah contrasts Yhwh with the Babylonian idol-makers, and therefore Israel with idols. One question that emerges from Isa 40-55 is which creation truly reflects divinity—lifeless idols or redeemed Israel? Despite Babylon's claim that "I am and there is no other," she cannot create life. See discussion in Knut Holter, *Second Isaiah's Idol Fabrication Passages* (BBET 28; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995); MacDonald, "Monotheism and Isaiah," 53.

and will be, responsible for Israel's future deliverance.<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, Israel ought to appeal to no other deity for aid. In addition, (c) two passages extend the implications of national uniqueness to the king (2 Sam 7:22-29//1 Chr 17:20-21; 1 Kgs 8:23-26//2 Chr 6:14-17) and one passage to Zion (2 Kgs 19:15, 19). Just as Yhwh proved his sole divinity by delivering Israel from Egypt, so he confirmed his reputation by establishing the Davidic throne (2 Sam 7:22-29; 1 Kgs 8:23-26) and delivering Zion from the Assyrians (2 Kgs 19:15, 19). As such, Yhwh's supreme uniqueness becomes evident in the exaltation of his agents.

## B. CHRONICLES

Chronicles shares with its sources the idea that Yhwh's supremacy was established by his delivering Israel from Egypt, and reflected in Israel's national uniqueness (1 Chr 17:20-21//2 Sam 7:22-29; 2 Chr 6:14-17//1 Kgs 8:23-26). Moreover, Chronicles shares the idea that the uniqueness of the nation became focused on the king who embodied in himself Yhwh's election of the people. Chronicles also extends the notion of royal uniqueness by depicting the king as occupant of the divine throne and ruler over the divine kingdom. However, a different configuration of monotheism emerges in Chronicles. First, Chronicles also depicts kings as servants of the temple who reform and restore the cult it in accordance with Mosaic and Davidic dictates. Priestly and royal offices both revolve around the temple, and have as their primary obligation the maintenance of its ongoing cult and financial prestige. One might suggest, therefore, that Chronicles brings into greater unity than Samuel-Kings the institutions that embody divine preeminence, while privileging the temple as their *raison d'être*.

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<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, expressions like *אין מלבדו, אין עוד*, communicate primarily that Yhwh *acts* alone, and not necessarily that he *exists* alone. Seen in this light, the phrase "there is no one like me" (46:9) is only a shade away from the phrase "there is none other" (45:22), with the latter emphasizing Yhwh's unique capacity to deliver Israel.

Second, Kings does not extend divine uniqueness to the temple as it does to the Davidic king and Zion. Chronicles emphasizes beyond Kings that the temple was a witness to Yhwh's supreme uniqueness. While Kings refers to the temple as a "lofty residence" (זבל; 1 Kgs 8:13; 2 Chr 6:2), it lacks Chronicles' emphasis on the temple's visible and functional approximation and embodiment of divine power and supremacy.

Third, Chronicles introduces monotheistic texts to emphasize divine wealth and the necessity of responding to Yhwh's grandeur with lavish gifts (1 Chr 16:8-36; 29:11-20; 2 Chr 2:4). 8 [5, 9]). As such, the cult and temple become augmented in reflection of, and in response to, Yhwh's preeminence. By emphasizing the uniqueness of Israel's temple and priesthood, moreover, Chronicles augments the national uniqueness of Israel emphasized by Samuel-Kings. Moreover, it focuses that uniqueness on the institutions that unify and distinguish the nation in the post-exilic period.

## II. MONOTHEISM AND DIVINE PRESENCE IN/AT THE TEMPLE

### A. SAMUEL-KINGS

In his study on monotheism in DH, Pakkala also posits an interconnection between the destruction of Israel's first temple and the articulation of monotheism. According to Pakkala, Yhwh's physical representation was destroyed with the first temple, leading the Deuteronomists to the conclusion that only Yhwh's *name* resided in the temple while his *body* remained in heaven, a realm over which he ruled the nations (Deut 4:36; Deut 12; 1 Kgs 8).<sup>24</sup> This formulation is certainly open to dispute, as "name" and divine presence were not necessarily dichotomous in the Hebrew Bible, or even in the passages Pakkala cites.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Pakkala, "The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," 173,

<sup>25</sup> E.g., 1 Kgs 8:12-13; cf. Ps 11:4a, "But Yhwh is in his holy temple. Yhwh, his throne is in heaven." See esp. Sandra L. Richter, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology: ʾšmô šam* in the Bible and the



Moreover, Pakkala's developmental schema, according to which monotheism developed from an incipient "nationalism" toward the universalism of Deutero-Isaiah, defies the biblical evidence (as discussed in ch. 1).

However, in at least one text in DH contrasts Yhwh's "name" with his physical presence in the temple (1 Kgs 8), and points toward a different configuration of divine-institutional supremacy than what one finds in Chronicles. The outer frame of Solomon's prayer seems to presuppose a contrast between Yhwh's heavenly dwelling, from where he hears and sees, and the earthly locus of his "name" (vv. 27-30; 44-45, 48-49).<sup>26</sup> In addition to Yhwh's bodily absence from the temple, there is a sense of the temple's loss embedded in the narrative progression of Solomon's prayer of 1 Kgs 8:22-53, as Israel and foreigners pray "toward" the temple (vv. 38, 42, 44, 48) and Yhwh hears "from heaven" (vv. 30, 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49) in a series of distressing situations that alienate Israel from the temple.<sup>27</sup> One

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Ancient Near East (BZAW 318; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002); cf. also Terence E. Fretheim, *First and Second Kings* (WBC; Louisville: WJK Press, 1999), 49-54. Note also the reference to Yhwh living "in" the temple in 1 Kgs 8:12-13, a passage that Sommer (*Bodies of God*, 65, 245) and others consider redactional because of its purported conflict with the Deuteronomistic notion that Yhwh lives only in heaven.

There is considerable debate as to whether God's  $\text{נש}$  in the Deuteronomistic temple/sanctuary denotes God's real presence or simply serves as a verbal indicator of God's authority over the temple. Those that argue for  $\text{נש}$  as a marker of Yhwh's physical presence include Roland de Vaux, "Le lieu que Yahvé a choisi y pour établir son nom," in *Das Ferne und Nabe Wort* (F. Maas ed.; BZAW 105; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967), 219-28; McCarter, "Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy," 137-55; S. Dean McBride, "Deuteronomistic Name Theology" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1969); Gordon McConville and J. G. Millar, *Time and Place in Deuteronomy* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 111-116; Ian Wilson, *Out of the Midst of the Fire: Divine Presence in Deuteronomy* (SBLDS 151; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995); M. Keller, *Untersuchungen zur deuteronomisch-deuteronomistischen Namenstheologie* (BBB 105; Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum Verlag, 1996). For the contrasting position, see Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 192-94; Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 65, 241 fn. 73.

Gerhard von Rad argued earlier for a somewhat mediating position wherein Yhwh's  $\text{נש}$  in Deut constituted a quasi-hypostasis, yet still avoided the "crude" idea that Yhwh was fully present at the shrine (*Studies in Deuteronomy*, [London: SCM Press, 1953], 38-39). For a view that Yhwh's  $\text{נש}$  in connection with the temple had nothing to do with divine absence, see the important study of Richter, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology*.

<sup>26</sup> MacDonald, *The Many Faces of Monotheism* (forthcoming), 17-19, argues that one finds explicit contrasts between these domains only in the latest redactional layers of the Solomonic prayer (vv. 27-30; 44-45, 48-49). Vv. 39 and 43 also seem to presuppose the contrast by referring to "heaven, the place where you dwell" (השמים מכון שבתך), though without the contrasting mention of "name."

<sup>27</sup> Note also the "pilgrimage pattern" implicit in Solomon's thrice-yearly sacrifices (9:25; cf. 2 Chr 8:13-14 where Solomon organizes "daily" sacrifices).

gains a sense of increasing alienation by following the location and orientation of seven petitions within Solomon's prayer:

|         | <u>Location of Petition</u>  | <u>Orientation of Petition</u>                                |
|---------|--|---|
| 8:31-32 | at the temple "before your altar at this temple ..."                                   |   |
| 8:33-34 | at the temple "to you [ת"לד] at this temple ..."<br>YET, "return them to the land ..." |   |
| 8:35-36 | in the land  | "toward this place ..."                                       |
| 8:37-40 | in the land  | "toward this place ..."                                       |
| 8:41-43 | in(to) the land (immigrant)  | "toward this temple ..."                                      |
| 8:44-45 | out of the land (temporarily at war)   | "toward the city ... and toward this temple"                  |
| 8:46-51 | out of the land (in exile)   | "toward their land ... toward the city ... toward the temple" |

Table 6

As the petitions move from the temple, to the land more generically, to foreign lands, the orientation of the petitions become more general, from "toward the temple," to "toward the city ... and toward this temple," and finally "toward their land ... toward the city ... [and] toward the temple." According to the logic of this prayer, the international availability of Yhwh works to Israel's benefit, however, as Yhwh could hear and respond to prayers from anywhere. While Solomon's prayer does not obviate the temple or the possibility of Yhwh's presence therein, it does set up a system of appeal and deliverance that functions seamlessly in the event of the temple's absence.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the cultic functions of the temple are completely ignored despite the prayer's emphasis on sin and forgiveness, and nothing mentioned in the prayer occurs *in* the temple.<sup>29</sup> Solomon's prayer places no importance on Israel's presence in the land, an established priesthood, or ritual calendar, in connection with

<sup>28</sup> MacDonald, *The Many Faces of Monotheism*, 17-19, notes that various text in 1 Kgs 8 draw their inspiration from discrete inner-biblical sources. For instance, vv. 15-21 and vv. 24-26 draw from the dynastic oracle in 2 Sam 7; appeals 2-4 (vv. 33-39) recall the Deuteronomic curses in Deut 28; appeals 6-7 (vv. 44-53) and the end of Solomon's blessing (vv. 59-60) draw from Deut 4 and 30:1-10. Whether or not redactional growth accounts for these differences is unclear, though MacDonald also notes several linguistic differences between these texts. For my purposes, it is of interest that the prayer is framed by two texts that draw from monotheistic language in Deut 4 (1 Kgs 8:23; 59-60), and is framed by texts that juxtapose Yhwh's heavenly dwelling with his name-presence on earth (vv. 27-30; 44, 48). As MacDonald notes, "Together these statements frame Solomon's petitions and provide a hermeneutical framework for understanding the references to the name and the temple throughout the prayer."

<sup>29</sup> Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, 50.

the temple.<sup>30</sup> The temple possessed a religiously orienting, and not a religiously organizing, role in the prayer.<sup>31</sup>

As a fitting correlate to Israel's anticipated alienation from the temple, Solomon links Yhwh's incomparability and sole divinity with Yhwh's uncontainability (and hence, international availability): "The heavens, even the heavens' heavens" could not contain Yhwh, "how much less this temple" (1 Kgs 8:27).<sup>32</sup> Yhwh is incomparable *because* his presence could not be contained in one place, not in heaven and certainly not in the temple. This creates tension, therefore, between the temple's uniqueness as a place for Yhwh's name, and the quality that defined Yhwh's uniqueness, namely his uncontainability (1 Kgs 8:23, 27-30; 59-60). Unlike the analogy between Yhwh's and Israel's uniqueness mentioned above, the temple had only a qualified uniqueness. The temple was less suited than the heavens to manifest Yhwh's uniqueness (hence the use of "heaven" as Yhwh's domain in the prayer, even though it was deemed ultimately inadequate). However, the temple mediated the communication of prayer between petitioners in any location and Yhwh in heaven. Prayers *toward* the temple (and eventually the city or land) could reach heaven—Yhwh's true dwelling place—and initiate a deliverance that would prove Yhwh's sole divinity before a watching world.<sup>33</sup> As such, Solomon's prayer depicts a temple that pointed away from itself toward Yhwh's cosmic abode, offering a resolution to the tension it created with Yhwh's

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<sup>30</sup> At least, as conceived of in vv. 44-51, and arguably, the entire passage. If there is a cultic rhythm to prayers toward the temple, it is found in 1 Kgs 8:59, where Solomon asks that his words would be near Yhwh "day and night" (יָמָם וּלְיָלֵה) in order to perform justice for his people "according to each day's needs" (דְּבַר־יְיָ לְכָל יוֹמָם). Nonetheless, it is only Solomon's one-time prayer that "acts" effectively each day to cover the daily needs of the people. Additionally, Solomon offers sacrifices three times a year according to 1 Kgs 9:25 (following a pilgrimage pattern conducive to life away from the temple), whereas in Chr Solomon offers *daily* offerings (8:12-13).

<sup>31</sup> Note the integration of Kgs' perspective on prayer with sacrificial practices in Isa 56:1-8.

<sup>32</sup> I have already noted in ch. 2 that Chr reformulates this qualification in 2 Chr 2:3-5[4-6] by granting the temple a role in embodying divine supremacy. Notably, 1 Kgs 8:28-30 proceeds to emphasize the temple's role as a place of prayer *for deliverance*, while 2 Chr 2:3 and 5[4, 6] emphasizes the temple's *ongoing cultic* functions.

<sup>33</sup> Even if several monotheistic passages were missing from Chr's *Urtext*, this doesn't negate the comparison and point that the DH is marked by the experience of exile.

transcendence. Solomon's prayer draws upon aspects of divine uniqueness without reference to the temple's cultic identity, and instead expresses the temple's ability to orient and serve a scattered people through dynamics of prayer.<sup>34</sup> While indeed the narrative frame of Solomon's prayer reports cultic sacrifices (1 Kgs 8:1-6; 62-66), the absence of any institutionalization of sacrifice, and the omission of cultic elements from the prayer, are notable contrasts to the emphases in Chronicles' version of the temple's founding in 2 Chr 6 (discussed below). In the chapter's final form, as in 2 Chr 6, statements of divine transcendence and divine presence (esp. 1 Kgs 8:13//2 Chr 6:2) coexist. Solomon's words in 1 Kgs 8:23a affirm both domains: "Yhwh, God of Israel, there is none like you, a God in heaven above and on earth below."<sup>35</sup>

## B. CHRONICLES

Chronicles shares with its source the notion that the temple mediated Yhwh's transcendent power for those in distress. Not only does Chronicles copy most of 1 Kgs 8 (2 Chr 6, yet cf. 6:41-42), Chronicles also uses Solomon's prayer as a template for additional prayers at the temple in the book (cf. 2 Chr 20:6-12). Moreover, Chronicles shares, and even develops, the paradox of divine limitlessness and Yhwh's presence in the temple (2 Chr 6:18//1 Kgs 8:27; cf. 1 Chr 29:15 and 2 Chr 2:5[6], without parallel). One might say that Chronicles' more exalted view of the temple accentuated this paradox.

However, as suggested in chs. 2-3, Chronicles places greater emphasis on the temple and its cult as concrete embodiments of divine supremacy. Kings does not ignore the cult, however, it never expresses (with Chronicles) that the visible evidence of Israel's relatedness

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<sup>34</sup> Apart from whether or not Solomon's prayer was redacted in the post-exilic period, it bears the imprint of exile.

<sup>35</sup> MacDonald ("1 Kgs VIII 23," 115-17) argues that 1 Kgs 8:23, which reads יהוה אין כמוך אלהים בשמים יהוה אין כמוך אלהים בשמים ועל הארץ מתחת should be translated thus in accordance with a repunctuation of the MT.

to the supreme God was its ongoing cult (esp. 2 Chr 13:10-12). Chronicles' rhetoric of divine supremacy and monotheism relates intimately to the temple's (and priesthood's) *ongoing presence*. While Chronicles affirms with Kings that the temple cannot contain Yhwh because of his supremacy, it contends that the temple could nonetheless reflect divine supremacy over the gods. In other words, Chronicles moves toward a notion of the temple as a congruent manifestation of Yhwh's supreme uniqueness. The clearest expression of their congruence is 2 Chr 2:4[5], where Solomon states, והבית אשר־אני בונה גדול כִּי־גדול אלהינו מכל־האלהים ("The temple that I am going to build must be great, because our God is greater than all the gods"). The temple does not simply *deflect* attention toward Yhwh's grandeur in heaven as in Kings; it *reflects* Yhwh's grandeur on earth.<sup>36</sup>

Cultic activities such as sacrifice and liturgical music thus attain a theological purpose that they do not attain in Samuel-Kings. Chronicles consistently drives home the point that David and Solomon established the temple for the purpose of perpetual incense, offerings, and praise to God. In fact, Solomon points to temple's ongoing cult as demonstrations of its grandeur (2:3, 5), and hence, of Yhwh's grandeur. Similarly, Abijah contrasts the Northern cult of non-gods ("like the peoples of other lands") with Yhwh's cult in Judah, and points to the activities of priests as evidence of the true God's presence (2 Chr 13:8-12).<sup>37</sup> Abijah thus connects the uniqueness of Yhwh with his supporting cult, which kept his charge day and night (vv. 10-11). That the cultic configuration Abijah mentions persisted into the Chronicler's own time likely reinforced the notion that that a perpetually served and praised deity is supreme.

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<sup>36</sup> Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 198, points out that "the Chronicler underlines the paradox that though there is no question of God dwelling in a temple, yet it must still be 'great' as a reflection of his greatness."

<sup>37</sup> Texts claiming that Yhwh is the *only* God usually pertain to unique acts that Yhwh has performed (2 Chr 13; 32:19).

Accordingly, Chronicles blunts the dichotomy between Yhwh's supremacy and his presence in the temple found in 1 Kgs 8. At the conclusion of Solomon's prayer, the Chronicler inserts a quotation of Ps 132:1, 8-9 (2 Chr 6:41-42). Though Chronicles faithfully preserves most of Solomon's prayer (1 Kgs 8:12-50 in vv. 14-40), the use of Ps 132 directs Solomon's prayer explicitly toward a notion of Yhwh's presence *in* the temple:

So now, Yhwh God, arise to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. May your priests, Yhwh God, be clothed in salvation, and your loyal ones rejoice in your goodness. Yhwh God, do not neglect your anointed ones. Remember the faithful deeds of David<sup>38</sup> your servant. (2 Chr 6:41-42)

This quotation follows immediately from the seventh of Solomon's requests, in which he sets out a course of appeal and deliverance for Israel in exile. This text turns the prayer back toward the temple after prayers about deliverance from exile. Significantly, Chronicles' quotation of Ps 132 stands in the place of 1 Kgs 8:51-53, where Solomon prays that God would respond to Israel's pleas for deliverance. Chronicles thus substitutes a celebration of divine presence for an appeal for deliverance.<sup>39</sup> Thus, whereas Kings' version of Solomon's prayer (1 Kgs 8:22-53) depicts a series of appeals that telescopes out and away from the temple, Chronicles' version (2 Chr 6:14-42) comes full circle in by envisioning the entrance of Yhwh, his ark, and priesthood into the temple (vv. 41-42). Immediately following Solomon's prayer, Chronicles reports that Yhwh answered with "fire from heaven" as his

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<sup>38</sup> On the subjective-genitive construction קִסְדֵי דַוִּד, see Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 51-52.

<sup>39</sup> Chr places less emphasis on the exodus than Sam-Kgs (on which, see Japhet, *Ideology*, 382-88). Chr abridges or eliminates three allusions to the exodus in 2 Chr 6:11//1 Kgs 8:21; 1 Kgs 8:51, 53). One may note, e.g., that 1 Chr 16 cuts off the historical narration of Ps 105 right before recounting the events of the exodus, and the omission of the reference to the exodus in 1 Kgs 8:51-53 by the insertion of 2 Chr 6:41-42. Chr's de-emphasis of the exodus is not a form of historical suppression, but rather an effect of its greater interest in probing the components of Israel's history that bear witness to elements of its past that endured into the post-exilic present. Yet, cf. other mentions of the exodus in 1 Chr 17:21; 2 Chr 5:10; 6:5; 7:22; 20:10, as noted by Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 47.

glory filled the temple (2 Chr 7:1).<sup>40</sup> The people's response suggests that Yhwh answered

Solomon's final appeal (6:41-42) in the affirmative:

When all the Israelites saw the descent of the fire, and the glory of Yhwh upon the house, they fell prostrate on the ground and worshipped, giving thanks to Yhwh "surely he is good, his mercy endures." (7:3)

As Riley argues, Chronicles may have included portions of Ps 132 in order to demonstrate what the "prayer of this place" was to look like.<sup>41</sup> The "prayer of this place" became a prayer of praise for Yhwh's triumphant cultic presence (2 Chr 6:41), and an appeal for ongoing faithfulness to the Davidic covenant (2 Chr 6:42). Thus, Solomon's temple prayer begins and concludes with meditations on *divine presence* and the Davidic covenant:

Yhwh, God of Israel, there is none like you, *a God in the heavens and on the earth*, one who keeps the covenant and loyalty to your servants to walk before you with all their heart. (v. 14)

... [vv. 15-40] ...

So now, Yhwh God, *arise to your resting place*, you and the ark of your might. May your priests, Yhwh God, be clothed in salvation, and your loyal ones rejoice in your goodness. Yhwh God, do not neglect your anointed ones. Remember the faithful deeds of David your servant. (vv. 41-42)

In v. 14, Yhwh is incomparable in terms of his location in heaven and earth, and his loyalty to the covenant. The body of the prayer (vv. 15-40) emphasizes Yhwh's presence in heaven. Then, vv. 41-42 calls upon Yhwh to demonstrate his incomparability by (a) entering the temple and (b) maintaining his loyalty to the covenant. Yhwh does so (7:1-2) and the people respond in thanksgiving (7:3).

Further evidence for the congruence between Yhwh's cultic presence and his supremacy emerges in 2 Chr 20. This chapter recounts Yhwh's sweeping victory over a Trans-Jordanian coalition during the reign of Jehoshaphat.<sup>42</sup> I discussed this episode in ch. 3, though without attention to the link between divine supremacy and cultic presence. Though

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<sup>40</sup> Chr repeats the episode of the divine glory filling the temple, thus framing Solomon's prayer with two accounts of Yhwh's presence (2 Chr 5:11-14; 7:1-3; cf. 1 Kgs 8:11).

<sup>41</sup> Riley, *King and Cultus*, 91.

<sup>42</sup> I discuss this narrative in closer detail in ch. 3, in connection with the priesthood.

this story is not found in Kings, Chronicles employs language from Solomon's temple prayer in 1 Kgs 8 (//2 Chr 6) to pattern Jehoshaphat's prayer of appeal in 2 Chr 20:6-12.<sup>43</sup>

Jehoshaphat appeals to Yhwh as "the God who is in heaven," refers to the "sanctuary for your name," and recalls the conditions of "sword ... plague or famine" that would necessitate temple-oriented appeals. Thus far, the prayer looks like a straightforward application of Solomon's prayer as envisioned in 1 Kgs 8, where the temple stood as a conduit for heaven-to-human communication. However, Jehoshaphat's prayer and its surrounding narrative register several changes to the perspective of 1 Kgs 8 that result in a more prominent role for the physical temple and cult.

To begin, Jehoshaphat appeals to Yhwh as "the God who is in heaven" and who rules "over all the kingdoms of the nations" (v. 6), and against whom "there is no one to oppose you [אין עמך להתיצב]." Chronicles emphasizes Yhwh's transcendence and "incomparability" (אין עמך) but then draws attention to Yhwh's presence in the temple:

נעמד לפני הבית הזה ולפניך כי שמך בבית הזה ...  
[If] we stand before *this house*, that is, *before you*, *for your name is in this house* ... (2 Chr 20:9)

Noticeably, this text presupposes an explicit connection between *Yhwh's house, name, and presence*. Even though Jehoshaphat affirms (v. 6) that Yhwh is the supreme king "in heaven" and over all nations, Yhwh is uniquely present in the Jerusalem temple. 1 Kings 8 never makes explicit this association between Yhwh's house, name, and presence at the temple.

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<sup>43</sup> Especially 1 Kgs 8:9; cf. also 1 Kgs 8:37, 44//2 Chr 6:28, 34. On Solomon's prayer as a "charter" for subsequent history in Chr, see Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 52-53. Note additionally that prayer was already becoming a regular feature of the cult in the post-exilic period. On which, see Balentine, *Prayer in the Hebrew Bible*, 85-88; Eileen M. Schuller, "Prayer, Hymnic and Liturgical Texts from Qumran," in *Community of the Renewed Covenant: The Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. E. Ulrich and J. C. VanderKam; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 153-74; *ibid.*, "Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: A Research Survey," in *Seeking the Favor of God: The Development of Prayer in Second Temple Judaism*, Vol. 2 (ed. Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 1-12. Esther G. Chazon, ed. *Liturgical Perspectives: Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scroll and Associated Literature, 19-23 January, 2000* (STDJ 48; Leiden: Brill, 2003).



After Jehoshaphat's appeal, a Levitical prophet assures the people of victory. In response, Jehoshaphat and all the people fall down in worship לפני יהוה ("before Yhwh") at the temple.<sup>44</sup> Yhwh responds to Jehoshaphat by delivering Israel to the tune of Levitical music and with a priestly vanguard (v. 21). The victory culminates with Israel worshipping at the temple and "fear upon all the surrounding kingdoms" (v. 28-29). In short, the Jehoshaphat narrative draws together a strong theology of (a) divine supremacy, (b) divine presence *in* the temple, (c) and appeal and worship *at* the temple. Yhwh's heavenly dwelling and preeminent kingship stand congruent with his physical presence in the temple.

### III. THE GEOGRAPHY OF MONOTHEISM

#### A. SAMUEL-KINGS

In addition to links between divine supremacy on the one hand, and nationalism and the temple's absence on the other, Kings attends to demonstrations of Yhwh's sole divinity in the North. More to the point, in several cases Kings extrapolates from specifically regional, Israelite, displays of divine power that Yhwh is the sole divinity. Two episodes are exemplary. 1 Kings 18:21-40 recounts Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal.<sup>45</sup> A significant component of Elijah's contest was its geographical location on Mount Carmel, home of the Phoenician deity Baal,<sup>46</sup> but also a region that Israel claimed for its deity.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Note the halting syntax here, as in v. 9 "... and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before Yhwh, to worship Yhwh" (לפני יהוה להשתחוות ליהוה). The Deuteronomic phrase לפני יהוה appears only in Solomon's concluding blessing in 1 Kgs 8:59, 62, 64, 65, and not in his dedicatory prayer itself.

<sup>45</sup> On this text, see Ernst Würthwein, "Zur Opferprobe Elias I Reg 18,21-39," in *Prophet und Prophetenbuch: Festschrift für Otto Kaiser zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Volkmar Fritz, Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, and Hans-Christoph Schmitt; BZAW 185; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 277-84; Georg Braulik, "Elija und der Kult des Baal" in *Gott, der einzige: zur Entstehung des Monotheismus in Israel* (ed. Ernst Haag; QD 104; Freiburg: Herder, 1985), 54-90.

<sup>46</sup> There is considerable debate over the precise identity of this "Baal," whether the general deity *Baalshamem*, a generic term for non-Yahwistic male deities, or a more local Tyrian Baal (=Melqart), or Baal-Hadad. See discussion in M. J. Mulder, "Carmel," in *DDD*, 182-85.

Kings sets the contest in a time of famine, and therefore the burden of proof was upon both deities to demonstrate their ability to control the region's weather. However, there is also a wider frame of reference to the contest. The contest was not just to determine Baal's or Yhwh's regional supremacy, but rather to demonstrate which deity was האלהים ("The God" without qualification; v. 24). While it may not be clear from an etic perspective why a regional contest would prove sole divinity, the text presupposes that such was the case.<sup>48</sup> Yhwh's ability to demonstrate power over Baal's putative domain would prove his sole divinity. Accordingly, Elijah prays for Yhwh to respond in order to reveal that "you, Yhwh, are the true God" (כי־אתה יהוה האלהים; 18:37). When Baal remains silent and Yhwh answers with fire from heaven to consume Elijah's sacrifice, the people exclaim as Elijah had prayed: "Yhwh is the true God! Yhwh is the true God!" (יהוה הוא האלהים יהוה הוא האלהים; v. 39). In conjunction with this demonstration of power, Yhwh also brings heavy rain to the region in affirmation of his power.<sup>49</sup>

Elsewhere, Kings records an account of God healing the Aramean general Naaman through the prophetic ministry of Elisha and the intervention of a captured Israelite girl (2 Kgs 5:1-19). As with the story of Elijah, this story is set in Israel. In response to his miraculous healing in the Jordan River, Naaman exclaims, "Now I know for certain that there is no God anywhere on earth except in Israel" ( הנה־נא ידעתי כי אין אלהים בכל־הארץ כי

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<sup>47</sup> Note Elijah's words on Mount Carmel in 18:36, "Let it be known that you are God in Israel [בישראל]," and the reference in v. 30 to a pre-existing "altar to Yhwh" at the site of the contest. That Elijah needed to "repair" Yhwh's altar attests to a regional struggle between the two deities on Mount Carmel, or an *apologia* for its inclusion in the land.

<sup>48</sup> For that matter, it is not self-evident why deliverance from Egypt (Exod 15:11) or exile (1 Kgs 8:60) would *prove* Yhwh's sole divinity or supremacy, and not just his superiority in geo-political matters, yet several biblical passages link Yhwh's supreme uniqueness with supremely unique deeds.

<sup>49</sup> Significantly, the ensuing narrative challenges the notion that Yhwh is limited to Israel or to specific manifestations of power, referring, for instance, to Horeb as the "mountain of God" (19:8) and appearing as a "quiet, still" sound rather than with dramatic displays of nature (19:12).

אִם-בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל; v. 15b).<sup>50</sup> Interestingly, Naaman infers Yhwh’s international supremacy on the basis of his regional display of power, and because of his inability to find healing apart from Israel and the intervention of his Israelite servant. Naaman’s words echo Elisha’s “regional” declaration in v. 8 that Naaman would “realize that there is a prophet in Israel” (וַיֵּדַע כִּי יֵשׁ (נִבְיָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל), but extends its implications. As with the Mount Carmel episode, Yhwh’s demonstration of power (healing Naaman/ consuming Elijah’s sacrifice) in one region (Mount Carmel/Israel) forms the basis of a claim about Yhwh’s absolute supremacy.<sup>51</sup> Recognition of Yhwh’s supremacy does not diminish Yhwh’s particular relationship to a particular area in these stories. In fact, after making his “monotheistic” exclamation, Naaman asks for two mule loads of earth from *Israel* on which to offer sacrifices to Yhwh, and vows to offer sacrifices only to Yhwh (5:17).<sup>52</sup> In other words, he validates the unique position of Israel vis-à-vis the nations even while recognizing the international supremacy of Israel’s God. Yhwh was *in* Israel as the only deity.

The Elijah and Elisha narratives exhibit several features in common with each other, and with the other monotheistic passages in Samuel-Kings. (1) These stories accentuate Israel’s unique relationship to Yhwh via his prophets. Elijah prays for it to become known that “you are God in Israel” and that “I am your servant” (1 Kgs 18:36). Similarly, Elisha quips that Naaman would realize “that there is a prophet in Israel” (2 Kgs 5:8). (2) Geographically, both episodes take place in the North,<sup>53</sup> and the Elisha story even

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<sup>50</sup> Pakkala omits 2 Kgs 5:15b from his list of monotheistic passages in DH, even though it fits his criterion that monotheistic texts possess an “explicit denial of the existence of other gods” (“The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History,” 163).

Note the similarity in language between 2 Kgs 5:18 and Elijah’s words in 1 Kgs 18:36, “Let it be known today that you are God in Israel . . .” (וַיֵּדַע כִּי-אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל).

<sup>51</sup> A point expressed well by the contrasting account of Elijah at Horeb in 1 Kgs 19.

<sup>52</sup> Though Elisha does forgive Naaman for times he would have to accompany his master in Rimmon’s temple (5:18).

<sup>53</sup> Cf. also the national implications of 1 Kgs 18:31, 36. Notably, 1 Kgs 19 challenges the notions of geographical locatedness and dramatic manifestation implied by Elijah’s contest with the prophets of Baal in

emphasizes the uniqueness of Israel's soil. Naaman exclaims that there is no God on earth "except in Israel" (2 Kgs 5:15). Further, (3) regionally specific acts of Yhwh (on Mt. Carmel/in the Jordan) become the basis for assertions about Yhwh's sole divinity (1 Kgs 18:37, 39; 2 Kgs 5:15). The "particularist" emphases on only Yhwh and Baal, and Yhwh's special relationship with Israel's land, pose no stumbling block to drawing larger conclusions about Yhwh's (and Israel's) unique position among the nations.<sup>54</sup>

## B. CHRONICLES

In Chronicles, Yhwh also displays his mighty power outside the land, primarily in military encounters (e.g., 2 Chr 20). However, it is noticeable that Chronicles excludes the possibility that the North retained an alternative or competing Yhwh's cult after the kingdom split. There was *one* cult in Jerusalem. One may recall that the account of Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal (1 Kgs 18) and Naaman's healing (2 Kgs 5) featured sacrifice as a means of indexing territorial hegemony. By claiming *this* territory, Kings claims, Yhwh established his claim to sole divinity. Chronicles' omission of Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal and Naaman's healing are part of a general rejection of the North as a distinct expression of the cult of Yhwh.<sup>55</sup>

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ch. 18. On the importance of crossing borders in the Elijah and Elisha narratives, see Jeremy M. Hutton, *The Transjordanian Palimpsest: The Overwritten Texts of Personal Exile and Transformation in the Deuteronomistic History* (BZAW 396; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 24-26; James Fleming, "Was there Monotheism in Israel before Amos?" *Anglican Theological Review* 14/2 (1932):130-42.

<sup>54</sup> Note the words of Halpern ("Brisker Pipes than Poetry," 30):

Israel remains specially sacred to Yhwh no matter how universal his scope of power or his recognition. Second Kings 5:17, which is coupled with the recognition of Yhwh as the only active god, demonstrates this. Na'aman still does better to appropriate the soil of Israel for his worship. Here is evidence of special sanctity, not the limitation or an exclusive or reified 'particularism.'

<sup>55</sup> Alternatively, see the argument of Person (*The Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles*) that non-synoptic passages in Sam-Kgs are *expansions* on the source (proto-LXX) employed by Chr and Sam-Kgs. As such, Chr had no Elijah or Elisha cycle to omit.

Chronicles completely inverts the picture in 1 Kgs 18-19, 2 Kgs 5, and elsewhere, that Yahwism existed (albeit under strain) in the North. Moreover, there is even evidence that Chronicles transposes stories that occur in the North in application to Judah.<sup>56</sup> Yhwh's cult existed only in Judah, and with two exceptions, the cult was always centralized in the hands of the Levites and priests.<sup>57</sup> Chronicles revises its sources on a number of points to make this precise point.<sup>58</sup> From the moment the Israelite kingdom split, Chronicles maintains that all those loyal to Yhwh, including priests, and Levites, fled south:

The priests and Levites from all their districts throughout Israel took up their positions with him [Rehoboam]. The Levites even abandoned their pasturelands and landholdings, and came to Judah and Jerusalem because Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them as priests of Yhwh. . . . Those from every tribe of Israel who devoted themselves to seeking Yhwh, the God of Israel, followed the Levites to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices to Yhwh, the God of their fathers. (2 Chr 11:13-14, 16)<sup>59</sup>

King Abijah's speech against the North continues along this theme: "As for us [in contrast to the North], Yhwh is our God, and we did not forsake him. . . . God is with us as our leader" (2 Chr 13:10a, 12a). Though Manasseh is exiled to Babylon, and even prays there "in his distress" (2 Chr 33:12; again, evoking Solomon's prayer [1 Kgs 8:37]), he recognizes Yhwh as the "true God" only when reestablished as king in Jerusalem (33:13). Thus, recognition of Yhwh's sole divinity finds its chief expression through sacrifices, offerings, and gifts in his presence at the sanctuary (1 Chr 16:25-29; 29:14, 16-17). In short, Chronicles uses the Jerusalem cult to index Yhwh's claim over Israel, and as discussed in the dissertation, to make broader claims about Yhwh's incomparability and sole divinity.

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<sup>56</sup> E.g., the modification of 2 Kgs 3 in 2 Chr 20.

<sup>57</sup> 2 Chr 1:3; 33:17.

<sup>58</sup> E.g., in 1 Chr 16; 21:29; and 2 Chr 1 in order to explain the sacrifices of David and Solomon at Gibeon. Cf. 2 Chr 32:17; 33:17. See discussion in Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 389, 528. Cf. 2 Chr 32:17

<sup>59</sup> I discuss this passage in ch. 3.

#### IV. SUMMARY OF COMPARISON

##### A. SAMUEL-KINGS

In sum, monotheism in Samuel-Kings draws upon and supports several significant aspects of Israel's self-identity and experience, including the memory of the exodus and Davidic covenant, Zion's deliverance from Sennacherib, and displays of power in Israel. That these are not all unified expressions should come as no surprise, given the diverse material collected by the Deuteronomists, and given the diverse redactions that Samuel-Kings sustained. Nevertheless, several aspects of monotheism in Samuel-Kings recur. (1) Monotheistic language *rhetorically* underscores Israel's distinct national identity, especially as it was formed during its deliverance from Egypt. (2) Samuel-Kings employs several *modes of monotheizing*. The most prominent observed in the sample texts is the explicit exaltation of Yhwh as sole sovereign on the basis of Yhwh's past or future salvation. However, these texts also base claims about Yhwh's sole divinity on his covenant with David (2 Sam 7:22-29), acts of healing (2 Kgs 5:1-19), and his rule over his creation (2 Kgs 19:15). (3) Monotheistic affirmations are not impeded by Israel's experience of alienation from the temple and its cult in 1 Kgs 8. The *monotheistic configuration* between the supreme deity and the temple "stretches" to allow Israel to experience Yhwh's deliverance outside the land. (4) Accordingly, Yhwh's supremacy finds expressions in Northern Israel and outside the land. (5) Yhwh-Israel homologies of exaltation figure into several texts, most significantly in the parallelism between Yhwh and Israel in 2 Sam 7:22-23 (cf. 2 Kgs 5:1-19; Deut 4:33-34). In addition, David (2 Sam 7:22-29), Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs 18:36; 2 Kgs 5:8, 15), and Zion (2 Kgs 19:21-28) serve as mediators of Yhwh's divine supremacy.

## B. CHRONICLES

Only *two* of the five monotheistic texts from Samuel-Kings appear in Chronicles (1 Chr 17:20-27; 2 Chr 32:19 // 2 Sam 7:22-29; 2 Kgs 19:15-19), and only one (1 Chr 17:20-27//2 Sam 7:22-29) leaves the monotheistic rhetoric of Samuel-Kings in tact. 2 Chronicles 32 omits the monotheistic content of Hezekiah's prayer as recorded in Kings, including his exclamation, "you alone are God over all the earth's kingdoms" (אתה־הוא האלהים לבדך לכל) (ממלכות הארץ) and his petition that "all the earth's kingdoms may know that you alone are God (וידעו כל־ממלכות הארץ כי אתה יהוה אלהים לבדך; 2 Kgs 19:15, 19).<sup>60</sup> If monotheism became a defining feature of early Judaism, as Pakkala would concede, why would Chronicles not draw upon and expand all evidence to that effect? Pakkala explains that "there was no reason to emphasize the point in such a late stage of Israel's religion, because the Jewish community now already generally accepted that only Yahweh is God."<sup>61</sup> Thus, he argues, Chronicles refrains from including Solomon's blessing recorded in 1 Kgs 8:54-61 because Yhwh's sole divinity was "self-evident."<sup>62</sup> However, Pakkala does not account for the *addition* of texts in Chronicles that explicitly espouse one-God theology, including the prominent Yhwh-kingship Psalm included in 1 Chr 16.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, as argued in the introduction, it is not clear that monotheism had "won the day" on the ground. There was still a case to be made for Yhwh's supreme divinity.

A fuller analysis of the DH, such as I have undertaken in Chronicles would allow for a more precise comparison between the two bodies of literature. Nevertheless, working with Pakkala's monotheistic texts (plus 2 Kgs 5:15) as a sample set, we observe that a

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<sup>60</sup> However, as noted in ch. 4, Chr reconfigures the narrative such that monotheistic claims rhetorically bolster the temple and king.

<sup>61</sup> Pakkala, "The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," 170.

<sup>62</sup> Pakkala, "The Monotheism of the Deuteronomistic History," 171.

<sup>63</sup> See also, e.g., 2 Chr 13:9; 15:3; 33:13.

predominant premise for monotheizing in Samuel-Kings is Yhwh's salvific response to appeals for deliverance. Israel finds itself in distress, appeals to Yhwh, who proves his sole divinity by delivering Israel from its peril. The predominant monotheistic *configuration* in these chapters is that of Yhwh with Israel as his elect and exalted partner. Yhwh's victories against the overwhelming odds—the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians—attest to his unrivaled power, and by virtue of their unique relationship to God, they attest to Israel's status as a unique nation. In addition, the exaltation of Yhwh's king, prophets, and city (*Zion*) also figure in the Deuteronomistic presentations. Like Chronicles, therefore, Samuel-Kings exhibits tendencies to focus on particular individuals or institutions as agents of the supreme God.

However, Chronicles' configuration of monotheism and divine preeminence differs. For Chronicles, the temple cult was the primary center around which all else orbited, including the king. Chronicles also weds the temple and priesthood to Yhwh as his exalted partners, and directs much of its narrative toward bolstering these institutions as expressions of divine power and exaltation. These institutions mediate Yhwh's divine supremacy, and as such, were worthy of Israel's unswerving devotion. Chronicles is "nationalistic" like Samuel-Kings, but in a manner more focused on bolstering the Jerusalem temple and cult, the enduring institutions of post-exilic society, and on exalting the Davidic king as contributor to those institutions. Moreover, Chronicles emphasizes more than Samuel-Kings that the power, majesty, and preeminence of Yhwh became periodically manifest in the temple, priesthood, and Davidic king.

While not representing only "competing" visions of monotheism, Samuel-Kings and Chronicles offer different visions of divine supremacy, each suited to its particular milieu. Despite the complex redactional history of the DH, the inclusion of "monotheistic



passages” cohere with the general rhetorical purpose of the DH as I see it, namely, to account for the rise and fall of the Israelite kingdom, to provide hope for the future, and to offer a way of relating to the past while in exile. Chronicles does not appear interested in “explaining” the demise of Israel and Judah, but rather, in rebuilding Israel’s identity in the post-exilic period. Specifically, Chronicles aims to offer a vision of life for post-exilic society that is organized around those institutions that manifest Yhwh’s historic supremacy over the cosmos, and which recapture the lost glory of Israel. These broad purposes distinguish the two works and account for their different configurations of monotheism, though indeed, lines of continuity exist. The DH looks to recapture the glory of the past through a unique act of deliverance as a demonstration of loyalty to the covenant. Chronicles also looks to Yhwh for deliverance (1 Chr 16:35; 2 Chr 6:40-42), but directs its focus on the rank and file worship of all priests and Israelites around the temple as the goal of such deliverance, and the experience of divine power and supremacy that Israel’s institutions could facilitate.

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