

Remembering Solomon: Constructions of Solomon in Kings and Chronicles

by

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ABSTRACT

Narratives of King Solomon's life and reign are preserved in both the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles, and both texts contain similar narrative elements and mnemonic constructions, such as Solomon's role as Temple builder and his great wisdom. Other elements of the narrative have been shortened, lengthened or even omitted between the texts. By using the lens of social memory to investigate the reshaping of the narrative of Solomon by the Chronicler, one can attempt to further understand the reasoning for both the changes and similarities between the two texts. Although the mnemonic constructions of Solomon in both Kings and Chronicles are rooted in matters of kingship and rule, the issues themselves are vastly different and representative of the concerns of their respective communities. In Kings, the narrative of Solomon's rise and ultimate fall interacted with these larger mnemonic constructions to inform the reader about the fundamental issues with mortal kingship. In contrast, the narrative of Solomon in the Book of Chronicles instead focused its attention on the maintenance of cult, leading to memories of ancestral merit, legitimization and even utopia during a time of non-Davidic kingship.

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INTRODUCTION

Mnemonic constructions of King Solomon are evoked throughout the Hebrew Bible. His life and reign in Jerusalem are recounted in the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles. Moreover, writings attributed to him are found in the Book of Proverbs, and Song of Songs. As such, the story of King Solomon as preserved in the writings of the Hebrew Bible likely held a large mindshare for its ancient readership. Even today, Solomon remains a memorable king to the modern reader. His great wisdom is so intrinsically linked with his identity that even those not intimately familiar with the Hebrew Bible can likely recall Solomon's command to divide the baby in half (1 Kgs 3:25 NRSV) when two women approached him with a dispute about who the true mother was.

While the fundamental structure of the narratives found in Kings and Chronicles are similar, there are notable differences. While Solomon is remembered in both Kings and Chronicles as a great king and as the builder of the Temple in Jerusalem, other aspects of the narrative in Kings were reshaped by the Chronicler into new narratives and memories not found within its Deuteronomistic counterpart.

As will be discussed, the intended readership of the Book of Chronicles was not only aware that the Book of Kings already existed, but they were also familiar with the narratives within it. As both shortened and lengthened versions of narratives found in Kings were in Chronicles, a new dynamic was created.

While it may be evident that differences between Kings and Chronicles exist, it is also important to attempt to ask why they exist. Although the memories of Solomon in both Kings and Chronicles are rooted in issues of kingship and rule, the issues themselves are vastly different and representative of the concerns of their respective communities. The readers and writers of Kings

were living in a very different time than the writer(s) of Chronicles, and the memories within each reflect this. As such, it is crucial that not only are the differences identified, but we must ask and investigate why.

I will begin with an examination of the narrative of Solomon found within the Book of Kings and the memories encoded within it. This includes a study of the “uniqueness” of Solomon, such as his role of Temple Builder, his international fame and power, his wisdom and even his origin and rise to the throne. Moreover, I will investigate how these memories came together to create an overarching memory of Solomon’s kingship and the problems therein. Similarly, I will also examine the portrayal of Solomon in Chronicles, such as his relationship with his father, David, and memories of peace, piety and other Yahwistic blessings. Finally, I will compare and contrast these mnemonic constructions to each other in an attempt to understand how the different temporal and political setting affected the Yehudite literati’s understanding of kingship in Persian Yehud through the re-imagining of Solomon and his reign.

KINGS' CONTRIBUTION TO THE SHAPING OF THE MEMORY OF SOLOMON

Introduction

The memory of King Solomon encoded within the Book of Kings is complex. He is a man rewarded with a “wise and discerning mind” by Yahweh (1 Kgs 3:12) who received the honour and responsibility of building the Temple in Jerusalem. Yet he was not infallible. Not only did Solomon deviate from the cult which he centralized, but the transgressions reported in 1 Kings 11 were so great that Yahweh proclaimed that he would divide the kingdom as punishment (1 Kgs 11:11). Yet, the memory of Solomon’s errors is contained. In his youth, he was perfect. He received divine blessings and was capable of using them appropriately, but when he aged, he became foggy and lost his ability to act wisely and thus seemed senile. No longer was he able to act appropriately. And as a result, his actions led to a national trauma, the dissolution of a united Israel. Solomon is presented as a paradox of kingship. He centralized Yahwistic cult in Jerusalem, yet he is explicitly presented as being the force behind the destruction of the unified monarchy. Yahweh blessed Solomon with wisdom, yet his wives manipulated him in his old age. He was devout yet he blatantly disregarded Yahweh’s warning. Solomon was “bad” at the end of his narrative within Kings, yet he ruled for forty years (1 Kgs 11:42). As such, there is a mnemonic grammar and rhyme, reminding the reader of the inherent problem with mortal kingship.

The Uniqueness of Solomon

It was important for the literati to establish Solomon as unique, as he was both the builder of the temple in Jerusalem, but also the king before calamity; the dissolution of the united monarchy. A large portion of the narrative of Solomon is dedicated to reminding the reader of the

divine blessings he had received from Yahweh and establishing that he had all the resources needed to succeed. Prior to 1 Kings 11, Solomon was the picture of good kingship, wise and wealthy with a distinctive rise to the throne.

Solomon's wisdom is unique but not just due to its divine origins. Significantly, Solomon had the knowledge and skill to build the temple in Jerusalem, he administered judgment on behalf of Yahweh, he understood riddles and "hard questions", and due to his wisdom, he did not need to engage in warfare to expand and defend his territory. Yet, notably unlike other biblical figures, such as Moses or Joshua, Solomon was not explicitly depicted as a student of Torah.¹

Solomon as Builder

Solomon is remembered as a builder. He built the temple but also many projects both within Jerusalem and across his territory. As such, his building activities are remembered as expressions of his architectural and organizational wisdom. Furthermore, the memory of his building projects served to remind the readership of the united monarchy and Solomon's organizational prowess.²

The detailed description of the Temple constructed a memory of divine opulence and glory.³ The temple is described as having been fitted with ornate cedar and olive wood carvings, and pure gold (1 Kgs 6:15-36). Solomon's use of cedars of Lebanon in his construction reminded the reader of Solomon's wealth and his ability to "spare no expense".⁴ The description of the bronze as being in such abundance that it was "unable to be weighed" and the use of exotic and rare building supplies, stones and wealth created a vivid description for the reader.⁵

¹ Ian Douglas Wilson, *Kingship and Memory in Ancient Judah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 44–45.

² Walter Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 68.

³ Marvin A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 109.

⁴ Ibid., 103, 116.

⁵ Ibid., 124, 150.

As Mark S. Smith noted, the temple represented “strength and size, fertility and beauty; holiness; immortality and knowledge.”⁶ Solomon is not only remembered as having the privilege and responsibility of building the temple, but also the wisdom to do so. When Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem, he transformed chaos into sacred order by providing Yahweh with a house to dwell in.⁷ In ancient Near Eastern tradition, the temple was also a place of cosmic connection, connecting the earth and the divine. By centralizing Yahwistic cult, Solomon constructed a mnemonic symbol of Yahweh’s blessing and covenant with Israel.⁸

The Power and Prestige of Solomon

Solomon’s wealth is constructed to portray the ideal king, one with the ability to accumulate great fortune and having had power respected by nations near and far. Moreover, when the laws were followed, both Solomon’s reign, and the people of Israel, enjoyed a golden age unlike any before or after.⁹

The uniqueness of Solomon’s wealth is unmistakable even in the shallowest reading of Kings. His throne is described as incomparable to any other (1 Kgs 10:20), even his cups were made of gold (1 Kgs 10:21). The text stated that gold was so plentiful during the reign of Solomon that silver “was not considered as anything” (1 Kgs 10:21). Every visitor brought even more treasures for Solomon as tribute and “the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as numerous as the sycamores of the Shephelah” (1 Kgs 10:23,27). Solomon’s reign was remembered as both a figurative and literal golden age.

⁶ Mark S. Smith, “Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People),” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 20.

⁷ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel’s Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 87.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Karl William Weyde, “The Narrative of King Solomon and the Law of the King: On the Relationship between 1 Kings 3-11 and Deut 17:14-20,” in *Enigmas and Images: Studies in Honor of Tryggve N.D. Mettinger*, ed. Goran Eidevall and Blazenka Scheuer (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 87.

Although there is a negative version of the memory of Solomon's marriage to foreign women, it is restricted to 1 Kings 11 and will be discussed in detail later. Otherwise, Solomon's numerous marriages to foreign princesses reminded the reader of his status among foreign powers. For the Pharaoh of Egypt, the ruler of a powerful nation, to give his daughter as well as territory as a gift is significant for there is no indication that Solomon gave away any of his own daughters. As such, Solomon was portrayed as the dominant king.¹⁰ Not only was Solomon respected among his own people, but he was respected by one of the most powerful nations in the ancient Near East.

The large-scale taxation system described in 1 Kings 4 demonstrated to the reader the breadth of Solomon's economic wealth.¹¹ It also reminded the reader that Solomon had control over a significantly large territory. The memory of occupying the land reminded the reader of stability, in contrast to the memory of other biblical narratives of exile and migration.¹² Solomon's control of his territory is symbolic of Yahweh's blessing in direct contrast to exile, which acted as a "sign of divine rejection and punishment."¹³

Due to his great wisdom, Solomon did not have to engage in warfare to expand his empire or legitimize his reign to foreign nations. 1 Kgs 4:24-25 states "For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphshah to Gaza, over all the kings west of the Euphrates; and he had peace on all sides. During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, all of them under their vines and fig trees." His wisdom allowed him to have dominance over the surrounding nations, including strong foreign powers and thus he was able to expand his territory peacefully.

¹⁰ Tal Davidovich, "Emphasizing the Daughter of Pharaoh," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 24, no. 1 (2010): 77.

¹¹ David C. Hopkins, "The Weight of the Bronze Could Not Be Calculated: Solomon and Economic Reconstruction," in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium*, ed. Lowell K. Handy (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 302.

¹² Gary N. Knoppers, "Exile, Return, and Diaspora: Expatriates and Repatriates in Late Biblical Literature," in *Texts, Contexts and Readings in Postexilic Literature* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 36.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 35–36.

Solomon is remembered as understanding the totality of the world. He was described as being able to speak about trees, from the most important to the common, about animals, birds, reptiles and fish (1 Kgs 4:33). Solomon had wisdom about all the land, air and sea. His ability to speak about all matters of the world demonstrated how he knew more than any human being. 1 Kgs 4:34 states “People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon; they came from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.” Even the Queen of Sheba was described as having had “no more spirit in her” after witnessing Solomon’s wealth, wisdom and the overall prestige of his reign (1 Kgs 10:5).

Riddles and Wisdom

In a trope that continues to persist in modern times, “The East” was considered to be a place of wisdom and associated with the ancestors of Israel.¹⁴ It is thus notable that the Queen of Sheba was from the South-East, as the readership of Kings remembered her as wise. As such, for Sheba to commend Solomon was significant. The presentation of Solomon’s wisdom as having been greater than that of “the East” as well as Egypt, presented Solomon as the wisest of any ruler he interacted with.¹⁵ Although the exact geographic origin of Sheba is unclear, she was remembered in Kings as having made a significant journey specifically to visit Solomon to “test him with hard questions”, or riddles, and further establish a political relationship (1 Kgs 10:1).¹⁶

Solomon’s ability to answer riddles is especially noteworthy. The ability to answer a riddle requires one “to answer a question that doesn’t seem to have a solution.”¹⁷ To solve a riddle is to seemingly solve the unanswerable. As Steven Weitzman describes, “One solves the riddle not only

¹⁴ Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 101.

¹⁵ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel’s Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 116.

¹⁶ Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 149–50.

¹⁷ Steven Weitzman, *Solomon* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 142.

by not believing one's eyes - by distrusting appearances, and by discerning what lies hidden behind them."¹⁸

A second memorable narrative contributing to the image of the greatness of Solomon's wisdom also involves women. The narrative of the two prostitutes in 1 Kgs 3:16-27 is particularly notable and famously linked with the mnemonic construction of Solomon's wisdom. In contrast to the narrative of Queen Sheba and her riddles, this narrative has two memorable themes, motherhood and sex. Two prostitutes who shared a home and had given birth within a few days of each other came to Solomon for judgment (1 Kgs 3:16-18). One woman claimed that the other's son had died when the mother had rolled onto him, leading the woman to switch the babies. When the sleeping mother discovered the dead infant in her arms, she claimed it was not hers (1 Kgs 3:19-22). They argued and thus came to Solomon for judgment (1 Kgs 3:22). This led Solomon to famously proclaim that the baby would be cut in two so that each mother would have a half (1 Kgs 3: 24-25). The true mother then exclaimed that she rather the other woman have her son and have him alive, in contrast to the speech of the liar, who stated she would rather the baby be dead than given to the other woman. This led Solomon to give the baby back to the first mother and as such demonstrated that Solomon had the ability to see the truth that was otherwise hidden and administer divine judgment (1 Kgs 3:26-27). The text stated "All Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered; and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice" (1 Kgs 3:28).

Solomon is unique that the "wisdom of God" was in him. Moses, although remembered teaching and implementing the wisdom of Yahweh, did not receive the ability to know the unknowable that was demonstrated by Solomon (Exod 18:25-26). Moreover, חכמת אלהים only

¹⁸ Ibid., 143.

appeared in the context of Solomon and was not repeated anywhere else in the Hebrew Bible. Instead, Bezalel, the builder of the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant, was filled with רוח (Exod 31:3; 35:31). While the חכמת אלהים embodied Solomon's very being, Bezalel, was instead a filled vessel.

The Royal Underdog

Solomon's rise to power is a component of the construction of his uniqueness. It was important for such a notable king to also have a notable origin story. In most cases, such as Moses or Samuel, it is a unique birth story. But unlike Moses, Solomon's father was already a great king. Solomon could not be placed in a river to be found, nor was he born to pious but barren parents like Samuel. Instead Solomon was born great without a unique story of his birth. To make the story of his origin special, he is instead remembered as an underdog within the narrative of his rise to power.

Solomon was not the assumed heir to David. Instead, it was his half-brother Adonijah who was the apparent heir to the throne. He was older than Solomon, handsome, and presented as having military and priestly support (1 Kgs 1:5-9). Yet, through the actions of Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, and the prophet Nathan, David declared Solomon as successor to the throne (1 Kgs 1:30). This strengthens the memory of Solomon as a competent ruler with a unique origin story. Although Solomon's father was a king, he came to power during a succession crisis when there was a stronger competitor who had support for the throne, which reinforced the significance of his eventual success. Even though Adonijah is introduced first and is heir apparent, Solomon was the eventual "winner".¹⁹ Yet, there is little indication that Adonijah was more competent to rule.

¹⁹ Ibid., 33.

Unlike Solomon, there was little inherently kingly about him, as demonstrated by his fleeing to grasp the horns of the altar in fear of Solomon (1 Kgs 1:50).²⁰

David described Solomon as wise even before he was blessed by Yahweh.²¹ In contrast, Adonijah acted foolishly by requesting to marry Abishag, David's former concubine, which Solomon took as a threat to his own authority.²² As 1 Kings continued, Solomon is remembered as having consolidated his power. He sentenced Adonijah to death (1 Kgs 2:24-25), banished the priest Abiathar, and the text further detailed the death of Joab and the eventual death of Shimei (1 Kgs 2:26-45). But his actions are presented as a justifiable portion of the consolidation process: "So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon" (1 Kgs 2:46).

Before his death, David commanded Solomon to "be strong, be courageous, and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses...." (1 Kgs 2:2-3) and the dialogue further confirmed to the reader that the Davidic monarchy would remain on the throne if they remained faithful to Yahweh (1 Kgs 2:4).

What about Torah?

Solomon was given by Yahweh great wisdom, yet the text does not draw attention to the image of the study of Torah. Unlike other wise biblical figures, such as Joshua (Josh 1:8), there is no indication that Solomon was a student of the laws of Yahweh. As such, although his wisdom was a divine blessing from Yahweh, the reader was not asked to remember Solomon as a student of the laws of Torah.

²⁰ Ibid., 41.

²¹ Ibid., 42.

²² Ibid., 44.

Even before the transgressions in 1 Kings 11, Solomon deviated from the teachings of Deuteronomy. Solomon is remembered as having an abundance of wealth and women in stark contrast to Deut 17:17, which states “And he must not acquire many wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; also silver and gold he must not acquire in great quantity for himself.” As such, the text evoked a tension between the golden age of Solomon and the prescriptions of Deuteronomy. The readership of Kings is asked to bracket this tension. Yet, as will be explored further, narrative brackets are often unstable and an excellent tool for the creation of narrative conflict.

As established, Solomon’s wisdom is unique. He had wisdom about all the land, sea and air, wisdom for judgment but not wisdom for Torah. When the literati described Solomon’s wisdom, they described him as being wiser than anyone else, wiser than all the wisdom of the East and Egypt, that he “composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five” and that he had wisdom of all the things on earth. Solomon had the knowledge and skill to build the temple in Jerusalem, he administered judgment on behalf of Yahweh, he understood riddles and “hard questions”, and due to his wisdom, he did not need to engage in warfare to expand and protect his empire. Yet there is no mention of his knowledge of Torah (1 Kgs 4:29-34). Significantly, Solomon is specifically directed by Yahweh to keep his commandments and when the tension between his actions and Torah are bracketed, he and Israel are rewarded.²³

How to Explain the Calamity

It is at the end of the narrative of Solomon in which he, and Israel, began their decline. As Karl William Weyde noted “...at the beginning of the Solomon narrative the king is a man after

²³ Weyde, “The Narrative of King Solomon and the Law of the King: On the Relationship between 1 Kings 3-11 and Deut 17:14-20,” 78.

God's own heart, his wisdom is rooted in God and the divine law," yet "the older Solomon, however, forgets the fear of YHWH is the beginning of wisdom; he is disobedient and turns away from YHWH, the God of Israel."²⁴ Such a deviance was necessary, as the readership knew of the calamity, which followed Solomon's reign.

How Could Solomon Go Wrong?

Interacting with the above-described positive memories is the memory of Solomon's actions in 1 Kings 11. As discussed, the memory of Solomon in Kings is bookended with greatness and calamity. Perhaps unfortunately for the literati, there were only so many ways Solomon could be portrayed. He had to be "good", for he was the builder of the temple, an inherently kingly activity which should have been divinely sanctioned, but he also had to be remembered for doing something "bad", as convention in the ancient Near East would have required a theological reason for the dissolution of the united monarchy following his reign. As such, the literati seemingly had two possible options.

First, Solomon could have had a change in his heart, falling victim to his own hubris. To do so would be easy, but would diminish the memory of his wisdom and his overall greatness. Solomon should have "known better", especially as Yahweh had repeatedly promised prosperity and unity to Israel and the House of David as long as they kept the commandments. As such, there is no logical reason for him to deviate. For him to be manipulated under any other situation would also diminish his wisdom, as the great Solomon could not be remembered as having a mind which was malleable.

Instead, there can be a narrative of greatness followed by decline in old age, negating the need for hubris. Solomon can deviate because he had lost his wisdom. Although Solomon was not

²⁴ Ibid., 88.

the only biblical figure to age negatively, he is not completely comparable to the others. Isaac, Eli and David all suffer in their old age.²⁵ Isaac is purposely deceived by Jacob and his mother Rebekah who trick him into blessing Jacob rather than Esau by having Jacob wear a coat of fur to disguise his identity (Gen 27:5-29). In 1 Sam 2:22-25, Eli attempted to stop his sons from stealing sacrifices and sleeping with women, but they would not listen and as a result Yahweh killed his sons and cursed his household (1 Sam 2:34; 3:14). 1 Kgs 1:1-4 clearly illustrated that in his old age, David was unable to keep warm so a beautiful girl was acquired for his bed.

Yet, in these examples, their aging did not overwhelm the mnemonic constructions in their narratives as happened to Solomon. For example, both David's need for a woman to "warm his bed" and his perceived inability to have sexual relations with her did not undermine his fame, as he was not remembered for his inability to achieve either of these. Yet Solomon was known for his wisdom, and this is what he lost. Solomon's unique wisdom is after all temporary and as such, it is a comment on the infirmity of his own essence of uniqueness.

Good stories tend to associate fall with something in the narrative's past; a latent seed of destruction that germinates. Solomon is remembered for three distinct reasons, his wisdom, his wealth and his women, two of which Deuteronomy specifically warned against (Deut 7:3, 17:17) and one of which made him unique. As such, the seed for deviation must have lain in his wealth or women. Although his wealth could have been presented as the problem by the literati, the use of foreign women to further the narrative is substantially more memorable due to the construction of women as dangerous in patriarchal societies.

²⁵ Judith C. Hays, Richard B. Hays, and Christopher B. Hays, "Ageism in the Bible," in *The Encyclopedia of Ageism*, ed. Erdman B. Palmore, Laurence Branch, and Diana K. Harris (New York: The Haworth Press, 2005), 22.

The Danger of Marriage to Foreign Women

As discussed, in his youth, Solomon was able to deal wisely with women and his marriages were representative of Yahweh's blessings.²⁶ Polygamy, or more accurately, polygyny, is often associated in modern memory with the ancient Near East.²⁷ Yet it is important to understand that such marriages were relatively uncommon and more importantly, often limited to royalty.²⁸ 1 Kgs 11:3 noted that Solomon had seven hundred princesses and three hundred concubines, which described Solomon's wives very similar to how his possessions were described in 1 Kings 10, and evoked memories of the power and prestige established in the preceding narratives.²⁹

Yet, Solomon's love and marriage of foreign women included those from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon and the Hittites, nations whom Yahweh had previously warned "will surely incline your heart to follow their gods" (1 Kgs 11:2). Nevertheless, Solomon failed to heed Yahweh's warning and in his old age, Solomon was led astray by his wives and turned his heart to other deities, such as Astarte and Milcom (1 Kgs 11:2-4). He built high places for Chemosh and Molech and further ensured that each of his foreign wives had a place to offer sacrifices and burn incense (1 Kgs 11:4-8).

Foreign women were often, though not always, presented negatively in the Hebrew Bible.³⁰ Marriage to foreign women was often presented negatively as these women were often faithful to foreign deities, even in marriage.³¹ Deut 7:4 explicitly warned that they would turn men away from Yahweh to serve other gods and it is a transcultural trope that women could manipulate their

²⁶ Ehud Ben Zvi, "Monogynistic and Monogamous Tendencies, Memories and Imagination in Late Persian/Early Hellenistic Yehud," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 125 (August 2013): 275.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 265.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 155.

³⁰ Linda S. Schearing, "A Wealth of Women: Looking Behind, Within, and Beyond Solomon's Story," in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 440.

³¹ *Ibid.*

husbands, leading to both good and bad results. As such, foreign women were dangerous to the Israelite man and his community.

Yet there is no reference to Solomon's wives acting in such a manner prior to 1 Kgs 11:1-8 and like Solomon, their negative actions are also contained to this chapter. As such, it is implied that prior to Solomon's deviation, Solomon's marriage to foreign women was not necessarily an issue nor was it problematic for them to have worshipped their own gods. This is not to suggest they were somehow "good" or "better" than they were in 1 Kings 11, but instead the text chose not to mention them, implying they were not threatening to Solomon or his kingship. Furthermore, there is no indication that his wives had a turn of heart, causing them to act and manipulate Solomon. Instead, they were not a threat as they were seemingly controlled by Solomon and while the (re)reader may have been forewarned, they were asked to bracket Solomon's wives prior to 1 Kings 11.

1 Kgs 11:4 reads:

וַיְהִי לַעֲת זִקְנַת שְׁלֹמֹה נָשִׁיו הָטוּ אֶת לִבָּבוּ אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְלֹא הָיָה לִבָּבוּ שָׁלֵם עִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו כְּלָבֵב דָּוִיד אֲבִיו

The use of the *hiphil* stem, reserved for causative action, is notable, reminding the reader that it was Solomon's wives which acted upon him, just as Deut 17:17 warned. Solomon was thus "caused to" sin by his wives.³² Yet by marrying such a large number of foreign wives, in stark contrast to the teachings of Deuteronomy, Solomon planted the seeds for his own transgressions. How could a king with divinely given wisdom, the ability to administer justice and even the knowledge and blessing to build the temple in Jerusalem deviate so dramatically from the cult

³² Nancy Nam Hoon Tan, *"Foreignness" of the Foreign Woman in Proverbs 1-9: A Study of the Origin and Development of a Biblical Motif* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 73.

which he centralized? If Solomon was divinely blessed, how could there be the national trauma of the fall of the united monarchy immediately after his reign?

The Matter of Aging

Solomon not only aged, but it was his aging that led to a national trauma, the division of the united monarchy. Not only was Jeroboam's rebellion divinely sanctioned, but the text reiterated Yahweh's judgment. There can be little doubt in the reader's mind that the dissolution of the united monarchy and the rise of the northern Kingdom was due to Solomon's actions.

Importantly, Solomon lost his ability to discern when he aged. No longer was he "wiser than anyone else, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, children of Mahol" nor did "his fame spread throughout all the surrounding nations" (1 Kgs 4:31). If Sheba was to visit Solomon in his old age she would not have lost her breath in awe (1 Kgs 10:5). No longer would all of Israel stand in awe of his judgment nor would "The whole earth [have] sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind." (1 Kgs 3:28; 1 Kgs 10:24)

As Burke O. Long stated "It is a powerful legitimization both of Solomon's failures and Jeroboam's sudden success."³³ Rhythmically, yet also paradoxically, Solomon's reign began with much hope for the lasting of the united monarchy and the centralized cult in Jerusalem, and his ending resulted in a prophecy of destruction.³⁴ Even though Solomon constructed the temple in Jerusalem and thus centralized the Yahwistic cult, his eventual downfall set in motion the dissolution of the united monarchy, a tragedy for the literati.

³³ Burke O. Long, *1 Kings with an Introduction to Historical Literature* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 130.

³⁴ Matthew J. Suriano, *The Politics of Dead Kings: Dynastic Ancestors in the Book of Kings and Ancient Israel* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 83.

Permanent Warning and Impermanent Heart

The Solomon of Kings embodied memories about divine warning and the impermanence of wisdom. Prior to Solomon's transgressions, Yahweh appeared to remind Solomon of the greatness he and Israel would experience if they kept the commandments and he appeared again to warn Solomon when he began to transgress. Yahweh provided the opportunity for repentance by offering a warning before punishment. Yet due to Solomon's infirmity, he was not able to listen to Yahweh.

As stated, Yahweh had appeared to warn Solomon multiple times. In 1 Kgs 3:13, Yahweh said "If you walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life." Following the construction of the Temple, Yahweh appeared again to Solomon, re-affirming his promise, stating

As for you, if you walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised your father David, saying, 'There shall not fail you a successor on the throne of Israel.' (1 Kgs 9:4-5)

Yet Yahweh also warned Solomon that if he did not remain devoted and kept his commandments, "I will cut Israel off from the land that I have given them; and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight and become a heap of ruins..." (1 Kgs 9:6-8). Additionally, Yahweh further reiterated that all would understand that they had fallen because they had cast aside their god (1 Kgs 9:9).

1 Kgs 11:9 reminded the reader that Yahweh had previously appeared twice to Solomon to warn him directly, yet Solomon failed to observe the warning. As a result, Yahweh stated that due to Solomon's actions, the kingdom would be split, although one tribe would remain for the Davidic

lineage “for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen” (1 Kgs 11:13).

The text reiterated that in his old age, he turned his heart from Yahweh. His warnings were very clear and the text left little room for misunderstanding. Solomon was mentally incapacitated and his heart was no longer strong. Solomon is remembered through a duality, he was seemingly superhuman yet also overwhelmingly human. Although in his youth he has divine wisdom, wealth and prestige, he is humanized in his old age. Moreover, there is a memory built to exhibit the contrast between the permanence of divine warning and the impermanence of the human heart. Although human wisdom is inherently impermanent, the principle of divine warning was not.

The Literati, Memory and Kingship

Although Solomon was old when he deviated and was lacking his mental faculties, he is not remembered as blameless. He, and thus all Israel, were punished for his actions. In his youth, Solomon planted the seeds of his own deviation by transgressing Torah. Solomon had deviated from the teachings in Deuteronomy and finally, the tension between Solomon’s golden age and his actions were too great and the brackets fell. Significantly, if Solomon had not amassed such a large number of women of foreign origin, there would not have been anyone to manipulate him in his old age. And as such, Solomon was still culpable for his actions, both in his youth and later in life. By doing so, the literati thus maintained the principle of justice and the importance of following Torah.

As such, there is an intertwined memory created. Not only can even the best deviate from their royal responsibility in their old age, but no one can acceptably deviate from Torah without consequence. No king, not even the greatest, wisest, or richest, is comparable to Yahweh.

What Do You Do With an Old King?

Just like the modern reader, the literati and their audience knew that old age was associated with a mental “fogginess” and susceptibility for manipulation.³⁵ Moreover, the ability for a king to act cultically appropriately, administer divine judgment and be respected, if not feared, by his neighboring nations was important in the ancient Near East.

The memory of Solomon’s deviation as described above, does not replace the positive memories of Solomon’s wealth and wisdom, instead they interact. For Solomon’s deviation to be significant, it must be in contrast to how the reader assumed the narrative was to unfold. Solomon is demonstrated as having reigned Yahwistically for a majority of the narrative and his mnemonic construction is overwhelmingly positive. Yet his old age is seemingly his downfall. Solomon’s deviation from the restrictions on wealth and women as laid out in Deuteronomy seemingly “caught up” with him and he “lost control” over his wives who were subsequently able to influence his actions.

The Memory of Fallibility in Kings

Despite Yahweh’s repeated warnings, Solomon sinned, in a manner so great, that his legacy is not only tarnished but destroyed. As such, another memory of Solomon is created. Solomon, the ideal ruler, is fallible. There is no reason to assume that his wives were wiser than Solomon or that they had a unique ability to manipulate him. Furthermore, Solomon should have “known better” than to blatantly disregard Yahweh’s direct warning. As such, the memory of Solomon’s fallibility interacts with the memories of Yahweh’s blessings to reinforce the mnemonic construction of the uniqueness of Yahweh. No matter the blessings, Yahweh remained distinct from humanity. Even

³⁵ For more information on aging in the ancient Near East, see Douglas A. Knight “Perspectives on Aging and the Elderly in the Hebrew Bible.” *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 68 (2014): 136-149.

those chosen to administer divine laws and construct divine structures are not divine themselves. For even the wisest and most blessed king can fail. The reader of the narrative of Solomon in Kings remembers this. Just like Solomon, they too are fallible and it is through Yahweh's guidance that they are able to achieve great things. And when they disregard Yahweh's commandments, they will suffer, no matter how great their previous achievements.

In his youth, Solomon is the picture of good kingship. He, upon the advice of his father, consolidated his rule (2 Kgs 2) and not only was he wise, but he specifically requested the ability of discernment, a marker of a great monarch in the ancient Near East.³⁶ As a "good king" he also engaged in proper cultic ritual and completed the impressive and important task of temple building.³⁷ Yet he deviated, his knowledge and ability failed. In his old age his wisdom was gone, he did not have the ability to discern proper cultic behavior even with divine warning and intervention, let alone the ability to know the unknowable. Solomon's golden age, like his wisdom, was impermanent.

The Problem with Kingship

Solomon is seemingly a perfect king before 1 Kings 11. Although the seeds of Solomon's transgressions may have been planted in the readers' memory, such as his use of forced labour in 1 Kgs 9:15-23, there was little warning for the reader in Solomon's younger years that he would deviate so substantially. Yet, herein lies the inherent problem with kingship. No matter how unique, wise or blessed, the king will always age. Because Solomon was devout, he was blessed with a long life, but he is not immortal and as such, he aged significantly. And with age comes inherent physiological and mental challenges.

³⁶ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 74.

³⁷ Ibid., 75.

Ideally the king held his position for life and named one of his sons as successor to the throne. And as such, there was no “term limit”. Unless overthrown by a foreign power or deposed internally, the king would remain in control of the throne until the end of his natural life. Moreover, the king acted as the mouthpiece of the divine.³⁸ To question the king was to question Yahweh. As the king was divinely linked, there was no one else to answer to. Although various members of the elite likely attempted to sway the decisions of an aging king, they did not have true authority.

As such, the narrative of Solomon in Kings is not just about his rise and fall. Instead, it acts as a site of memory to explore the problem with kingship. Although the memory of Solomon is intrinsically linked with wisdom, wealth and temple building, it is also a memory of fallibility, national destruction and punishment. Solomon is seemingly a paradox, and although he was unique in many ways, he was not divine. Unlike Yahweh, the monarch becomes old and his mind is less capable with age. He is fallible. Within the mnemonic construction of Solomon in the Book of Kings, the literati explored the inherent problem with kingship. What should be done with an old king? A king who no longer has the mental capacity to rule? A king whose actions may bring about destruction? Although it raised the question, the Book of Kings does not have the answer, instead, it reminded the reader that even the “perfect” king can fail, and when he does, his golden age will come to an end.

³⁸ Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 133.

CHRONICLES' CONTRIBUTION TO THE SHAPING OF THE MEMORY OF SOLOMON

Introduction

There are numerous memories about King Solomon encoded within the Book of Chronicles, some of which have mnemonic counterparts in the Book of Kings and some of which do not. Particular elements of Samuel-Kings were taken as fact by the Chronicler, and not seen as flexible, such as that he built the Temple, or who the monarchs were.³⁹ As such, much of the narrative of Kings is retained, yet new memories are created and existing memories are re-shaped within Chronicles.⁴⁰ Furthermore, Chronicles legitimized itself by drawing comparisons to its textual predecessors yet also suggested a unique authority by the use of its self-constructed differences.⁴¹

As in the Book of Kings, in Chronicles, Solomon is remembered as the builder of the Temple, a pre-determined "fact" for the Persian literati.⁴² Even though the text noted the use of Hiram-abi for its construction, the Temple remained Solomon's, and as will be discussed, David's creation.⁴³ In contrast, Solomon's other building activities, including the important symbol of his kingship, his palace, were not emphasized by the Chronicler.⁴⁴ Instead, the memories of Solomon's

³⁹ Ehud Ben Zvi, "One Size Does Not Fit All: Observations on the Different Ways That Chronicles Dealt with the Authoritative Literature of Its Time," in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi and Diana V. Edelman (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 19.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 26.

⁴¹ Ehud Ben Zvi, "The Book of Chronicles: Another Look," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 31 (2002): 270.

⁴² Louis C. Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 195.

⁴³ Ibid., 183.

⁴⁴ Ida Frohlich, "The Temple as a Symbol of Power in Inner-Biblical and Post-Biblical Exegesis," in *Cultural Memory in Biblical Exegesis*, ed. Pernille Carstens, Trine Bjornung Hasselbach, and Niels Peter Lemche (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2012), 269.

divine gifts and subsequent activities that have been retained are explicitly linked with the Temple and thus with Yahweh.⁴⁵

David, Solomon and the Temple

David and Solomon

David's preparations for the construction of the Temple held a large mindshare for the reader of the Book of Chronicles. Although the Chronicler did not change that it was Solomon who was chosen to build the Temple, it was now David who set the foundations and provided the plans to Solomon, including the layout and items needed.⁴⁶ Moreover, it was David, with divine help, who chose the site of the Temple.⁴⁷ 1 Chr 22:5 states "For David said, 'My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the Lord must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorified throughout all the lands; I will therefore make preparations for it.'" As such, David was remembered as the architect of the Temple while Solomon was remembered as the builder.⁴⁸ This does not necessarily detract from the memory of Solomon; instead, the memory of the Temple is strengthened as the Temple was built by the two most important kings in the memory of the literati.

For the Chronicler, without the achievements of David, there would be no foundation on which Solomon could build the temple in Jerusalem. Moreover, by mnemonically linking the reigns of David and Solomon, one reign smoothly transitioned to the next. David's success was

⁴⁵ Mark J. Boda, "Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler's Temple Building Account," in *Foundations to the Crenellations*, ed. Mark J. Boda and Jamie Novotny (Munster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010), 311.

⁴⁶ 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 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 195; Boda, "Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler's Temple Building Account," 305.

⁴⁷ Sara Japhet, *I&II Chronicles* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 552.

⁴⁸ Boda, "Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler's Temple Building Account," 305.

tied to Solomon's completion of the Temple, just as Solomon's success was tied to David's foundations.⁴⁹

The Experienced Warrior and the Young Builder

A Man of War

David was a man of war, and it is this attribute, which ultimately barred him from building the Temple (1 Chr 28:3). Although David had planned to build the Temple, Yahweh came to him saying "You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood in my sight on the earth" (1 Chr 22:8) and 1 Chr 22:9 brought attention to the connection between the *שלום ושלום ושקט* and *שלמה*, his son's name.⁵⁰ Unlike the case of Solomon, war was the main mnemonic feature of David's reign, and as John W. Wright notes, even his coronation was mnemonically linked to "military grandeur."⁵¹

Although peace did not embody David's reign, it was remembered as a reign of security.⁵² It was through David's war efforts that Israel was able to defeat the Philistines (1 Chr 18:1), collect wealth (1 Chr 18:7) and as will be discussed, provide the authoritative foundation on which Solomon was later dependent.⁵³ Notably, David was not remembered as having acted unjustly in war.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the climax of the narrative of David in the Book of Chronicles is his cultic preparations.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Mark A. Throntveit, "The Idealization of Solomon as the Glorification of God in the Chronicler's Royal Speeches and Royal Prayers," in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium*, ed. Lowell K. Handy (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 425.

⁵⁰ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 145.

⁵¹ John W. Wright, "The Fight for Peace: Narrative and History in the Battle Accounts in Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Historian*, ed. M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven L. McKenzie (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 162.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., 162–63.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 164.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Foundations of the temple of peace came from the success of war. Even David's military actions, which as noted, barred him from construction, are mnemonically linked with the temple. Not only did David plan the Temple, but the very foundations were made of David's success over his enemies such as Solomon's use of the spoils of David's wars in the Temple, such as bronze from Hadadezer (1 Chr 18:8).

Although mnemonically linked with war, David's rule eventuated in a time of peace.⁵⁶ The concept of a warring king engaging in cultic activities and building projects is not novel and is a motif found in other kings in the Persian period, such as Darius I.⁵⁷ Notably, however, unlike other kings, David's later peace did not allow him to construct the Temple. David's previous warfare left a "mark". A mark his son did not, and would not, have.

The Temple was to be a house of peace, built by the man of peace, yet it is from the actions of the man of war that the Temple could be built.⁵⁸ This reminded the reader that although the Temple was a house of peace, war was sometimes necessary.

A Man of Peace

Unlike in the narrative counterpart in the Book of Kings, all of the memories of Solomon in Chronicles were typified by peace. Solomon's rise to the throne was peaceful as he was divinely chosen by Yahweh to be David's successor (1 Chr 22:6).⁵⁹ Unlike in the Book of Kings, there was no succession crisis or pretenders for the throne and when Solomon became king there was festivity and joy which acted to reaffirm his right to the throne.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Ibid., 163.

⁵⁷ Francois Vallat, "Darius the Great King," in *The Palace of Darius at Susa: The Great Royal Residence of Achaemenid Persia*, ed. Jean Perrot (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 44.

⁵⁸ Knoppers, "Treasures Won and Lost: Royal (Mis)appropriations in Kings and Chronicles," 194.

⁵⁹ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 149, 160.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 163, 169.

Rest was important to the Chronicler and acted to remind the reader of Deut 12:10-12, which stated that it was only when Yahweh had given them rest from their enemies that the Temple would be built. In order to be a man of peace and rest, Solomon was remembered in Chronicles without struggle or having taken any missteps which may trigger them.⁶¹ Moreover, David said to Solomon “Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the Temple is finished” (1 Chr 28:20). As will be discussed further, while it is arguable that the ending left room for Solomon to make a grave sin, such as he did in 1 Kings 11, it is important to note that in Chronicles there was no reason for the reader to be reminded of him as having done so.⁶² For the Chronicler, the reign of Solomon was a golden age of cult and monarchic unity.

Solomon and Yahweh’s Blessings

A Memory of Wealth

Solomon’s wealth is recounted in the Book of Chronicles and, like in Kings, Solomon’s riches were a divine gift (2 Chr 1:12).⁶³ The Chronicler retained the story of the visit of the Queen of Sheba which once again acted to re-affirm Solomon’s wealth and international prestige.⁶⁴ Moreover, the memory of Solomon’s wealth had a strong cultic element. The Chronicler detailed the offerings and the feast at the Temple, signifying both Solomon’s wealth, but also his dedication.⁶⁵ The Temple was described in great detail, noting the exquisite building materials and techniques, reminding the reader of Solomon’s power and prestige (2 Chr 4).⁶⁶ Gold was used

⁶¹ Throntveit, “The Idealization of Solomon as the Glorification of God in the Chronicler’s Royal Speeches and Royal Prayers,” 415.

⁶² Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 176.

⁶³ Ibid., 174.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 199.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 196.

⁶⁶ Frohlich, “The Temple as a Symbol of Power in Inner-Biblical and Post-Biblical Exegesis,” 246.

throughout the Temple and like in Kings, Solomon was remembered as having engaged in trade, which generated, even more, prosperity for himself (2 Chr 9:13-23).⁶⁷

The Temple furnishings were exquisite and included objects dedicated by David (2 Chr 5:1).⁶⁸

As Knoppers notes,

Together with the material in David's reign, the references in Solomon's reign create a highly positive image of the way in which the united monarchy generates an enduring legacy for subsequent generations. Unlike the Deuteronomists' David, Chr.'s David has a formative role to play in establishing the legacy. Solomon's wealth becomes, in part, a Davidic bequest.⁶⁹

Notably, however, the Chronicler had little interest in Solomon's wealth outside of the Temple and cult.⁷⁰ This is not to suggest that wealth was necessarily bad, nor that the Chronicler never found it important, but instead it was worth remembering when it was tied to the Temple and cult. In a similar vein, no particular attention was paid to his palace, a great symbol of his wealth and kingly prestige.⁷¹ As the palace had little cultic relevance, there was little reason to focus on non-Temple or non-cultic wealth. It was not necessarily that this wealth was "bad" or otherwise negative, instead wealth not tied to the temple served no purpose to the Chronicler and may have even acted as a distraction.⁷²

A Memory of Wisdom

Solomon was remembered as having asked Yahweh for wisdom to be a great ruler, and being thus awarded "wisdom and knowledge" (2 Chr 1:10-12). His wisdom is further legitimized

⁶⁷ Ibid., 259; Knoppers, "Treasures Won and Lost: Royal (Mis)appropriations in Kings and Chronicles," 197.

⁶⁸ Knoppers, "Treasures Won and Lost: Royal (Mis)appropriations in Kings and Chronicles," 197.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Irony Icon of Human Achievement*, 176.

⁷¹ Niels Peter Lemche, "Solomon as Cultural Memory," in *Remembering Biblical Figures in the Later Persian & Early Hellenistic Periods*, ed. Diana V. Edelman and Ehud Ben Zvi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 180.

⁷² John Van Seters, "The Chronicler's Account of Solomon's Temple-Building: A Continuity Theme," in *The Chronicler as Historian*, ed. M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven L. McKenzie (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 287.

during the recounting of the visit of the Queen of Sheba. She was struck awe by the combination of Solomon's ability to answer riddles, and his wealth (2 Chr 9:2-4). Moreover, the text states "All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom," (2 Chr 9:23). Yet, unlike in the Book of Kings, explicit demonstrations of Solomon's wisdom are missing.⁷³

While Solomon was remembered as wise in Chronicles, his wisdom was not emphasized to the extent it was in the Book of Kings. The reader of Chronicles would likely already remember and be aware of demonstrations of Solomon's wisdom recounted in Kings and as such, the Chronicler could safely omit the narratives without substantially changing the memory. While Solomon's wisdom may have been important, it was superseded, and intertwined in the memory of the building of the Temple.⁷⁴ This is not to suggest that the Chronicler did not consider Solomon to be as wise as he was remembered in Kings, but the memory of the Temple construction took precedence.⁷⁵

A Memory of Fame

Although the Temple was a significant aspect of the memory of Solomon in Chronicles, as Louis Jonker described, "the Chronicler goes to great lengths to emphasize the glorious reputation of the king."⁷⁶ Solomon was remembered as having strong international support. He contacted Hiram for assistance in building the Temple and Hiram further gifted cities to Solomon, illustrating the ties between the two nations and importantly, that Solomon was the dominant king.⁷⁷ Additionally, when the literati remembered his wealth and his wisdom, they, in turn, were asked to remember his fame.⁷⁸

⁷³ Boda, "Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler's Temple Building Account," 305.

⁷⁴ Japhet, *I&II Chronicles*, 544.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 644.

⁷⁶ Jonker, *I & 2 Chronicles*, 198.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 176, 195.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 198.

Notably, Solomon's wealth and wisdom were legitimized by foreign monarchs.⁷⁹ This illustrated that not only was Solomon respected in his own nation, but internationally.⁸⁰ 2 Chr 9:23-24 states "All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. Every one of them brought a present, objects of silver and gold, garments, weaponry, spices, horses, and mules, so much year after year." Not only did foreign kings visit Solomon to hear his wisdom, but they also gave gifts. Notably, it was not only his immediate neighbours, but his fame was remembered as spreading to "all the kings of the earth" (2 Chr 9:23).

As discussed, Solomon engaged in trade with both Hiram of Tyre and the Queen of Sheba. The latter came with tribute. She is described as bringing "a very great retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones" (2 Chr 9:1). Her large tribute helped to legitimize Solomon, as the reader understood the Queen of Sheba herself to be great.⁸¹

Hiram's relationship with Solomon is similarly notable. The Chronicler was clear that Hiram accepted the greatness of both Solomon and Yahweh and thus when "Hiram opens his response by stating that Solomon's kingship is the result of an expression of (YHWH's love of his people)," it further legitimized Solomon.⁸²

Knoppers has previously argued that it is through Hiram that the Temple becomes great.⁸³ Notably, Solomon and Hiram's correspondence in Chronicles, unlike in Kings, is succinct.⁸⁴ Solomon and Hiram already knew what was needed and were familiar with the construction of

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 203.

⁸¹ Ibid., 199.

⁸² Ehud Ben Zvi, "When the Foreign Monarch Speaks," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*, ed. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 215.

⁸³ Gary N. Knoppers, "When the Foreign Monarch Speaks about the Israelite Tabernacle," in *History, Memory, Hebrew Scriptures: A Festschrift for Ehud Ben Zvi*, ed. Ian Douglas Wilson and Diana V. Edelman (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 61.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 52.

the tent of meeting, suggesting both were readers of Torah.⁸⁵ Thus, the Book of Chronicles blurred the boundary of what constituted the Other.⁸⁶ As such, it is through foreigners, such as the Queen of Sheba and Hiram of Tyre, that Solomon and the Temple was made even greater.

A Memory of Piety

Within the Book of Chronicles Solomon is not seduced by women, by wealth, or by his own power.⁸⁷ Unlike the Book of Kings, there is no memory of deviation or cultic sin nor did the Chronicler take action to remind the reader of such incidents within Kings.⁸⁸

No attention is drawn to Solomon's wives, with the exception of the Pharaoh's daughter. Moreover, when Pharaoh's daughter was mentioned it was in regard to her not being allowed to “live in the house of King David of Israel, for the places to which the ark of the Lord has come are holy,” (2 Chr 8:11) acting to demonstrate Solomon’s dedication to proper cult, piety, or perhaps some other factor.⁸⁹ The Chronicler further went to great lengths to detail the practices of the Levites in the Temple as well as other cultic ceremonies.⁹⁰ The reader is thus reminded of a glorious time in the history of their cult. Moreover, Solomon, intertwined with David, is representative of a golden age which would later be remembered within the narrative of Hezekiah “There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon son of King David of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem (2 Chr 30:26).⁹¹

⁸⁵ Ibid., 61.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 179.

⁸⁸ Steven James Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 82.

⁸⁹ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 177.

⁹⁰ Yong Ho Jeon, *Impeccable Solomon? A Study of Solomon's Faults in Chronicles* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 191.

⁹¹ Mark A. Throntveit, “The Relationship of Hezekiah to David and Solomon in the Book of Chronicles,” in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 120.

The exclusion of Solomon's cultic misdeeds is notable, as Chronicles spends more time discussing royal cultic activity than can be found in the corresponding stories within Samuel and Kings.⁹²

A Perfect Solomon?

The explicit absence in Chronicles of the narratives found within 1 Kings 11 has already been the focus of numerous studies. William Riley noted the importance of Solomon as the builder of the Temple and thus his elevated status within Israelite cultic narrative.⁹³ Riley described the Solomon of Chronicles as a seemingly purified figure, one who is without cultic sin, in contrast to the Solomon of Kings, a man of transgressions and foreign love. He further saw Solomon's portrayal in Chronicles in relation to his temple building, and it is through this construction that Solomon was purified. He states, "In many ways, the Chronistic Solomon, cleansed of the sins and failures narrated in the Deuteronomistic History (1 Kgs 11:1-8), provides a picture of the ideal Davidide," and further stated, "However, the Temple in Chronicles does not gain in prestige because it has been built by someone so sinless; rather, Solomon becomes sinless in the Chronistic History, because he has fulfilled the task laid upon him and built the Temple."⁹⁴

The Book of Chronicles was not read in isolation, however, and as such it is problematic to understand Solomon as having been cleansed of his sins and failures. Additionally, the assertion that Solomon's sins are removed from Chronicles because he built the Temple, not because the Temple needed to be built by one free of sin, is not without issue either. Riley's argument that Solomon became sinless due to his cultic construction is problematic, as the "sins" which are

⁹² William Riley, *King and Cultus in Chronicles: Worship and Reinterpretation of History* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 37.

⁹³ Ibid., 87.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 96.

conspicuously missing from Chronicles are present within Kings, and thus in the memory of the (re)readers, and are noted as being committed in his old age.

The Chronistic narratives allowed for kings to have “blemishes” after completing cultic reform, such as Asa (2 Chr 16:7-10), yet the Chronicler chose not to explore this in regards to Solomon. Moreover, the Book of Chronicles was not read in isolation, and although Solomon as he appears within Chronicles may be considered sinless, the Solomon of memory was not.

The readers of the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles knew that there was a difference between the two texts. For example, although the Chronicler retold certain narratives almost verbatim, at times the author chose to use different words or spellings, such as his occasional use of Late Biblical Hebrew instead of Standard.⁹⁵ By doing so, the Chronicler brought attention to the difference between the texts and the implied time of authorship.⁹⁶ Furthermore, Chronicles was presented as being contemporary to the community, yet as a text that understood the author as being informed by other texts which the community has deemed to be authoritative and worthy of being remembered.⁹⁷ As such, not only did it borrow the authority of Samuel-Kings to legitimize itself, but it also presented the previous texts as part of an authoritative grouping, one in which the Book of Chronicles placed itself.⁹⁸

Moreover, Solomon was not perfect in Chronicles, as there is the reference to Solomon's use of forced labour in the later narrative of 2 Chr 10:4 and there is mention of Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter which reminded the reader of 1 Kings 10.⁹⁹ As Yong Ho Jeon notes, Chronicles goes into greater detail about Solomon's Egyptian horses than in Kings which, like in

⁹⁵ Ben Zvi, “The Book of Chronicles: Another Look,” 269.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Jeon, *Impeccable Solomon? A Study of Solomon's Faults in Chronicles*, 262–63.

Kings, was in tension with Deuteronomistic Law.¹⁰⁰ Yet, Solomon received divine blessings despite these flaws.¹⁰¹ The Chronicler wanted to present Solomon as an ideal king, but he did not wish to bring attention to the events of 1 Kings 11 nor did the Chronicler wish to replace the memory encoded within it.¹⁰² Instead, he did not need attention brought to it. Two different memories can exist at the same time, and can even be in tension, without one needing the other to be replaced.

Solomon and the Temple

All of the above-mentioned memories of Solomon are either implicitly, or often explicitly, linked to the creation of the Temple in Jerusalem.¹⁰³ As discussed in the previous chapter, Solomon is remembered as having unified the cult by building the Temple.¹⁰⁴ 1 Chronicles 22 and 28-29 had already described David's planning activities for the Temple, yet the reader is reminded that Solomon still had activities to do; he needed a craftsman and to obtain materials.¹⁰⁵ While David may have received the plans for the Temple, the reader is reminded that Solomon was the Temple builder, the builder of Yahweh's dwelling on earth. Moreover, the text further reminded the reader that it is "Solomon [that] orders the building of a Temple for the Name of the Lord..."¹⁰⁶ And as described, the memory of Solomon as a man of "peace and rest" is directly linked with the memory of the Temple, the "house of rest" (1 Chr 22:9). Furthermore, the Temple itself represented the peaceful exchange between Yahweh and Israel.¹⁰⁷ As Gary N. Knoppers notes,

The Davidic-Solomonic era represents an unrivalled period of Israelite solidarity, royal accomplishment, and divine blessing. Within the larger picture, the tenure of Solomon

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 218–19.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 221.

¹⁰² Ibid., 268–69.

¹⁰³ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 145.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 171.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 175.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 191.

is notable for marking an unprecedented time of international peace, national prosperity, and the successful construction of the long-awaited sanctuary.¹⁰⁸

The construction of the Temple encompassed a large portion of the narrative of Solomon in Chronicles and by doing so, the reader cannot help but focus on the Temple construction. As Brueggeman notes, this is not surprising given the large mindshare the Second Temple likely had on the literati of the Persian Period.¹⁰⁹

Substantial time was spent describing the origins of the design of the Temple and its preparations and building.¹¹⁰ There is little debate that the Chronicler was overtly concerned with the Temple and proper cultic worship.¹¹¹ As a result, when the intended readership of Chronicles read and reread the narrative of the Temple, they “were asked numerous times to visit the main site of holiness in Israel’s mental map: the Temple and the holy altar that the readers were to imagine through their (re)readings.”¹¹²

Additionally, the extensive mindshare of the Temple in the narratives of both David and Solomon show that it was important to the literati.¹¹³ By reading and re-reading these narratives, the literati of the Persian period were able to revisit the united monarchy and the First Temple in the time of the Second Temple and foreign occupation.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸ Knoppers, “When the Foreign Monarch Speaks about the Israelite Tabernacle,” 61.

¹⁰⁹ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel’s Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 163.

¹¹⁰ Boda, “Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler’s Temple Building Account,” 310.

¹¹¹ Ehud Ben Zvi, “Purity Matters in the Book of Chronicles: A Kind of Prolegomenon,” in *Essays in Memory of Susan Haber*, ed. Carl S. Ehrlich, Anders Runesson, and Eileen Schuller (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 39.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Van Seters, “The Chronicler’s Account of Solomon’s Temple-Building: A Continuity Theme,” 283.

¹¹⁴ Ben Zvi, “Purity Matters in the Book of Chronicles: A Kind of Prolegomenon,” 39.

Legitimization

A Memory of Exodus or of “Ancient Times”

The Chronicler often linked the memory of Solomon in the book of Chronicles to “ancient times”. For example, it is widely held among scholars that the transition of kingship from David to Solomon was based on that of Moses to Joshua in Deuteronomy 31 and Joshua 1.¹¹⁵ As Mark J. Boda summarized,

Both predecessors (Moses, David) undertake significant preparation to ensure the success of the successor with Moses defeating the Transjordan kingdom and leading the people to the edge of the promised land and David amassing resources and organizing personnel for the temple project. Both predecessors make double announcements regarding the appointment of their successors with one private and the other public. Both successors (Joshua and Solomon) enjoy immediate and wholehearted popular support and lead Israelites into ‘rest’.¹¹⁶

Japhet also notes other parallels, such as Moses acting as covenant founder and establisher and David doing the same for the Temple cult.¹¹⁷ Moreover, just as Moses did not enter the Promised Land, David did not see the completion of the Temple.¹¹⁸ Joshua’s authority and right to rule is legitimized through Moses, just as Solomon’s is from David.¹¹⁹

It has been noted that Hiram-Abi may have acted to remind the reader of Oholiab, the craftsman who built the tabernacle in Exod 31:6.¹²⁰ As such, when Hiram-Abi assisted Solomon, the reader is asked to remember the relationship between Oholiab and Bezalel.¹²¹ “Solomon received his divine endowment of wisdom at the very bronze altar constructed by Bezalel, who is

¹¹⁵ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 143.

¹¹⁶ Boda, “Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler’s Temple Building Account,” 316–17.

¹¹⁷ Japhet, *I&II Chronicles*, 499.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 177.

¹²¹ Ibid., 169.

described in the book of Exodus as one ‘with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom’.”¹²² Moreover, Hiram/Hiram-abi acts as a site of memory for Oholiab and the altar.¹²³

Additionally, the Chronicler noted that the Temple was built on Mount Moriah, where Yahweh had appeared to David (2 Chr 3:1) Notably, Mount Moriah is only named one other time, in Genesis 22, when Abraham offered Isaac.¹²⁴ Solomon’s Temple is thus further legitimized by its link to multiple important cultic events and biblical figures.¹²⁵

As Boda notes “By linking themselves and their work to past luminaries and projects, ancient royal figures were aware of the need for continuity with the past even in the midst of their present innovations.”¹²⁶ As such, when the reader remembered the First Temple, they were also remembering the great lineage that preceded it.¹²⁷

A Memory of Legitimization

Memories can be tools of legitimization.¹²⁸ They can also build the community of which they legitimize. As Ben Zvi notes “A society that ‘remembers together’ is far more likely to ‘remain together’...”¹²⁹

The literati knew of their literary predecessors and it is safe to assume that their intended audience did as well.¹³⁰ The Biblical patriarchs that the readers were reminded of served as sites of memories for the literati of Persian Yehud.¹³¹ As there was both a physical and cultic break

¹²² Boda, “Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler’s Temple Building Account,” 317.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 180.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Boda, “Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler’s Temple Building Account,” 315.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 315–16.

¹²⁸ Ehud Ben Zvi, “Social Memory and Identity Formation: A Historian’s Viewpoint with a Focus on Prophetic Literature, Chronicles and the Deuteronomistic Historical Collection,” in *Texts, Contexts and Readings in Postexilic Literature*, ed. Louis Jonker (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.), 100.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 136.

¹³¹ Ibid., 128.

between the First and Second Temple, the Persian-era Temple “was vulnerable to allegations of illegitimacy”.¹³² By linking the First Temple to ancient times, the Second Temple, already linked to the first, could then also be linked to the distant past. The Chronicler emphasized that the Temple was the most important aspect of the cult, as it was on this foundation that all other activities were to be performed. By doing so, contemporary Persian period rituals were legitimized.¹³³

Moreover, by tying the Temple to the ancient times, the reader is reminded of the Exodus from Egypt and thus the situation of themselves and recent ancestors.¹³⁴ The memory of the “Return from Babylon” was present within the social mindscape of the literati and thus it is not surprising to see memories of the Exodus from Egypt present within Chronicles.¹³⁵

Ancestral Merit as an Explanation of Uncertainty

Within Chronicles, piousness did not ensure blessing. Bad kings may be punished, but sometimes good kings were too.¹³⁶ Similarly, some may be blessed seemingly without merit.¹³⁷ The divine blessing of peace allowed for Solomon to build the Temple and as such is one of the greatest blessings one could receive.¹³⁸ Yet this blessing was given before Solomon was born and thus before he was able to complete any actions that would have resulted in a reward.¹³⁹

¹³² Boda, “Legitimizing the Temple: The Chronicler’s Temple Building Account,” 317.

¹³³ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 176.

¹³⁴ It is irrelevant how large the population of Persian Yehud was actually in exile. Instead it is important that they remembered themselves as exiled.

¹³⁵ Ehud Ben Zvi, “The Study of Forgetting and the Foreign in Ancient Israelite Discourse/S: Observations and Test Cases,” in *Cultural Memory in Biblical Exegesis*, ed. Pernille Carstens, Trine Bjornung Hasselbach, and Niels Peter Lemche (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2012), 143.

¹³⁶ Ehud Ben Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles* (London and Oakville: Equinox, 2006), 22.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

As such, Solomon seemingly received the blessing on the grounds of ancestral merit.¹⁴⁰ Ancestral merit is referenced numerous times in Chronicles, yet it goes both ways.¹⁴¹ Children could also be punished for the actions of their fathers.¹⁴² This is not to suggest that good or bad kings are not divinely blessed or punished during their own lifetime, but these actions can also affect their descendants. Most notably this is the case of the Babylonian exile wherein entire generations were punished.¹⁴³

The theme of ancestral merit could be used to explain events that would not otherwise logically follow. As Ben Zvi states, "...not only human actions cannot be predicted, but also YHWH's response to them cannot be predicted, and at times remain unexplainable."¹⁴⁴ When the literati read and reread their own textual corpus, a mnemonic grammar of uncertainty was created.¹⁴⁵ They remembered good kings being blessed and bad kings being punished, yet sometimes good kings were punished and bad kings enjoyed privilege. They were aware that sometimes people would receive Yahwistic blessings or punishment seemingly without merit. This tension allowed the literati to understand that Yahweh was unpredictable. Despite this however, "...even if the future or (his)tory is unpredictable, even if YHWH's actions are not fully explainable and will never be, the need to seek YHWH and follow YHWH's commandments remained."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 23.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 24.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 25.

According to Knoppers, “The text presents, therefore, a paradox: the dynastic promises are both unconditional and conditional.”¹⁴⁷ As such, “The history of the Judahite kingdom becomes not so much a commentary on Yhwh’s relationship to David, as in Samuel-Kings, as a commentary on Yhwh’s relationship to both David and Solomon.”¹⁴⁸

Memory of Non-Mortal Kingship

As Schweitzer argues, “The Chronicler recognized that the cult was not a static entity. Its organization and practices must be adapted over time.”¹⁴⁹ As such, hope for restoration was always possible and cultic practice did not need to remain unchanged during this break, “but it must stand in continuity with them.”¹⁵⁰

Although Chronicles stressed the greatness and contributions of both David and Solomon, there is little to indicate that an independent Davidic monarch was required to sit on the throne.¹⁵¹ While David was instrumental for the foundations of the Temple, the emphasized roles of the Levites allowed for proper cult to be practiced despite who was physically on the throne.¹⁵²

A continuation of the Davidic lineage was not necessary for proper worship and rule, and as such, David and Solomon were vehicles to cement proper cultic practice in the memory of the Yehudite community.¹⁵³ This is not surprising, as there certainly was not a Davidic king on the

¹⁴⁷ Gary N. Knoppers, “David’s Relation to Moses: The Contexts, Content and Conditions of the Davidic Promises,” in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. John Day (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 103.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 106.

¹⁴⁹ Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, 80.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Mark J. Boda, “Gazing through the Cloud of Incense: Davidic Dynasty and Temple Community in the Chronicler’s Perspective,” in *Chronicling the Chronicler: The Book of Chronicles and Early Second Temple Historiography*, ed. Paul S. Evans and Tyler F. Williams (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 240.

¹⁵² Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, 13.

¹⁵³ Ehud Ben Zvi, “Toward a Sense of Balance: Remembering the Catastrophe of Monarchic Judah/ (Ideological) Israel and Exile through Reading Chronicles in Late Yehud,” in *Chronicling the Chronicler: The Book of Chronicles and Early Second Temple Historiography*, ed. Paul S. Evans and Tyler F. Williams (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 262.

throne during the Persian period.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, the Chronicler did not suggest that the House of David would be or even should be on the future throne.¹⁵⁵ As Schweitzer notes “Just as YHWH made David king in place of Saul, so too the Davidic dynasty can be replaced at the will of YHWH in response to continued unfaithfulness.”¹⁵⁶

Perhaps most importantly, the Chronicler presented the Temple, and the kingdom, as Yahweh’s. Although Solomon may be king over Israel, he was Yahweh’s representative sitting on his throne.¹⁵⁷ Additionally, by having Yahweh as true king, a break in Davidic lineage was acceptable. Although the House of David may have lost control of Israel, it was Yahweh who was true king and ruled, no matter who was physically on the throne. Whether the physical king was Israelite, or Persian, it was no matter. As Jonker notes, “In the Persian era Israel had no Davidic king any longer. But they could still confess to the nations that the kingdom belongs to Yahweh, who is their actual king.”¹⁵⁸

As such, no matter who physically ruled, they were Yahweh’s proxy.¹⁵⁹ There was no need for a break in proper cult as long as the Temple was standing and legitimized through the methods described earlier.¹⁶⁰ It did not matter whether Israel was independent, or part of a larger empire. Yahweh would remain true king and proper cult and worship was possible.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, 10–11.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 78.

¹⁵⁷ Boda, “Gazing through the Cloud of Incense: Davidic Dynasty and Temple Community in the Chronicler’s Perspective,” 225.

¹⁵⁸ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 161.

¹⁵⁹ Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, 127.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

A COMPARISON OF THE MNEMONIC CONSTRUCTIONS OF SOLOMON IN KINGS AND CHRONICLES

Introduction

While the narratives of Solomon found within the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles are indeed similar, with particular events and characters mnemonically cemented in the reader's mind across both texts, the mnemonic constructions that the author asks the reader to remember are at times largely different. As previously discussed, the reader of Chronicles was aware of the existence of the Book of Kings and thus the dynamic created by the similarities and differences between the two texts. Chronicles contained both shortened and lengthened versions of the narratives in Kings, and when dates, events, and characters were changed, the reader was expected to be aware and familiar with the “original” narratives. As such, it is quite telling to try to understand the intended mnemonic construction and themes created by the Chronicler in light of the larger literary context.

Solomon and the Temple

As discussed, for the literati, it was a pre-determined and inflexible “fact” that Solomon was the builder of the temple.¹⁶¹ In both Kings and Chronicles, the temple was described as having been constructed with exotic building materials and techniques, but unlike in the Book of Kings, the Book of Chronicles emphasized David’s role in the preparations for the temple and its cultic activities.

¹⁶¹ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 195.

Wealth of the Temple

Although both accounts of the description of the physical temple are very similar, they do differ. For example, when the writer of Kings described the nave, he wrote "he carved cherubim, palm-trees, and open flowers, overlaying them with gold evenly applied upon the carved wood" (1 Kgs 6:35), while the Chronicler instead stated that "the nave he lined with cypress, covered with fine gold, and made palms and chains on it," (2 Chr 3:5).

As such, the readers of the text were asked to imagine and memorize a slightly different temple in Chronicles than that of Kings. As previously discussed, the respective authors of Kings and Chronicles were informed by their differing contemporary contexts. As such, it seems likely that the writer(s) of Chronicles imagined the Solomonic temple in the context of their contemporary temple, their memory of the temple in Kings, and also an idealization of both.¹⁶² Similarly, the writer(s) of Kings were also likely informed in a similar manner, and thus their description of the Solomonic temple was also a reflection and idealization.

Inauguration, Temple Cult and the Ordinances of David

The memory of the dedication of the temple is also very similar in both texts. Kings and Chronicles evoked memories that are similar and re-affirm each other, but both draw attention to something different. In both Kings and Chronicles, Solomon acknowledged that it was David who wished to build the temple but ultimately was not permitted to, and both included the lengthy blessing of forgiveness and sin (1 Kgs 8:31-53; 2 Chr 6:22-42). While both narratives included that Solomon offered sacrifices (1 Kgs 8:63; 2 Chr 7:5), the Chronicler expanded the description to state "the priests stood at their post; the Levites also, with the instruments for music to the Lord

¹⁶² Ibid., 181.

that King David had made for giving thanks to the Lord...Opposite them, the priests sounded trumpets, and all Israel understood" (2 Chr 7:6).

Unlike the Book of Kings, the Chronicler further detailed the cultic practices around the Solomonic Temple, helping to shape the memory of the pre-exilic cult. 2 Chr 8:12-13 stated that Solomon offered sacrifices every day "as the duty of each day required, offering according to the commandment of Moses for the Sabbaths, the new moons and the three annual festivals- the festival of unleavened bread, the festival of weeks, and the festival of booths." As previously discussed in greater detail, by asking the reader to imagine their contemporary festivals in the context of the First Temple, Yehudite cult was further legitimized. Moreover, 2 Chr 8:14 states "According to the ordinance of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their offices of praise and ministry alongside the priests as the duty of each day required, and the gatekeepers in their divisions for the several gates; for so David the man of God had commanded." This change in emphasis asked the reader to remember the Temple as a living place, one which required proper order for it to work properly. As such, the temple priests themselves became further mnemonically linked with David. Moreover, David is remembered as acting according to Torah (1 Chr 16:40) and thus when David provided his ordinances in 1 Chr 23:25-32, which were adaptations of the requirements of the Ark in the tent, David was further linked with Moses, and thus the writings of the Pentateuch were re-enforced in the context of Jerusalem.

Moreover, by ensuring the cultic activities within the Temple were implemented correctly and not left to his "inexperienced son" (1 Chr 22:5; 1 Chr 29:1), David was able to make plans for the eternal temple. One which could be destroyed, rebuilt and filled once again without the need for a "new" David.

Solomon and David

The origins of Solomon's rule, and thus claim to the Davidic throne, are strikingly different between Kings and Chronicles. Similarly, the "overlap" of David in the narrative of Solomon in Chronicles is also noticeably distinct. Perhaps the most noticeable difference is the story of the succession crisis within 1 Kings 1 as there is simply no parallel found within Chronicles. Instead, when Solomon became king, there was festivity and joy (1 Chr 29:20-22).¹⁶³ 1 Chr 29:24 reads "All the leaders and the mighty warriors, and also all the sons of King David, pledged their allegiance to King Solomon." Such a statement effectively closes any gaps for the narrative of Adonijah's claim to the throne (1 Kgs 1:5) or a need for Bathsheba's subsequent involvement (1 Kgs 1:11-21). In fact, Bathsheba's only appearance in Chronicles is in the genealogies (1 Chr 3:5).

David's involvement in the construction of the temple is further detailed in 1 Chr 28:11-19 and included the plans for the temple, the division of the priests, the weight of the cultic vessels and furnishings and also the cherubim that covered the ark of the covenant. But if David were to be the architect of the Temple while simultaneously retaining the mnemonic construction of Solomon as temple builder, he would have to provide his son with the plans for the Temple. Within the framework of the succession crisis of 1 Kings 1, David would need to provide the plans either before the end of his reign, which would assume that there was already a rightful, presumably Yahwistic approved heir or conversely, the plans would be inherited by his assumed "first in line" successor upon David's death. Instead, David announced, "And of all my sons, for the Lord has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord

¹⁶³ Ibid., 163, 169.

over Israel." (1 Chr 28:5). Importantly, while the reader was aware of the succession crisis of 1 Kings 1, the use of "mnemonic silence" diminished its overall mindshare.¹⁶⁴

Wealth, Wisdom, and Deuteronomy

Wisdom

While both Kings and Chronicles asked the reader to remember Solomon as wise, there is a stronger emphasis on the matter in Kings. As previously discussed, in both Kings and Chronicles, Solomon asked and received divine wisdom as a blessing from Yahweh (1 Kgs 3:3-15; 2 Chr 1:7-12). Notably, the Chronicler omitted arguably the most memorable narrative of his wisdom, his counsel to the two prostitutes in 1 Kgs 3:16-28.

While the narrative of the two prostitutes is indeed interesting, it is used to demonstrate Solomon's ruling wisdom. Chronicles does not seem to emphasize Solomon's secular duties as king and instead it is his role of temple builder for which he is remembered as great.¹⁶⁵ As such, while the narrative may be important, it is a daily issue that does not "fit" with the emphasis on the Temple in Chronicles.

Solomon's Wealth

In Kings, gold was so plentiful during the reign of Solomon that silver "was not considered as anything" (1 Kgs 10:21). And like in Kings, the Solomon of Chronicles engaged in trade, and gold was used throughout the Temple (2 Chr 9:13-23).¹⁶⁶ But, the Chronicler did not express interest in reminding the reader of Solomon's wealth outside of the Temple and cult.¹⁶⁷ It was not

¹⁶⁴ Charles B. Stone et al., "Toward a Science of Silence: The Consequences of Leaving a Memory Unsaid," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 7, no. 1 (2012): 40.

¹⁶⁵ Japhet, *I&II Chronicles*, 644.

¹⁶⁶ Frohlich, "The Temple as a Symbol of Power in Inner-Biblical and Post-Biblical Exegesis," 259; Knoppers, "Treasures Won and Lost: Royal (Mis)appropriations in Kings and Chronicles," 197.

¹⁶⁷ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 176.

necessarily that Solomon's wealth as remembered in Kings was "wrong," but instead, the nuanced relationship between Solomon and his wealth was not something the Chronicler wished to bring attention to.¹⁶⁸ In Kings, Solomon's wealth existed in a larger mnemonic construction of Deuteronomistic tension and fall unlike in Chronicles.

Palace

In both Kings and Chronicles, Solomon's palace served as a minor memory. While the Book of Kings noted that Solomon's palace took thirteen years to build, six years longer than the temple, there is nothing to suggest that it is more important or that the length of its building contributed to its being greater than the temple (1 Kgs 6:38; 7:1). While the palace is described as having "costly stones" (1 Kgs 7:10-11), the reader is only reminded that it was a suitable palace for a great king. There is nothing to suggest that it was overly extravagant. In the Book of Chronicles, little attention is paid to Solomon's palace, only noting "At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon had built the house of the Lord and his own House..." (2 Chr 8:1). Notably, however, the Chronicler does state that Pharaoh's daughter was not to live in his palace, and instead, he had built a home elsewhere for her outside of the City of David (2 Chr 8:11).

As Jonker notes, Chronicles was generally accepting of foreigners, and thus Pharaoh's daughter is seemingly barred because she is a woman and thus impure.¹⁶⁹ Japhet notes that this is interesting as this restriction on women is not explicitly echoed elsewhere.¹⁷⁰ Once again, it must be understood that the author of Chronicles was informed by and remembering, a different temple

¹⁶⁸ Van Seters, "The Chronicler's Account of Solomon's Temple-Building: A Continuity Theme," 287.

¹⁶⁹ Japhet, *I&II Chronicles*, 626; Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 196.

¹⁷⁰ Japhet, *I&II Chronicles*, 626. Japhet does state, however, "...it seems, however, that a similar concept is found in the instructions of the sectarian (Essene) literature of which this very may be regarded as an early precursor..."

than that of the writer of Kings and it is possible that 2 Chr 8:11 is a reflection of contemporary Yehudite cult, cultural discomfort, or even a contemporary “Utopian” image.

Motif of Rest & Deuteronomy

Despite the relationship between Solomon and Yahweh, Solomon is not remembered as reading Torah. The intended readership of both Kings and Chronicles, however, are expected to at least be familiar, if not a student of Torah. Both Kings and Chronicles stipulate that peace was required to build the temple (1 Kgs 5:3; 1 Chr 22:7-8), actively reminding the reader of Deut 12:10-11 which states “...when he gives you rest from your enemies all around so that you live in safety, then you shall bring everything that I command you to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name; your burnt-offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and your donations, and all your choice votive gifts that you vow to the Lord.”¹⁷¹

In both texts, it is David’s warring ways which prohibit him from building the Temple and in Kings, Solomon explained to Hiram that is because “enemies surrounded” David (1 Kgs 5:3). While Solomon’s reign in Kings was not entirely peaceful, it is interesting that when Solomon rose to power and had to “deal with” his enemies, it was David who advised him how to judge them accordingly (1 Kgs 2:5-9).

Notably, however, Solomon’s reign as remembered in Kings was not entirely peaceful. As previously discussed, it is in his later years that there is rebellion when the tension between Solomon’s actions and Deuteronomy ultimately become too great. In contrast, Solomon’s reign in Chronicles was seemingly typified by peace, with non-peaceful mnemonic elements removed or mnemonically minimized, such as Solomon’s ascension to the throne (1 Kgs 1), and the subsequent

¹⁷¹ Throntveit, “The Idealization of Solomon as the Glorification of God in the Chronicler’s Royal Speeches and Royal Prayers,” 415.

rebellion of Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11:26) Instead, Jeroboam's rebellion is remembered as having occurred under Solomon's son, Rehoboam, as 2 Chr 10:4 states "Your father made our yoke heavy. Now, therefore, lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you again" which reminded the reader that there was still trouble that followed Solomon's reign. This is not to suggest that Solomon's reign was purposefully meant to be remembered as sinful or otherwise "bad," but instead, Jeroboam's rebellion under the reign of Rehoboam was a concrete "fact" within Chronicles and that Solomon's reign was not without criticism.¹⁷²

Solomon's Activities

Hiram of Tyre

In both Kings and Chronicles, Solomon maintained relationships with foreign monarchs, such as King Hiram/Huram of Tyre and the Queen of Sheba. Although much of the narrative may at first seem similar, there are slight differences that shape different mnemonic constructions. In both narratives, King Hiram aided in building the temple (1 Kgs 5:1-10; 2 Chr 2:3-16), but the Chronicler was clear that Hiram accepted the greatness of both Solomon and Yahweh and thus when Hiram acknowledged Yahweh's love of Israel in the form of Solomon's rule, it further legitimized Solomon himself.¹⁷³ While the Book of Kings notes that King Hiram sent Solomon servants (1 Kgs 5:6), they are not detailed to the extent that Hiram-Abi was in Chronicles. As previously discussed, when Hiram-Abi assisted Solomon, the reader is asked to remember the

¹⁷² Ben Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles*, 118.

¹⁷³ Ben Zvi, "When the Foreign Monarch Speaks," 215.

relationship between Oholiab and Bezalel.¹⁷⁴ This link was not necessary for the Book of Kings, as the writer(s) were not attempting to create a mnemonic construction of legitimization.

Solomon's relationship with Hiram of Tyre also differed between the two texts. As previously discussed, Hiram and his craftsmen, Hiram-abi are remembered as having knowledge of Yahwistic cult.¹⁷⁵ Moreover, in the Book of Kings, Hiram received cities as gifts from Solomon (1 Kgs 9:11-13) which he is ultimately displeased with, yet in Chronicles, Solomon received cities from Hiram (2 Chr 8:2) indicating that Solomon was the greater king.

Queen of Sheba

The Queen of Sheba plays an important role in both Kings and Chronicles, acting to legitimize Solomon's wealth, knowledge, and overall international fame. In both narratives, she traveled a great distance to visit Solomon to test his knowledge and gave him great gifts in return. The Chronicler also retained from Kings that when Sheba visited Solomon, she was struck awe by the combination of Solomon's ability to answer riddles (1 Kgs 10:6-9; 2 Chr 9:2-8) thus further legitimizing his wisdom.¹⁷⁶

Notably, 1 Kgs 10:13 notes "Meanwhile, King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba every desire that she expressed, as well as what he gave her out of Solomon's royal bounty." In contrast, 2 Chr 9:12 states "Meanwhile, King Solomon granted the queen of Sheba every desire that she expressed, well beyond what she had brought to the king," effectively changing the relationship of Sheba and Solomon. No longer is their relationship remembered as reciprocal; instead, Solomon was established as the wealthier and more prestigious ruler. Not only did the Queen of Sheba travel a long distance to visit Solomon, but even her great riches were no match to his. While her narrative

¹⁷⁴ Jonker, *1 & 2 Chronicles*, 169.

¹⁷⁵ Knoppers, "When the Foreign Monarch Speaks about the Israelite Tabernacle," 61.

¹⁷⁶ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 116.

still legitimizes Solomon, the Chronicler is clear that their relationship, like that between Hiram and Solomon, was not one of equals.

Solomon's Wives

Not only is the narrative of 1 Kings 11 removed, but the reader is only asked to remember Pharaoh's daughter, his "trophy wife" as Ben Zvi has previously described.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, as discussed, it was stipulated that she was not to be allowed to "live in the house of King David of Israel, for the places to which the ark of the Lord has come are holy," (2 Chr 8:11) thus further demonstrating Solomon's dedication to proper cult and piety.¹⁷⁸

As previously discussed, the narrative of Solomon's decline in his old age found in 1 Kings 11 is missing from Chronicles. Furthermore, by diminishing the mindshare of Solomon's multiple wives in Chronicles, the tension between Solomon and Deut 7:3-4 is relaxed. While reminding the reader of Solomon's wives and harem re-emphasized the memory of Solomon's great wealth, the overall mnemonic benefit of keeping such a memory which was directly linked to the events of 1 Kings 11 was small.

Biblical Wives

Chronicles also does not ask the reader to recall details about David's wives, though they are preserved in the genealogies of 1 Chr 3:1-8. Within David's narrative, there is only one mention of Michal (1 Chr 15:29), who is only referred to as the daughter of Saul and who is described as having despised David after seeing him leaping and dancing while the ark of the covenant was brought to the city of David.

¹⁷⁷ Ben Zvi, "The Study of Forgetting and the Foreign in Ancient Israelite Discourse/S: Observations and Test Cases," 152.

¹⁷⁸ Brueggeman, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*, 177.

Japhet notes that while this retained partial parallel of 2 Sam 6:20-22. "it is obvious, then, that the verse has survived as a detached member. It is neither a preparation for what follows nor integrally connected with what came before and hinders the fluent development of the story."¹⁷⁹ Despite this, however, as she is described as the daughter of Saul, the reader is reminded of the attitude of the House of Saul to the ark.¹⁸⁰

Solomon's sons are preserved in the genealogies, but unlike in the case of David, there is no mention of who bore him his children (1 Chr 3:10-14), with the exception of Rehoboam who is stated to be the son of Naamah the Ammonite (2 Chr 12:30), adding to the ambiguity of Solomon's marital life in Chronicles.

Utopia

As discussed, the Book of Kings investigated the perennial issue of mortal kingship and its possible downfalls. Solomon, like all mortal rulers before and after, was inherently fallible. Even if all the mortal king's actions on the throne were near perfect, which they certainly were not, as Solomon demonstrated, they eventually age and the risk of misstep not only increases but ultimately becomes inevitable. Yet, the king was presumed to rule for life. What should be done when a king acts destructively? The Book of Kings is not able to provide an answer.

In contrast, the Book of Chronicles seemingly removed this exploration and instead, there is little to indicate that a Davidic monarch, let alone an independent Davidic king, was required to sit on the throne at all.¹⁸¹ Additionally, it is important to note that it does not attempt to "correct" the kingship either. If we understand the narrative of David and Solomon as it is presented in

¹⁷⁹ Japhet, *I&II Chronicles*, 307.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 308.

¹⁸¹ Boda, "Gazing through the Cloud of Incense: Davidic Dynasty and Temple Community in the Chronicler's Perspective," 240.

Chronicles as utopic, it offered two possible options to the reader, both a Davidic dynasty and a non-Davidic dynasty.¹⁸² While the first option is the ideal, the second is presented as a valid alternative.¹⁸³ And as Steven Schweitzer notes, the Chronicler is careful to not purposefully advocate for either option.¹⁸⁴

As such, the Chronicler has approached the reign of Solomon much differently than that of Kings. While the writer of Kings chose to explore inherent issues with mortal kingship and its relation to the divine, the Chronicler understood themselves as living in the reality of its consequences.¹⁸⁵

Additionally, they also knew that the monarchic ideal as described in Kings was not necessary to engage in worship and devotion to Yahweh's teachings.¹⁸⁶ They were aware of the unpredictableness of their own reality, and they understood Yahweh as transcending human rationality.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, as Ben Zvi notes, the community understood that their reality may transcend rationality, but still offers hope:

Moreover, no matter how many times the proper temple may cease to exist in actual Jerusalem, it is always re-buildable, because the community's knowledge of the temple and worship is always available through YHWH's teachings, in the form of authoritative texts held by the literati of the community. These texts provided them with a mental temple, accessible through reading and imagination, that cannot be polluted, destroyed, or the like.¹⁸⁸

As such, the Chronicler presented the utopic idea of an independent Davidide on the throne, but also an alternative. A way to worship and retain a relationship with a rebuilt temple or without

¹⁸² Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, 125.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 125–26.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁸⁵ Ben Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles*, 165.

¹⁸⁶ Ben Zvi, "Toward a Sense of Balance: Remembering the Catastrophe of Monarchic Judah/ (Ideological) Israel and Exile through Reading Chronicles in Late Yehud," 261.

¹⁸⁷ Ben Zvi, *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles*, 124–25.

¹⁸⁸ Ben Zvi, "Toward a Sense of Balance: Remembering the Catastrophe of Monarchic Judah/ (Ideological) Israel and Exile through Reading Chronicles in Late Yehud," 261.

an independent Israel, one through proper cult. While memories of trauma and catastrophe are important to groups and their identities, it is not a long-term sustainable construction.¹⁸⁹ Instead, there must also be hope.¹⁹⁰ And the Chronicler aimed to provide this to his readers.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 262.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

CONCLUSION

As established, the author(s) of Kings were living in a significantly different time than the writer(s) of Chronicles, and this fact is reflected in the mnemonic constructions found in each text. As demonstrated, the narratives of Solomon in Kings and that of Chronicles have both obvious similarities and differences. In Kings, Solomon's reign is both one of ideal kingship, and ultimately failure, as it is his reign which leads to the ultimate downfall of his own kingdom. In contrast, Chronicles wrestles with a different trauma, the fact that there was not, and it was unlikely that there would be, a Davidic king on the throne.

By attempting to understand how the different temporal and political setting affected the Yehudite literati's understanding of ruler and kingship in Persian Yehud through the re-imagining of Solomon and his reign, it becomes clear that while the writer of Kings explored the inherent issues of mortal kingship and its relationship with the divine, the Chronicler understood themselves as living in the consequences of such a relationship and instead looked to provide hope to its readership.

A study such as this could also be extended to other kings who have counterparts found in both Kings and Chronicles. While it is possible that such an analysis would not necessarily shed light on contemporary thoughts and concerns on kingship specifically, presumably any changes between the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles were made for a reason and there is much room for investigation for future scholars using a similar comparative method.

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