

Translation

1/

And Solomon the son of David took firm control over his kingdom, and Yahweh his God was with him and magnified him exceedingly.

2/

After Solomon gave orders to all Israel, to the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, the judges,¹ and to every leader of all Israel, the heads of families, 3/ Solomon and the whole assembly with him went to the high place which was in Gibeon, for there was God's tent of meeting,² which Moses the servant of Yahweh had made in the wilderness. 4/ But David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it,³ for David had pitched for it a tent in Jerusalem. 5/ Moreover, the bronze altar, which Bezalel the son of Uri the son of Hur had made, was there⁴ before the tabernacle of Yahweh. Solomon and the assembly⁵ sought it.⁶ 6/ Solomon made an offering⁷ there, in Yahweh's presence,⁸ on the bronze altar, which was at the tent of meeting, and he offered on it one thousand burnt offerings.

7/

That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask what I should give to you." 8/ Solomon replied to God, "You⁹ have shown to David my father great loyalty, and you have made me king in his stead. 9/ Now, Yahweh God, let your promise¹⁰ to David my father be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. 10/ Now give me wisdom and knowledge so that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can govern this great people of yours?" 11/ God said to Solomon, "Because this is in your heart, and you did not ask for riches, wealth,¹¹ and honor, neither for the life of those who hate you, nor for many days have you asked, but you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge so that you might govern my people, over whom I have made you king, 12/ wisdom and knowledge are granted¹² to you, and riches, wealth, and honor I will give to you, such as none of the kings who were before you, and after you there will not be anything like this."

13/

Then Solomon came from the high place¹³ which was at Gibeon, from the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he ruled as king over Israel.

14/

Solomon amassed chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he posted¹⁴ in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

1 וְלִשְׁפָטִים. Curtis and Madsen (316) propose emending to “the tribes” and suggest that “the commanders of” was accidentally lost before it. Hence, “the commanders of the tribes.” See 1 Chr 28:1; 29:6. In a reading discussed in the second textual note in v. 17, Chronicles seems to presuppose a text of Kings other than MT.

2 אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד הַלְּדוֹת. This could also be translated “the tent for meeting God.” The expression occurs only here in the Bible.

3 בְּחַכְמָה לְדִין. Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 63) suggests that this is a kind of abbreviation for בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר חָכַן לְדִין, “in the place which David had prepared for it.” Cf. 1 Chr 15:12 Chr LXX ὅτι ἡτοίμασεν αὐτῷ = כִּי חָכַן לְדִין.

4 מִשְׁׁלָשֶׁל, with many Heb. mss LXX Vg; cf. Hognesius, *Text of 2 Chronicles*, 64. Many Heb. mss Syr Tg Arab מִשְׁׁלָשֶׁל “he [Solomon] put.” An altar for burnt offerings had already been there in David's day (see 1 Chr 16:39-40) so that it was not Solomon who put it there. For a defense of “put,” see Carr, *From D to Q*, 95 n. 151.

5 וְהַקְרָבָל; cf. 2 Chr 24:6; 29:23. A few Heb. mss LXX^A and other mss Syr Vg וְכָל הַקְרָבָל, “and all the assembly” (cf. v. 3; 2 Chr 6:3).

6 “It” refers to the altar (cf. LXX Vg) or “him” = God (Myers, 2:3). 1 Chronicles 13:3 speaks of seeking “the ark” (cf. 1 Chr 15:13) and leads me to favor the translation “it.”

7 וַיַּעַל (hiphil). The verb could also be translated “went up [on the bronze altar]” (*qal*), but it seems unlikely that Solomon performed such a cultic act.

8 לְפָנֵי יְהוָה. In MT these words follow the “bronze altar” and therefore separate the bronze altar from the relative clause that modifies it. The *sebir* adds שֶׁר before לְפָנֵי יְהוָה, which facilitates the retention at their present place in MT. Carr (*From D to Q*, 98) attempts to improve the verse by identifying “which was at the tent of meeting” as a gloss. The awkward syntax of this verse, however, should be compared to that in v. 13 and does not justify surgery. Carr also finds a tension between “the tent of meeting” and the tabernacle of Yahweh in the previous verse. He also argues that, since Solomon had only recently put the bronze altar before the tabernacle, the relative clause in this verse is inappropriate. In an earlier note above, I argued that מִשְׁׁלָשֶׁל “there” was preferable to מִשְׁׁלָשֶׁל “he put” in v. 5.

9 תְּהִלָּה. The presence of the pronoun gives emphasis to the word “you.” LXX construes this as the sign of the definite direct object.

10 דְּבָרָךְ; LXX τὸ ὄνομά σου (“your name”). LXX^L corrects to the MT.

The king made silver and gold¹⁵ in Jerusalem [as plentiful] as stones, and cedar he made¹⁶ as plentiful as the sycamores in the Shephelah.^{16/} Solomon's importation of horses¹⁷ was from Egypt¹⁸ and Kue;¹⁹ the traders of the king acquired them from Kue²⁰ at the standard price. 17/ They²¹ imported and then exported from Egypt a chariot²² for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty (shekels); so through them they were exported²³ to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings²⁴ of Aram.

- 11 עַשְׁר נִכְסִים. LXX construes these words here as a construct chain ("wealth of possessions"), but in v. 11 has two nouns in a series.
- 12 נָתַן; LXX δίδωμι (*νοτάτη*) "I am giving." Cf. 1 Kgs 3:12 "נָתָן" "I have given."
- 13 לְבָמָה. *BHS* suggests that this should probably be emended to *בַּחוֹתָה* (cf. LXX Vg Allen, *Greek Chronicles*, 2:131; and Rudolph, 196). This may be so, but the prepositions in Hebrew had a wide variation in meaning and ל can occasionally be translated as "from." The translation "to" in any case does not make sense since David had already been at Gibeon (See *NIV* and *NRSV*). Kropat (*Syntax*, 77–78) suggested that *לְבָמָה אֲשֶׁר בְּגִבֵּעָן* is a gloss from v. 3. Schenker ("Hebraica veritas," 426–38) thinks that MT ("Solomon came to the high place that was in Gibeon Jerusalem, away from the tent of meeting") is a correction of the Hebrew text lying behind LXX, and it implies that Jerusalem was the only appropriate place for sacrifice (Deut 12:5). Schenker's argument, however, depends on a number of questionable conclusions. I do not subscribe to Schenker's position that the high place was in Gibeon *in Jerusalem*, in the city of David, and not at the Benjaminite city of Gibeon. Schenker also mistakenly identifies the tent of meeting, which was at Gibeon, with David's tent, which was in the city of David (pp. 429–30). Finally, the Chronicler believed that Deut 12:5 permitted sacrificial worship at Gibeon until the establishment of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. In short, I do not believe that Schenker's interpretation of a correction supposedly made by MT is convincing. The Targum made it a two-stage journey: "So Solomon came to the height which was at Gibeon. From there he went to Jerusalem."
- 14 מִנְיָנִים; 1 Kgs 10:26 וְיִנְחַזֵּם "and he stationed them," from חָזַב.
- 15 חָזַב; missing in Syr and in 1 Kgs 10:27 MT. Kings LXX τὸ χρυσόν καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον "the gold and the silver," as in Chr LXX. The order of the words is reversed (= Chr MT) in Kgs LXX^{Ax} and the Syro Hexapla, where the words "and the gold" are marked with an obelus. Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 70–71 n. 47) argues that Kgs LXX has been corrected from Chronicles. See also 2 Chr 9:27 MT, which does not contain the word "gold."
- 16 נָתַן; cf. 1 Kgs 10:27 MT LXX. Chr LXX omits this second occurrence of the root נָתַן in this verse and adds ἐν τῷ Ιουδαϊᾳ, thus locating the cedars in Judah rather than in Jerusalem.
- 17 מִוּצָא הַסְכִּים. Or "The source of (Solomon's) horses."
- 18 מִמּוֹצְרִים. Many scholars emend this text and the parallel in 1 Kgs 10:28 to מִמּוֹצְרִי "from Musri." This

- may be the correct historical interpretation, but Rudolph (198) calls attention to יְעַלְוִי in the next verse, which would be more appropriate for Egypt than a place in Cappadocia. As far as I can tell, the alternate reading never existed in a text of Chronicles. *Per contra* Hognesius, *Text of 2 Chronicles*, 71–72. Myers (2:4–5) deletes Egypt “because horses were not bred in Egypt.”
- 19 תְּקֻפָּה; MT תְּקֻפָּה “collecting place” or “collecting pool.” The misunderstanding implied by this vocalization in MT is present already in 1 Kgs 10:28 MT. Kgs LXX (10:32) ἐκ Θεοῦ means the word as a place-name. The *athnah* in MT mistakenly follows “Egypt.” Myers (2:4–5) translates this word as Cilicia. See the commentary.
- 20 See the previous note.
- 21 The traders of v. 16. Perhaps this should be

- understood as a Semitic passive. A chariot could be imported.
- 22 מִמְצָרִים מִרְכָּבָה; cf. 1 Kgs 10:33 LXX ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἄρμα. 1 Kgs MT 10:29 מִמְצָרִים the. Unless the Kings translator was exercising some freedom of word order, the reading in Chronicles seems to presuppose the text of Kgs LXX rather than Kings MT.
- 23 יְצָאֵן (*hophal*), with BHS and Vg; MT יְצָאֵן (*hiphil*). Cf. the *Vorlage*, 1 Kgs 10:29 יְצָאֵן, which is vocalized as *hiphil*, but the consonants could just as well be understood as a *hophal* written *defectiva*.
- 24 וְלֹמְלָכִי, with Chr LXX and 1 Kgs 10:29. Chr MT וְמַלְכִי. Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 72) considers this a deliberate change in Chr MT, but does not explain why this change was made.

Structure

The opening chapter in the Chronicler’s account of Solomon can be outlined as follows:

- I. 1:1 Introductory verse
- II. 1:2-6 (1 Kgs 3:4) Solomon makes a pilgrimage to Gibeon and worships there
- III. 1:7-12 (1 Kgs 3:5-9, 10-13¹) God promises Solomon riches, wealth, and honor
- IV. 1:13 (1 Kgs 3:15; 4:1) Solomon returns to Jerusalem²
- V. 1:14-17 (1 Kgs 10:26-29) The wealth and some trading ventures of Solomon

While the Chronicler depends on no source apart from 1 Kings in this chapter, he has rewritten the excerpts from 1 Kings 3 far more extensively than was his usual practice in 1 Chronicles. Hence, the list of parallels in his

Vorlage above may be misleading. It is not always possible to provide a significant reason for these changes, and, as we noted in our introduction to the Solomon account, the Chronicler actually adds very few additional verses to his Solomon narrative. One must consult a synopsis, such as Endres, Millar, and Burns, *Parallels*, or Vannutelli, *Libri Synoptici*, to see both his dependence on the Kings *Vorlage* and the ways he has recast almost every sentence in this chapter. Of the first thirteen verses in this chapter, six are new compositions and seven are heavily reworked material from the *Vorlage*. The Chronicler has omitted an equivalent for 1 Kgs 3:1-3 (the marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt and the continuing worship at the high places during Solomon’s reign),³ 10,⁴

- 1 While there is extensive rewriting of the *Vorlage*, the following parallel passages can be listed: 2 Chr 1:7//1 Kgs 3:5; 2 Chr 1:8//1 Kgs 3:6α& and 7a; 2 Chr 1:10//1 Kgs 3:9, 7bβ; 2 Chr 1:11//1 Kgs 3:11; and 2 Chr 1:12//1 Kgs 3:12-13. While worded quite differently, 2 Chr 1:9 and 1 Kgs 3:8 have similar content.
- 2 Chronicles omits an equivalent for 1 Kgs 3:16-28 (Solomon judging between the two prostitutes); 1 Kgs 4:2-19 (the list of Solomon’s officials and administrators = Solomon’s administrative wisdom); 1 Kgs 4:20 (Judah and Israel were numerous); and 1 Kgs 5:1-14 (4:21-34; further examples of Solomon’s wisdom). I believe that the wisdom references

were omitted because the Chronicler saw Solomon’s wisdom particularly in his building of the temple. For discussion, see Philippe Abadie, “Du Roi sage au roi bâtisseur du temple,” 339–54. On 1 Kgs 5:1 (4:21) reappearing in 2 Chr 10:26, see the commentary on the latter passage.

- 3 The Deuteronomistic Historian was perplexed by Solomon’s attendance at the high places. He wrote, “Solomon loved Yahweh . . . except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.” The Chronicler turns Gibeon into a legitimate place of worship by placing the tent of meeting there.
- 4 There is no evident reason why this verse was omitted.

and 14-15a.⁵ A. Graeme Auld has published an essay on 1 Kgs 3:4-13//2 Chr 1:3-13, in which he argues that, wherever Kings and Chronicles differ, the shorter reading is the original text. That is, Chronicles was not rewriting the text of Kings but the text of the source that Kings used.⁶ But the reason for the major omissions listed in n. 2 make it highly unlikely that they were added to Kings after the composition of Chronicles. Auld's proposal that 1 Kgs 3:6a β -7a α , 7b-8a, 10, 12a, 12b β -13a α , and 14-15⁷ were not in the Kings source used by the Chronicler is unconvincing to me.⁸

Perhaps the most notable change in this chapter is the Chronicler's inclusion of an equivalent for 1 Kgs 10:26-29, presumably to show that Solomon's riches and his recognition by the nations were present from the very start of his reign and that Yahweh immediately fulfilled the promise made in v. 12. Both chap. 1 and chap. 9 deal with Solomon's wisdom and wealth, and both Solomon's wisdom and his wealth in Chronicles are focused primarily on the building of the temple. Solomon's wealth offers implicit testimony to his piety since David had promised, "Then you will prosper if you are careful to do the statutes and the ordinances which Yahweh commanded Moses for Israel" (1 Chr 22:13). The final four verses in this chapter are repeated in their context from Kings in 2 Chr 9:25-28, again with some changes from the *Vorlage*.⁹

Detailed Commentary

1:1 Introductory Verse

■ 1 *And Solomon the son of David took firm control over his kingdom, and Yahweh his God was with him and magnified him exceedingly:* The verb פָּנַן in the *hithpael* ("took firm control") is frequently used in Chronicles after a difficult transition in the monarchy (all of these without a parallel in the *Vorlage*): 2 Chr 12:13, Rehoboam after the invasion of Shishak (see also 13:7, 8); 13:21, Abijah after his war with Jeroboam; 15:8, Asa after the prophecy of Azariah; 17:1, Jehoshaphat after his father and predecessor died of an illness of the feet; 21:4, Jehoram, who killed all his brothers at his accession; 23:1, the priest Jehoiada in leading the coup against Athaliah; 25:11, Amaziah after the prophecy of the man of God; 27:6, Jotham after his father and predecessor was afflicted with leprosy; and 32:5, Hezekiah after the invasion of Sennacherib.¹⁰ Solomon's kingship is mentioned in this verse, and the verb "you have made me king" appears in vv. 8, 9, and 11, all of which are additions by the Chronicler. The Chronicler left out most of the turbulent events of 1 Kings 1-2, including the attempt of Adonijah to become king during David's lifetime, his later execution, and David's advice to Solomon to get rid of his enemies.¹¹ Still the Chronicler may allude to these events as he reports Solomon's great strength at the beginning of his reign.

5 Explanations are offered for these omissions in the commentary on vv. 7 and 12.

6 Auld, "Solomon at Gibeon," 97-107. For my critique of Auld's hypothesis in general, see Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 31-32.

7 These are approximations of his proposal in "Solomon at Gibeon." See pp. 98-103 for the exact details. This is not the place to respond to each of his assertions. Note that he errs in claiming that Kgs LXX lacks 3:6a β -b α , and in suggesting that the *Vorlage* of ἐν τῷ ψυχε is unclear. This Greek word for "sleep" is used to translate סְלִלָּה "dream" in Gen 20:3, 6; 31:10, 11, 24; 40:9, 17, 22; Num 12:6.

8 Person (*Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles*, 108-11), building on the work of Trebelle ("Kings [MT/LXX] and Chronicles," 494-95), argues for a modified version of the Auld hypothesis. In his view Chronicles is the most conservative text in this pericope, with 1 Kgs 3:1-3 and 16-28 being additions in Kings. I think Talshir ("Reign of Solomon," 235) is correct in pointing out that the

new beginning to the reign of Solomon in 2 Chr 1:1 and 2-6 left no room for the mention of Solomon's marriage at this point. She ascribes the omission of 1 Kgs 3:2-3 to ideological reasons. See my discussion of the reason for these omissions in my commentary on 2 Chr 1:1.

9 See the commentary on chap. 9. 2 Chr 1:14//2 Chr 9:25//1 Kgs 10:26; 2 Chr 9:26//1 Kgs 5:1a (4:21a); 2 Chr 1:15//2 Chr 9:27//1 Kgs 10:27; 2 Chr 1:16//2 Chr 9:28//1 Kgs 10:28; 2 Chr 1:17//1 Kgs 10:29.

10 See also 1 Chr 11:10 "These are the heads of David's warriors who give him strong support" (כִּי מְתֹחֲזֵק); 19:13; 2 Chr 16:9.

11 See Klein, "Last Words of David," 84-87.

Solomon's firm control over the kingdom, in fact, may be the Chronicler's recasting of two half verses in 1 Kings that he otherwise omitted: 1 Kgs 2:12, "his [Solomon's] kingdom was firmly established," and 1 Kgs 2:46, "So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon."¹² David, of course, in his farewell speeches had frequently urged Solomon to be strong (1 Chr 22:13; 28:10, 20; 29:12). The smooth succession from David to Solomon is underlined by calling Solomon the son of David, although this father-son relationship is never mentioned again in the Chronicler's Solomon account. Solomon is buried, however, in the city of David (2 Chr 9:31), and the two men are frequently mentioned together elsewhere in the book (11:17; 13:6; 30:26; 33:7; 35:3-4).

This is the first time "his God" is used with the divine name Yahweh in Chronicles,¹³ although expressions such as "Yahweh the God of Israel" or "Yahweh my God"¹⁴ had been employed. In 1 Chr 22:11, 12, David had associated "Yahweh your God" with Solomon, and he had also assured him three times that Yahweh was with him (1 Chr 22:11, 16; 28:20). Yahweh's magnification of Solomon is a repetition of 1 Chr 29:25, "Yahweh magnified Solomon exceedingly in the eyes of all Israel" (cf. 1 Chr 29:12). The word "exceedingly" (*למעלן*) is a favorite of the Chronicler.¹⁵ The Chronicler omitted the notice in Kings about the marriage alliance between Solomon and Pharaoh that led to Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kgs 3:1). Alliances are generally considered signs of lack of trust in Yahweh and are roundly condemned.¹⁶ The Chronicler does later retain the notice that Solomon moved Pharaoh's daughter from the city of David to the house he had built for her (2 Chr 8:11). The Chronicler also omitted 1 Kgs 3:2-3, which reported that, although Solomon loved Yahweh, he and the people

sacrificed and burned incense at the high places since the house for the name of Yahweh had not yet been built. For Solomon and the high place of Gibeon, see the commentary on v. 3 below.

1:2-6 Solomon Makes a Pilgrimage to Gibeon and Worships There

■ 2 *After Solomon gave orders to all Israel, to the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, the judges and to every leader of all Israel, the heads of families:* Some commentators have found similarity between this verse and the list of community leaders in 1 Chr 28:1, but the only thing the two verses have in common is "the commanders of thousands and hundreds."¹⁷ The only other use of the word "leader" (*נשָׁלֵן*) in 2 Chronicles is in 5:2, where it is used for the leaders of the ancestral houses (see 1 Chr 2:10; 4:38; 5:6; 7:40). The listing of officials in this verse seems to be the Chronicler's effort to give concrete substance to the concept of all Israel,¹⁸ that will be important in the following verses.

■ 3 *Solomon and the whole assembly with him went to the high place which was in Gibeon, for there was God's tent of meeting, which Moses the servant of Yahweh had made in the wilderness:* Just as David's first act as king was the capture of Jerusalem and his first act after the celebration of his coronation was his effort to bring the ark to Jerusalem, so Solomon's first act as king also involved worship in the company of the whole assembly (*כָל הַקְהֻלָּה*,¹⁹ see "all Israel" in the previous verse). In the *Vorlage* (1 Kgs 3:3) this journey to Gibeon had been a solo pilgrimage of Solomon to the "great high place."²⁰ Now he goes with the whole assembly, and the adjective "great" has been dropped as a description of the high place. The high place at Gibeon was mentioned also in 1 Chr 16:39

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| <p>12 The word "established" in both cases is a form of the verb <i>נִזְמַן</i> in the <i>niphal</i>.</p> <p>13 It occurs twelve additional times in 2 Chronicles: 14:2, 11; 15:9; 26:16; 27:6; 28:5; 31:20; 33:12; 34:8; 36:5, 12, 13.</p> <p>14 "My God" has appeared nine times already in Chronicles, always on the lips of David (1 Chr 11:19; 17:25; 21:17; 22:7; 28:20; 29:2, 3 (twice), 17.</p> <p>15 1 Chr 14:2; 22:5; 23:17; 29:3, 25; 2 Chr 16:12; 17:12; 20:19; and 26:18. The form is used in another sense in 2 Chr 34:4.</p> <p>16 2 Chr 16:3//1 Kgs 15:19; 2 Chr 18:1. See Knoppers, "Alliances as a <i>Topos</i>," 601–26.</p> | <p>17 For "judges," see 1 Chr 26:1; for "heads of families," see 1 Chr 23:9, 24; 26:21, 26; 27:1.</p> <p>18 In addition to its two uses in this verse, "all Israel" appears more than twenty times in 2 Chronicles.</p> <p>19 Cf. 1 Chr 13:2, 4; 29:1, 20; 2 Chr 6:12, 13; 23:3; 29:28; 30:23, 25 (twice).</p> <p>20 Diana Edelman ("Gibeon and the Gibeonites Revisited," in Lipschits and Blenkinsopp, <i>Neo-Babylonian Period</i>, 164) argues that the account of Solomon's trip to Gibeon in 1 Kings 3 and 2 Chronicles 1 describes Gibeon as the religious precursor to Jerusalem and implies that it was the main sanctuaries site under Saul.</p> |
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(where Zadok and the tabernacle are located) and 1 Chr 21:29 (where the tabernacle and the altar of burnt offering are mentioned).²¹ The ark was housed in the tabernacle of the tent of meeting in the city of David until Solomon built the temple (1 Chr 6:17 [32]).

As pointed out in the textual notes for this verse, the designation for the tent of meeting in this verse is unique and ambivalent. More important is that the desert tent's presence at Gibeon makes that site a completely legitimate place for Israelite sacrifice. Already in 1 Chronicles 16 David had stationed Zadok and other priests at this sanctuary²² to conduct sacrifices, though David himself had been prevented from going there (1 Chr 16:39; 21:29). A law in the Holiness Code stated that sacrifices could be conducted only at the tent of meeting (Lev 17:8-9). The tent of meeting is here linked to Moses, and his authority is underlined by calling him the servant of Yahweh.²³ A connection between Gibeon and the wilderness period is also made with the note about Bezalel in v. 5. There has been a considerable debate over whether the location of the tabernacle or tent of meeting at Gibeon is historical, since the location of the tent at Gibeon is not mentioned in any preexilic source²⁴ and its presence in this verse seems clearly to be an apologetic for Solomon, justifying his trip to Gibeon. I do not think this represents an authentic historical tradition.²⁵ Japhet (527-29) finds here, in addition to the Solomonic apologetic, an attempt to bring together the tabernacle traditions of the Pentateuch and the ark traditions of the Former Prophets. In the book of Kings, Solomon could worship at the great high place at Gibeon because the temple had not yet been built (cf. Deut 12:8-14). Once there had been many cultic sites, according to the Deuteronomistic Historian, but eventually one exclusive one at Jerusalem. The Chronicler, however, presupposes that there was one

temporary cultic site, at Gibeon, where burnt offerings could be carried out, and it was eventually replaced by the permanent site at Jerusalem. Finally, Japhet concludes that the historical question is immaterial. I believe that the Eli narrative implies that the tabernacle had been replaced by a more permanent structure at Shiloh (cf. 1 Sam 1:9; 3:3),²⁶ and it seems unlikely to me that a tent shrine would have survived for a couple of centuries. Whatever uncertainties attend the historical discussion, we should not lose sight of the fact that, for the Chronicler, the place where Solomon went to sacrifice was altogether appropriate.

■ 4 *But David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it, for David had pitched for it a tent in Jerusalem:* The Chronicler takes full notice in v. 4 of the tradition he had reported at great length, namely, that David had brought the ark from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem and pitched a tent for it (1 Chronicles 13-16; the tent is mentioned in 15:1; 16:1; and 17:1). Only a service of song, however, took place before that tent (1 Chr 16:37-38). The coordinated efforts of David and Solomon, the two kings of the united monarchy, would eventually lead to the construction of the permanent cultic facility in Jerusalem, to which both the ark and tent of meeting were brought (2 Chr 6:5).

■ 5 *Moreover, the bronze altar, which Bezalel the son of Uri the son of Hur had made, was there before the tabernacle of Yahweh. Solomon and the assembly sought it:* Twice earlier the Chronicler had referred to the sacrificial altar at Gibeon (1 Chr 16:40; 21:29²⁷), but now he adds that this was the altar that Bezalel had prepared for the tabernacle in the wilderness (Exod 31:2; 38:1-2). Bezalel was of the tribe of Judah (1 Chr 2:19-20).²⁸ Technically, this bronze altar was made of acacia wood and given a bronze

21 For the negative mentions of high places in 2 Chronicles, see the discussion at 2 Chr 11:15.

22 There it was called the tabernacle (**מִזְבֵּחַ**).

23 Moses is given this title also in Deut 34:5; fourteen times in Joshua; in 2 Kgs 18:12; and in 2 Chr 24:6. The title is given to Joshua in Josh 24:29 and Judg 2:8. Moses also appears in 2 Chr 5:10; 8:13; 23:18; 24:6, 9; 25:4; 30:16; 33:8; 34:14; 35:6, 12. He also appears nine times in 1 Chronicles.

24 Outside of the Pentateuch, the tabernacle is mentioned only in Josh 22:19, 29 and 2 Sam 7:6//1 Chr 17:5. Outside of the Pentateuch, the tent of meeting

is mentioned only in Josh 18:1; 19:51; 1 Sam 2:22 (all referring to its location at Shiloh); and 1 Kgs 8:4//2 Chr 5:5 at the dedication of the temple.

25 So also Curtis and Madsen, 315-16; and Rudolph, 121. Williamson (130-32) wants to leave the historical question open.

26 Klein, *1 Samuel*, 8. Cf. Jer 7:12, 14; 26:9.

27 David could not go there because of his fear of the sword of the angel (1 Chr 21:30).

28 Caleb and Ephrath were the parents of Hur, and Hur became the father of Uri, Bezalel's father. See Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 97.

covering. For the Chronicler, the direct connection of Gibeon's altar to Bezalel would be additional proof of its legitimacy. Solomon, the chosen temple builder, and the whole assembly sought the altar, just as David and all Israel had sought the ark (1 Chronicles 13–16). Brian E. Kelly notes that this seeking of Yahweh or his altar leads directly to a divine appearance “in that night.”²⁹ Josephus conflates the mention of the tent of meeting made by Moses and the bronze altar constructed by Bezalel. He refers to the bronze altar made by Moses.³⁰

■ 6 Solomon made an offering there, in Yahweh's presence, on the bronze altar, which was at the tent of meeting, and he offered on it one thousand burnt offerings: The Chronicler heaps up references to Yahweh's sanctuary: “there” (cf. v. 3); “in Yahweh's presence” (cf. 2 Chr 7:4, where the king and all the people make a sacrifice at the dedication of the temple); “on the bronze altar”; “at the tent of meeting.”³¹ While the number of sacrificial animals seems large, this number pales before the 22,000 oxen and the 120,000 sheep that were sacrificed at the dedication of the temple (2 Chr 7:4–5). Solomon's parity with or superiority to David is shown in that he carries out sacrifices at a place from which David was barred (1 Chr 21:30). Solomon sacrificed these animals on only one occasion according to Chronicles, but in 1 Kgs 3:4 we are told that Solomon (customarily) would sacrifice³² one thousand animals at Gibeon. In Chronicles the first thing that Solomon does is to go to the ancient sanctuary at Gibeon and offer sacrifices. For the Chronicler, this points to the most important aspect of Solomon's reign.³³ In Kings, Solomon's reign begins with the execution of his enemies.

1:7-12 God Promises Solomon Riches, Wealth, and Honor

■ 7 That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask what I should give to you”: The Chronicler rewrote and abbreviated his *Vorlage*. In its account of this event, the author of 1 Kgs 3:5 says that this revelation took place in a dream. Dreams appear nowhere in Chronicles and only here in Kings (see also 1 Kgs 3:15). Did the Chronicler omit the reference to the dream for the sake of brevity, or does this represent a critique of the legitimacy of dreams as the source of revelation (cf. Deut 13:2–6; Jer 23:25–32; 27:9–10; Zech 10:2)?³⁴ In any case, this is a direct revelation to Solomon, not mediated through a prophet, as in Nathan's conversation with David in 1 Chr 17:3–15.³⁵ The revelation happened on the night after Solomon and the assembly had journeyed to Gibeon and Solomon had made there his thousand-part burnt offering. Solomon receives a second divine revelation in 2 Chr 7:12–22, at the end of the period in which he had built the temple.

■ 8 Solomon replied to God, “You have shown to David my father great loyalty, and you have made me king in his stead”: Solomon's response to God's question begins with a confession of God's loyalty to David. No specific mention of the deity's **תָּמִימָה** to David has been cited previously by the Chronicler, although the parallel verse in 1 Kgs 3:6 is an echo of 2 Sam 22:51: “He is a tower of salvation for his king, and shows loyalty (**תָּמִימָה**) to his anointed, to David and his descendants forever.” The Chronicler omits “your servant” before David and an equivalent for 1 Kgs 3:6aβb, which notes David's obedience and God's granting him a son to sit on his throne.³⁶ That son is now “me,” Solomon.

29 Kelly, *Retribution*, 90.

30 See Begg, “Solomon's Two Dreams,” 690.

31 Carr (*From D to Q*, 98) identifies “which was at the tent of meeting” as a gloss, but his excision depends in part on his incorrect understanding of **בְּ** in the previous verse. See the discussion at the textual notes to v. 5.

32 Note the imperfect form of the verb **תָּלַעַת**. Person (*Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles*, 109) attributes this change of verb forms and the inversion of the word order to a “memory variant,” arguing that the Chronicler was citing Kings from memory. But the change in verbs seems to be more significant than that.

33 Williamson, “Temple,” 16.

34 Person (*Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles*) attributes this to a “memory variant.”

35 Schweitzer (*Utopia*, 82 n. 18) points out that Solomon is the only monarch not to require the agency of a prophet to hear Yahweh's word.

36 Carr (*From D to Q*, 100) attributes this omission to its irrelevance to the Chronicler's purpose. Japhet (616) claims that the Chronicler restricts, without excising completely, comparisons with David. Auld (“Solomon at Gibeon,” 101) decides that “your servant” was not part of the original common text.

The *Vorlage* has an equivalent reading to the second half of this verse (“Now, Yahweh my God, you have made your servant³⁷ king in the place of David my father”; 1 Kgs 3:7). The Chronicler, however, omits Solomon’s self-deprecation from that verse: “I am only a little child” (*נְתָר*) and transfers “I do not know how to go out or come in” to v. 10. But David had already twice referred to Solomon as “young and inexperienced” (*נֶעֶשׂ וּנְבָדֵד*) and in need of David’s assistance to provide materials for the temple (1 Chr 22:5; 29:1); hence to call Solomon a *נֶעֶשׂ* would not be in principle offensive to the author. Or did the Chronicler think that once Solomon had become king he was no longer of the social status of a *נֶעֶשׂ*?³⁸ For going out and coming in, see v. 10.

■ 9 “Now, Yahweh God,³⁹ let your promise to David my father be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth”: Solomon’s request echoes David’s own request in 1 Chr 17:23-24. On both occasions the Chronicler employs the verb *מִתְאַكֵּל* (“be confirmed” or “made sure”).⁴⁰ The promise itself might refer to 1 Chr 17:11; 22:10; or 28:4-5, words that promise David dynastic heirs and a son who will build the temple. Solomon’s greatness is expressed by Yahweh’s making him king *over* the people, whereas in 1 Kgs 3:8 Solomon (“your servant”) is *in the midst* of the chosen people. Yahweh had promised both Abraham and Jacob that their descendants would be as numerous as the dust (Gen 13:16; 28:14). The content of 1 Kgs 3:8 is similar, though there we are told that the people cannot be numbered or

אֲשֶׁר לَا יִמְהָא וְלَا יִסְפֹּר מְרֻבָּה). The latter expression is used of Hagar’s descendants in Gen 16:10. Did the Chronicler think that the promise of numerous progeny was more appropriately expressed in the words to the patriarchs themselves than in the promise given to Hagar, who gave birth to Ishmael?⁴¹

■ 10 “Now give me wisdom and knowledge so that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can govern this great people of yours?”: “Knowledge” (*מַדְעָה*) is a late word used outside this context (vv. 10, 11, 12)⁴² only in Eccl 10:20 and Dan 1:4, 17. The purpose of Solomon’s wisdom and knowledge in Chronicles is for governance of the people and specifically for building the temple (cf. 2 Chr 2:11 [12]). Hence this means that *שְׁפָט* here is to be translated “govern,” whereas in 1 Kgs 3:9 the translation “judge” seems more appropriate. The wisdom given to Solomon in Kings, on the other hand, prepares him to make a wise decision in the dispute between the two prostitutes (1 Kgs 3:16-28),⁴³ to make administration changes (1 Kgs 4:1-20), and to surpass all the people of the East in wisdom (1 Kgs 5:9-14 [4:29-34]). Governance in Chronicles is also implied by Solomon’s going out and coming in before the people.⁴⁴ Going out and coming in 1 Kgs 3:7, however, would seem to refer to Solomon’s professed inability to lead the people in war.⁴⁵ Solomon in Chronicles, of course, is a man of peace (1 Chr 22:9). The Chronicler has replaced the adjective *הַכְּבָד* (“vast”) with *הַגָּדוֹל* (“great”) perhaps because the former is an unusual modifier of “people.”⁴⁶

37 The Chronicler uses this term of David in 2 Chr 6:17 and of Solomon in 2 Chr 6:17-19. Auld (“Solomon at Gibeon,” 98, 101-2) considers 1 Kgs 3:6αβ-7α an independent addition in Kings to his reconstructed “original text.”

38 Leeb (*Away from the Father’s House*, 158-59) points out that Solomon in Kings has already married the Pharaoh’s daughter and been responsible for several deaths.

39 This divine title appears twenty times in Gen 2:4—3:24, twelve times in Chronicles (1 Chr 17:16, 17; 22:1, 19; 28:20; 29:1; 2 Chr 1:9; 6:41 [twice], 42; 26:18; 32:16, and nine times elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.

40 The word is an addition in 1 Chr 17:24 and replaces *מִתְאַקֵּל* (2 Sam 7:25) in 1 Chr 17:23. See also 2 Chr 6:17//1 Kgs 8:26, where both texts use *מִתְאַקֵּל*, “Now, Yahweh God of Israel, let your word be confirmed which you promised to your servant David.”

41 Person (*Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles*, 110) dismisses this as a “memory variant.”

42 Despite this late dating, Auld (“Solomon at Gibeon,” 99-100) assigns it to the common “original” text in vv. 11 and 12.

43 According to 1 Kgs 3:11 Solomon had asked for wisdom *לִשְׁמַע מִשְׁפָט* (“to discern justice”). Note the threefold use of the root *שְׁפָט* in 1 Kgs 3:28. I see no reason to consider this passage a supplement to an original common source behind Kings and Chronicles. Contra Person, *Deuteronomistic History and the Books of Chronicles*, 109.

44 This expression originally had a military meaning (1 Sam 18:13, 16; 1 Chr 11:2).

45 Auld (“Solomon at Gibeon,” 99, 102) misses the significance of this shift of meaning and arbitrarily places this expression in his reconstruction in a position different from both Kings and Chronicles.

■ **11** God said to Solomon, “Because this is in your heart, and you did not ask for riches, wealth, and honor, neither for the life of those who hate you, nor for many days have you asked, but you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge so that you might govern my people, over whom I have made you king;”: The idiom “this is in your heart” has been added to the text taken from 1 Kgs 3:11, and it has previously been used of David and of his plans to build the temple (1 Chr 22:7; 28:2). This first clause offers a paraphrastic description of Solomon’s wisdom, and we see in the next verse that wisdom has already been given to him. The Chronicler’s language may depend on 1 Kgs 3:12, “I have given to you a wise and discerning heart,” a clause not included by the Chronicler.

The Chronicler recast the order of Solomon’s requests from the *Vorlage* in 1 Kgs 3:11. There God congratulated Solomon for not asking for long life, riches, or the life of his enemies. After naming these three things for which he had not asked, God names a fourth request, for wisdom, which Solomon in fact had made. In Chronicles the things for which Solomon did not ask have been divided into two groups arranged chiastically (the verb שָׁלַח followed by direct objects, and then direct objects followed by the verb בָּנָה).⁴⁷ The first group of things not requested is the group of things that God will in fact give Solomon; the second group consists of two items that God will not give him. “Riches” and “honor” are ascribed to other kings whom the Chronicler favors (David, 1 Chr 29:12, 28; Jehoshaphat, 2 Chr 17:5; 18:1; Hezekiah, 2 Chr 32:27). The threefold enumeration of riches, wealth, and honor, used only in this context in Chronicles, is found also in Eccl 6:2.⁴⁸ Solomon’s failure to ask for the life of those who hated him rings truer in Chronicles than in 1 Kgs 3:11,⁴⁹ since in 1 Kgs 2:5-46 Solomon had already executed or banished a series of “enemies” at David’s suggestion (Adonijah, Abiathar, Joab, and Shimei).

■ **12** “wisdom and knowledge are granted to you, and riches, wealth, and honor I will give to you, such as none of the kings who were before you, and after you there will not be anything like

this”: The content of this verse is similar to the *Vorlage* in 1 Kgs 3:12-13, but with significant differences. The two sets of gifts from God in Kings are expressed in both cases by verbs in the perfect tense; the first of these is replaced by a *qal* passive participle in Chronicles, and the second by a verb in the imperfect tense. In Chronicles, God has already granted Solomon’s request for wisdom, and God now promises him the first of the three types of things for which he had not made a request. It is precisely because of Solomon’s wisdom that the kings of the earth seek him out (2 Chr 9:23). The promise of riches, wealth, and honor is fulfilled immediately in vv. 14-17. The Chronicler omits from 1 Kgs 3:14 the promise of long life that is contingent on Solomon’s obedience. Both David and Solomon reigned for forty years (1 Chr 29:27; 2 Chr 9:30), though it would seem that David lived a bit longer since he was older than Solomon when he became king (1 Kgs 3:7). Note also David’s emphasis on Solomon’s youth and inexperience in 1 Chr 22:5; 29:1. The Chronicler may also have omitted the promise of a long life since God’s gifts to Solomon are judged to be better than those made to any kings before or after Solomon, and that would not be true for long life. Nor was a long life necessary for building the temple, since Solomon had completed that project by the midpoint of his reign.

Solomon’s riches, wealth, and honor will be incomparable. No king before him (read David) nor any king after him will match his prosperity.⁵⁰ This promise could be construed also to include a comparison with the kings of the nations. In 1 Kgs 3:12-13 Solomon’s wisdom is eternally incomparable while his riches will only surpass those his contemporary kings.

■ **13** Then Solomon came from the high place which was at Gibeon, from the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he ruled as king over Israel: Johnstone (1:303) takes the MT in a very literal fashion and construes the text to say that Solomon went to worship to the high place “at Gibeon of Jerusalem.” He sees here an attempt by the Chronicler to enhance the legitimacy of the high place of Gibeon by

46 In his reconstructed original text, Auld (“Solomon at Gibeon,” 99) omits this adjective altogether.

47 Carr, *From D to Q*, 105.

48 עַשֶּׂר נְכָסִים וּכְבוֹד is used by the Chronicler in vv. 11, 12. In the first instance Kings has only עַשֶּׂר (1 Kgs 3:11) and in the second case it has נֵם עַשֶּׂר נֵם כְּבוֹד.

49 The expression there is “the life of your enemies.”

50 Cf. already 1 Chr 29:25; Yahweh magnified Solomon exceedingly in the eyes of all Israel, and he gave him royal majesty that had not been on any king more than on him.

associating it with Jerusalem. Our more flexible understanding of the preposition, or a replacement of **בְּ** by **בִּן**, however, makes this point unlikely. The Chronicler does omit from the *Vorlage* the copious sacrifices before the ark of the covenant at Jerusalem and the great feast prepared by Solomon for all his servants (1 Kgs 3:15). For the Chronicler, according to 1 Chr 16:37, the ark sanctuary at Jerusalem was a place only for the service of song and not for sacrificial worship.

The Chronicler seems to have constructed the clause about Solomon ruling as king over Israel out of 1 Kgs 4:1,⁵¹ which introduces there the account of Solomon's administrative officials and his dividing the kingdom into administrative districts with these words: "And king Solomon was king over all Israel." With this clause the Chronicler notes the real beginning of the reign of Solomon.

1:14-17 The Wealth and Some Trading Ventures of Solomon

■ **14** *Solomon amassed chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he posted in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem:* The Chronicler places vv. 14-17 here from their place in 1 Kgs 10:26-29 in the *Vorlage*⁵² in order to show that Solomon had ample riches to build the temple—in addition to the lavish gifts given by his father David—and to show the fulfillment of God's promise of riches, wealth, and honor in v. 12. The number of chariots (fourteen hundred) and cavalry (twelve thousand) is relatively modest in biblical military figures, as the sample of numbers from elsewhere indicates: in 1 Sam 13:5, the Philistines used thirty thousand chariots and six thousand cavalry vs. Israel.

In 1 Chr 18:4, David captured one thousand chariots, seven thousand cavalry, and twenty thousand infantry.⁵³ In 2 Chr 12:3, Shishak brought twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand cavalry against Israel.

In 2 Chr 14:8 (9), Zerah the Cushite came with three hundred chariots and one million men.

Curtis and Madsen (318) point out that the number of stalls of horses for chariots has grown to forty thousand in 1 Kgs 5:6 (4:21).⁵⁴ By incorporating the equivalent for 1 Kgs 10:26 here and the equivalent for 1 Kgs 5:6 (4:1) in 2 Chr 9:25, thus reversing the order of the verses in the *Vorlage*, the text of Chronicles allows the reader to draw the logical conclusion that the king's military preparedness grew during the course of his reign. At one time archaeologists thought they had discovered Solomon's stables at Megiddo. The understanding of that building as a stable is contested although still possible, but that building dates to the time of Ahab, seventy five years after Solomon, in any case.⁵⁵ Chariot cities are mentioned also in 1 Kgs 9:19//2 Chr 8:6. Chariots were apparently not used in the Israelite army at the time of David since he hamstrung chariot horses that he had captured (1 Chr 18:4//2 Sam 8:4). Critical comments about Egyptian horses in Deut 17:16-17 and polemical comments about Egyptian chariots and horses in Isa 30:1-3; 31:1; Isa 36:9//2 Kgs 18:24 make it possible that 1 Kgs 10:26-29 is an implicit denunciation of Solomon,⁵⁶ but the account in 2 Chr 1:14-17 surely redounds to Solomon's glory and honor.

■ **15** *The king made silver and gold in Jerusalem [as plentiful] as stones, and cedar he made as plentiful as the sycamores in the Shephelah:* Solomon's economic activities under God's blessing made the two precious metals as prevalent as stones are in the rocky country of Israel. In 2 Chr 2:6 (7) Solomon asks for an artisan who can work in gold and silver, as well as other metals. Cedar wood (*Cedrus libani*) from Lebanon was prized for building, and Solomon requested cedar from Huram in the very next chapter (2 Chr 2:7 [8]). Under Solomon's reign, cedar wood supposedly became as plentiful as the sycamore fir (*Ficus sycomorus*) that flourished in the Shephelah (1 Chr 27:28). The wood of this tree was used by the Egyptians for sarcophagi, mummy coffins, furniture, and doors, and its fruit provided food for the poor.⁵⁷ The obvious

51 He omitted Solomon's judicial procedure with the prostitutes (1 Kgs 3:16-28) and replaced it in 2 Chr 1:14-17 with evidence that Yahweh gave Solomon great riches.

52 For the repetition of this material, with changes, in 2 Chr 9:25-28, see the commentary at that point.

53 For the divergent numbers in 2 Sam 8:4, see Klein, *1 Chronicles*, 386.

54 The parallel passage in 2 Chr 9:25 has four thousand.

55 Mazar, *Archaeology*, 475-77.

56 See John Barclay Burns, "Solomon's Egyptian Horses and Exotic Wives," *Foundations & Facets Forum* 7 (1991) 38.

57 Irene and Walter Jacob, "Flora," *ABD* 2:805, 808.

hyperbole in this verse (*per contra* the more reasonable numbers in vv. 14, 16-17) demonstrates God's generosity to Solomon and Solomon's capacity to build the temple.

■ **16** *Solomon's importation of horses was from Egypt and Kue; the traders of the king acquired them from Kue at the standard price:*⁵⁸ The Masoretes divided the verse with the *athnah* after "Egypt." If this interpretation is followed, the first reference to Kue could be taken as a *casus pendens* ("and as for Kue"). Donald Schley interpreted the second half of this verse as poetry and proposed that the whole paragraph may once have been poetic in form, but I am not convinced that the difficult and repetitious v. 16b (//1 Kgs 10:28) is poetry;⁵⁹ let alone that one can deduce from this observation that the rest of the paragraph was also once in poetry and hence not from a royal archive.⁶⁰ The Deuteronomist strongly criticizes going to Egypt to acquire horses (Deut 17:16), a view shared by Isaiah (31:1). The Rabshakeh mocks the strength of Egyptian chariots and horsemen. According to the Chronicler, Shishak invaded with twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand cavalry (2 Chr 12:3). These passages all presuppose that horses were plentiful in Egypt. In Chronicles itself the passage shows both Solomon's wealth and his international influence.⁶¹ Kue (Cilicia) was a Neo-Hittite kingdom located in southeast Turkey in the first half of

the first millennium B.C.E.⁶² Perhaps the horses in this verse are for cavalry use.

■ **17** *They imported and then exported from Egypt a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty (shekels); so through them they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Aram:* This verse makes Solomon's traders middlemen between Egypt and the Hittite and Aramean countries, thus enhancing Solomon's reputation for power and international importance.⁶³ The antecedent of "them" is the royal traders in the previous verse. It is difficult to assess the prices cited in this verse (although four times as much for a chariot as for a horse may be accurate). The prices seem modest in comparison with four hundred shekels of silver for the field and cave at Machpelah (Gen 23:15) or the six hundred shekels paid by David to Ornan for the threshing floor (1 Chr 21:25), but high in comparison to seventeen shekels paid for a field at Anathoth (Jer 32:9) or thirty shekels for a gored servant (Exod 21:32). Myers (2:5) claims that six hundred shekels would be about 15 and 1/10 pounds, and 150 shekels would be about 3 and 3/4 pounds.

Conclusion

2 Chronicles begins with the notice that Solomon had taken firm control of his kingdom, presumably after the

58 See A. Goetze, "The Laws of Eshnunna," *AASOR* 31 (1956) 111-12.

59 "And from Que the royal traders—from Que they took for a price."

60 See Donald D. Schley, Jr., "1 Kings 10:26-29: A Reconsideration," *JBL* 106 (1987) 595-601. Schley refers to the eulogistic character of 1 Kgs 10:23-29//2 Chr 9:22-28, which is surely true, but it should not be totally discounted historically just because it lauds Solomon. In a review of James A. Montgomery's commentary on the book of Kings (*JBL* 71 [1952] 249), William F. Albright conjectured that the word "Egypt" should be deleted from this verse, making this verse deal only with trade with Kue, while the following verse deals only with Egypt. He also moved the price of the horses from the following verse to this verse. Neither of these emendations is convincing, and, of course, Albright's reading never appeared in a text of Chronicles. See also Burns, "Solomon's Egyptian Horses and Exotic Wives," 29-44.

61 Burns ("Solomon's Egyptian Horses and Exotic Wives," 29-44) argues that the polemic against

Egyptian horses and chariots in Deut 17:16 and Isa 31:1 means that the passage in 1 Kgs 10:26-29 is implicitly critical of Solomon for this trading. This seems doubtful to me, but even Burns admits that 2 Chr 1:16-17 is to be understood as positive evidence for Solomon's riches, wealth, and honor.

62 See Hector Avalos, "Kue," *ABD* 4:102-3.

63 See Yutaka Ikeda, "Solomon's Trade in Horses and Chariots in Its International Setting," in Ishida, *David and Solomon*, 215-38. Ikeda extrapolates from the meager biblical data and postulates that Solomon established a trading center at Hamath and that smaller kingdoms in northern Syria were forced to buy Anatolian horses from him. Cf. Bright, *History*, 216-17. For a critique, see Schley "1 Kgs 10:26-29," 596; and A. D. Crown, "Once Again, 1 Kings 10:26-29," *Abr Nahrain* 15 (1974-75) 35-38. It is doubtful that such a major Israelite trading center could exist with the nearby presence of rising Aramean states.

tumultuous days of 1 Kings 1–2. The new king's first act was to make a pilgrimage with the whole assembly to the tabernacle at the high place at Gibeon, a sanctuary constructed by Moses and boasting an altar made by Bezalel in the wilderness period. After Solomon offered Yahweh one thousand sacrifices, Yahweh appeared at night and asked Solomon what he could do for him. Solomon asked Yahweh to confirm his dynastic promise and to give him wisdom for ruling the people.

Yahweh congratulated Solomon for asking for wisdom rather than riches, revenge against his enemies, or long life, and noted that Solomon had already been

given wisdom. Yahweh then promised to give him riches that would surpass any king before or after him. After Solomon's return to Jerusalem, the author reported Solomon's possessions of chariots and cavalry, his vast holdings in silver and gold, and his trade in horses and chariots, verses that appear in the *Vorlage* in 1 Kgs 10:26–29,⁶⁴ whereas the rest of the *Vorlage* for this chapter comes from 1 Kings 3. By recording these verses at this place, the Chronicler showed the immediate fulfillment of Yahweh's promise and demonstrated that Solomon indeed had the wherewithal to build the temple.

64 The Chronicler repeats these verses, with changes, in 2 Chr 9:25–28.

Translation

18 (2:1)/

Solomon decided¹ to build a house for the name of Yahweh and a palace for his kingdom.

1 (2)/

Solomon mustered² seventy thousand laborers who bore burdens and eighty thousand stonemasons in the hill country, with the overseers over them numbering three thousand and six³ hundred.

2 (3)/

Solomon sent a message to Huram⁴ the king of Tyre, "Just as you have dealt with David my father⁵ and sent to him cedar wood to build for himself a house to live in— 3 (4) / See, I am building⁶ a house for the name of Yahweh my God by consecrating it to him for offering fragrant incense before him, and for the regular offering of the rows of bread⁷ and for burnt offerings⁸ every morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and the new moons, and the appointed festivals of Yahweh our God, as this is established forever over Israel. 4 (5) / The house that I am about to build is great, for our God is greater than all the gods. 5 (6) / But who is able to build for him a house, when the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain him,⁹ and who am I to build for him a house, except as a place to burn sacrifices before him?— 6 (7) / Now send to me a person skilled¹⁰ to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in red purple,¹¹ crimson¹², and bluish purple¹³ fabrics, knowledgeable about engraving, together with the skilled workers who are with me¹⁴ in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David provided. 7 (8) / And send to me cedar wood, cypress, and almyg wood¹⁵ from Lebanon, for I know that your servants are skilled in cutting the timber of Lebanon. My servants will work with your servants¹⁶ 8 (9) / to prepare¹⁷ timber for me in abundance, for the house which I am about to build will be great and marvelous.¹⁸ 9 (10) / I have allocated for your servants, for the lumberjacks, who cut down the timber, twenty thousand cors of crushed wheat,¹⁹ twenty thousand cors of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.²⁰

10 (11)/

Hiram the king of Tyre replied in a letter that he sent to Solomon, "Because Yahweh loves his people, he has made you king over them." 11 (12) / Huram also said, "Blessed be Yahweh the God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth, who has given to king²¹ David a wise son, one endowed with discretion and understanding, who is about to build a house for Yahweh and a royal palace for himself. 12 (13) / Now I have sent Huram-abi, a wise person, one endowed with understand-

1:18–2:17 (2:1–18) Solomon's Correspondence with Huram; Conscription of Laborers

- 1 רַיִם אָמַר; cf. 2 Chr 28:10, 13; 1 Kgs 5:19 (5); Josh 22:33. In readings discussed in the final textual note in v. 9 (10) and the textual note in v. 17 (18), Chronicles presupposes a text of Kings other than MT.
- 2 וְגַם סִפְר; LXX συνήγαγεν “gathered together” = perhaps קִיסֵּר or קִסְּרָא. See Hognesius, *Text of 2 Chronicles*, 73. Rudolph (198), cites 1 Chr 22:2 as a parallel, but there συναγάγειν translates סִפְר.
- 3 שָׁבֵת מְהֻת; so also Chr LXX. See the textual note on v. 17 (18).
- 4 חִרְמָה; cf. 1 Chr 14:1 Q. Some Hebrew mss LXX Syr Vg חִירָם “Hiram”; cf. 1 Chr 14:1 K. The original name would seem to be חִירָם; hence חִירָם is historically correct. Allen (*Greek Chronicles*, 2:120) proposes that a simple *wāw/yōd* confusion lies behind this spelling difference. Hiram also appears in 1 Chr 2:10-11 (11-12); 4:11 twice (the second occurrence has Hiram in K and Huram in Q); 8:1, 12; 9:10 (again Hiram in K and Huram in Q), 21. In 1 Kgs 5:24 and 32 (10 and 18), the name is spelled חִירָם “Hirom.” In the *Jewish Antiquities* and in *Against Apion*, Josephus calls him Εὐρωμος.
- 5 אָבִי. Rudolph (198) and Curtis and Madsen (320) suggest adding כֶּן עֲשֵׂה עִמָּךְ “so do with me his son.” Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 74) and Williamson (198; cf. Rudolph, 198) see it as a case of *aposisopeis*, continuing in v. 6 (7).
- 6 בָּנָה. LXX puts before this ὁ νιὸς αὐτοῦ (בָּנָה) “his son,” which may have been lost in MT by homoiarchton. Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 75) points out that Solomon never uses this designation for himself in Chronicles. The LXX therefore probably represents a dittography in its *Vorlage*.
- 7 וּמִעֲרָכָה; cf. Rudolph, 198, and LXX¹. MT לִלְעָלָה.
- 8 וּלְעָלָה; cf. Rudolph, 198, and the previous note. MT וּלְעָלָה. BHK suggested reading עליה הנדי “and for offering burnt offerings continually,” on the basis of LXX. Allen (*Greek Chronicles*, 2:162) proposes that לאלהלוֹת was added to the LXX *Vorlage* since “for offering” was felt to be too far away.
- 9 יְכַלְלָה; cf. LXX οὐ φέρουσιν αὐτοῦ τὴν δόξαν “cannot bear his glory,” a paraphrastic translation.
- 10 חַכְמָה; LXX σοφὸν καὶ εἰδότα “a skilled man and one who knows how.” Cf. v. 12 (13).
- 11 אָרֶנְן; cf. באָרֶנְן (v. 13 [14]). HALOT (84) identifies אָרֶנְן as an Aramaic form.
- 12 וּכְרִימֵל. HALOT (498–99). Rudolph (198) takes this as the equivalent of (שְׁוֵלֶת).
- 13 וּחַלְלָת. HALOT, 1732–33.
- 14 עַמְּנָה; omitted by a few Hebrew mss and Syr.
- 15 אַלְמָנָה; cf. 1 Kgs 10:11 אַלְמָנָה // 2 Chr 9:10 MT אַלְמָנָה; but a few Hebrew mss אַלְמָנָה. Cf. 1 Kgs 10:12 קְאַלְמָנִים // 2 Chr 9:11 קְאַלְמָנִים. Almug is apparently a better spelling, although it is spelled

16 (17)/

ing, 13 (14) / the son of a woman from the daughters of Dan, and his father is a Tyrian, one knowing how to work with gold, silver, bronze, iron, stones, and wood, and in red purple, bluish purple, linen, and crimson fabrics, and to do all sorts of engraving and execute any design that may be given²² to him, together with your artisans and the artisans of my lord, your father David. 14 (15) / Now, as for the wheat, barley, oil, and wine, of which my lord has spoken, let him send them to his servants. 15 (16) / We will cut down timber from Lebanon in accord with your every need,²³ and we will bring it to you in rafts²⁴ by sea to Joppa; you will transport it up to Jerusalem.

Solomon took a census of all the aliens who were residing in the land of Israel, on the model of the census in which his father David had counted them; they were found to be one hundred fifty-three thousand and six hundred. 17 (18) / Seventy thousand of them he assigned as laborers, eighty thousand as stone cutters in the hill country, and three thousand and six hundred²⁵ as overseers to see that the people worked.

alum in its three occurrences in Chronicles. See HALOT, 51, 57–58; and the commentary.

- 16 עבדך עם עבדים. The verb is supplied for sense in English, but is lacking in Hebrew. LXX *οἱ παῖδες σου μετὰ τῶν παιδῶν μου πορεύσονται* “my servants will go with your servants.” Is the verb here also supplied for sense? Cf. 1 Kgs 5:20 (6) וְעַבְדִּי יְהוָה עַמְּעַבְדֵּךְ “and my servants will be with your servants.”
- 17 להזכיר. The copula is used in an emphatic or explicative sense. See GKC §144p; and Curtis and Madsen, 323.
- 18 והפלא. Rudolph (198) notes that this infinitive absolute is used as an adjective.
- 19 חמץ ממתה. Rudolph (200) and Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 78) read *חמצים ממלחת* “wheat for food,” taking the second word as a defective form of *ממלחת*. See LXX *εἰς βρώματα* “as food.” They point to 1 Kgs 5:25 (11) where this defective form of *ממלחת* appears.
- 20 שמן בתים עשרים אלף. Missing in Chr LXX with MT. This phrase is lost in Chr LXX by homoioteleuton, but see LXX^A. 1 Kgs 5:25 (11) וعشרים כר שמן כהית “and twenty cors of refined oil.” Cor is normally a measure of cereal and not of liquids. Kgs LXX changes cors to baths, but reads 20,000 baths instead of 200 baths, which would be expected because of the ten to one ratio of cors to baths: *καὶ εἴκοσι χιλιάδας βαυθ ἐλαίου κεκομμένον* “and twenty thousand baths of beaten oil.” Van Keulen (*Two Versions*, 243) concludes that the figure of 20,000 baths has been adopted from Chronicles into Kings LXX. The other, preferable alternative is that Chronicles is based in this case on a Hebrew text of Kings like the one that lay behind Kings LXX. See the commentary.
- 21 המלך. Missing in Chr LXX and 1 Kgs 5:21 (7).
- 22 שאר ענן. Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 79) notes that the verb is 3ms and the subject *מחשבת* “design” is fs. GKC (§145a) notes that there are numerous exceptions to the agreement of subject and verb in gender and number.
- 23 צרכך; *hapax* in OT. Rudolph (200) identifies it as an Aramaism. This noun occurs in Sirach according to Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 79). HALOT (1056) cites a verb from this root in Sir 42:21 and a noun in Sir 39:33 and 42:23.
- 24 בפסדotta; HALOT (1279) notes that the etymology of this word is uncertain. 1 Kgs 5:23 (9) דברותה דברות; HALOT, 212: “bundle of tree trunks tied together, towed by a ship.” Both Hebrew nouns occur only here. See Montgomery and Gehman, *Kings*, 139, pointing to a root meaning of “lead.” LXX in Kgs and Chr *σχεδίας* “rafts.”

- 25 **מִשְׁלָשׁ מֵאוֹת**; cf. 1 Kgs 5:30 (16) LXX. Kgs MT **מִשְׁלָשׁ מֵאוֹת** “three hundred.” LXX Zbc₂e₂ “seven hundred”; LXX^{Ax Arab SyrH} “five hundred”; Josephus *Ant.* 8.58 “three hundred.” Chronicles is based on a non-MT version of Kings. Note the similarity of the words six (**שֶׁשׁ**) and three (**תְּרַצֵּן**) in Hebrew. See also van Keulen, *Two Versions*, 245; and 1 Kgs 2:35^b “three thousand and six hundred overseers.”

Structure

After an introductory verse, this chapter¹ consists of an exchange of letters between Solomon and Huram, with a report about Solomon’s (forced) laborers preceding and following these communications. Note that sections II and V speak of the conscription of laborers, while the intervening sections III and IV report Solomon’s letter to Huram and Huram’s response. As Dillard (17) notes, this chapter has a clear chiastic outline.

- I. 1:18 (2:1) Solomon’s decision to build the temple and a palace
- II. 2:1 (2) Conscription of laborers
- III. 2:2-9 (3-10) Solomon’s letter to Huram² (1 Kgs 5:16, 19-20, 25 [2, 5-6, 11]). In vv. 2-5 (3-6) Solomon introduces the temple project to Huram and in vv. 6-9 (7-10) he makes specific requests of the Phoenician king.
- IV. 2:10-15 (11-16) Huram’s letter to Solomon (1 Kgs 5:21, 23 [7, 9]; 1 Kgs 7:13-14)
- V. 2:16-17 (17-18) Conscription of laborers (1 Kgs 5:29-30 [15-16])

The opening verse of this account reports Solomon’s decision to build the temple and a palace³ for himself, and this major unit is closed with the notice in 2 Chr 8:16 that the house of Yahweh was completed (earlier stages of completion are noted at 2 Chr 5:1 and 7:11). Construc-

tion itself starts in 2 Chr 3:1. The Chronicler has omitted from the *Vorlage* before the beginning of this pericope 1 Kgs 3:16-28, Solomon’s judicial decision between the two prostitutes;⁴ 1 Kgs 4:1-6, a list of Solomon’s officials; 1 Kgs 4:7-19, the twelve officers over twelve administrative districts; 1 Kgs 4:20—5:8 (4:20-28), a description of Solomon’s kingdom and his daily provisions; 1 Kgs 5:9-14 (4:29-34), a description of Solomon’s encyclopedic wisdom; and 5:15 (1), the report of a delegation sent by Hiram to the new king Solomon and the report of Hiram always being a friend (**בְּנֵי**) of David. In Kings, Solomon’s wisdom is seen in his shrewd judgment between the prostitutes, in his astute administration, and in his wide and proverbial knowledge, while in Chronicles his wisdom is seen above all in his building of the temple (2 Chr 2:11 [12]). By omitting 1 Kgs 5:15 (1) the Chronicler has Solomon take the initiative in his communication with Huram rather than responding to Huram’s previous message.

As in the previous chapter, the Chronicler here has thoroughly recast the parts of the *Vorlage* he has included. Hence, in Solomon’s letter to Huram, vv. 4-6, 8 (5-7, 9) are new; vv. 2-3 (3-4) are taken from 1 Kgs 5:16, 19 (5:2, 5); v. 7 (8) is taken from 1 Kgs 5:20 (6); v. 9 (10) incorporates 1 Kgs 5:25 (11) into the letter, whereas it is part of the narrative context in the *Vorlage*; and the Chronicler has omitted 1 Kgs 5:17-18 (3-4).⁵ Even verses

1 Following many previous commentators, I join 1:18 (2:1) to this chapter rather than to the preceding one.

2 See the textual notes and the commentary on v. 2 (1) for this spelling of the name. This spelling will be used throughout this chapter for the Phoenician king when dealing with Chronicles (except for 1 Chr 14:1), but the name will be spelled Hiram when dealing with a citation from 1 Kings.

3 The account of the building of the palace in 1 Kgs 7:1-12 is not included in Chronicles.

4 Did the Chronicler want to avoid mentioning Solomon’s threat to divide the living child in two or even his involvement in a quarrel between two prostitutes?

5 The Chronicler also omits 1 Kgs 5:24 (10), which reports Hirom (**חִירָם**) fulfilling all of Solomon’s requests.

taken over from the *Vorlage* are considerably rewritten. In Huram's reply to Solomon, vv. 10,⁶ 12 (11, 13) are new; vv. 13-14 (14-15) are moved to this context from 1 Kgs 7:13-14 in the *Vorlage*; vv. 11, 15 (12, 16) are taken from 1 Kgs 5:21, 23 (vv. 7, 9); and 1 Kgs 5:24 (10), which reports "Hirom" (הִרְוָם) meeting all of Solomon's requests, is omitted.⁷ In section V of the outline, the Chronicler has added v. 16 (17) and derived v. 17 (18) from 1 Kgs 5:29-30 (15-16).

A number of scholars have judged 2 Chr 2:1 (2) to be secondary, since it repeats the basic content of 2 Chr 2:16-17 (17-18),⁸ but the reason suggested for this addition—that it provides background for the mention of Solomon's servants in 2:7 (8)—could have led the Chronicler himself to include it, and the chiastic arrangement in the outline above, following the suggestion of Dillard, makes its retention probable.

Detailed Commentary

2 Chr 1:18 (2:1) Solomon's Decision to Build the Temple and a Palace

■ **18 (2:1)** *Solomon decided to build a house for the name of Yahweh and a palace for his kingdom:* The reference to a house for the name of Yahweh is found also in 2 Chr 2:3 (4)//1 Kgs 5:19 (5).⁹ The temple as the place where Yahweh's name dwells is common in Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic thought. Yahweh is not physically present, let alone confined to the temple. The narrator places this decision early in his account and not first mentioned in a letter to Hiram as in 1 Kgs 5:19 (5). References to the royal palace appear in 2 Chr 2:11 (12)//1 Kgs 5:21 (7); 2 Chr 7:11//1 Kgs 9:1; 8:11//1 Kgs 9:24; 2 Chr 9:3, 11//1 Kgs 10:4, 12, but the Chronicler did not include

the details of the construction of the palace and other non-temple buildings that were provided in 1 Kgs 7:1-12. The latter pericope was probably omitted so that the focus would remain on the temple itself. The Chronicler had previously reported David's construction of a house for himself, with Hiram's¹⁰ help, in 1 Chr 14:1. The several references to the palace in both Chronicles and Kings, apart from the construction account in 1 Kgs 7:1-12, are important evidence against Auld's theory that the account of the palace was lacking in the original edition of the Deuteronomistic History.¹¹

2 Chr 2:1 (2) Conscription of Laborers

■ **2:1 (2)** *Solomon mustered seventy thousand laborers who bore burdens and eighty thousand stonemasons in the hill country, with the overseers over them numbering three thousand and six hundred:* The information about Solomon's workers in this verse provides a background for the reference to Solomon's servants in 2 Chr 2:7 (8). The content of this verse will be discussed when this information is repeated in 2:16-17 (17-18).

2 Chr 2:2-9 (3-10) Solomon's Letter to Hiram

■ **2 (3)** *Solomon sent a message to Hiram the king of Tyre, "Just as you have dealt with David my father and sent to him cedar wood to build for himself a house to live in":* For the spelling of Hiram in Chronicles, see the textual notes.¹² Solomon takes the initiative in this correspondence¹³ whereas in the *Vorlage* (1 Kgs 5:16 [2]), he was responding to a previous delegation of servants sent to him by Hiram. The Chronicler omits 1 Kgs 5:17-18 (3-4), which attributes David's failure to build the temple to his time being consumed by wars and Yahweh giving rest only in the time of Solomon, since he had already said why David

6 But compare 1 Kgs 5:22 (8), where Hiram indicates that he is responding to the message Solomon had previously sent to him.

7 Also omitted are 1 Kgs 5:26-28 (12-14), which speaks of a treaty between Solomon and Hiram and of a forced labor gang that Solomon raised from Israel, and 5:31-32 (17-18), which reports details about the quarrying of stones for the temple.

8 See Rudolph, 201; Williamson, 198; Japhet, 538.

9 See also 1 Chr 22:7, 8, 10, 19; 28:3; 29:16; 2 Chr 6:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 34, 38; 7:15, 20; 12:13; 20:8-9; 33:4, 7. As Japhet (*Ideology*, 69) points out, there is no real

distinction between building a house for God and building a house for his name.

10 בְּנֵי ק; בְּנֵי Q.

11 See the clear arguments of Talshir, "Reign of Solomon," 238-40.

12 See Klein, "Africa and the Africans," 277.

13 Josephus (*Ant.* 8.55) claims that the following letters were preserved not only in the Bible but also in the Tyrian archives and were still accessible in his day.

could not build the temple in 1 Chr 17:4-6; 22:7-10;¹⁴ and 28:2-3.¹⁵ After his pilgrimage to Gibeon in chap. 1, Solomon moves decisively to build the temple. According to Josephus (*Ap.* 1.117), Hiram became king in Tyre after the death of his father Abi-Ba‘al. Josephus also claims that Hiram was nineteen years old at his accession and ruled for thirty-four years. Gershon Galil proposes absolute dates of 980–946 for him.¹⁶ Since the fourth year of Solomon, when he began to build the temple, was the eleventh (Josephus *Ant.* 8.62) or twelfth (Josephus *Ap.* 1.126)¹⁷ year of Hiram according to Josephus, this would put Solomon’s accession in the late 970s B.C.E.¹⁸ Both Galil and Edwin R. Thiele date Solomon’s death to 931, and 2 Chr 9:30//1 Kgs 11:42 sets the length of his reign as forty years. Tyre (MR 168297) is about twenty-five miles southwest of Sidon (MR 184329) and about one hundred three miles north of Jerusalem (MR 172131).

I believe that the construction of the initial quotation of Solomon’s letter is an example of *aposiopesis* (a sudden breaking off by the Chronicler, as if unwilling to express his mind; see the textual notes), with the main thought continued in v. 6 (7). The intervening verses, vv. 3-5 (4-6), that report Solomon’s plans for the temple, are a kind of parenthetical thought. Huram’s contribution of cedar for David’s palace is recorded in 1 Chr 14:1//2 Sam 5:11. David had already brought together a massive supply of cedar wood from Tyre and Sidon for the temple according to 1 Chr 22:4. In his appeal to the

Tyrian king, Solomon refers only to Huram’s supplying cedar for David’s house and not to the cedar David supposedly collected for the construction of the temple. For the expression “house to live in,” see Yahweh’s oracle forbidding David to build the *temple* (1 Chr 17:4): “You are not the one to build for me the house to live in.”

■ 3 (4) “*See, I am building a house for the name of Yahweh my God by consecrating it to him for offering fragrant incense before him, and for the regular offering of the rows of bread and for burnt offerings every morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and the new moons, and the appointed festivals of Yahweh our God, as this is established forever over Israel*”: Solomon repeats his intention to build a house for Yahweh’s name (1:18 [2:1]).¹⁹ In the *Vorlage* (1 Kgs 5:19 [5]), Solomon relates this project to Yahweh’s promise to David that his son, who would rule in his place, would build a house for his name. Since it is a place for Yahweh’s name, it will not be a place for God himself to live (see below on v. 5 [6]). In Chronicles, but not in the *Vorlage*, Solomon goes on to spell out the purpose of such a temple. It will be first of all a place for offering fragrant incense (Exod 25:6; 30:1-10; 35:8, 28; 37:25-29; 40:27; Lev 4:7; 16:12-13; cf. 1 Chr 28:18;²⁰ 2 Chr 13:11;²¹ and 2 Chr 26:16-20)²² and for setting out the rows of bread (Exod 25:23-30; 40:22-24; Lev 24:5-9; 1 Sam 21:1-6; cf. 1 Chr 9:31-32; 23:29; 28:16; 2 Chr 13:11; 29:18). These purposes mark a significant continuity between the temple and the tabernacle.

14 See esp. v. 8: “You have shed much blood and you have carried out great wars. You shall not build a house for my name, for you have shed much blood on the ground before me.”

15 See esp. v. 3: “You shall not build a house for my name, because you are a man of wars; you have shed blood.”

16 Galil, *Chronology of the Kings*, 165. Lowell K. Handy (“Phoenicians in the Tenth Century BCE,” in *idem, Age of Solomon*, 162–63) proposes a similar date for Abi-Ba‘al’s accession, but doubts the numbers in Josephus.

17 Josephus dates the founding of the temple 143 years and eight months before the establishment of Carthage.

18 For studies of this Tyrian leader, see H. J. Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre: From the Beginning of the Second Millennium B.C.E. until the Fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire in 538 B.C.E.* (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1973); Brian Peckham, “Israel and

Phoenicia” in *Magnalia Dei, the Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright* (ed. Frank Moore Cross, Werner E. Lemke, and Patrick D. Miller, Jr.; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976) 224–48; and the chapter by Handy mentioned in n. 16 above.

19 Solomon also calls Yahweh “my God.” See 1 Chr 11:19; 17:25; 21:17; 22:7; 29:2, 3 (three times); 2 Chr 6:19, 40; 8:13. At the end of this verse Yahweh is called “our God.” See 1 Chr 13:2, 3; 15:13; 16:14; 19:13; 28:2, 8; 29:13, 16; 2 Chr 2:4 (5); 13:10, 11; 14:6, 10 (7, 11); 19:7; 20:7, 12; 29:6; 32:8, 11.

20 This verse tells of David’s provision of gold for the altar of burnt incense.

21 Abijah contrasts the way burnt offerings, incense, the rows of bread, and the lamps are kept in the temple in Jerusalem with the way the north Israelite cult is carried on.

22 These verses report Uzziah impinging on the sole right of priests to burn incense. For discussion of

The order of the offerings follows the order in Numbers 28–29: daily burnt offerings, Num 28:3–8; Sabbath offerings, Num 28:9–10; and the new moon offerings, Num 28:11–15. In Numbers the sacrifices for the appointed festivals are listed individually: the sacrifices for Passover (cf. 2 Chr 30:1–27; 35:1–19) and Unleavened Bread (Num 28:16–25; cf. 2 Chr 8:13); the sacrifices for the feast of Weeks (Num 28:26–31; cf. 2 Chr 8:13); the offering for the first day of the seventh month (Rosh Hashanah) (Num 29:1–6); the tenth day of the seventh month (the Day of Atonement) (Num 29:7–11); the offerings for the fifteenth to twenty-first days of the seventh month, the feast of Booths (Num 29:12–34; cf. 2 Chr 8:13);²³ and the offering for the eighth day²⁴ (Num 29:35–38). “Appointed festivals” are mentioned in 1 Chr 23:31 and 2 Chr 31:3. Just as the Chronicler states that this system of sacrifices was established forever, the Pentateuch established a perpetual ordinance for the feast of Unleavened Bread (Exod 12:17) and also made it a perpetual statute that neither suet nor blood of a sacrificial animal should be eaten (Lev 3:17).

■ 4 (5) “The house that I am about to build is great, for our God is greater than all the gods”: Solomon’s speech argues from the incomparability of Yahweh²⁵ to the need to build him an incomparable house. In a self-reflection before instructing Solomon to build the temple, David had remarked that the temple must be “exceedingly magnificent, famous, and an object of praise for all the lands” (1 Chr 22:5). David had also told the whole assembly that “the work is great; for the temple will not be for humans but for Yahweh God” (1 Chr 29:1). Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, had also confessed that Yahweh was greater than all the gods” (Exod 18:11).²⁶ This incomparability of

Yahweh falls short of the expression of absolute monotheism as in 1 Chr 17:20: “Yahweh, there is no one like you and no God besides you.” A few verses later in this chapter Solomon again insists that the temple that he is building will be great and marvelous (**כָּלְפָלָל**; v. 8 [9]). Solomon’s request of Huram is justified by the tremendous dimensions of the project. The Chronicler does not incorporate 1 Kgs 5:20 (6), where Solomon conceded that there was no one among the Israelites who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.

■ 5 (6) “But who is able to build for him a house, when the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain him, and who am I to build for him a house, except as a place to burn sacrifices before him?”: In a sophisticated argument, Solomon modifies the previous verse by indicating that no temple, however great, could “contain” (**כִּלְכָלָה**) Yahweh. In proof he quotes a line apparently taken from 1 Kgs 8:27//2 Chr 6:18 that neither the heavens nor the superlative of that concept²⁷—we might say “space” today—could ever contain (**כִּלְכָלָךְ**) Yahweh. Hence the purpose of the temple is surely not a house for Yahweh to live in, but a place to offer sacrifices. The “highest heavens” belong to Yahweh (Deut 10:14) and were created by him (Neh 9:6).

Self-deprecation in the presence of God or some other higher authority is expressed by the rhetorical question “Who am I?” (Exod 3:11, by Moses; 1 Sam 18:18, David in response to the proposal to marry Saul’s daughter; 2 Sam 7:18//1 Chr 17:16, David in response to the oracle of Nathan; 1 Chr 29:14, David and the people, in response to their opportunity to make an offering to the temple). In passages attested in the Bible, therefore, such humility is expressed by three people who are arguably among Israel’s greatest heroes. Because of the greatness of

the use of incense in the Old Testament, see Haran, *Temples and Temple Service*, 230–45; Nielsen, *Incense in Ancient Israel*; idem, “Incense,” *ABD* 3:404–9; and Frank H. Gorman, “Incense,” *NIDB* 3:38.

23 In Exod 23:14–17 we read of Unleavened Bread, harvest of the firstfruits of your labor, and ingathering. Deuteronomy 16:16 gives the same names as in 2 Chr 8:13. Solomon is the only king in Chronicles who celebrates all three of these festivals. Hezekiah and Josiah celebrate the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread (2 Chr 30:13, 21; 35:17).

24 In 1 Kgs 8:66 Solomon sends people home from the temple celebration on this day, while in 2 Chr 7:9–10 Solomon observes this day as a festival and only

releases the people to go home on the following day. Solomon’s festival actually lasted fourteen days. See the commentary on 2 Chr 7:9–10.

25 Solomon confesses Yahweh as “our God.”

26 See also Ps 77:14 (13): “What God is so great as our God?” Ps 95:3: “For Yahweh is a great God, and a great king above all gods.” Ps 135:5: “For I know that Yahweh is great; our Lord is above all gods.”

27 **שְׁמַיִם וְשָׁמְרוֹת**. The Targum notes the three occurrences of the noun “heavens” and translates: “The lower heavens, the middle heavens, and the upper heavens.”

Yahweh, therefore, and the limitations of Solomon, his intention to build a temple is not a sanctuary to house Yahweh, despite the fact that **בֵּית** (“house”) is one of the most common words used for the temple. Instead, this house will be a place only for offering sacrifices (**וַיְלֹא קָרְבָּן**) before Yahweh. In 2 Chr 7:12, without *Vorlage*, Yahweh states that he has chosen this place as a house of sacrifice (**לְבֵית זְבָח**). As Avi Hurvitz points out, this is the only occurrence of this phrase in the Bible.²⁸

■ 6 (7) “Now send to me a person skilled to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in red purple, crimson, and bluish purple fabrics, knowledgeable about engraving, together with the skilled workers who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David provided”: “Now” often marks a point of transition in a letter from introductory materials to the main purpose of the letter.²⁹ In this case, it also provides a transition back to the comparative clause in v. 2 (3) that was interrupted by the parenthesis in vv. 3-5 (4-6). In Kings, the report of Solomon bringing the artisan Hiram from Tyre occurs only after the completion of the main building, when Hiram constructed the bronze pillars, the sea, and other cultic paraphernalia (1 Kgs 7:13-51// 2 Chr 3:15—5:1.). The craftsman requested by Solomon is to possess many of the talents of Bezalel³⁰ and Oholiab in the tabernacle account. Bezalel was a skilled or wise man (Exod 35:35), who could work in gold, silver, and bronze (Exod 35:32), and Bezalel and Oholiab were skilled to work in bluish purple (**תְּכִלָּת**), red purple (**אַרְגָּמָן**), and crimson (Exod 35:35).³¹ The word for bluish purple in Exodus is the same as in 2 Chr 2:6, while the word for red purple is only slightly different there (**תְּרֵנֶת**) from here (**תְּרֵנָה**).³² The word “crimson” in Exod 35:35 (**תְּלֵילָה**) has been replaced by **כְּרֻמֵּל**, a Persian loan word (*HALOT*, 298–99), which appears only here and in vv. 13-14 (14-15) in the Bible. The use of the late Aramaic and Persian terms shows that

this letter is a composition of the Chronicler and not of Solomon himself. Iron was not part of the construction material used for the tabernacle, but it was part of the copious donations made to the temple by David (1 Chr 22:5, 14-16; 29:2). Gold, silver, and bronze were used in the tabernacle and were among the items donated by David for the temple (1 Chr 29:1-7). Fabrics were not among the things donated by David but were essential to the construction of the tabernacle and, no doubt, the temple. The only engraving mentioned in the tabernacle account has to do with priestly vestments (Exod 28:11, 36; 39:6).

David had assembled an abundance of skilled workers: stonemasons, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of artisans (1 Chr 22:15-16; 28:21; 29:5; all these passages were composed by the Chronicler and are not found in the *Vorlage*). Skilled workers were with Solomon in Judah and Jerusalem. This is the only time that “Judah and Jerusalem” are mentioned during the united monarchy,³³ and Ackroyd (104) saw this as a slip of the Chronicler, who was making reference to the community of the restricted southern area of his own day. Dillard (19), however, argues that it would make sense for David to recruit workers who lived only a relatively short distance from the temple.

■ 7 (8) “And send to me cedar wood, cypress, and almu wood from Lebanon, for I know that your servants are skilled in cutting the timber of Lebanon. My servants will work with your servants”: Solomon’s requests in his letter come off as orders, indicating his superiority to Huram. Only cedar wood (**כִּיר**) was mentioned in the *Vorlage* for this verse (1 Kgs 5:20 [6]), although cypress (**בְּרוֹשִׁים**) does appear a bit later in 1 Kgs 5:22, 24 (8, 10) and occasionally elsewhere in the account of the temple in Kings (1 Kgs 6:15, 34; 9:11; not included in *Chronicles*) and once elsewhere in *Chronicles* (2 Chr 3:5). “Almu wood” was apparently

28 Hurvitz, “Terms and Epithets,” 178. He notes that **בֵּית מִדְבָּחָה** occurs in the Aramaic documents from Elephantine.

29 Dennis Pardee, *Handbook of Ancient Hebrew Letters: A Study Edition* (SBLSBS 15; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982), 180. Cf. Jer 29:27; Neh 6:7. See also P. S. Alexander, “Remarks on Aramaic Epistolography in the Persian Period,” *JSS* 23 (1978): 155–70. Cf. the transitions in Huram’s letter at vv. 13 and 15.

30 Bezalel was introduced already in 2 Chr 1:5.

31 Cf. Exod 25:4, which lists the same three colors as Exod 35:35 and identifies them as gifts to the tabernacle. The Chronicler uses **כְּרֻמֵּל** for crimson in 2 Chr 2:6 (7).

32 This is an Aramaic form of a Hebrew word. Cf. Dan 5:7, 16, 29.

33 It appears frequently in the rest of the book: 2 Chr 20:17; 24:6, 9, 18, 23; 29:8; 32:12, 25; 34:3, 5; 35:24; 36:4, 10, 23.

added by the Chronicler in anticipation of 2 Chr 9:10–11//1 Kgs 10:11–12, where this wood from Lebanon is used for steps and for musical instruments. This wood is unidentified, and the spelling in the Kings texts reverses two consonants (see the textual notes). It may be compared to *elammakku*, known from a series of Akkadian texts, but the identity of that tree is also unknown.³⁴ The word *almg* appears once in the Ugaritic texts, in a list of tribute sent by the ruler of Ugarit to another king (*UT* 137, 37–38). Earlier the Chronicler had reported the massive amounts of cedar wood that David had imported (1 Chr 22:4, 14; 29:2), not counting the wood sent to him for his own house (1 Chr 14:1) and his instructions for Solomon to gather even more.

The compliment for Huram's workers (skilled in cutting the timber of Lebanon) is considerably toned down from the praise offered in the *Vorlage*: “For you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians” (1 Kgs 5:20 [6]). The Chronicler does not want to emphasize that Solomon was dependent on skilled foreign labor. The pledge for the servants of Solomon to work with the servants of Huram is taken from the *Vorlage*.

■ 9 (10) “*I have allocated for your servants, for the lumberjacks,³⁵ who cut down the timber, twenty thousand cors of crushed wheat, twenty thousand cors of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil*”: 1 Kgs 5:25 (11) is the equivalent of this verse in the *Vorlage*, and the Chronicler has moved it from the narrative account there to a position within Solomon's letter. He also has changed this transaction into a one-time payment, whereas according to Kings, Solomon contributed this amount annually (שנה בשנה).³⁶ According to this account, Solomon paid for the work before the lumber was delivered. A cor

is approximately 6.25 bushels,³⁷ so that Solomon sent Huram's men approximately 125,000 bushels of wheat and the same amount of barley. A bath is about 5.8 gallons, so that the liquid payments were 116,000 gallons of wine and olive oil. The wine is not mentioned in the *Vorlage*, and the oil there is called “refined oil” (שמן סחורה).³⁸ While our knowledge of ancient systems of weights and measures is imperfect,³⁹ we can compare these amounts with quantities mentioned elsewhere. Solomon's court required thirty cors of fine flour (187.5 bushels; סלתָן) and sixty cors of meal (375 bushels; קמץ) daily (1 Kgs 5:2 [4:22]). The Ammonites paid Jotham tribute annually for three years, in the amount of ten thousand cors (62,500 bushels) of wheat and barley. Solomon's payment in the book of Kings was designated for Hiram's household, while here it is specifically given to the lumberjacks, who are cutting timber for the temple. Although these are enormous amounts of foodstuffs, they differ from the blank check Solomon offers Hiram in 1 Kgs 5:20 (6): “I will pay your servants whatever you say.”

2 Chr 2:10–15 (11–16) Huram's Letter to Solomon

■ 10 (11) *Horam the king of Tyre replied in a letter that he sent to Solomon, “Because Yahweh loves his people he has made you king over them”*: Huram's letter (סחבה)⁴⁰ is six verses long in Chronicles whereas it is only two verses in Kings (1 Kgs 5:22–23 [8–9]). This verse, added by the Chronicler, has Huram make a theological judgment about Solomon, invoking the name of the Israelite God. The affirmation that Yahweh loves his people and therefore has made Solomon king has been taken by the Chronicler from the mouth of the queen of Sheba (2 Chr 9:8//1 Kgs 10:9), who affirms that Solomon has been made king by God to execute justice and righteousness.⁴¹ Hence, it is two non-

34 Jonas C. Greenfield and Manfred Mayrhofer, “The ²algummîm/²almuggîm-Problem Reexamined,” in *Hebräische Wortforschung: Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Walter Baumgartner* (VTSup 16; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 83–89.

35 סחבות; cf. Deut 19:5; 29:10 (11); Josh 9:21, 23, 27; Jer 46:22; Ezek 39:10.

36 Note the change in compensation between Huram and Solomon also in 2 Chr 8:2//1 Kgs 9:11–14.

37 See Michael H. Homan, “Weights and Measures,” in Freedman, *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, 1373–76.

38 Chronicles is dependent on the Hebrew *Vorlage* of Kgs LXX (see the textual notes).

39 See Raz Kletter, “Weights and Measures,” *NIDB* 5:831–41.

40 Cf. 2 Chr 21:12, a letter (סחבה) of Elijah; 30:1, letters (סודות) of Hezekiah.

41 In two verses from Kings not included in Chronicles, we learn that Solomon loved Yahweh (1 Kgs 3:3) and that Hiram had always loved David (1 Kgs 5:15 [1]).

Israelite monarchs in Chronicles who attest that Yahweh's love for Israel has been manifested in the enthronement of Solomon. Yahweh's love for Israel is also expressed in Deut 7:7-8; Isa 43:4; 63:9; Jer 31:3; Hos 2:21 (19); 3:1; 11:1, 4; 14:5 (4); Zeph 3:17; Mal 1:2; Ps 47:5 (4).

■ **11 (12)** *Huram also said, “Blessed be Yahweh the God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth, who has given to king David a wise son, one endowed with discretion and understanding, who is about to build a house for Yahweh and a royal palace for himself”:* The Chronicler took over from the *Vorlage* in 1 Kgs 5:21 (7) Huram's blessing of Yahweh for giving David a wise son, although there it was something Hiram said to himself that was not included in his letter to Solomon. He has added to it two epithets “the God of Israel” and “who made the heavens and the earth.” Huram seems not to have been offended by Solomon's affirmation in v. 4 (5) that Yahweh is greater than all the gods; in fact, he seems to subscribe to it. This is the only time in Chronicles that creation is affirmed, outside of the quotation from Ps 96:5 in 1 Chr 16:26. Huram's affirmation is similar to that made by Melchizedek in Gen 14:19: “Blessed be Abram by God most high, maker of heaven and earth.”⁴²

The Chronicler has made two additional significant changes to this quotation he has taken over from the Tyrian king's self-reflection. He has added the words “one endowed with discretion and understanding” (יָדַע שְׁלֵל וּבִנָה), which confirm that David's prayer-like wish in 1 Chr 22:12⁴³ has been fulfilled. Second, while David had prayed in that verse for wisdom so that Solomon could keep the law (*תֹּרְאָת*) of Yahweh, and while Hiram, according to 1 Kgs 5:21 (7), had celebrated Solomon's wisdom, which would make him a good ruler, the Chronicler recasts the comment on Solomon's wisdom so that it would enable Solomon to build the temple and his own palace. Throughout these first two chapters,

the capacity to build the temple has been the principal importance of Solomon's wisdom, and not the ability to rule, to judge, to speak proverbs, or to know many things. There has been no mention of the palace in Solomon's letter to Huram (but see 1 Chr 1:18 [2:1] above and 2 Chr 7:11 and 8:1 below). Curtis and Madsen (322) found the reference to Solomon in the third person in this verse so awkward after the reference to him in the second person in the previous verse, that they considered interchanging the order of these verses.

■ **12 (13)** *“Now I have sent Huram-abi, a wise person, one endowed with understanding”:* “Now” marks a transition as Huram responds to Solomon's request for a skilled worker (חֲכָם) in v. 6 (7). Huram the craftsman has exactly that qualification. He is חֲכָם יָדַע בִּנָה (wise, endowed with understanding).⁴⁴ The suffix -*î* is treated as a frozen form, as in the word “Rabbi.” Rudolf Mosis thinks that “abi” may evoke memories of the last syllable of Oholiab (אֶחָד לְאֶחָד), one of the craftsmen who worked on the tabernacle.⁴⁵ In the *Vorlage* (1 Kgs 7:13), where this verse comes in another context, at the end of the construction of the temple and the palace, this man is identified only as Hiram from Tyre (cf. 1 Kgs 7:40 [חִירָם; Hirom], 45). The name Huram-abi may also be the Chronicler's attempt to distinguish this man from Huram, the king of Tyre.

■ **13 (14)** *“the son of a woman from the daughters of Dan, and his father is a Tyrian, one knowing how to work with gold, silver, bronze, iron, stones, and wood, and in red purple, bluish purple, linen, and crimson fabrics, and to do all sorts of engraving and execute any design that may be given to him, together with your artisans and the artisans of my lord, your father David”:* The genealogy of Hiram the craftsman in Kings is considerably different: there he is the son of a widow⁴⁶ from Naphtali, and his father, as here, was a Tyrian (1 Kgs 7:14). This difference has led to several harmoni-

42 See also Ps 115:15; 121:2; 124:8; 146:6; Rev 14:7; and Pr Man 1:2.

43 “Only, may Yahweh give to you [Solomon] discretion and understanding.”

44 Hognesius (*Text of 2 Chronicles*, 79) follows Rudolph (200) in interpreting ‘בָּנָה’ (-abi) as a title rather than part of the name, perhaps meaning something like “master craftsman” or “trusted counselor” (cf. Gen 45:8; Judg 17:10; 1 Macc 11:32). In 2 Chr 4:11 he is simply called Huram, but Huram-abi occurs again in 2 Chr 4:16. Cf. C. C. Torrey, “Concerning Hiram

(“Huram-abi”), the Phoenician Craftsman,” *JBL* 31 (1912) 151–55.

45 Mosis, *Untersuchungen*, 137. See Exod 31:6; 35:34; 36:1-2; 38:23.

46 She is only one of five women associated with Solomon in Chronicles. See Bath-shua, 1 Chr 3:5 (mentioned only in the genealogies); Pharaoh's daughter, 2 Chr 8:11 (who is mentioned five times in Kings); the queen of Sheba, 2 Chronicles 9; and Naamah, the mother of Rehoboam, 2 Chr 12:13. This contrasts with more than one thousand women

zations, such as that the tribal territory of Dan lay within the district of Naphtali,⁴⁷ that Naphtali was the place she lived while she was genealogically a descendant of Dan,⁴⁸ that she was born a Danite, married a man from Naphtali who died, and then married a Tyrian who was the father of Huram,⁴⁹ that Oholiab's father was a Naphtalite but was called a Tyrian because he lived in Tyre,⁵⁰ or that her parents may have been of two different tribes. This last position is taken by the Targum: "The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan; this woman's father belonged to the tribe of Naphtali." I believe, however, with many others, that the Chronicler was only trying to associate him genealogically with Oholiab,⁵¹ who had worked on the tabernacle. The Oholiab from the book of Exodus was a descendant of Dan (Exod 31:6; 35:34). Both Naphtali and Dan, in any case, were sons of Jacob's concubine Bilhah (Gen 30:6, 8).

In Kings, the craftsman Hiram worked exclusively with bronze (1 Kgs 7:13–50). In Chronicles, Huram's skills in working with gold, silver, bronze, iron (cf. 1 Chr 22:16; 29:2, 7), purple, blue, and crimson (cf. 2 Chr 3:14) and in engraving (cf. Exod 28:11, 36; 39:6)⁵² match those requested by Solomon in v. 6 (7). In addition, Huram had skill in stones and wood, and could carry out any design given to him. These additional talents match the building materials actually listed by the Chronicler, and they comport in part with Bezalel's and Oholiab's work with the tabernacle. Stones and wood are mentioned in Exod 35:33, in this chapter (2 Chr 2:1–9 [2–10]), and among David's donations (1 Chr 22:15; 29:2). The ability

to carry out any assignment was also a skill possessed by Bezalel and Oholiab (Exod 31:4; 35:31–35); they also had the skill to work with linen (Exod 35:35).⁵³ A striking difference is that Bezalel was explicitly endowed with the spirit of God (Exod 35:31) whereas Huram was not.

Solomon had referred to the skilled workers provided by his father David in v. 6 (7), and David referred to artisans that were with Solomon in 1 Chr 22:15. King Huram writes as the inferior power in this letter, referring to David as "my lord" in this verse and to Solomon as "my lord" in the next. He also refers in that verse to the Tyrian recipients of the wheat, barley, oil and wine as servants of Solomon. Verse 14 (15) begins with the transitional "Now," as Huram accepts the financial terms Solomon has offered to pay for Tyrian labor. The treaty mentioned in 1 Kgs 5:26 (12), but not in Chronicles, was more likely a parity treaty rather than a suzerainty treaty between a superior and an inferior partner. In any case, the Chronicler makes mention of no treaty between Solomon and Huram.⁵⁴

■ **15 (16)** "*We will cut down timber from Lebanon in accord with your every need, and we will bring it to you in rafts by sea to Joppa; you will transport it up to Jerusalem*": The Chronicler has recast the logging and transporting process that was reported in 1 Kgs 5:23 (9; cf. v.22 [8]). In Kings the servants take the logs to the sea, where King Hiram puts them on rafts, and they are then taken to the place chosen by Solomon. Hiram will "break them up" there and Solomon will carry them off. On the different words for rafts in Kings and Chronicles, see the textual

in the books of Kings! Linda S. Schearing ("A Wealth of Women: Looking Behind, Within, and Beyond Solomon's Story," in Handy, *Age of Solomon*, 428–56) lists seven hundred royal wives, three hundred concubines, three royal mothers (Bathsheba, Naamah, and Haggith), two daughters (Taphath and Basemath), two prostitutes, two foreign queens (queen of Sheba and Queen Tahpenes), two widowed mothers (the mother of Huram and Jeroboam's mother, Zeruah), and an enemy's high-born wife (Hadad's wife, who was the sister of Tahpenes) in 1 Kings 1–11. She also mentions Abishag, who plays a role in the succession to David. In general, the presentation of the women associated with Solomon is more positive in Chronicles.

⁴⁷ J. Liver, *Encyclopedia Biblica* 3 (1958), col. 123.
⁴⁸ This opinion is cited by Dillard, 20.

⁴⁹ Keil, *Books of the Kings*, 96.

⁵⁰ Berger, *Kimhi*, 192.

⁵¹ Noth (*Personennamen*, 158–59) interpreted this name as "the master of my tent."

⁵² As noted above, this engraving is primarily for ornaments on priestly vestments.

⁵³ The word used for linen in 2 Chr 2:13 (14) is פָּרָה, whereas in Exod 35:35 it is שְׁלֹשֶׁת.

⁵⁴ See F. C. Fensham, "The Treaty between the Israelites and Tyrians," in *Congress Volume Rome 1968* (VTSup 17; Leiden: Brill, 1969), 71–87. Fensham notes that Hiram called Solomon "my brother" in 1 Kgs 9:13 (not included in Chronicles).

notes. The Chronicler makes the unloading port Joppa (MR 126162),⁵⁵ from where the logs will be taken about twenty-nine miles northeast to Jerusalem (MR 172131). The Chronicler is apparently influenced by the report of the transfer of lumber for the Second Temple: “So they gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the Sidonians and the Tyrians to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the grant that they had from King Cyrus of Persia” (Ezra 3:7).

2 Chr 2:16-17 (17-18) Conscription of Laborers

■ **16 (17)** *Solomon took a census of all the aliens who were residing in the land of Israel, on the model of⁵⁶ the census in which his father David had counted them; they were found to be one hundred fifty-three thousand and six hundred:* David had also assembled resident aliens (*גָּרִים*) who were residing in the land, and he had put them to work as stonemasons (*בְּנֹתֶרֶת*; 1 Chr 22:2, without *Vorlage* in Kings). This took place after the census of the Israelites themselves in 1 Chronicles 21; Solomon’s census is only of the resident aliens. The only other uses of “resident aliens” in Chronicles are a metaphorical use of the term in 1 Chr 29:15, when David and the people are declaring their unworthiness (“We are aliens before you [Yahweh] and transients like all of our ancestors”), and a reference to the resident aliens from Israel and Judah that participated in Hezekiah’s Passover celebration (2 Chr 30:25). The “land of Israel” is the place where a people called Israel dwells, but non-Israelite inhabitants are not excluded, as can be seen by the resident aliens mentioned in this verse.⁵⁷

■ **17 (18)** *Seventy thousand of them he assigned as laborers, eighty thousand as stonemasons in the hill country, and three thousand and six hundred as overseers to see that the people worked:* Verses 16-17 (17-18) and the parallel in the *Vorlage* in 1 Kgs 5:29-30 (15-16) report that the work force created by Solomon consisted entirely of resident aliens.

These aliens were assigned as laborers (carriers?)⁵⁸ and as stonemasons in the hill country of Palestine, with three thousand six hundred serving as foremen or supervisors. According to 1 Kgs 5:31 (17), not incorporated into Chronicles, these workers quarried out great costly stones to lay the foundation for the temple. The labor force described by the Chronicler here would seem to be in agreement with 1 Kgs 9:20-22//2 Chr 8:7-9, where it is stated that it was only from the remnants of the pre-Israelite inhabitants of the land that forced labor gangs were formed. Solomon did not make slaves of the people of Israel, although they served in the military and in other capacities.⁵⁹ A number of passages deal with compulsory labor imposed by Israelites on others, just as compulsory labor had been imposed on them (Gen 49:15; Exod 1:11; Deut 20:10-11; Josh 19:21-27; 16:10; Judg 1:28, 33).⁶⁰ Adoniram/Adoram (2 Sam 20:24; 1 Kgs 4:6; 5:28 [14]; 12:18) was the officer in charge of forced labor. Nahman Avigad has published a seal, dated to the seventh century, with the inscription *לְפָלָאֵדוּ אֲשֶׁר עַל הַמֶּסֶן*, “belonging to Pala’ahu who is over the corvée/forced labor,”⁶¹ which suggests that compulsory labor continued as a state policy long after the time of Solomon.

A difficulty arises with the interpretation of 1 Kgs 5:27-28 (13-14), which was not incorporated into Chronicles. These verses report that Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel of thirty thousand people, who would spend one month in Lebanon and two months (“at his house”). I believe that the Chronicler omitted these verses precisely because of this apparent contradiction and because of the damage that the imposition of such compulsory labor would do to Solomon’s reputation. Solomon’s actual practice seems to have included forced labor. Jeroboam served under Solomon as supervisor of forced labor of the house of Joseph (1 Kgs 11:28), and the antagonism expressed by the northern tribes toward Rehoboam and his father Solomon and their subsequent

55 The importance of this port is seen also in Ezra 3:7 and Jonah 1:3. This may reflect the Chronicler’s knowledge of contemporary ports, not the situation of Solomon himself.

56 For this meaning of *גָּרִים*, see W. J. Peter Boyd, “Notes on the Secondary Meanings of *גָּרִים*,” *JTS* n.s. 12 (1961) 54.

57 See Willi, “*אֲדֹם יְשֻׁבָּן*,” 387-97.

58 The terms corresponding to *סִבְלָה* in 2 Chr 2:17 (18) in 1 Kgs 5:29 (15) are *נַשָּׂא סִבְלָה*.

59 See Lev 25:39-45 and Deut 20:11, which prohibit harsh rule and permit the use of non-Israelite residents for forced labor.

60 A. Rainey, “Compulsory Labour Gangs in Ancient Israel,” *IJF* 20 (1970) 191-202.

61 Avigad, *Corpus*, 56-57, #20. Israelites were also permitted to buy slaves from among aliens (Lev 25:44-55).

stoning of the administrator of the forced labor program strongly suggest that Solomon in fact did force Israelites themselves into forced labor (1 Kgs 12:3-4, 18//2 Chr 20:3-4, 18).

Tryggve N. D. Mettinger believes that we should distinguish between מַס עֲבָד, understood by him as perpetual or eternal state service, and simple מַס, which would be temporary service.⁶²

מַס עֲבָד is used in 1 Kgs 9:21 to denote the perpetual servitude of the pre-Israelite inhabitants of the land, while the servitude of the Israelites in 1 Kgs 5:27-28 (13-14) was only temporary, involved only the northern tribes, and is therefore called מַס (1 Kgs 5:28 [14]). He further argues that each group of thirty thousand Israelites spent one month in Lebanon and two months “at his house,” referring either to Solomon’s temple or his palace.⁶³ Each group of thirty thousand served three months in the year.⁶⁴ There were four groups of such workers, in his opinion, or 120,000 in all. There are at least two⁶⁵ difficulties with this interpretation. The reading לִמְסֵעַ עֲבָד in 1 Kgs 9:21 appears only as לִמְסֵל when it is incorporated into 2 Chr 8:8, and the LXX in both Kgs and Chr reads εἰς φόρον, that is, a reading without עֲבָד. Hence the textual support for his crucial technical term is not certain. In addition, it is difficult to limit “all Israel” in 1 Kgs 5:27 (13) to the northern tribes as he does. In the final analysis, Mettinger’s interpretation does not question the forced labor of Israelites but only its duration.⁶⁶ Whatever the “original meaning” of 1 Kgs 5:27-28 (13-14), I still think the Chronicler omitted these two verses because they contradicted both 2 Chr 2:16-17 (17-18); 8:9 and the character of Solomon he was developing.

The difference between 3,600 supervisors in Chronicles and in Kgs LXX and the 3,300 supervisors in Kgs MT is difficult to explain (see the textual notes). Mettinger argued that a redactor associated the 550⁶⁷ supervisors in 1 Kgs 9:23 with the Israelite levy of 30,000 (1 Kgs 5:27-28 [13-14]). When the numbers in 1 Kgs 5:27-29 (13-15), 30,000, 70,000, and 80,000, were combined by this redactor, they numbered 180,000 laborers, or six times as many as the Israelite levy alone. Hence the redactor concluded that this group would require six times as many supervisors, or 3,300.⁶⁸ However that may be, I have no suggestion on how the number 3,600 was calculated,⁶⁹ but I do note that this variant tradition is attested in Kgs LXX, meaning that the Chronicler got it from his non-MT copy of Kings.⁷⁰

Conclusion

In this chapter, as in chap. 1, the Chronicler has extensively rewritten his *Vorlage* from 1 Kings and had no resort to additional, nonbiblical sources. Solomon took the initiative in writing to the Tyrian king Huram. Relying on the precedent of Huram providing cedar wood for David’s palace, Solomon appealed to the king to send him a craftsman who would be endowed with many of the skills of Bezalel and Oholiab, who had worked on the construction of the tabernacle. Solomon also requested a shipment of wood and promised to pay a one-time, set amount for food and drink of the workers, not the blank check he promised to give Hiram’s household annually in Kings.

62 Mettinger, *Solomonic State Officials*, 134–39.

63 BHS suggests that we read בְּבַיִת (“at home”) with the suffix in the MT arising by dittography. In this understanding, the crews worked one month in Lebanon, and then had two months off at home.

64 Myers (2:10) points out that forced laborers in Egypt also worked on three-month shifts. Cf. Herodotus 2.124; and Hermann Kees, *Ancient Egypt: A Cultural Topography* (trans. Ian F. D. Morrow; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961) 55.

65 1 Kgs 5:28 (14) also seems to say that there were three groups of ten thousand each.

66 Forced labor of Judahites was implemented also by Asa (1 Kgs 15:22//2 Chr 16:6), and labor with-

out remuneration was criticized by Jeremiah (Jer 22:13).

67 The parallel text in 2 Chr 8:10 has 250 chief officers.

68 Mettinger, *Solomonic State Officials*, 137 and n. 50.

69 Berger (*Kimhi*, 190) notes that Rashi concluded that the extra three hundred were prefects over all of them.

70 Myers (2:10), using the “unit principle,” suggests that there were 153 units, with 600 persons in each unit, or a total of 91,800. But see Klein, “How Many in a Thousand,” 275. Note that there were 3,600 overseers, which does not fit well with 153 units.

Huram's reply is as an inferior power to a greater one, and he, like the queen of Sheba at the end of the Solomonic narrative, affirms that Yahweh loves his people. He also acknowledges Yahweh as creator and concludes that he has given Solomon wisdom so that he can build the temple. The artisan he sends is a Danite, Huram-abi, whose tribal ancestry connects him genealogically with Oholiab. Huram-abi has the requisite skills that Solomon requested and even more, corresponding to the gifts of the tabernacle craftsmen Bezalel and Oholiab themselves and comporting to the materials used in the temple's construction. King Huram also promised to deliver the cedar wood when he had been appropriately compensated. The support Huram gives to Solomon's temple can be seen as a response to 1 Chr 16:28: "Ascribe to Yahweh, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to Yahweh honor and strength."

At the beginning and end of this chapter we find references to forced laborers, but these people according to Chronicles were conscripted only from the non- or pre-Israelite inhabitants of the land, and not at all from the Israelites themselves. Solomon is energetic in his plans for the temple and lacks the flaws described by the Deuteronomistic Historian, such as the conscription of Israelite labor gangs. The Chronicler does not use the technical term for forced labor (**מְנֻסָּה**) in this chapter.

Work on the temple, then, is fostered by Huram, a foreign king, and by compulsory labor gangs drawn from the non-Israelite inhabitants of the land. The nations of the world therefore provide essential material and labor to work on the temple. Their support also demonstrates the value placed on the temple. This temple will be great because Yahweh is greater than the gods.