READING UTOPIA IN CHRONICLES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate School
of the University of Notre Dame
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Notre Dame, Indiana
March 2005
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Abstract

by

Steven James Schweitzer

The book of Chronicles is examined using the methodology of utopian literary theory. From this innovative perspective, Chronicles is interpreted as a utopian work that critiques present society and its *status quo* by presenting a “better alternative reality.” My analysis contends that Chronicles does not reflect the historical situation of a particular time during the Second Temple period in its portrayal of the past, but rather conveys hope for a different future. While some scholars have also affirmed that Chronicles is concerned with the future, the majority of scholars believe that the content of Chronicles largely reflects the present situation of the author and in doing so reinforces or legitimizes the *status quo*. Also, this dissertation argues that utopianism is an underlying ideological matrix that contributes to the coherence of the book of Chronicles as a whole. Three commonly addressed concerns of the Chronicler (genealogy, politics, and the temple cult) are understood from this methodological perspective as vehicles for conveying the Chronicler’s vision for a utopian future. Thus, the scope of this analysis is broader than many recent studies on Chronicles that have focused on isolated themes, individuals, or discrete sections in the book.
Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the state of scholarship on Chronicles, to the methodological approach of utopian literary theory, and to the applicability of this method to Chronicles. Chapter 2 assesses Chronicles through this interpretative lens by focusing on the genealogical utopia in the material of 1 Chronicles 1-9 and the related issue of delineating the concept of “Israel” throughout the book. Chapter 3 investigates the political utopia in Chronicles. Comparisons and contrasts with other Hellenistic utopias are briefly discussed while the main focus is on the presentation of the Davidic dynasty in Chronicles. Chapter 4 consists of a detailed examination of the temple cult and its personnel, the center of the Chronicler’s utopian history. Chapter 5 contains a summary, conclusions, and implications for further research into Chronicles as a result of this analysis, many of which challenge the dominant scholarly views and the assumptions that lie behind them.
DEDICATION

To

Jill

my best friend
and
lifelong companion
on this wonderful journey together
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ABBREVIATIONS


Additional Abbreviations used in this dissertation, but not found in the SBL Handbook of Style, are:

AARAS American Academy of Religion Academy Series
ABBT Alttestamentliche Beiträge zur biblischen Theologie
ACHS American Cultural Heritage Series
AGRL Aspects of Greek and Roman Life
AOSM American Oriental Society Monographs
AOTC Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
ArchBibS Archaeology and Biblical Studies
ASNSL Archiv für das Studium der neuren Sprachen und Literaturen
ATSAT Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament
BAWC Bochumer Altertumwissenschaftliches Colloquium
BETS Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society
BibSem Biblical Seminar
BICS Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies
BIS Biblical Interpretation Series
BJSUCSD Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego
BLS Bible and Literature Series
BM Beth Miqra
CCOT Communicator’s Commentary: Old Testament
CERG Centre d’études romaines et gallo-romaines
CIS Copenhagen International Seminar
CJAS Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity Series
CP Cultural Politics
CSCHG California Studies in Critical Human Geography
CSOLC  Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture
CSPHS  Contemporary Studies in Philosophy and the Human Sciences
CSS  Cultural Studies Series
CSSFF  Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy
CV  Critical Views
CWeek  Classical Weekly
Diod. Sic.  Diodorus Siculus
EDSS  Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls
EH  Europäische Hochschulschriften
ESELL  Essays and Studies on English Language and Literature
ESHM  European Seminar in Historical Methodology
Extrap  Extrapolation
FTS  Freiburger theologische Studien
GCN  Groningen Colloquia on the Novel
GTS  Gettysburg Theological Studies
HBS  Herders Bibliische Studien
HCS  Hellenistic Culture and Society
Hist. conscr.  Quomodo Historia Conscribenda sit, Lucian
IRGLS  International Rennert Guest Lecture Series
JANES  Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society
JCPS  Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series
JHebScr  Journal of Hebrew Scriptures
JJTP  Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy
LBS  Library of Biblical Studies
LDSS  Literature of The Dead Sea Scrolls
LSFTS  Liverpool Science Fiction Texts and Studies
LTJ  Lutheran Theological Journal
MinnRev  Minnesota Review
MnemSup  Supplements to Mnemosyne
NCBOT  New Clarendon Bible Old Testament
NEASB  Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin
NPAJSJ  New Perspectives on Ancient Judaism (Studies in Judaism)
OCM  Oxford Classical Monographs
OrTer  Orbis Terrarum
OTM  Old Testament Message
OTWASA  Ou-Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suider-Afrika
PEGLMBS  Proceedings, Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies
PFES  Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society
PTT  Playing the Texts
RevHist  Revue Historique
RNBC  Readings: A New Biblical Commentary
RSSSR  Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion
SBEC  Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity
SBLStBL  Society of Biblical Literature Studies in Biblical Literature
SBTS  Sources for Biblical and Theological Study
SCGST  Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project has benefited from the support and input of several individuals. I wish to express my sincere thanks to my director, Jim VanderKam, whose careful attention to the text improved its content and style. Also, he has left an indelible impression on me as an example of a brilliant scholar who lives a balanced and involved life apart from his career. Second, I wish to thank the members of my committee: Hindy Najman, Gene Ulrich, and Greg Sterling. Each has contributed to the direction of this work, especially Hindy, in whose seminar this study originated. I am grateful for their consistent affirmation of me and my work over the last five years.

The Department of Theology has been a wonderful place to pursue my degree. I also appreciate the pleasant attitudes and dedicated work by the staffs at the circulation desk of the Hesburgh Library and in the Interlibrary Loan Office, both of which have been kept busy over the course of my research for this project.

My parents, Thomas and Janis Schweitzer, cannot know the extent to which they have influenced my life and set me on this path by their examples of faith. They have repeatedly demonstrated their love and encouraged me throughout my education.

My three children, Luke, Anna, and Benjamin, have brought such joy to my life that I could never have dreamed possible.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my wife Jill. This project could not have been accomplished without her support, encouragement, patience, friendship, and love.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Current State of Chronicles Scholarship

Once at the center of HB studies in the work of Wilhelm de Wette, and progressively moved to the margins where it was entrenched by Julius Wellhausen,\(^1\) the book of Chronicles has enjoyed a resurgence in scholarly interest in recent decades. An explosion of articles, monographs, and commentaries is filling a gaping hole in scholarship on the HB.\(^2\) However, no consensus has emerged from these numerous

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\(^2\) Reflecting on this recent development in the field, Roddy Braun humorously notes that, in 1971, he remembered “… discovering, with a certain amount of delight, the relatively meager amount of information written on [the Chronicler’s History], and especially Chronicles itself, when I began looking into a subject for my doctoral dissertation” (“Martin Noth and the Chronicler’s History,” in *The History of Israel’s Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth* [ed. S. L. McKenzie and M. P. Graham; JSOTSup 182; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994], 63-80, here 71). However, publications over the last thirty years demonstrate that this is no longer the case. See the helpful surveys by John W. Kleinig, “Recent Research in Chronicles,” *CurBS* 2 (1994): 43-76; Kent Harold Richards, “Reshaping Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Interpretation,” in *Old Testament Interpretation: Past, Present, and Future. Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker* (ed. J. L. Mays, D. L. Petersen, and K. H. Richards; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 211-24; and Thomas Willi, “Zwei Jahrzehnte Forschung an Chronik und Esra-Nehemia,” *TRu* 67 (2002): 61-104; cf. the
studies on even the most basic of issues. The authorship, date, genre, and purpose of the work have been at the center of much debate. For example: is the work from the Persian or Hellenistic or even Maccabean period; is it history or historiography or midrash or something else; is it originally the work of priests or Levites, and was it redacted by the other group and to what extent; what is its relationship to its sources—especially the Pentateuch, Samuel-Kings, and the Ezra and Nehemiah materials; how many redactions has it undergone and which sections belong to each; and what are the main theological interests of the work? Any one of these topics would be, and has been, the subject of a dissertation. However, this dissertation will pursue a different line of inquiry.

Rather than focus on one of these issues, which has been the trend of a majority of recent publications, this dissertation will employ a literary approach in an attempt to address the coherence of the book of Chronicles as a whole. Three major concerns of the Chronicler commonly discussed by scholars (genealogy, politics, and the temple cult) will be examined through the lens of utopian literary theory. While such a literary analysis has been undertaken successfully for explaining several features of the narratives

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3 This lack of consensus was noted in the opening paragraph of the highly-influential study by Werner E. Lemke, “The Synoptic Problem in the Chronicler’s History,” *HTR* 58 (1965): 349-63. In almost forty years, there has been no sign of resolution and the points of disagreement have multiplied instead.


5 While these three topics have been chosen for their prominence in Chronicles, other works considered to be utopian in nature (especially from the Hellenistic period) evidence the same three concerns: genealogy, politics, and temple cult. The relevant Hellenistic texts will be discussed at the beginning of the appropriate chapter devoted to the particular theme in Chronicles.
concerning Solomon, Rehoboam, and Abijah in Chronicles, an analysis of the utopian dimensions of the book of Chronicles as a whole has not yet been attempted. The results of previous work in utopian theory suggest that Chronicles scholarship may benefit from an analysis using this particular methodological lens.

The first chapter of this dissertation will provide an introduction to the current state of Chronicles scholarship, to the methodological approach of utopian theory, and to the applicability of this method to the study of Chronicles. The second chapter will begin the assessment of Chronicles through this interpretative lens by focusing on the construction of a genealogical utopia in both the material of 1 Chronicles 1-9 and by the related issue of the identification of “Israel” throughout the book. The third chapter continues this methodological investigation into the construction of a political utopia in Chronicles. Comparisons and contrasts with other Hellenistic utopias will be discussed briefly while the main focus will be on the presentation of the Davidic dynasty in Chronicles. The fourth chapter concludes the interpretation of Chronicles in terms of utopian literary theory with a detailed examination of the description of the temple cult, the center of the Chronicler’s utopian history. Finally, the fifth chapter consists of conclusions and implications for further research into Chronicles as a result of this analysis. As will be argued and hopefully demonstrated, the version of utopianism

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7 Boer calls his own work an “interpretative prototype” (“Utopian Politics,” 360). Although the recent work by John Jarick claims to be a reading of Chronicles as fantasy literature which creates the imaginary world of a “perfect society,” the book does not develop either of these points nor does it supply any theoretical model for reading fantasy literature (J Chronicles [RNBC; London: Sheffield Academic, 2002]); see the passing references to these concepts on pp. 6, 128.
present in Chronicles serves as an underlying ideological matrix that provides a means for understanding several major concerns of the Chronicler’s work in a coherent manner.

1.1.1 Authorship of Chronicles

Chronicles and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah have long been associated by the theological traditions of Christianity and Judaism and by scholars. Common authorship


(or final editing) of these works had been the dominate position until the publication of Sara Japhet’s article in 1968 and its adaptation and expansion by H. G. M. Williamson in 1977. Japhet’s linguistic study has been challenged and revised, but the separation of Chronicles from Ezra-Nehemiah as distinct units with different aims and arising in different historical contexts has been accepted by the vast majority of scholars. When scholars have concluded that “the Chronicler” is not the individual responsible for the composition of Ezra-Nehemiah or even Ezra himself, they have provided numerous suggestions regarding his identification with a particular social, political, or religious group. Of course, these suggestions have been made with recourse to the content and emphases of Chronicles: priests, Levites, scribes, Zadokites, high priests, and Levitical


11 A brief survey of the major commentaries and nearly all articles which deal with the subject demonstrates this. The separation of Chronicles from Ezra-Nehemiah has produced further investigation into the unity of Ezra and Nehemiah; see the convincing arguments against their common origin made by James C. VanderKam, “Ezra-Nehemiah or Ezra and Nehemiah?,” in From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature (JSJSup 62; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 60-80; cf. the arguments by David Kraemer, “On the Relationship of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah,” JSOT 59 (1993): 73-92; and Bob Becking, “Ezra’s Re-enactment of the Exile,” in Leading Captivity Captive: ‘The Exile’ as History and Ideology (ed. L. L. Grabbe; JSOTS 278; ESHM 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 40-61, esp. 47-
singers to name a few.\textsuperscript{12} Currently, there seems to be no agreement among scholars on a possible identification of “the Chronicler.”

1.1.2 Date of Chronicles

In many ways, the lack of consensus regarding authorship is tied to and paralleled by the various dates suggested for Chronicles, especially when multi-layered redactional histories of the text are postulated.\textsuperscript{13} Dates ranging from the sixth century to the

\textsuperscript{12} The plethora of social locations for the author(s) of Chronicles is not unique; cf. the numerous assertions for the Deuteronomists and the suggestion for a “mixed group” by Patricia Dutcher-Wells, “The Social Location of the Deuteronomists: A Sociological Study of Factional Politics in Late Pre-Exilic Judah,” \textit{JSOT} 52 (1991): 77-94; cf. also the well-reasoned arguments for separate social and temporal locations, and not a “mixed group,” for those responsible for Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History by Gary N. Knoppers, “Rethinking the Relationship between Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History: The Case of Kings,” \textit{CBQ} 63 (2001): 393-415.

\textsuperscript{13} David N. Freedman suggests two editions, the original coinciding with the completion of the temple in 515 B.C.E. (“The Chronicler’s Purpose,” \textit{CBQ} 23 [1961]: 432-42; repr., \textit{Divine Commitment and Human Obligation: Selected Writings of David Noel Freedman} [ed. J. R. Huddleston; 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 1:88-93). Frank M. Cross accepts Freedman’s two editions, but delineates a third (Chr.; 1 Chr 10-2 Chr 34 and the \textit{Vorlage} of parts of Ezra 1-3 dated to the time of Zerubbabel in 520; Chr.; 1 Chr 10-2 Chr 34 and the \textit{Vorlage} of all of 1 Esdras dated after Ezra’s mission in 458; Chr.; 1 Chr 1-9 and 1 Chr 10-2 Chr 36 and Hebrew Ezra-Nehemiah dated ca. 400) in “A Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration,” \textit{JBL} 94 (1975): 4-18; repr., \textit{Int} 29 (1975): 187-203. Besides the suggestions of Freedman and Cross, scholars have also posited a pro-priestly redaction which cuts across Chronicles but is particularly evident in 1 Chronicles 15-16 and the supposed large insertion of 1 Chronicles 23-27; see the concise articulation of this view by Piet B. Dirksen, “The Development of the Text of I Chronicles 15:1-24,” \textit{Hen} 17 (1995): 267-77. The secondary nature of the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9 has been asserted as well. A wide range of dates for these additions have been suggested, but not without each of these positions being refuted with a fair degree of success. See the works of Paul D. Hanson, “1 Chronicles 15-16 and the Chronicler’s View on the Levites,” in ‘Sha’arei Talmon’: \textit{Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon} (ed. M. Fishbane and E. Tov; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 69-77; John W. Wright, “The Legacy of David in Chronicles: The Narrative Function of 1 Chronicles 23-27,” \textit{JBL} 110 (1991): 229-42, which is based on chapter 5 of his unpublished dissertation “The Origin and Function of 1 Chronicles 23-27” (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1989); and the brief discussion of the genealogies by H. G. M. Williamson, “Eschatology in Chronicles,” \textit{TynBul} 28 (1977): 115-54, especially 121-22. See also the extended discussion of these chapters and the unity of Chronicles by Gary N. Knoppers, \textit{I Chronicles 1-9}, 72-100; and idem, \textit{I Chronicles 10-29}: \textit{A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary} (AB 12A; New York: Doubleday, 2004), 654-59, 788-98.
Maccabean period have been suggested, although the late Persian or early Hellenistic
time period has by far the most supporters.\(^\text{14}\)

\(^{14}\) As noted above, Freedman and Cross have associated the original edition of Chronicles with the
events surrounding the temple restoration under Zerubbabel. Although a minority opinion, it still finds
some supporters, e.g., Mark A. Throntveit, *When Kings Speak: Royal Speech and Royal Prayer in*
*Chronicles* (SBLDS 93; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 107; William M. Schniedewind, *The Word of God in*
*Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period* (JSOTSup 197; Sheffield: Sheffield
Academic, 1995), 249; and Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 8-12.

Maccabean dating has been largely restricted to the “redactional additions” to the text and to
the genealogical material in particular (especially in the material unique to the LXX). See Peter R. Ackroyd,
“Criteria for Maccabean Dating of Old Testament Literature,” *VT* 3 (1953): 113-32, esp. 126-27 on 1 Chr
24:7-18, with the comment that such a suggestion is “not unreasonable … [but] not conclusive” (127); Otto
xxiv and the Royal Priesthood of the Hasmoneans,” in *Crises and Perspectives: Studies in Ancient Near
Eastern Polytheism, Biblical Theology, Palestinian Archaeology, and Intertestamental Literature* (ed. J. C.
de Moor et al; OtSt 24; Leiden: Brill, 1986), 94-106; Kurt Galling, *Bücher der Chronik, Esra, Nehemia*
(1954): 401-09, esp. 402; Paul Winter, “Twenty-six priestly courses,” *VT* 6 (1956): 215-17. However, this
dating has been almost universally rejected in recent years, as nothing in the text requires the specific
context of the Maccabean period for an explanation. For recent arguments in favor of the Maccabean
date, see Ernst M. Dörffü, *Mose in den Chronikbüchern: Garant theokratischer Zukunftserwartung*
(BZAW 219; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 282-83; and the three-layered redactional model offered by Georg
Steins, *Die Chronik als kanonisches Abschlußphänomen: Studien zur Entstehung und Theologie von 1/2
Chronik* (BBB 93; Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum Verlag, 1995), 419-39, 491-99; idem, “Zur Datierung der

The detailed section on the date of Chronicles by Sara Japhet concludes with the following: “I
would place it at the end of the Persian or, more probably, the beginning of the Hellenistic period, at the
end of the fourth century BCE” (*I & II Chronicles: A Commentary* [OTL; Louisville: Westminster/John
Knox, 1993], 23-28, here 27-28). Compare the lengthy discussion of date, authorship, and compositional
history of Chronicles by Knoppers, *J Chronicles I-9*, 72-117, esp. 101-17. This loosely-defined dating has
become the dominant view among scholars, with which I have no argument. See also the brief and helpful
summary of the issues regarding the date of Chronicles by Jonathan E. Dyck, “Dating Chronicles and the
Purpose of Chronicles,” *Did* 8, no. 2 (1997): 16-29; cf. the more exhaustive and recent treatment by Isaac
London: T&T Clark, 2004), 347-71. Kalimi argues for the probability of “not after the first quarter of
the fourth century” and even for some time around 382-376 B.C.E. (pp. 366, 371).

However, while this transitional period between the Persian and Hellenistic eras is typically
assumed, some more recent arguments for a date later in the Hellenistic period have been offered. Rainer
Albertz places Chronicles squarely in the Hellenistic period and interprets it accordingly (*A History of
arguments for strong parallels with Hellenistic historiography lead him to date Chronicles well into the
Hellenistic period (“The Chronicler as Historian: A Comparativist Perspective,” in *The Chronicler as
Historian* [ed. M. P. Graham, K. G. Hoglund, and S. L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: Sheffield
Academic, 1997], 19-29). Martin Hengel agrees with this assessment of the parallel Hellenistic material
(“Judaism and Hellenism Revisited,” in *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* [ed. J. J. Collins and G. E. Sterling;
CJAS 13; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001], 6-37, esp. 11). Gary N. Knoppers
A few items do seem certain: (1) The Chronicler’s sources included the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, several of the Prophets, some of the Psalms, and the large block of material in Samuel-Kings, though not in any literary edition known today.\textsuperscript{15} (2) Some form of the Pentateuch containing stipulations from the sources commonly designated as “P” and “D” must have been in existence at the time of the book’s composition but not necessarily in a \textit{fixed written} form. (3) The absolute \textit{terminus post quem} would be 515 B.C.E. based on 1 Chr 29:7, which uses the term “darics” (דរִיכָה), Persian coinage recognizes similar and additional parallels but believes such a late dating is not necessary, maintaining that Chronicles is still more likely from the late Persian or early Hellenistic period (“Greek Historiography and the Chronicler’s History: A Reexamination,” \textit{JBL} 122 [2003]: 627-50, here 650). Chronicles is viewed as part of the movement toward increased interest in the interpretation of sacred texts during the Hellenistic period by Thomas Willi, \textit{Die Chronik als Auslegung: Untersuchungen zur literarischen Gestaltung der historischen Überlieferung Israels} (FRLANT 106; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), 241-44. There is a marked tendency among German scholars to date Chronicles well into the Hellenistic period; see the previous mentioned works, and Norbert Dennerlein, \textit{Die Bedeutung Jerusalems in den Chronikbüchern} (BEATAJ 46; Frankfort am Main: Peter Lang, 1999), 249-53; Han-Peter Mathys, “Chronikbücher und hellenistischer Zeitgeist,” in \textit{Vom Anfang und vom Ende: Fünf alttestamentliche Studien} (BEATAJ 47; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000), 41-155, esp. 46-50; Kim Strübind, \textit{Tradition als Interpretation in der Chronik: König Josaphat als Paradigma chronistischer Hermeneutik und Theologie} (BZAW 201; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991), 23-25. See also the helpful discussion of Hellenistic dating and its difficulties by Kai Peltonen, “A Jigsaw without a Model? The Date of Chronicles,” in \textit{Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period} (ed. L. L. Grabbe; JSOTSup 317; ESHM 3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 225-71.

\textsuperscript{15} See the summary of Tuell, \textit{First and Second Chronicles}, 5-6. The critical analysis of Steven L. McKenzie is particularly helpful even if all of its conclusions are not accepted (\textit{The Chronicler’s Use of the Deuteronomistic History} [HSM 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1984]). On the concept of “literary editions” of texts, see Eugene C. Ulrich, \textit{The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible} (SDSSRL; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 17-120.

known to be first minted at this time.\(^{16}\) (4) The absolute *terminus ad quem* of ca. 158 B.C.E. can be determined from the citations of Chronicles found in Eupolemus’ writings.\(^ {17}\) Any other restrictions are speculative and far less certain. (5) There are no explicit Hellenistic or Maccabean references in Chronicles, although several allusions have been suggested.\(^ {18}\)

In light of these points, it seems best to locate the date of Chronicles, without serious additions to the text, to some point either in the late Persian or early Hellenistic period. Apart from the genealogy of Jeconiah in 1 Chr 3:17-24, which is “riddled with textual and interpretative difficulties,”\(^ {19}\) neither the genealogical material nor the narrative that follows requires a date which extends into the third century B.C.E., while the evidence for locating it in the transitional fourth century B.C.E. is more compelling.\(^ {20}\)

\(^{16}\) Following the comments of Williamson, “Eschatology in Chronicles,” 123-26; see also the arguments for Persian loan-words and against Greek loan-words in Chronicles, which have won wide acceptance among scholars, as articulated by Albright, “Date and Personality,” 113-15.


\(^{18}\) A recent argument for a Hellenistic date has been the occurrence of military terms and organizations used in Chronicles, typified by the phrase θετῶν θωράκων (2 Chr 26:15), which has been taken to refer to some sort of catapult used in defense of the city. Scholars have found parallels with Hellenistic sources and not Persian ones. See the evidence and highly-influential arguments of Peter Welten, *Geschichte und Geschichtsdarstellung in den Chronikbüchern* (WMANT 42; Neukirchen Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973), 9-175, esp. 111-14; cf. Francesco Bianchi and G. Rossone, “L’armée d’Ozias (2 Ch 26, 11-15) entre fiction et réalité: une esquisse philologique et historique,” *Transeu* 13 (1997): 21-37. Peltonen rightly notes the difficulty of expressing any certainty surrounding this complex issue of dating (“Jigsaw,” 239).


1.1.3 Genre of Chronicles

Chronicles contains a wide variety of genres: lists, linear and segmented genealogies, speeches, prophetic oracles, a letter, legislation regarding cultic organization and practice, source citations, poetry, and narrative. While these micro-genres are readily identifiable, scholars have offered a seemingly excessive number of labels for the macro-genre in an attempt to determine how the micro-genres function together in the larger work known as Chronicles.21 For example: midrash,22 commentary,23 targum,24 history,25

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historiography, historical literature, historical narrative, biblical historiography, priestly historiography, Greek historiography, myth-making with no resemblance to Greek historiography, apologetic historiography within the context of ancient Hellenistic historiography, a “revisionist history” to rewrite the tradition intentionally, a “corrective history,” “rewritten Bible,” historiography using the techniques of


29 Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 32; and Kalimi, “Was the Chronicler a Historian?,” 89.

30 Jon L. Berquist, Judaism in Persia’s Shadow: A Social and Historical Approach (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 155; cf. the comments by Donald C. Raney II, History as Narrative in the Deuteronomistic History and Chronicles (SBEC 56; Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2003), 193.


35 Sara Japhet, “Postexilic Historiography: How and Why?,” in Israel Constructs its History: Deuteronomistic History in Recent Research (ed. A. de Pury, T. Römer, and J.-D. Macchi; JSOTSup 306;
rewritten Bible, a “work of theology,” a historical sermon for the purpose of exhortation, a “theological rewriting of Bible history for instructional purposes” similar to both rewritten Bible and history writing, a “history of religion” from a “religious teacher,” “educational religious literature,” a “cycle of royal biographies, prefaced by an introduction,” a novel or proto-novel, a


Klaas A. D. Smelik, “The Representation of King Ahaz in 2 Kings 16 and 2 Chronicles 28,” in Intertextuality in Ugarit and Israel (ed. J. C. de Moor; OtSt 40; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 143-85, esp. 165; Steins, Chronik als kanonisches Abschlußphänomen, 39; and Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 7: “Arguably, the Chronicler was the inventor of the rewritten Bible.” Compare the critique of this view by Knoppers, I Chronicles 1-9, 129-34.


Willi, Chronik als Auslegung, 53-66; with discussion of its nine categories of exegetical method on pp. 67-68 and their illustration on pp. 68-175; see the use of these exegetical categories by Strübind, Tradition als Interpretation; and the similar label by Ingeborg Gabriel, Friede über Israel: Eine Untersuchung zur Friedenstheologie in Chronik I 10-II 36 (ÖBS 10; Klosterneuburg: Verlag Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990), 10-11, 199.


William Johnstone, 1 and 2 Chronicles. Volume 1. 1 Chronicles 1-2 Chronicles 9: Israel’s Place among the Nations (JSOTSup 253; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 1:23.


McKenzie, 1-2 Chronicles, 33-34.


“literary fiction,”

a tendency writing of little historical value,

the historical work of an “earnest and devout” novelist,

and utopian literature.

While some type of historiography is the most common label, the importance of the dissenting voices should not be overlooked. The authors of these less-accepted positions are all attempting to address the Chronicler’s reworking of his sources and the clear theological overtones in the material unique to Chronicles. While some of these positions have merit, none of them fully represents the content and form of Chronicles. Each attempts to identify


50 Boer, Novel Histories, 136-37.

51 Midrash is an anachronistic understanding of the Chronicler’s method. While his method may have much in common with this later tradition of interpretation, the term cannot explain the complexity of Chronicles, nor is it appropriate in this historical setting. Attempting to define this historiographic work as priestly creates a category by which to differentiate Chronicles from DtrH. But is merely saying “priests wrote it” enough? In fact, is Chronicles “priestly,” “Levitical,” or “cultic”? This issue will be further addressed in Chapter 4. The term biblical is useless in that it blurs the distinction between DtrH and Chronicles and creates a false separation from “non-biblical” historiographies that are very similar to Chronicles. Hoglund makes too much of the similarities to Hellenistic historiographies. Although, they may indicate parallel development, there is not necessarily dependency. In addition, this influence could have entered Yehud during the Persian period, particularly given Greek expansionism and the Greco-Persian wars. In this sense, dating Chronicles to the Hellenistic period is too tenuous based on these commonalities. Chronicles is revisionist, but what does this actually mean? Van Seters implies intentional malice on the part of the Chronicler, and this seems presumptuous. In addition, while the Chronicler does engage in the reconstruction of the past, is his work really myth? Chronicles does not spend much time on “mythic” origins or cosmology. Although Van Seters is correct in presenting Chronicles in tension with DtrH, his conclusions do not help to explain why or how the Chronicler is able to promote his version of the past. Why should DtrH be replaced by Chronicles? This leads one to question the label of rewritten Bible. This loaded term is a current “hot potato” among scholars. What determines when something is being “rewritten”? How do we know that Samuel-Kings is a/the “Bible” for the Chronicler? Source criticism has produced no clear solution to this problem; see Section 2.2.1. The notion that Chronicles is an extended historical sermon misunderstands the function of historiography as the Chronicler uses the genre. The Chronicler is not “commenting” on and “teaching” from history; he presents the past in such a way that it speaks for itself. The Chronicler addresses his audience only implicitly, never directly. If this were an exhortation, one would expect directives, commands, and explicit admonitions rather than hints, asides, and clarifications embedded in the narrative or only in the speeches. To suggest that Chronicles is some type of novel may be helpful in understanding its presentation of history, but not in fully understanding this ancient document. The same criticism could be made of calling the books of Jonah, Ruth, or Esther novels. While Chronicles may have much in common with the modern concept of a novel, this term would be anachronistic if it were used as the only classification of this ancient text. Chronicles is not a novel, at least
Chronicles by one all-encompassing category; yet Chronicles resists such a narrow
definition. However, to label Chronicles *sui generis* would be simply to avoid the
problem instead of attempting a holistic reading of the work.

Defining genre is a complicated pursuit. Literary theorists have attempted to
refine the understanding of how to determine what genre is and what separates one genre
from another. While many biblical scholars have attempted to use the findings by
literary theorists, not all have done so satisfactorily. This dissertation will follow the
recent tempered evaluations and suggestions by Alan Kirk. His analysis allows for the

Not as the term has been typically defined. Thus, Mitchell’s definition (“Dialogism of Chronicles”)
requires further nuance that may be provided by scholars working in classics; see, e.g., the essays contained
in *The Novel in the Ancient World* (ed. G. Schmeling; MnemSup 159; Leiden: Brill, 1996); and John
Marincola, “Genre, Convention, and Innovation in Graeco-Roman Historiography,” in *The Limits of
Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts* (ed. C. S. Kraus; MnemSup 191; Leiden:
Brill, 1999), 281-324. Finally, it seems that the issue of genre requires greater precision on the part of all
scholars involved in this discussion.

*A point echoed most recently by McKenzie, 1-2 Chronicles, 33.*

See the insightful comments by Tzvetan Todorov, “The Origin of Genres,” in *Genres in
separating genres, Todorov states: “Where do genres come from? Quite simply from other genres. A new
genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several: by inversion, by displacement, by
combination” (15). Also, Todorov notes that genres may be present in one culture while absent in another,
and that this is entirely consistent with the ideological milieu(s) of the society and of the writer (18-19).
Todorov’s view is employed in addressing the issue of genre in antiquity by Daniel L. Selden, “Genre of
Genre,” in *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (ed. J. Tatum; Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press,
1994), 39-64, esp. 39-45. Selden notes that genre analysis was first developed in Hellenistic political
philosophy (39) and that most “complex prose fiction” regarded itself as having an “eclectic nature” (43).

*Alan Kirk, “Compositional Analysis of Q: History and Theory,” in The Composition of the
Sayings Source: Genre, Synchrony, and Wisdom Redaction in Q* (NovTSup 91; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1-86,
esp. 64-86. While written to aid in illuminating the genre of Q, it is, in my opinion, one of the best overall
discussions of the complexities of genre that I have come across; cf. David E. Aune, “Genre criticism,” in
*WDNTECLR* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 196-97. These points are obviously in concert
with the previous statements by Todorov.

See also Stanley Cavell’s conception of genre: “The idea is that the members of a genre share the
inheritance of certain conditions, procedures and subjects and goals of composition, and that in primary art
each member of such a genre represents a study of these conditions, something I think of as bearing the
responsibility of the inheritance. There is, on this picture, nothing one is tempted to call *the* features of a
genre that all its members have in common. First, nothing would count as a feature until an act of criticism
defines it as such. (Otherwise it would always have been obvious that, for instance, the subject of
remarriage was a feature, indeed a leading feature, of a genre.) Second, if a member of a genre were just an
object with features then if it shared *all* its features with its companion members they would presumably be
indistinguishable from one another. Third, a genre must be left open to new members, a new bearing of
responsibility for its inheritance; hence, in the light of the preceding point, it follows that the new member
mixing of genres to be a possible authorial communication strategy rather than a sign of redaction or of ineptness on the part of the author. He also recognizes that literary structure and genre are interrelated and cannot be easily separated in any literary analysis. Kirk notes that complex texts tend to employ a “large number of diverse small genres” which are organized into a holistic “framework genre” or even a “mixed genre” functioning as the “framework genre.” Finally, he correctly notes that historical reality and social conditions may be revealed in genre. That is, the text does not exist apart from a historical context in which it was produced.

While these points do not delimit the genre of Chronicles, they do provide a starting point for discussing Chronicles as literature that presents a coherent message to its readers. There is also an explicit rejection of the idea that the Chronicler’s purpose “may have been complex and perhaps not altogether clear even to him.” Rather, Kirk’s analysis of genre allows for an analysis of a text, in this case Chronicles, which attempts to locate a “framework genre” with attention to the following interrelated concepts: the authorial communication strategy, the response of the reader, the historical and social context of the work’s composition, and the important notion that inconsistencies do not indicate redactional layers de facto. All of these contribute to a holistic reading of a text,

must bring with it some new feature or features. Fourth, membership in the genre requires that if an instance (apparently) lack a given feature, it must compensate for it, for example, by showing a further feature ‘instead of’ the one it lacks. Fifth, the test of this compensation is that the new feature introduced by the new member will, in turn, contribute to a description of the genre as a whole” (Pursuits of Happiness: The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981], 28-29). In addition, see Stanley Cavell, “The Fact of Television,” in Themes Out of School: Effects and Causes (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 235-68, esp. 242-44.


Ibid., 78.

and (as will be obvious in the discussion below) are consistent with the principles of utopian literary theory.

1.1.4 Three Major Themes in Chronicles

Having briefly outlined the current scholarly assessment of the authorship, date, and genre of Chronicles, we now turn to a brief survey of the state of the question regarding the three major themes in Chronicles which are to be addressed by this dissertation: genealogies, politics, and temple cult.

1.1.4.1 Genealogies

The genealogical material in 1 Chronicles 1-9 has not been the focus of scholarship on Chronicles; however, a growing number of recent analyses have indicated a new interest in this often neglected material. As the text now stands, these

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genealogies form an “introduction” to the narratives that follow.\(^{59}\) The dominant position had been that this long “preface” was a secondary (or tertiary) addition to the original composition that began with the reign of David.\(^{60}\) However, many scholars are now questioning this view and have noted the literary function of the genealogies as necessary and thematically consistent with Chronicles and specifically with those sections that had been deemed “original” by source criticism.

The genealogies provide a means of group definition.\(^{61}\) For the Chronicler, these lists draw the boundaries between Israel and the nations and between groups within


\(^{60}\) See footnote 13 above. In addition, it should be noted that one of the main difficulties in describing Chronicles as historiography is its lacking a true preface, which begins most Hellenistic historiographic works. It is possible, and I will contend probable, that the genealogies serve as a type of “preface” in the tradition of the Hellenistic ones, especially if Lucian’s notion of a “virtual preface” (*Hist. conscr.* 23, 52) is given its due (see Lucian, *How to Write History* [trans. K. Kilburn; LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959], 6:1-73, esp. 34-35, 64-65; see also the discussion in Section 2.1.4).

“Israel” itself. The origin of the lists is debated. Some clearly summarize the narrative and genealogies of the Pentateuch (especially from P) and the Former Prophets; others reproduce previous lists (1 Chr 5:27-41 [6:1-15 Eng.]; 9:2-16); many may be historical records from the preexilic period that have been preserved; some are most likely the creation of the Chronicler. Together these genealogies organize Israel; they not only identify who belongs to “all Israel,” but how this expansive group is interrelated.62 While

the Other is a concern of these lists, the internal structure of Israel is by far more significant than an exact account of those excluded from this group.

This structure of Israel, of course, is different from all the depictions preserved in the Pentateuch, Former Prophets, Ezekiel’s vision of restoration (chs. 40-48), and the accounts of Ezra and Nehemiah. The Chronicler is not returning to an ideal depiction of Israel in the remote past, but has constructed a new version of “Israel” that is unique among the preserved traditions of Israel. As such, its portrayal of society may reflect the concerns of the Chronicler in his historical situation, whether in history or fantasy.\textsuperscript{63} This genealogical system has been termed—rather dismissively—“ideal,” but no systematic assessment of its “utopian” qualities has been undertaken.

1.1.4.2 Politics

The genealogical material is connected to the issue of politics via geography. Israel is both a people and a land. The genealogical material contains settlement information and reflects geographic boundaries. However, politics is not restricted to settlement lists. One major political concern in Chronicles scholarship has been the portrayal of the Northern Kingdom in the book. Scholars have advocated opposing positions on this complex issue: the North is the enemy, is barely mentioned, is illegitimate, but at the same time has true worshippers of God, has loyal Levites and

\textit{Temple Community in the Persian Period} (ed. T. C. Eskenazi and K. H. Richards; JSOTSUp 175; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 146-62; and Knoppers, “Greek Historiography and the Chronicler’s History.”

\textsuperscript{63} Here it is important to distinguish between the reflection of the actual historical situation in the text and the projection of desired reality through the literary forms and content utilized in these lists. Although this distinction is difficult to describe with any degree of certainty, Japhet simply dismisses the reflection of the Chronicler’s actual historical situation in the genealogies (Ideology, 300). In doing so, she fails to understand the importance of her position for the Chronicler’s purpose in spending so much space and effort in the construction of Israel’s past via this form.
priests, and is a significant part of the identity of “all Israel.” Much of the negative view of the North has been linked to the supposed anti-Samaritan attitude of Chronicles (especially when viewed together with Ezra-Nehemiah). Despite recent advocates of this hostility, Chronicles seems much less interested in condemning the North (or its referent in Samaria) than it does in explicitly noting the faithful followers of God who migrate south at the key points in the narratives which depict religious reforms. This openness to the North contrasts with the exclusive claims found in Ezra-Nehemiah,

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which is concerned about defining the “holy seed” of Israel (Ezra 9:2) against the Other, particularly in terms of intermarriage. 67

While the book of Kings provides an account of both kingdoms of the Divided Monarchy, the narrative of Chronicles focuses on the Davidic line. This central concern has been, again, the subject of much debate: did the Chronicler desire the restoration of the Davidic monarchy in his own time or does he advance the idea that the monarchy has fulfilled its purpose (restoring the cult) and is superfluous now that the Persian Empire is the chosen instrument of God in history? 68 There is no doubt that the Davidic monarch


has a cultic significance in Chronicles, but there is also no indication that Chronicles advocates or even awaits its restoration. The temple, built under the Persian Empire, is the essential element for societal stability in Chronicles. Indeed, as noted by Braun, the main message of Chronicles is “Rally Round the Temple” and not “Restore the Ruler.”

In the context of the Second Temple period, this position of Chronicles contrasts with many other texts which openly desire the restoration of the Davidic monarchy or the overthrow of the foreign government, especially those stemming from the Maccabean period. While the “idealized” portrayal of the Davidic-Solomonic period in Chronicles

Ben Zvi, “When the Foreign Monarch Speaks,” in The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture (ed. M. P. Graham and S. L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 209-28; cf. the qualifications to his view made in Ben Zvi, “What is New in Yehud?,” esp. 43-44; and idem, “The Book of Chronicles: Another Look,” SR 31 (2002): 261-81, esp. 273-74, 278 n. 15. The further claim that Chronicles was composed to communicate to the Persian kings their expected actions as the new guardians of the cult via the Davidic example according to Louis C. Jonker cannot be accepted as a viable possibility for the Chronicler’s primary purpose (Reflections of King Josiah in Chronicles: Late Stages of the Josiah Reception in 2 Chr 34f. [TSLKHB 2; Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2003], esp. 87).


Chronicles agrees with the positive opinion of Cyrus presented in Second Isaiah (44:24-45:13), and the Persian Empire in Ezra-Nehemiah; cf. Roddy L. Braun, “Cyrus in Second and Third Isaiah,
(which lacks many of the foibles of these two kings) has been long noted, understanding the portrayal of the Davidic monarchy as a whole in utopian terms has not been so explicitly clarified. How is the presentation of the Davidic monarchy utopian if the Chronicler does not maintain its continued significance in his present or future?

Answering this question requires that the definition of “utopian” be clarified to a greater degree than terming it “ideal” and not necessarily “eschatological” and that the issue be clarified to a greater degree than terming it “ideal” and not necessarily “eschatological”

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investigated systematically throughout Chronicles rather than by focusing only on David-Solomon or the negative portrayal of some of the later kings as has been done typically by scholars.  

1.1.4.3 Temple Cult

Chronicles is a work deeply concerned with the temple cult, typified by the priestly and Levitical organizations and duties. While sacrifice itself receives minor attention, the major festivals are part of the religious reforms of several of the righteous kings. With this focus on the temple and its operation, Chronicles becomes a cultic

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75 There is no shortage of articles and essays on individual kings; however, a thorough analysis of the Davidic Dynasty is rare and one done from the perspective of utopian theory is altogether lacking. The relevant bibliography for each king will be presented when discussed in Section 3.2.


history rather than a royal one. All sources of authority employed in Chronicles are utilized to affirm the temple and its priority in the postexilic community as a result of its importance during the preexilic period. Scholars have often assumed that many practices of the Second Temple period have been retrojected into the past, especially the functions of the Levites.\textsuperscript{78} The unique and highlighted duties of the Levites in Chronicles stand in contrast to the limited descriptions of priestly duties and virtually non-existent duties of the high priest in the narrative.\textsuperscript{79} Several scholars have recently argued for Zadokite...
authorship of Chronicles, though this seems unlikely. Rather, the immense concern over the Levites may indicate the Chronicler was at least supportive of this group in the Second Temple period if not a Levite himself.

Indeed, Chronicles depicts the multi-talented and dependable Levites as one of the keys in establishing the proper functioning of the temple cult. This portrayal of the cult

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80 William R. Millar, Priesthood in Ancient Israel (UBT; St. Louis: Chalice, 2001), 33-64; Paolo Sacchi, The History of the Second Temple Period (JSOTSup 285; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 182-86; and Gabriele Boccaccini, Roots of Rabbinic Judaism: An Intellectual History, From Ezekiel to Daniel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), esp. 49-72, 73-82, 89; see also the earlier arguments for this view by Theophile James Meek, “Aaronites and Zadokites,” AJSL 45 (1929): 149-66, esp. 160-66. See my discussion of this issue in Section 4.3.2.

81 The “Levitical Sermon” hypothesis of Gerhard von Rad is not entirely correct, but his emphasis on the importance of Levites in Chronicles deserves further consideration (“The Levitical Sermon in I and II Chronicles,” in The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays [New York: McGraw Hill, 1966], 267-80). The “Levite Hypothesis” is not new, but was suggested as early as 1823 by C. P. W. Gramberg and has found a large number of adherents over the past 180 years. The further suggestion that the Chronicler
and the Levites in particular, while being the subject of several analyses, has not been addressed from the perspective of utopian theory. In the Chronicler’s utopia, it is the temple cult and the Levites that stand at the center of its construction.

1.1.5 The Present Situation and a New Approach to Chronicles

Two conclusions can be drawn from the previous section: (1) though most frequently analyzed separately, these three themes are important in a systematic discussion of Chronicles, and (2) none of them has been analyzed using utopian theory. Given earlier comments about the lack of consensus in Chronicles scholarship in recent years, this dissertation aims to read these three major themes—which have been recognized as functioning in important ways in Chronicles by the vast number of scholars—in the light of an underlying coherent ideological matrix, utopianism.

1.2 A New Methodology: Utopian Literary Theory

This dissertation will analyze the book of Chronicles through the lens of utopian literary theory. The formative work of Roland Boer, who has suggested that Chronicles may be read as utopian literature and has analyzed sections of the book accordingly, provides the initial point of departure for this project. In addition to the works

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was a Levitical singer or chorister has its merits, but rests on less solid ground. See the summary of previous scholarship by Labahn, “Antithecocratic Tendencies,” esp. 115-16 n. 2.

82 Boer, Novel Histories; idem, “Utopian Politics.” He notes that this idea first occurred to him in reading Fredric Jameson’s work on Ursula Le Guin’s science fiction novels (“Decentered and Utopian Politics,” 272 n. 54; see Fredric Jameson, “World-Reduction in Le Guin: The Emergence of Utopian Narrative,” SFS 2 [1975]: 221-30). As far as I am aware, Boer is the first person to suggest, with an accompanying methodology, that Chronicles may be read as utopian literature (and he adds, as science fiction). The relationship between science fiction and utopian literature is important to Boer’s analysis, and thus to this dissertation, and will be discussed in more detail; see Section 1.2.2.
employed by Boer, further scholarship on utopian theory will be discussed to formulate a more comprehensive depiction of this methodology.

1.2.1 Definition of Utopianism

However, before entering into a detailed discussion of utopian literary theory, it is first necessary to define utopianism and to dispel a few misconceptions about its characteristics.

Utopianism is the representative label for three manifestations: (1) as the *literary genre* of utopia; (2) as an *ideology* through which the world is viewed; and (3) as a *sociological* movement that writes utopias. Thus, just as biblical scholars now restrict the designation of “apocalypse” to a literary genre, but are willing to discuss the “apocalyptic” content of a text composed in the milieu of “apocalypticism” by a community or individual, so a similar distinction must be made when the terms “utopia,” “utopian,” and “utopianism” are employed. This precision allows for the reading of

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84 As mentioned, biblical scholars will recognize that these same classifications have been employed by Paul D. Hanson to address the nature of “apocalyptic”: literary genre, worldview, and social movement lying behind the production of such literature (“Apocalypticism,” *IDB* Supplement: 28-34). See also John J. Collins, “Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre,” *Semeia* 14 (1979): 1-20. While having other difficulties, Hanson’s distinctions have aided in the further exploration and, at times, complete reversal of previous thinking and associations of the term. A parallel phenomenon can be found in the critical literature on utopianism.
“utopian” content in a work that would not typically be classified as a “utopia” proper by generic considerations.

“Utopia” is, of course, the name of the fictional remote island created by Thomas More in his famous work of the same name.\(^5\) The word, like many names in his text, is Greek in origin and was, most likely, used because of its meaning.\(^6\) However, the literal meaning of “Utopia” is not obvious. It is both the “good place” (eutopia) and “no place” (ou topia). This ambiguity has provided the basis for subsequent studies of utopias.\(^7\)

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The imagined place is both idealized and does not exist in reality. Thus, “utopian” has come to mean “fanciful,” “fantastic,” “impossible,” and “unrealizable.” However, it can also mean “visionary,” “ideal,” “better-than-the-present,” and “an alternative reality.” The tension between these understandings of the adjective is essential to interpreting utopian literature and should not be readily dismissed in favor of one or the other connotations. Thus, its spatial existence is constantly a point of tension in a utopian text.

Utopia exists in space, if only in the ideological space of the text.

In terms of its temporal location, however, it is clear that utopia is not necessarily a future place. That utopia does not have to be a future place, but can exist in the present (just as More’s island of Utopia does) eliminates an automatic equivalency between

eschatology and utopia. Something or some place can be utopian without being eschatological.⁸⁸

Following the central feature of More’s work, the essential characteristic of utopian literature is not its temporal placement, but rather the depiction of the society which it aims to portray. In fact, the organization and qualities of the society depicted are

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⁸⁸ However, this should not be taken as supporting the conclusions by Otto Plöger, Theocracy and Eschatology (trans. S. Rudman; Richmond, Virg.: John Knox, 1968). His analysis presents a different misconception: the theocracy presented by the Chronicler cannot be eschatological in nature de facto (i.e., derived from prophetic hopes about future change). Indeed, Plöger never actually analyzes Chronicles, but merely notes “assumptions” about its opposition to eschatological circles which desire change in the future (41, 111). This false dichotomy is repeated by Paul D. Hanson, who also separates the “priestly” from the “visionary” with Chronicles being located firmly in the first category (The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology [rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979]). This understanding has been brought more fully into Chronicles scholarship by the influential work of David L. Petersen, Late Israelite Prophecy: Studies in Deutero-Prophetic Literature and in Chronicles (SBLMS 23; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977); see also Gabriel, Friede über Israel, 101-08 on the eschatology employed in depicting Solomon’s Golden Age; and Strübind, Tradition als Interpretation, 38-44. The recent German work by Dörrfuß addresses the issue of theocracy in Chronicles and its scholarly history in detail (Mose in den Chronikbüchern, 18-118, esp. 92-118). It should be noted that the first attestation of the word “theocracy” is in Josephus (C. Ap. 2.165) in his discussion of what makes the Jewish state distinct from other political systems (2.157-172). By this term, Josephus intends the rule of God directly over Israel as expressed in the Mosaic Torah. This should be more precisely labeled a “cultic theocracy” in which the political system is manifested in a worshiping community with God as the ultimate authority; see also comments on other cultic theocracies in Section 3.1.2.3.

The related label of “hierocratic” has been applied to Chronicles by several scholars; see, e.g., Murray, “Dynasty, People, and the Future,” 90 n. 43. Also, Chronicles may not be “apocalyptic,” but this categorization does not automatically prevent it from being “eschatological” or “utopian.” These three terms are not interchangeable, but refer to distinct characteristics or ideologies. If eschatology proper is explicitly about the future, then Chronicles is not eschatological in that it is not explicitly about the future, no matter how implicit that concern may be; cf. Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 43-44. The timeline in the book of Chronicles is entirely in the past without reference to the eschaton (i.e., there are not claims about what will occur “on that day” or the like). Dirksen correctly notes: “The absence of a specific eschatological/messianic expectation does not mean that people look to the future as closed. … The Chronicler preaches no attitude of acquiescence with respect to the present …” (“Future in the Book of Chronicles,” 50). In fact, such a dissatisfaction with the present is central to a reading of Chronicles with the methodology of utopian theory. As will be seen, Chronicles is extremely concerned about the future, but never expresses this in such clear terms as, for example, the prophetic texts. Contra Boer who moves too quickly to the conclusion that “In presenting an ideal or utopian past … Chronicles also generates a hope for a future in which such ideal state will be realized; it thus becomes utopian in the more conventional senses of eschatology or messianism” (Novel Histories, 138). The “hope for a future” in Chronicles is accomplished in anything but “conventional” terms. See also, Finley, “Utopianism,” 12; and Polak, “Utopia and Cultural Renewal,” 281-86.
the one commonality between all works considered to be utopian in nature. Whatever else utopian literature may be, it must describe a “good” (or better) society than that of the author’s present.

1.2.2 The Methodology of Utopian Literary Theory

This point about utopian literature reflecting such a good/better society is made by Darko Suvin’s paradigmatic definition of utopia as

a literary genre or verbal construction whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical institutions, norms and individual relationships are organized on a more perfect principle than in the author’s community, this construction being based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis.

Suvin’s definition reflects three central concerns of recent literary criticism on utopia: (1) comparison between the present society and the “more perfect” literary presentation, (2) the principle of estrangement or defamiliarization as an interpretative key, and (3) provision of a different series of events leading to the present situation or to the future as depicted explicitly or implicitly by the text. These three tenets derive both from the content and form of utopias and reflect the position of utopian theory within literary criticism.

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89 Suvin notes that utopias come in a variety of models and proposals, but all of them are organized; there are not disorganized utopias (Metamorphoses, 50).

90 This is partially demonstrated by the fact that a dystopia, the “bad” society and inverse of utopia, has the portrayal of an inherently “worse” society than the present situation as its common theme. See the comments by Booker, Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature, 18-20; Brown, “Some Hellenistic Utopias,” 62; Moylan, “‘Look into the Dark’”; idem, Scraps of the Untainted Sky; Quarta, “Homo Utopicus,” 155; Wagar, “Utopian Studies,” 5; Wu, “Understanding Utopian Literature,” 233, 242-43; and the essays in the volume Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination (ed. R. Baccolini and T. Moylan; New York: Routledge, 2003).

As a recognized methodology in literary criticism, utopian theory is related to a number of contemporary literary theories, especially deconstructionism, sharing many of the same presuppositions regarding the means by which a text generates meaning. Of particular importance are the ideas of “neutralization” and “defamiliarization” or ostranenie. In this view, utopian literature invites readers “to reconsider their notions of the normal and the familiar … [so that] one can safely assume that contemporary readers are particularly aware of the tensions and ambiguities observable in utopian visions. This emphasis on the provisional nature of all utopian systems encourages readers to employ their own utopian imagination.” In this light, the organizational structure of the utopia becomes a means of social critique, whether deriving ultimately from the reader or from the text, which constructs an alternative world that calls the present order into question at every turn.

Indeed, in More’s Utopia—the central, but not the only, text in definitions of the literary genre of utopia—the island of Utopia exists as an alternative reality filled with

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92 These related ideas, long associated with Russian Formalism, are the backbone of deconstructionism. The gaps, seams, inconsistencies of the text provide the place where a meaning can be constructed. Boer’s analysis depends heavily on defamiliarization, neutralization, ostranenie, and the notion of paradox (Novel Histories, 109); cf. the statement that “Chronicles defamiliarizes the main historical narrative [of the Pentateuch and Samuel-Kings]” by Ben Zvi, “Book of Chronicles,” 272. See also Easthope, “The personal and the political,” 50-53; Plank, “Geography of Utopia,” 40; and Ricoeur, Lectures on Ideology and Utopia, 16-17. The “singular relevance” of deconstructionism to utopian theory is noted by Hill (“Place of the Future,” 167). He also advocates, based on the landmark work by Marin (Utopics), the central place which neutralization and self-deconstruction holds in the ideology of the utopian text. Departing from Marin’s system, Hill returns to “authorial intention” as playing an important role in situating the ideology of the utopian text in its “ideological context.” This blending of more traditional “historical-critical” analysis and contemporary literary theory, particularly reader-response, is common to most recent works in utopian theory, including that of Boer; cf. the claim that utopias and works of science fiction tend to be written in the context of “sudden whirlpools of history” which produce radical change that influences the perspective of the authors according to Suvin, “Alternate Islands,” 242. See also the influential works by Jameson, “Of Islands and Trenches”; and Foucault, “Of Other Spaces”; cf. the insightful comments by Cotton, “Five-fold Crisis in Utopia.”

93 Dietz, “Utopian Re-visions of German History,” 33.
critiques of More’s present social situation. This point has been made in numerous studies on More’s work and has brought about a reevaluation of the character of utopian literature in general. Largely under the influence of Marxism, utopias have traditionally been viewed negatively as literary works of oppression that restrict the “revolutionary” spirit as the powerful elite impose a system on the masses. Given the highly-detailed organizational structures, especially hierarchical social pyramids, common to utopias, such a reaction is not surprising. However, the interrelationship between the utopian text and the reality against which it defines its values has provided a means of assessing the “utopian ideology” of the text. This phrase, “utopian ideology,” is an oxymoron in

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94 The relationship between alternative reality and historical present is well-articulated by Frye: “The utopian writer looks at the ritual habits of his own society and tries to see what society would be like if these ritual habits were made more consistent and more inclusive” (“Varieties of Literary Utopias,” 124). Compare the remarks by Baccolini, “‘A useful knowledge’,” 114; Cotton, “Five-fold Crisis in Utopia”; Jameson, Seeds of Time, 74-75; Le Guin, “‘A War Without End,’” 216-20; and S. B. Liljestegren, Studies on the Origin and Early Tradition of English Utopian Fiction (ESELL 23; Lund: Carl Bloms Boktryckeri, 1961).


Marxism, which distinguishes between the two concepts as opposites. Since, in the traditional Marxist system, ideology leads to revolution, while utopia is viewed as a vehicle for maintaining the status quo, Marxism has traditionally rejected utopia and favored ideology. However, the typical Marxist definitions of utopia and ideology are inadequate to account for the true nature of utopia: it is an ideology, and one which can be revolutionary in that it provides a strong social critique. Utopia is not opposed to ideology, but is an ideological position itself that can be identified in a text, a counter-ideology designed to question the present historical situation.

The importance of social critique in utopian literature is emphasized in recent critical theory as a means of reading such works not as blueprints for ideal societies, but rather as revolutionary texts designed to challenge the status quo and question the way things presently are being done. Thus, utopias depict the world “as it should be” not

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96 This opposition is part of the heritage of Marx and Engels; cf. Lyman Tower Sargent, “Authority and Utopia: Utopianism in Political Thought,” Polity 14 (1982): 565-84. Mannheim accepts the division in his famous work but defends the ability of utopia to support social change rather than reinforce the status quo (Ideology and Utopia). Bloch has attempted to recover the concept of utopia for Neo-Marxism (Utopian Function of Art and Literature); Ricoeur has made similar comments about the relationship of these two concepts, placing more emphasis on the unity of forms among utopian literature rather than on their shared content (Lectures on Ideology and Utopia, 16). Dyck discusses the works of Mannheim, Riceour, and Jameson on utopia and ideology in formulating his understanding of the Chronicler’s ideology (Theocratic Ideology, esp. 53-76). In this section, Dyck states that ideology supports the status quo while utopia critiques it, but then proceeds to label utopia as “mere escapist fancy with no link between the future and the present” (74), which then results in his search for ideology and not utopia in Chronicles; however, such a negative opinion of utopia has been rejected by most recent literary theorists working on utopian literature. Also noting the variety of forms employed in utopian literature: Ferns, Narrating Utopia, ix; Kateb, Utopia and Its Enemies, 5-9; Moylan, Demand the Impossible, 39; Segal, “Utopia Diversified,” 333; and Stephens, “Sun State and its Shadow.” See also Jameson, “Introduction/Prospectus”; idem, Seeds of Time, 77; Suvin, “‘Utopian’ and ‘Scientific’”; and Widdicome, “Eutopia, Dystopia, Aporia.”

“why it is the way it is.” In other words, utopias are not works of legitimation (providing a grounding for the present reality), but works of innovation (suggesting a reality that could be, if its parameters were accepted). This reassessment of utopian literature produces a significant by-product: the utopian construct does not necessarily reflect the historical situation of the author, that is, the author does not legitimize his present, but criticizes it by depicting the literary reality in terms not to be found in the author’s society. This makes historical reconstruction derived primarily from a utopian text extremely difficult. The utopian text does not reflect historical reality, but future possibility. For example, attempting to find the structures of society from More’s Utopia in his contemporary England would produce a distorted view of England during this time period. However, to take More’s portrayal as the opposite or another view of constructing society, the problems of his contemporary English society (at least in More’s own view) would become accessible to the reader.

It may be objected that this line of reasoning applies only to post-Marxist interpretations of utopian literature, or at least only to utopias since More’s inauguration of the genre in 1516 C.E. Roland Boer, in defending his “reading as” method, has

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98 Fournier, “Utopianism,” 192; Frye, “Varieties of Literary Utopias”; Gerber, Utopian Fantasy, 46-50, 83, 89; Le Guin, “‘A War Without End,’” 219-20; Moylan, Demand the Impossible, 213; Rabkin, “Utopian Paradox”; and Wu, “Understanding Utopian Literature,” 242. Compare the repeatedly quoted insight from Oscar Wilde from 1891 on the necessity of utopia for humanity’s continued push toward Progress:

A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even looking at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realisation of Utopias … (“The Soul of Man under Socialism,” in The Best of Oscar Wilde [ed. R. Pearce; London: Duckworth, 1997], 36-44, here 42).

99 This point is repeatedly made, with examples, by Jones, “Thomas More’s ‘Utopia’ and medieval London.” See also, Fortier and Fortier, Utopian Thought of St. Thomas More, i-ii, 1-4; and Morgan, Nowhere was Somewhere.

rightly observed that “the arrival of a new genre—More’s *Utopia* is my example—is not without its cultural precursors. More importantly, the opening of one’s eyes to the various contours of the radically new also opens one’s eyes to examples and generic forms that provide a foretaste of what is to come.” As noted previously in the discussion of genre, new genres arise from previously existing genres; this condition allows for the possibility that such cultural precursors to modern forms may be present in antiquity. As has been argued and reaffirmed by critical scholarship, utopian literature is an appropriate generic designation for writings in antiquity, of which there are numerous examples—particularly from the Hellenistic world. Such generic comparisons, with


101 *Novel Histories*, 122. More’s *Utopia* is a mixed genre; see Leslie, *Renaissance Utopias*, 1-5; and Donawerth, “Genre Blending and the Critical Dystopia,” 29.


both ancient and modern literature, have greatly aided in the endeavor to situate utopian literature among other generic forms. Within the field of genre studies, utopian literature has been associated with science fiction\textsuperscript{103} and the historical novel.\textsuperscript{104} While these forms

\textsuperscript{103} This relationship is complex and borne out by the major analyses in both the areas of utopian studies and science fiction. The two genres are related to one another; literary critics view utopia as a sub-genre of science fiction or vice versa; e.g., Suvin advocates the former position ("River-Side Trees," 114) and Sargent the second ("Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," 11). See also, Freedman, "Science Fiction and Utopia"; Georgiadou and Larmour, \textit{Lucian's Science Fiction Novel}, 45-48, esp. 47; Jameson, "Progress Versus Utopia"; Kincaid, "On the Origins of Genre"; Plank, "Geography of Utopia," 39; Wagar, "Utopian Studies," 4; and Williams, "Utopia and Science Fiction."


Xenophon’s \textit{Cyropaedia} was an immensely popular work in antiquity and has been the subject of many scholarly projects, some addressing its utopian, ideal, or paradigmatic features. See the following: Pierre Carlier, “L’idée de monarchie impériale dans la \textit{Cyropédie de Xenophon},” \textit{Kiema} 3 (1978): 133-63; John Dillery, \textit{Xenophon and the History of His Times} (London: Routledge, 1995); Robert Drews, \textit{The Greek Accounts of Eastern History} (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Hellenic Studies, 1973), esp. 119-21; Bodil Due, \textit{The Cyropaedia: Xenophon’s Aims and Methods} (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1989);
belong properly to modern literature, there is ample evidence to locate their “cultural precursors” in antiquity and in significant numbers as well. If the objections sometimes noted to the use of this generic designation for ancient literature have been answered at least to some degree, then the wealth of recent critical analyses of utopian literature, science fiction, and the novel becomes available to aid in reading ancient literature such as Chronicles.\(^{105}\)

Roland Boer has followed this line of argument in constructing his methodology by drawing on the highly-influential works on utopian literature by Louis Marin and on the related genre of science fiction by Darko Suvin, in addition to the obvious influence of Fredric Jameson’s insights into these matters.\(^{106}\) Boer provides the following helpful summary list of “literary features” common to utopian literature:

- neutralization,
- continual reference to contemporary events,
- contradiction between narrative and description of the utopian place,
- contradiction between the description itself and any efforts at graphic representation, and
- a dialectic of

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\(^{105}\) Even if this argument for contemporary generic relatives for Chronicles as a work of utopian literature should be rejected, the contention of Mario Liverani that one may benefit greatly from a cross-temporal, cross-spatial, or cross-generic comparative analysis of ancient documents in illuminating a text’s meaning would still be applicable to this present endeavor at reading utopianism in Chronicles; see his enlightened remarks on the usefulness of this type of broad literary criticism (“Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts,” \(Or\) 42 [1973]: 178-94, esp. 181-82).

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disjunction and connection between the constructed utopia and outside world, in particular the society from which the writer originates. 107

One of his central principles is that the appearance of a closed system in utopian literature is really an illusion. 108 The utopian system resists closure and remains open to inconsistencies and change. Boer thus intentionally looks for inconsistencies, impossibilities, and perceived “surprises” throughout the text focusing on two main issues: “world reduction” with its accompanying “large numbers” in spatial description, and the “inclusive/exclusive” society with its boundary definitions. 109 He concludes that these common utopian concepts manifest themselves in Chronicles as part of the Chronicler’s overall arguments about the nature of “Israel” and its relationship to the land. So, for example, by leaving a geographical opening in Rehoboam’s defenses in 2 Chronicles 10-13 (immediately following the division of the kingdom), the Chronicler provides a means for the Northerners to join Judah at the temple. 110 Boer next suggests that such an openness indicates that “Israel” is incomplete without the North; that is, the


108 Jameson notes the importance of contradictions and the impossibility of spatial and narrative closure common to most utopias despite the appearance of a detailed systematic order in the utopian society (“Progress Versus Utopia,” 155). See the comments concerning “open endings” and the relationship of utopia and reality by Holquist, “How to Play Utopia”; cf. Ruppert, Reader in a Strange Land.

109 Drawing from Jameson (“World-Reduction”), Boer notes that “World reduction is a feature of Utopian writing” (“Utopian Politics,” 375); in addition, the utopia must not be a completely closed society (a common misconception of utopias), since outsiders must enter, learn, and return to the larger world in order to bring its wonders to light. This second point is true of More’s Utopia as well as the ancient voyage of Iambulus and the utopian society that Homer describes in Od. 6.261-67 (see Giesecke, “Homer’s Eutopolis,” 31). In the first two cases, the utopians receive the outsider and explicitly participate in trade relations with other nations. While “most utopians expel their visitors as evil-doers,” this is only after a warm reception and much interaction occurs over a period of months or years (cf. Winston, “Iambulus’ Islands of the Sun,” here 223).

110 Boer, “Utopian Politics,” 374-81. Drawing on Marin’s comments (see below), he notes that the inclusion of Philistine Gath in the list of Judean cities in 2 Chr 11:6-10 neutralizes the perception of a drastically reduced Judah. Thus, this “quirk” enters the system and disrupts the spatial representation, causing the reader to rethink the reality of the system, i.e., a small Judah contemporary with the Chronicler (Novel Histories, 145); cf. Volkmar Fritz, “The ‘List of Rehoboam’s Fortresses’ in 2 Chr 11:5-12—A Document from the Time of Josiah,” ErIsr 15 (1981): 46-53.
Chronicler awaited the day of full reconciliation between North and South under the auspices of the one temple cult located at Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{111}

Boer’s use of geography as an indicator of utopianism is dependent on Marin’s spatial analysis of More’s \textit{Utopia}. Marin contends that “Utopia” is not “no-place” in the sense of being non-existent, but rather “the ‘other’ of any place” which does exist.\textsuperscript{112} Utopia is dialogue with spatial representation in a literary arena, which is in constant process and adaptation.\textsuperscript{113} Marin especially notes that utopias tend to resist easy representation on a map or straightforward depiction of its detailed societal structures. For Marin, such failure is a true victory over the powers that would attempt to contain and control the ideas of the utopia. By presenting ideals that avoid simple implementation, utopia is held out as the goal to be continually striven after but never completely reached. Thus, power is indefinitely critiqued and never fully accepted as sufficient or satisfactory in its present form(s) and structure(s). Thus, Marin concludes that “Utopia is an ideological critique of ideology,”\textsuperscript{114} especially the dominant ideology which it seeks to displace by its own displacement of structures and projection of reality.

In contrast to Marin, Suvin emphasizes that utopia is always located on a map, even if removed from the author’s/reader’s society by a great distance or temporal

\textsuperscript{111} Boer also suggests that the description of Jerusalem and its environs may reflect the “crucial role in the context of the imperial ancient world” played by the \textit{polis}, and that the ideal of the \textit{polis} may stand behind this depiction (“Utopian Politics,” 375, 387-89). Further research into the nature of the \textit{polis} is necessary on my own part before completely agreeing with Boer’s contention, although it certainly remains feasible.

\textsuperscript{112} Marin, “Frontiers,” 11; Suvin agrees with this understanding, though in slightly different terms (\textit{Metamorphoses}, 54).

\textsuperscript{113} Marin, \textit{Utopies}, 8, 113-16.

\textsuperscript{114} Marin, \textit{Utopies}, 195.
Klaus Geus has come to a similar conclusion regarding Hellenistic utopian literature. His analysis stresses the importance of locating utopia on the map of the ancient Greek world. Geus’ conclusions demonstrate that the spatiality of utopia plays a significant role in its depiction and in its relationship to the cultural ideals of the day. The notion that “utopia” has “space” draws more on its etymology as “good place” rather than its other connotation of “no place,” i.e., without space. While utopias have long been marginalized as “pie-in-the-sky” unrealistic portrayals of society without reference to the “real world,” more recent literary theorists have openly rejected the negative associations of the word “utopia” and have argued for a more sympathetic reading of these lengthy texts often considered boring.

Yet the location of utopia in relationship to the “outside world” is not the extent of spatial concerns in the description of utopia. Utopia’s relationship to the outside world is accompanied by an even more intense fixation on its internal structure, organization, planning, system, and hierarchy. As already mentioned, Suvin notes that utopias come in a variety of models and proposals, but all of them are organized. Chad Walsh, in his famous work, concurs that planning is the “keyword” of all utopias from Plato to the

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115 Suvin, Metamorphoses, 42.


117 On the rejection of this negative view of utopia and its results in reading utopias, see Grey and Garsten, “Organized and disorganized utopias”; Baccolini, “A useful knowledge,” 114; Moylan, Demand the Impossible, 197; Ricoeur, Lectures on Ideology and Utopia, 273; and Skinner, “Utopia,” 34.

118 Suvin, Metamorphoses, 50.
present. That is, utopias exist because they are intentional, following rules and patterns, and work themselves out in a literary reality.

However, it should be also noted that no longer is the common wisdom that “change is the enemy of utopia” held to be true by many utopian theorists. Innovation is not excluded within the confines of the utopian system, and utopia does not exist apart from history. Time and space still continue to impact the happenings of the utopian society. Utopia exists in a specific place and, at least, has a historical beginning if not a history of its own since the time of origin. Utopian literature’s similarity with science fiction again comes into play at this point. While science fiction tends to utilize time displacement as a narrative device more often than utopia does, science fiction also

119 Walsh, From Utopia to Nightmare, 57.

120 Afnan, “Chaos and Utopia”; Cotton, “Five-fold Crisis in Utopia”; Dentith, “Imagination and Inversion,” 146; Holquist, “How to Play Utopia,” 139. Contra Calinescu, “Idea of Modernity,” 66; Elliot, Shape of Utopia, 104; Fiddes, “Millennium and Utopia,” 11; Kreuziger, “Utopia and Fantasy,” 98-99; Marin, Utopics, xxiv; and Mumford, “Utopia,” 9. However, Japhet explicitly claims that “The primary principle underlying the book’s world-view is acceptance of the existing world: no change to the world is anticipated in Chronicles … Continuity, not change, characterizes the Chronicler’s way of thinking on every subject … [so that] the ways of the present are legitimized anew” (Ideology, 501-02, 516). While she is correct that the Chronicler stresses continuity with the past, the basis for her statement is actually based on her assumption that the depiction of the ordered cult and society of Chronicles reflects the present reality of the Chronicler’s period. If the depictions instead were the aspirations which the Chronicler desired to see implemented, then change would be at the very center of his purpose; such a shift in thinking is necessary in approaching Chronicles from the perspective of utopian theory.

121 The misconception that utopias cannot change their structures or develop has produced two side-effects: (1) inconsistencies in utopias have been interpreted as deficiencies on the part of the author, and (2) the label “utopia” has been restricted to very few works, almost all of an “eschatological” nature, especially when used for those in the biblical tradition—so that the Garden of Eden, the Priestly legislation, Ezekiel 40-48, the New Jerusalem (and related presentations of the eternal unchanging future), and the society of the Temple Scroll, have been interpreted as being “utopian,” and (especially when used by biblical scholars) thus unattainable, fanciful, unrealistic, and escapist. The fact that the society of Ezekiel 40-48 and the laws of P were almost certainly never implemented contributes to their being understood as “utopian.” This crucial point will be explored in further detail in the next section.

122 Often passed over without much thought is the fact that More’s island of Utopia existed contemporaneously with medieval England and that the lands of Euhemerus and Iambulus were also contemporary societies with ancient Greece. Temporal distance is more typically invoked in Urzeit and Endzeit myths, such as the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem or in Plato’s myth of the then 9,000-year-old Atlantis civilization (in Crit. 108e-115d and Tim. 23d-25d). Thus, the form of displacement, spatial or temporal, is not unique to either science fiction or utopia. Temporal displacement can be past or future depending on the individual work; and while spatial displacement towards the Other is very
employs a significant amount of space transformation or spatial displacement in its plot structure. This extensive use of “spatial anomalies” provides a means to create variations and plot development, for the unexpected to occur, and for problems to arise and to be resolved. These anomalies exist in a closed system (the literary world of science fiction) which allow the system to be broken, challenged, critiqued, and to move the narrative forward. Spatial anomalies attract attention because they do not fit the system. They speak to an “explorer’s” sense of reality and how new phenomena may challenge it.

Excursus: Spatial Theory and Insights into/from Utopian Literary Theory

This previous discussion of spatial anomalies and their significance in interpreting utopian literature—especially in light of the extensive use to which Boer puts this notion—would suggest that a brief digression on spatial theory and its relevance to utopian theory may be appropriate. The clarification of this relationship will benefit the further consideration of such spatial representations in Chronicles in subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

A relative newcomer to the methodological inventory, both for literary critics and for biblical scholars, spatial theory has been warmly received and its parameters continue to be refined. This excursus will not attempt a thorough discussion of spatial theory,123


123 For an excellent discussion of spatial theory beyond the scope of this excursus, see Eric Stewart, “Gathered Around Jesus: An Alternative Spatial Practice in the Gospel of Mark” (Ph.D. diss.,
but will instead focus on its articulation by two major architects, Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja, and on the recent essay of biblical scholar Claudia Camp who provides some insightful and corrective comments on their model. In addition, the comments by Lefebvre and Soja on the concept of “utopia” in their construction of spatiality will be explicitly addressed here (which, unfortunately and strangely, previous summaries or critiques have not included in any detail).

Space is a construct, not a given, at least as it is organized, encountered, and assigned meaning. Thus, space is a social product, being the result of human interaction with the surrounding world and with other beings. Soja (drawing on the seminal work of Lefebvre) divides such spatial constructs into three categories: Firstspace, Secondspace, and Thirdspace. Lefebvre termed his three groupings: Spatial Practice, Representations of Space, and Representational Spaces (or his variant terms: perceived-conceived-lived). For both Soja and Lefebvre the first concept represents the direct interaction of human beings and space, especially in terms of physicality.

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127 Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33, 40.

128 Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33; and Soja, *Thirdspace*, 66. Flanagan explains that Firstspace is the space typically treated by geographers: it is actual physical space (where something is located, looks like, its position relative to its surroundings) but also the immediate associations of that physicality on the level of social relations and the processes which have resulted in the formation of a particular space (what the space represents or what meaning has been invested in that space) (“Space,” 242).
The second is the arena of imposed codes, signs, maps, and ordering of space, especially in terms of ideology. The third term applies to the lived reality when the concrete spaces of the first and the ideological systems of the second are put into practice.

Camp details the importance and attraction of Thirdspace for biblical scholars. While Secondspace can be a stronghold of power for the elite imposing an ideological matrix on representations of space and reality, Thirdspace has the potential, especially as presented by Soja, of recombining the first two perceptions of space and thus producing an opportunity for “struggle, liberation, emancipation.” However, lest the freedom of Thirdspace be entered too hastily, ignoring the seemingly obvious descriptions of Firstspace or the oppressive nature of Secondspace’s ordering of reality, Lefebvre warns that his triad “loses all force if it is treated as an abstract ‘model’” and all three groupings “should be interconnected.” Camp also notes the difficulty of separating Secondspace and Thirdspace and the tendency for each theorist to gravitate towards one of the groupings instead of utilizing all three. She rejects the strict division of Secondspace as

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129 Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33; and Soja, *Thirdspace*, 67. Flanagan notes that the boundary between Firstspace and Secondspace becomes blurred when the “real” map of Firstspace is only “read” in terms of a space’s associated meaning from its “cognitive” map. Secondspace is the “ideational projections” of the ideology into Firstspace; that is, Secondspace exists in the world of thought and imagination (“Space,” 242).

130 Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33; and Soja, *Thirdspace*, 10, 67. Flanagan states that the realm of Thirdspace exists when the “real and imagined are intertwined” in the practice of ideologies which affect social relations, often establishing a hierarchy, which is replicated in the spatialities of both Firstspace and Secondspace to the detriment of one individual or group and the privileging of another. Thus, esp. in the view of Soja, Thirdspace is the result of living out the ideologies which have been infused into Firstspace via Secondspace by those in power (“Space,” 243).


132 Soja, *Thirdspace*, 68.

133 Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 40. Flanagan, largely responsible for the recent interest in spatial theory among biblical scholars, agrees with this methodological caution (“Space,” 242). He has made a similar suggestion using the metaphor of the hologram—one image being viewed from a variety of perspectives which each reveal something different about the same space; see James W. Flanagan, *David’s Social Drama: A Hologram of Israel’s Early Iron Age* (JSOTS 73; SWBA 7; Sheffield: Almond, 1988), esp. 77-87 on the hologram, and 207-25 on the Davidic model in Chronicles.
power and Thirdspace as resistance; “the oppressors also have lived spaces” and “life just goes on” for those in the margins of Thirdspace, which “is most often the spatially unrealizable work of intellectuals, while the heterotopias of resistance that make life livable for the oppressed usually do little in the way of actual social transformation.”

Camp’s critique of Thirdspace is well-founded. She concludes her introduction with the stated concern to assess the “power-mongering and maintaining potential of Thirdspace” in her analysis of Sirach. For Ben Sira, space is enlisted by the powers of Secondspace to portray Thirdspace in terms reinforcing the oppressive center without any hope of liberation for the margins. Her analysis of Sirach thus focuses on “Thirdspace as power” and moves forward on the seemingly continuous line connecting Secondspace and Thirdspace in the text. However, Camp’s critique of Thirdspace as power would also suggest the possibility of Secondspace as resistance to that power. This notion is confirmed by assessing the comments on utopia in the spatial systems of Lefebvre and Soja.

Lefebvre specifically calls his own book a project which “straddles the breach between science and utopia, reality and ideality, conceived and lived” and draws an explicit parallel between his attempt to indicate “a different society, a different mode of production, where social practice would be governed by different conceptual determinations” and those of the “great utopians,” especially of the Marxist variety. That Lefebvre would term his own book, which classifies a spatial system in order to

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135 Ibid., 68-69.
136 Lefebvre, Production of Space, 60, 419, 422-23.
critique it, as being of a utopian nature plays an important role in assessing the comments about utopian space throughout his text.\textsuperscript{137}

Lefebvre only incidentally mentions utopia in his analysis, but the concept and its associations are found repeatedly and provide important points to consider in assessing spatial theory’s contribution to utopian theory. First, Lefebvre notes the “grid on the basis of ‘topias’” to which places can be assigned. One of these is, of course, utopia, which he further defines as “places of what has no place, or no longer has a place—the absolute, the divine, or the possible.”\textsuperscript{138} With such a definition, when Lefebvre uses “absolute space” or “divine space” or “possible space” he is also speaking of utopian space, and such space for Lefebvre is utilized by authoritative powers, especially religious or political, to establish space and restrict access to it.\textsuperscript{139} Thus, Lefebvre continues, utopian space is truly Other-space, located in such physical places as temples, tombs, palaces, memorials. Lefebvre is clearly following his second category of Representations of Space, with its imposed order, signs, codes, and conceived-nature. However, it is doubtful that Lefebvre would characterize his own book as such a repressive Representation of Space. While he may prefer to locate his own analysis in the liberation of Representational Spaces (Soja’s Thirdspace), his explicit comments clearly locate it as a utopian text, as an ideological work, but chiefly as a counter-

\textsuperscript{137} Jon L. Berquist provides a useful summary of Soja and Lefebvre’s spatial theory; he makes a similar point when he notes that Lefebvre’s “work is not only a treatise on space but [the “utopian nature of Lefebvre’s project” is] a call to radical action through the creation of a different space” (“Critical Spatiality and the Construction of the Ancient World,” in ‘Imagining’ Biblical Worlds: Studies in Spatial, Social and Historical Construction in Honor of James W. Flanagan [ed. D. M. Gunn and P. M. McNutt; JSOTSup 359; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002], 14-29, here 19, 19 n. 2). My reading of Lefebvre was performed prior to reading Berquist’s analysis; I was obviously quite pleased that he confirmed my understanding of what Lefebvre had written.

\textsuperscript{138} Lefebvre, \textit{Production of Space}, 163-64.

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., 236-40.
ideology to the dominant one. This is, of course, a major tenet of utopian theory, as discussed previously. Utopian literature is an ideological critique of ideology.  

Lefebvre’s spatial system does not completely account for the ability of a writing in Secondspace to work against other writings in Secondspace. In order words, is Lefebvre correct that his Representations of Space (Soja’s Secondspace) is only about ideological oppression by the “priestly castes and political power” without also possibly being about criticism of the same ideology?

As ideology, utopia is naturally located by Soja in Secondspace. While recognizing with Lefebvre that Secondspace is the “dominating” space of power, he expands Lefebvre’s limited view of this category. It is also space for “the purely creative imagination of some artists and poets.”  

However, as with Lefebvre, Soja continues to promote Thirdspace as “the chosen spaces for struggle, liberation, emancipation.” Secondspace recedes into the ethereal background, being “entirely ideational, made up of projections into the empirical world from conceived or imagined geographies … [where] the imagined geography tends to become the ‘real’ geography, with the image or representation coming to define and order the reality.”  

Soja, finally, also does not account for the ability of Secondspace to resist power, to offer a different geography than the one commonly accepted by the “powers” of Secondspace, and to attempt to define a

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140 Compare Marin, *Utopics*, 195.
141 Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 237.
142 Soja, *Thirdspace*, 67, 79. Although Soja notes that Lefebvre includes artists in this second category, Lefebvre never seems to make much of this idea in his analysis.
143 Ibid., 68.
144 Ibid., 79.
new reality by a different projection of a different space that reorders space against the 
*status quo*.

Utopianism, according to utopian theory, rejects the claims of “hegemonic powers” who would maintain the current space and its accompanying social system. Utopian space is “Other-space” working for spatial change, and thus for the social change required to bring its new order into the lived world of Thirdspace. Just as Thirdspace is not always about liberation (Camp’s view of power in Thirdspace), so Secondspace is not entirely about ideological oppression. Secondspace can also be the realm of “struggle, liberation, emancipation” especially when it takes the shape of utopian literature, writing designed to cause a “disconnect” between the world of the text and the world of the reader. Utopian space critiques the *status quo* and its Representations of Space thereby forcing new systems to be developed along new ideological tenets in the place of the old complexes. Utopian space creates a space of resistance, a space in which a new society can be formed.¹⁴⁵

When this definition of utopian space is brought to spatial theory, the theory shifts once again (if Camp’s critique is regarded as the first adjustment). Secondspace is the realm of utopia, and utopia is the realm of revolution. In utopian literature, space is employed to critique the spatial, and thus societal, structure of the present. Utopian space becomes a means of presenting new options for the future. However, it must be remembered, utopia can be located on a map, but with inconsistencies or with details that

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¹⁴⁵ See also the very brief comments advocating this same conclusion regarding utopian space by Fredric Jameson, “Is Space Political?,” in *Anyplace* (ed. C. C. Davidson; New York: Anyone Corp., 1995), 192-205, esp. 196-97; cf. the idea of utopian space in archetecture and urban planning as articulated by David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (CSCHG 7; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), esp. 133-96. See also, the insightful (and largely unnoticed) discussion of utopian space cast in terms of the patterns of exile-and-return and center-periphery by Liverani, “Memorandum,” 189-91.
defy depiction.\textsuperscript{146} And it is at these spatial anomalies where the conflict between reality and utopia is especially evident.\textsuperscript{147} Thus, in exploring the spatial anomalies of a utopian text, the journey is made into Secondspace with the hope of encountering “strange new worlds” as a result.

Spatial theory thus reaffirms the methodological principles of utopian theory, while expanding the ability of utopian theory to discuss the representation of space as a particularly utopian concept in more precise terms than either Marin or Boer have done previously.

To summarize: Utopian theory is an approach to literature that focuses on constructing an ideological matrix which accounts for the complex depiction of the text’s society with particular attention to the discontinuity between the portrayal of that society and the author’s present situation; of special concern are (1) the organizational structure of the utopian society which attempts to locate spatially, temporally, or hierarchically its constitutive components in a seemingly coherent system, and (2) the inevitable inconsistencies within the presentation and what they may contribute to the social critique being employed by the construction of such a utopia.

1.2.3 Utopianism and its Literary Form in the Ancient World

As an ideology, utopianism is present in the ancient world, especially in Hellenistic literature. The following texts have been discussed in light of their utopian

\textsuperscript{146} See Marin, \textit{Utopics}; and the previous discussion.

\textsuperscript{147} As utopian theory draws so heavily on deconstructionist methods, this is not surprising. Such readings focus on “gaps,” “seams,” “inconsistencies,” and other points of conflict in a text.
content or as depictions of classical utopias: Hesiod’s Golden Age (in *Theogony* and *Op.* 109-180, 822-824); Homer’s societies of Phaeakia (in *Od.* Bks. 6-8), and the Ethiopians (in *Il* 1.423; 23.205; *Od.* 1.22; cf. the Lotus-eaters in *Od.* 9.83-104); Herodotus’ description of the Ethiopians (in *Hist.* 3.22-23); Plato’s *Republic*, *Laws* (esp. 3.702a-b), and his description of Atlantis (in *Crit.* 108e-115d and *Tim.* 23d-25d); Xenophon’s *Cyropaeida* and *Anabasis*; the land of Meropis in Theopompus (in Strabo, *Geogr.* 7.3.6); the travel narratives of Euhemerus (in Diod. Sic. 5.41.1-46.7) and Iambulus (in Diod. Sic. 2.55.1-60.3); Hecataeus of Abdera’s *On the Hyperboreans* (in Diod. Sic. 2.47.1-6); Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*; and Lucian’s *Verae Historiae.*

Several texts or descriptions from the biblical corpus and works related to it have also been labeled “utopian”: the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2); the eschatological visions of the prophets (esp. Amos, Hosea, Micah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Second Isaiah, Third Isaiah, Second Zechariah); the book of Deuteronomy; the Priestly Source of the Pentateuch; the “Jerusalem-theology” of the HB; the temple society of Ezekiel 40-48; the Christian community of Acts 2-4; the *Letter of Aristeas*; the *Temple Scroll*, *War Scroll*, and New Jerusalem texts from Qumran; the description of the Therapeutai (in Philo, *De vita contemplativa*) and the Essenes in Philo (*Prob.* 75-91; *Hypoth.* 11.1-11.18 in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.6.1-7; 8:11.1-8) and in Josephus (*Ant.* 13.171-173; 18.18-22; *B.J.* 2.119-161); the description of the New Jerusalem in Rev 21:1-22:5; and Augustine’s *De civitate Dei.*

While the biblical and related material listed has been termed utopian, this is

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148 See footnotes 102 and 103 for scholarly works on these texts and the topic in general.
The book of Chronicles is addressed with only some detail as one of the many “utopian proposals for what the priesthood ideally should become, proposals never fully realized in actual history” by Nelson, “Restoration and Utopian Vision,” 111; see also pp. 130-38. Chronicles is labeled a “utopian history, history not as it really was, but should have been [similar to the prophetic messianic ages and the legal codes]” by Wahl, “Chronicles,” 197. However, Wahl provides no further discussion of this insight and no theoretical basis for his brief assertion. In addition, it is clear from his statement that he understands “utopian” to mean “historically unrealized,” as do the scholars in the preceding paragraph; cf. the discussion of the Temple Scroll below. A similar parallel between Ezekiel’s program and that in Chronicles is made, though without the notion of “utopianism,” by Adam C. Welch, The Work of the Chronicler: Its Purpose and its Date (Schweich Lectures 1938; London: Oxford University Press, 1939; repr., Munich: Kraus, 1980), 156. Finally, Murray terms the Davidic-Solomonic era in Chronicles as a “utopian past” which is to be “recreated” by the Chronicler’s audience (“Retribution and Revival,” 88-89, 96); cf. Ackroyd, Chronicler in His Age, 220. He also correctly notes that Chronicles evinces a disappointment with the present that is manifested as a critique of the status quo and hope for a different future (88 n. 27, 97 n. 45). Murray does not address Chronicles as a whole, but only the “ideal” period of David and Solomon; cf. the similar remarks about replication of the ideal era of Solomon in the Chronicler’s future by Mosis, Untersuchungen, 122, 232-34; the period of David as an ideal picture of the future theocracy according to Im, Davidbild in den Chronikbüchern; and the Davidic-Solomonic era as a
mostly due to the dual misconception that utopian is interchangeable with eschatological and that none of these texts is practical in their implementation. However, neither of these characteristics is essential for a work being classified as “utopian.”

In a much more sophisticated analysis, John Collins has also recently argued for the authentic presence of various forms of utopianism in what he terms the “Biblical Tradition.”¹⁵⁰ In this essay, he draws on the classical tradition in recognizing that different kinds of utopias exist, but that all are “visions of an idealized or transcendent time and place.”¹⁵¹ He thus distinguishes four types of utopias in the “corpus of biblical and early Jewish writings”:

The first, which envisions a transformed land of Israel, may be termed agricultural. The second, which focuses on an ideal Jerusalem, has an urban character. The third is the model of an ideal community, such as we find in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the writings of Philo. The fourth, which appears at the beginning of Genesis and again in apocalyptic visions at the end of the biblical period, is properly utopian in the sense that the place it imagines is out of this world.¹⁵²

Collins’ final statement that this category of Urzeit and Endzeit myths is “properly utopian” because such myths lack a “this-worldly” location is simply incorrect. This notion of “utopian” is not to be found in More’s presentation or in the classical utopian literature, as discussed above. All of them, including the biblical material, locate the utopian society somewhere on this planet.¹⁵³ Collins’ use of the phrase “properly

¹⁵⁰ Collins, “Models of Utopia.”
¹⁵¹ Ibid., 52.
¹⁵² Ibid.
¹⁵³ Note that the Garden of Eden of Gen 2:8-3:24 and the New Jerusalem of Rev 21:1-22:5 both exist on, or at least are connected to, the earth in a physical/spatial relationship. The classical literature is even more clear about this point.
“Much of the abiding power of the Bible surely lies in the fact that its vision of utopia is so concretely embodied in a specific land.”¹⁵⁴ Thus, Collins himself notes the immense importance of spatiality and physical location in “biblical” utopian literature.

1.2.4 Utopianism in Chronicles

In addition to the previous argumentation for the appropriateness of analyzing Chronicles as if it were utopian literature, Collins inadvertently provides one more point. His final remark noted above could be used to demonstrate that Chronicles should have been included in his own analysis of utopian literature in the biblical tradition.¹⁵⁵ The vision of an “idealized or transcendent time and place” is surely appropriate to a description of Chronicles, which portrays such a society during the past “in a specific land”—Israel. While Collins focuses on depictions of future ideal societies (Ezekiel 40-48, the visions for the “messianic” future in Isaiah)¹⁵⁶ and terms the Temple Scroll utopian because “it is incongruous with the state of reality in which it occurs,”¹⁵⁷ he fails to consider that the Hellenistic traditions locate utopian societies in past, contemporary, and future proximity to their own time.

The utopian character of the Temple Scroll for Collins is worth further brief consideration. The reason provided—the depiction does not match historical reality—is,

¹⁵⁵ Also of interest is the remark by Frye that “Most utopias are conceived of as élite societies in which a small group is entrusted with essential responsibilities, and this élite is usually some analogy of a priesthood” (“Varieties of Literary Utopias,”119). This description definitely fits the utopian depiction of Israel in Chronicles.
¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 63.
of course, one of the central principles in the utopian theory outlined above. While scholars debate the nature of the temple in *Temple Scroll* (is it a future temple or the eschatological temple?), they are unanimous that it is not a depiction of actual temple practice during the Second Temple period. The elaborate rituals and legislation of the Pentateuch’s Priestly source, especially its provision of the Jubilee regulations, has also been termed utopian due to the perceived impracticability in implementing its details.

This pattern by biblical scholars—Collins is only one representative—of labeling works as “utopian” which do not contain historical realities is important to note.\(^{159}\)

While the historicity of Chronicles is much debated, especially for the preexilic period, it is commonly assumed to contain information useful for the reconstruction of Second Temple period history and cultic practice. As such a source of “historical data” Chronicles cannot be utopian *de facto*, for its structures were (apparently) implemented at some point. However, this is an assumption common in scholarship without actual evidence. That the stipulations of Chronicles may be reflected in later documents does


\(^{159}\) This is the case with all of the works cited above in footnote 149. While these scholars seem to be following a fairly common use of the word “utopian,” the meaning which it has in their works does not reflect the technical sense which it has in literary criticism on utopian literature.
not mean that they were historical reality for the Chronicler. Rather, if Chronicles is utopian in character, then its cultic practices and systems may reflect desired (but not necessarily implemented) changes and, therefore, not historical realities. Thus, the Chronicler may have been constructing an “ideal” or desired system which would possibly be implemented in the future; i.e., the Chronicler may not be legitimizing current practice but rather offering an alternative system that would change the present structure. It is equally plausible that its descriptions of society are not projections of Second Temple practice back into the preexilic period for the sake of legitimation, but are actually more in line with the desired stipulations of Ezekiel’s Temple and the Priestly Source.

Thus, rather than sift through Chronicles for what it may say about the Second Temple period, utopian theory would suggest that its depiction of society is in tension with historical reality. From this perspective, Chronicles provides an excellent source for

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160 Many examples could be offered, but undoubtedly the most obvious one is the “priestly courses” mentioned several times in Chronicles and as “twenty-four” in number in 1 Chr 24:1-19. This “rotation system” and that they were “twenty-four” of them are reflected by Josephus (C. Ap. 2.102-109; Ant. 7.363-367); apparently in Luke 1:5, 8-9, 23; and are explicitly mentioned in the Mishnah (Sukkah 5:6-8; Ta’an. 4:1-2; cf. Bik. 3:12; Ta’an. 2:6-7; Yebam. 11:7; B. Qam. 9:12; Tem. 3:4; Tanid 5:1; Parah 3:11). Similar evidence has been adduced from the “priestly rosters” and calendrical documents from Qumran (4Q320-330), which list the names and sequence of what appear to be priestly courses in temple service; cf. Winter, “Twenty-six priestly courses”; and James C. VanderKam, Calendars in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Measuring Time (LDSS; London: Routledge, 1998), 71-87. This is often taken as evidence that Chronicles was recording Second Temple practice which continued from his day down to the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E.; e.g., this is the explicit position of Gary N. Knoppers, “‘The City Yhwh Has Chosen’: The Chronicler’s Promotion of Jerusalem in Light of Recent Archaeology,” in Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period (ed. A. G. Vaughan and A. E. Killebrew; SBLSymS 18; Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 307-26, here 310, and even citing the above passages from Josephus and Luke. However, that these three texts later record practice in line with Chronicles does not actually affirm the historicity of Chronicles’ description. It could be that Chronicles suggests a system which was later implemented or that the Qumran community, Josephus, Luke, and the Mishnah use this idealized picture of priestly service to their own advantage, drawing on literary tradition rather than actual practice (e.g., Ant. 7.363-367 is essentially a rewriting of 1 Chronicles 23-24). This second option is the position taken by Knoppers in his commentary with regard to the association of the priestly courses and the Maccabean era (1 Chronicles 10-29, 837, 841-42). Mitchell makes a similar observation, without examples, in a passing remark and brief citation of Boer’s book (“Ideal Ruler as Intertext,” 21 n. 11).
looking once more at the **problems** and **ideological struggles** of the late Persian or early Hellenistic period, rather than at a text produced by those elite who are advocating a continuation of the **status quo**.¹⁶¹

It is therefore suggested that the utopianism of Chronicles has a great deal in common with Ezekiel’s restored temple, the New Heavens and New Earth, the New Jerusalem, and the future anticipated by the Qumran community. However, while these other texts present their utopian ideology as future idealized visions, Chronicles presents

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¹⁶¹ This notion of discontent with the present situation and an implicit dissatisfaction with the **status quo** in Chronicles is noted by Murray, “Dynasty, People, and the Future,” 90 n. 43, 91-92. He further identifies an “openness to the future … arising out of possibilities of the present” conveyed in “revivalist” terms and forms designed to prompt action rather than complacent acceptance on the part of the reader (91-92, 92 n. 47); cf. the statement that the Chronicler was the “revivalist of his age” by Jacob M. Myers (“The Kerygma of the Chronicler: History and Theology in the Service of Religion,” *Int* 20 [1966]: 259-73, here 273). See also Murray’s use of utopia analogous to “its use in political discourse, of an idealized view of a communal future that is radically better than a disappointing present” (“Retribution and Revival,” 88 n. 27); cf. the similar conclusions by Ralph W. Klein, “Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles,” *TBT* 36 (1998): 227-32, esp. 231-32; the brief summary by Fook Kong Wong, “1 and 2 Chronicles,” in *Global Bible Commentary* (ed. D. Patte; Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 119-26; the insightful comment that the Chronicler was “looking critically at the current situation, and hopefully to a more distant future” by Ackroyd, *Chronicler in His Age*, 205; the comments by Japhet, “Postexilic Historiography,” 166; idem, “Exile and Restoration,” 43-44; the invitation for the Chronicler’s audience “to evaluate their present situation in terms of the past” noted by Duke, “Rhetorical Approach,” 123; the emphasis in Chronicles on hope for a different future than the present as expressed by Alice L. Laffey, “A Theological Construction of Israel’s Temple,” *TBT* 26 (1988): 209-14, esp. 212; the early comment that in Chronicles “the past also was idealised and glorified as a norm for present activity and future development” by Curtis and Madsen, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 17; the future “fulfillment of God’s promise” mentioned by Schumacher, “Chronicler’s Theology of History,” 21 n. 28; the (incorrect) claim that Chronicles outlines a “blueprint” for the future by Henrietta Nel, “In the eyes of the beholder … theopolitics and theopolitical leadership in 1 and 2 Chronicles,” *In die Skriflig* 33 (1999): 385-400, esp. 389-91; cf. idem, “Theopolitics in the Davidic monarchical system: a pilot study,” *In die Skriflig* 31 (1997): 421-34; and that the function of the genealogies in particular “is not to faithfully describe the social reality, but to construe an ideal world” by means of “contrasting claims” made throughout the book according to Labahn and Ben Zvi (“Observations on Women,” 459 n. 7, 473). Such observations are consistent with the methodology of utopian theory discussed above. For explicit recognition that, at least on some occasions, the Chronicler is not merely defending the status quo,” see Gary N. Knoppers, “Jehoshaphat’s Judiciary and the Scroll of YHWH’s Torah,” *JBL* 113 (1994): 87-108, here 80; and Murray, “Retribution and Revival,” 97 n. 45.

The similar relationship between the perceived need for restoration based on an idealized past and the creation of a utopian or imagined future is noted in Jewish apocalyptic literature and some of the sectarian Dead Sea Scrolls; see David E. Aune with Eric Stewart, “From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future: Eschatological Restoration in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives* (ed. J. M. Scott; JSJSup 72; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 147-77, esp. 147; and Schiffman, “Concept of Restoration,” 220-21.
its utopian future as an idealized portrayal set in Israel’s historical past. Rather than a literary device designed to encourage legitimation of the present, this anchors the desired changes solidly in the hallowed past. Chronicles, if not supplying rationale for “why it is this way,” points to the alternative reality constructed in this version of Israel’s past as “how it should be.”

In conclusion: This dissertation will address three major utopian constructs in Chronicles: a genealogical utopia, a political utopia, and a cultic utopia. These three constructs, the subjects of three separate chapters, will each begin with brief summaries that provide the context, both literary and historical, for the construct to be addressed specifically as it appears in Chronicles. While typically analyzed separately, these concepts are interrelated throughout the text and will be seen to work together to produce the utopian society depicted by the Chronicler.

While Hellenistic utopias tend to be located in the author’s present, the past is also a possibility. If Chronicles rejects the vision of the future in prophetic terms, locating an Israelite utopia in the land of Israel during its historical past may be more reasonable given the Chronicler’s context than the construction of an Israelite utopia contemporaneous to Chronicles but located outside the land of Israel.

Isaac Kalimi has recently contended that the depiction of Jerusalem in Chronicles stands in marked contrast with these eschatological prophetic visions of the future (“Jerusalem—The Divine City: The Representation of Jerusalem in Chronicles Compared with Earlier and Later Jewish Compositions,” in The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein [ed. M. P. Graham, S. L. McKenzie, and G. N. Knoppers; JSOTSup 371; London: T&T Clark, 2003], 189-205). He emphasizes the “realistic” nature of the city’s portrayal in Chronicles as opposed to the description in these other texts that were “never realized.” Kalimi rightly notes the difference between eschatological texts and Chronicles, but makes the same mistake as other biblical scholars who equate “utopian” with “eschatological” or “fanciful” and “unrealistic.” Chronicles can be utopian without being eschatological, and it can be utopian regardless of the historical implementation of its proposals.

The notion that the Chronicler is a “legitimist” whose main concern is precisely providing the situation of his own day with an authoritative past is a well-entrenched understanding of this material by scholars; see, e.g., the highly-influential article by Freedman, “Chronicler’s Purpose.”

In light of the recent book by Hindy Najman (Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism [JSJSup 77; Leiden: Brill, 2003], esp. 10-19), I have considered labeling this matrix in Chronicles a “Utopian Discourse.” Chronicles engages in conversation with previous texts, especially other utopian literature (biblical and possibly Hellenistic texts from outside Yehud), to construct a textual reality around a foundational concept, namely utopia. While it could also be
argued that Chronicles engages in a Solomonic discourse (see comments to this effect in Sections 2.2.3 and 3.2.1), even here it is the utopian discourse which makes the unique presentation of Solomon in Chronicles understandable. Although, Najman insists that the discourse must be tied to a founder, i.e., an individual (10-14), and she suggests the possibility of a Davidic or Solomonic discourse (17-18 n. 34), it would seem that an organizational structure for society could serve a similar purpose in textual construction, such as the Torah of Moses (see pp. 106-07; cf. Walsh’s statement that all of utopian literature is a vast body of footnotes to Plato’s Republic [From Utopia to Nightmare, 40]). Indeed, not only is the utopian Temple Scroll part of Najman’s Mosaic Discourse (41-69), but Chronicles finds its place as a participant (27-28 n. 58, 111-12). It may be worth noting that Chronicles would most certainly be found in studies on Davidic and Solomonic discourses in the Second Temple period; see, e.g., the brief discussion of Chronicles in the recent survey of Solomonic traditions by Pablo A. Torijano, Solomon the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition (JSJSup 73; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 15-18.
CHAPTER 2

A GENEALOGICAL UTOPIA

2.1 The Functions and Structures of Genealogies: A Survey

The opening nine chapters of Chronicles contain an extensive amount of genealogical material, in various forms and interspersed with narrative comments. This material and its part in the formation of the ideological construct of identity in Chronicles will be assessed in this chapter using the principles of utopian literary theory outlined in the previous chapter. However, prior to this analysis, comparative data from the ancient Near East and the Hellenistic world will be surveyed briefly and a summary of the purposes of genealogies will be provided to offer a context in which to understand this genealogical material and its function in 1 Chronicles 1-9.¹

2.1.1 Genealogies in the ancient Near East

While the genealogies in Chronicles are by far the most extensive example of this genre in the biblical corpus, there are numerous precedents for this type of composition in the biblical tradition and in the ancient Near East. Most of the relevant biblical material is to be found in the Priestly source of the Pentateuch. The genealogies associated with P

¹ See footnotes 58 and 61 in Chapter 1 for secondary literature on genealogies and identity in Chronicles and especially in 1 Chronicles 1-9.
are often linear in progression—the genealogies moving from the father to the son whose line is to be sketched out in continuous sequence without mentioning the names of siblings or tracing additional lines of descent. The Table of Nations in Genesis 10, possibly originating with either P or J, provides an another form for the construction of a genealogical tree. This chapter outlines the descendants of humanity which have their common ancestry in Noah via his three sons. This genealogy names the eponymous ancestors of various nations and their interrelationship as either descendants or siblings of other individuals. Thus, typically it has been asserted that the perceived social, cultural, and political situation of the world at the time of its composition is presented via the breadth of these segmented genealogies. These two genealogical forms, linear and segmented, are the basis of the structure of the material in 1 Chronicles 1-9. While other genealogical information is scattered throughout other books of the HB, especially the Deuteronomistic History, nearly all of these lists are brief—consisting only of references to an individual’s father or possibly grandfather.\(^2\) More extended lineages comparable to the depth evidenced in 1 Chronicles 1-9 are rare.\(^3\)

\(^2\) See, e.g., Aufrecht, “Genealogy and History in Ancient Israel,” 212, 215; Osborne, “Genealogies,” 131; Rendsburg, “Internal Consistence,” 196 n. 21; and Waterman, “Some Repercussions,” 49. The citation of three generations is fairly common, while more lengthy statements of ancestry are not. The description of the infamous Achan’s pedigree through apparently five generations is one of the exceptions (Josh 7:16-18); so also, the genealogy of the prophet Zephaniah (1:1), which extends back four generations to a certain Hezekiah, which has led some scholars to speculate that this longer lineage is provided to highlight Zephaniah’s claim to descent from King Hezekiah of Judah.

\(^3\) Apart from the genealogies in P, only the genealogy of David in Ruth 4:18-22 extends as far as the tenth generation. It is uncertain whether this Davidic genealogy is a source for Chronicles, is derived from Chronicles, or reflects a common source for both texts; see, e.g., Thomas Hieke, *Die Genealogien der Genesis* (HBS 39; Freiburg: Herder, 2003), 233-40; Im, *Davidbild in den Chronikbüchern*, 25; Japhet, “Israelite Legal and Social Reality”; Knoppers, “Davidic Genealogy,” 46 n. 56; Carmel McCarthy, “The Davidic Genealogy in the Book of Ruth,” *PIBA* 9 (1985): 53-62, esp. 55-57; Noth, *Chronicler’s History*, 151 n. 27; Osborne, “Genealogies,” 217-19; Plum, “Genealogy as Theology,” 71-72; Sakenfeld, “Why Perez?”; and the differing views expressed in the commentaries.
Outside of the HB, examples of genealogies from the ancient Near East consist almost exclusively of sequential names detailing the authentic line of royal descent. These “King Lists” have survived from numerous cultures and have been the subject of many comparative analyses of the biblical genealogies, especially those in Genesis. However, the genealogies of the HB are almost entirely not royal in their focus; thus, the correspondence of these ancient Near East parallels is not one of direct applicability to either the biblical genealogies in general or to those in Chronicles in particular.

The following texts are but a sample of the more well-known and well-studied examples of genealogies, mostly in the form of King Lists, from the ancient Near East:

- **Egyptian:** Karnak List (COS 1.37A:69); Abydos List (COS 1.37B:69-70); Sakkara King List (COS 1.37C:70-71); Turin Canon (COS 1.37D:71-73)
- **Ugaritic:** Ugaritic King List (COS 1.104:356-57)
- **Sumerian:** Sumerian King List (ANET 265-66)
- **Moabite:** Mesha Inscription (COS 2.23:137-38; ANET 320-21)
- **Persian:** Cyrus Cylinder (COS 2.124:314-16; ANET 315-16)

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4 See the appropriate works cited previously.

5 Apart from Chronicles (1 Chr 3:10-17, which extends the Davidic line well into the Second Temple period when the monarchy ceased to exist) there is no continuous “King List” of the Israelite monarchy; while DtrH contains a continuous account of the Davidic monarchy, it does not provide a formal list of names. P also lacks a royal focus, although it mentions the kingship of Edom and a passing remark about kingship in Israel (Gen 36:31). Thus, the biblical genealogies are conceptually different in emphasis from the extant lists in the other cultures of the ancient Near East; cf. Aufrecht, “Genealogy and History in Ancient Israel,” 223; and Wilson, “Old Testament Genealogies in Recent Research,” 187.

These numerous examples of texts which contain genealogies from different cultures over the span of centuries illustrate that concerns about heritage, lineage, and tracing descent—especially for the royal line—received expression in this particular form as a common practice throughout the ancient Near East. To briefly summarize these texts: the Egyptian material presents by a sequence of names the mythical and historical royal line of Egypt which descended from the gods; the Ugaritic list, if this is its proper genre, is most likely a ritual prayer for the deceased kings now elevated to the status of gods (the divine determinative *ilu* being found before each name in the list); the Sumerian King List traces the migration of kingship from heaven to various cities—thus it is not formally a genealogy of individuals, but a narrative recording the location of authentic kingship; the Mesha Inscription also reflects more a developing sense of recording historical events than a true genealogy, as Mesha identifies himself as the son of the previous Moabite king in the opening line without further ancestry before proceeding to recount his deeds; the lengthy Autobiography of Idrimi is similar to the Mesha Inscription in its historiographic function and in the referencing only of Idrimi’s father in the opening line; the other Akkadian lists parallel the Egyptian practice of a list of royal names and regnal years, while also demonstrating that written historical records should and could be consulted, edited, and aligned to produce a systematic account of the past (a sort of critical historical consciousness); the Cyrus Cylinder provides a propagandistic narrative for Cyrus’ capture of Babylon, his status as “great king” of various kingdoms, and lists his ancestors for the previous three generations, who are also described as being

“great kings.” From these summaries, however, it becomes obvious that many of the examples typically brought forward for comparison to biblical genealogies are not formally genealogies, but only contain a genealogy—and then often only a patronym\(^7\) of the king at their beginning before continuing to tell of the greatness of the king by recounting his actions in narrative form.

Thus, while scholars have suggested, with good reasons, that these King Lists and other inscriptive evidence reflect the earliest historiographic texts—or at least the impetus for the development of historiography—in the ancient Near East, both their structure and content do not provide the best comparative evidence available for assessing the genealogical material in Chronicles.\(^8\)

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\(^7\) It is questionable whether a patronym or a list of individuals identified only by patronyms should be considered a genealogy on the basis of form or content. However, establishing a minimum number of generations required to constitute a genealogy would be an arbitrary decision at best.

\(^8\) These King Lists lack the narrative insertions which punctuate the genealogies of Chronicles. In addition, both the breadth and depth of these lists cannot even begin to compare with the complexity of the information found in 1 Chronicles 1-9 (or even in P for that matter). Thus, at least with regard to the genealogical material, Malamat’s claim that the genealogies of Chronicles “represent a unique historiographic genre within the literature of the ancient Near East” (“Kings Lists of the Old Babylonian Period and Biblical Genealogies,” 163) is more apt than may first be conceded by scholars searching for ancient Near East parallels to the biblical genealogies; cf. the criticism of the Sumerian King List as a charter document without a historical reality by Piotr Michalowski, “History as Charter: Some Observations on the Sumerian King List,” *JAOS* 103, no. 1 (1983): 237-47.

2.1.2 Genealogies in the Hellenistic World

While the attention to parallels of form, content, and function with the HB has been largely focused on the ancient Near East, several recent works have begun to address the possibility of parallels to be found in the Hellenistic World, especially in its wealth of historiographic texts.9 While these studies have mostly concerned themselves with the Pentateuch and DtH, a strong case for comparison of the Hellenistic material with Chronicles would seem to be logical given the near consensus on its date of composition at some point during the time of Greece’s ascendency or dominance over the ancient Mediterranean world.10 While a few studies have pursued this comparative option,11 of special notice are the article by Van Seters, which raises the question of

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10 On the issue of dating Chronicles, see Section 1.1.2 above.

11 See, e.g., the associations with the Hellenistic period made by Albertz, History of Israelite Religion, 2:544-56; the parallels mentioned by Hengel, “Judaism and Hellenism Revisited,” 11; the parallels adduced by Hoglund, “Chronicler as Historian”; the parallels with Hellenistic historiography and military terminology by Mathys, “Chronikbücher und hellenistischer Zeitgeist,” 59-110; the parallels drawn with Xenophon’s Cyropaedia by Mitchell, “Ideal Ruler as Intertext”; the Greek genealogies discussed by Oeming, Das Wahre Israel, 23-28; the Greek genealogies addressed by Scolnic, Chronology and Papponymy, 93-112; the summary statements by Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 6-7; and the comparisons made by Willi, “Der Weltreichsgedanke im Frühjudentum,” 404-05.
genealogical parallels between Genesis and the Hellenistic world, and the recent articles by Knoppers, who is one of very few scholars to address specifically the issue of the genealogies in Chronicles and Hellenistic parallels.12

Van Seters compares the sixth-century, genealogical, poetic, pseudo-Hesiodic Catalogue of Women13 with the narratives of Genesis, focusing on the interaction of the מַהְלָה and the מַהֲלָה in Gen 6:1-4, the Table of Nations in Genesis 10, and the stories of the Patriarchs which follow. Van Seters concludes that there are “close parallels” between the two works and that it is Greek rather than Mesopotamian influences that provide the best explanation for the content and structure of the Genesis narrative.14

Knoppers also includes this Hellenistic text as one of the examples with which to compare Chronicles and Hellenistic works mentioning, containing, or consisting of genealogies. Knoppers concludes that the Hellenistic Catalogue of Women is a valuable parallel for the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9.15 Of particular importance for Knoppers are the following points: the focus of the Catalogue on the intrarelationship of those claiming Greek descent while noting the Greeks’ relationship with the non-Greek world,16 the form of segmented genealogies which is common to Hellenistic genealogies


13 The work has been titled both Γυναικών Κατάλογος and the Ηνοεία, based on the refrain ἢ ὁμη, which indicated the beginning of a new section throughout the work.

14 Van Seters, “Primeval Histories,” 15, 22. In keeping with his late dating of the Yahwistic source argued in his previous analyses, he further concludes that the parallels of content and form coincide with the temporal proximity of the two works (“Primeval Histories,” 22).


16 This similar point is made, but without much further development, by Hoglund, “Chronicler as Historian,” 23.
and Chronicles but not to the examples from the ancient Near East which are linear in form with only rare exceptions, the obvious importance of women in the *Catalogue*, the use of narrative comments interspersed throughout the genealogical lists, and the fact that the *Catalogue* stops the lines of descent well short of the author’s own time.

Knoppers, as well as Van Seters, have drawn their understanding of the *Catalogue* from the seminal critical analysis by Martin West for issues of date, form, content, and structure. West’s views and conclusions about the *Catalogue* will be summarized in the following paragraphs.

West notes that this extensive poem which “seems in fact to have contained comprehensive genealogies covering the whole of the heroic age” was appended at some point in the sixth century to the earlier related work, Hesiod’s *Theogony*, and transmitted along with it in antiquity. In his introduction, West notes that genealogies are common in Hellenistic poetry and prose works and that they function to propel the plot forward or to provide background for a new character when introduced later in the narrative. In addition to providing several examples of Hellenistic genealogical concerns, West surveys the comparative genealogical evidence from the ancient Near East, the Old Testament, Arabia, northern Europe, India, Japan, Central Asia, Polynesia, and Africa. In discussing the Old Testament he focuses on those data in the book of Genesis which are “much more closely comparable to the Hesiodic ones, both in their multilinearity and

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19 Ibid., 5.

20 Ibid., 11-30; the discussion of the HB is on pp. 13-15.
in their national and international scope.” He also glosses those in 1 Chronicles 1-8 as a parallel since they “contain some brief narrative annotations [and that] many of the names are toponyms or eponymous heads of clans [just as in the Catalogue].”

After a detailed source- and form-critical analysis, West also argues that the work is a unity, crafted by “a single creative poet” who “did not construct his genealogies ex nihilo [but who] was building on inherited material.” This traditional material was “shaped, adjusted, combined, augmented [by the author] in accordance with his own conceptions [which] reflected the viewpoint of his own time and place” resulting in a text “implicitly relevant to his present,” a composition technique typical of the other genealogical poets in antiquity. In addition, West points out that the Catalogue recounts genealogies of the Greek “Golden Age” without continuing them down to the author’s present. Finally, West notes that the individual units are presented in a sequence which follows the geography of Greece, moving in a “general progression from west to east across Greece.” Thus, geography seems to have dictated the order of the presentation rather than historical linear progression of time or other possible concerns of the author.

In addition to the Catalogue of Women, Knoppers also replicates the comparative data from the Hellenistic world which West cites in his introduction and provides further explication of them. These texts include: Homer’s Odyssey (11.235 ff.; 15.223 ff.); the

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21 Ibid., 13.
22 Ibid., 15 n. 45.
23 Ibid., 125.
24 Ibid., 11, 9.
25 Ibid., 3, 9.
26 Ibid., 166.
27 Knoppers, “Davidic Genealogy,” 43-44; idem, “Greek Historiography and the Chronicler’s History”; and West, Hesiodic Catalogue of Women, 5-10.
Genealogiai/Historia of Hecataeus; the six works by Hellanicus of Mytilene (or Lesbos): Phoronis, Deukalioneia, Atlantis, Asopis, Troika, and Aiolika; Plato’s Hippias Major (285b-e) and Theaetetus (175a); and Herodotus’ Historiae (7.204 and 8.131; 5.22 with 8.137.1). As West surmises, “the total mass of early Greek genealogical literature was thus very considerable.”

These various texts reflect a different set of data with which to compare Chronicles, and one which has much potential in terms of both form and content. Without entering into this extensive analysis in this dissertation, it will suffice to note that in all of these texts the preservation or presentation of an accurate genealogy is a concern, that narrative elements are often interspersed in the genealogical sequence (and are not interpolations), and that the primary function of the genealogy is to demonstrate relationship—whether socially, politically, religiously—between groups and individuals in ethnic terms whether this biological connection is “real” or “imagined.”

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28 West, Hesiodic Catalogue of Women, 7.

29 It is not my intention to survey these other works or to do this comparative analysis in this dissertation. Rather, such a thorough analysis should be undertaken in the same fashion as has been done with the ancient Near East material. At this time I merely wish to note the promise that this material seems to have for better understandings of the genealogies in Chronicles. For a helpful summary of some of the more influential material, especially Hecataeus of Miletus and the works by Hellanicus who was born in Mytilene and died in Lesbos, see Lionel Pearson, Early Ionian Historians (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975; repr. from Oxford: Clarendon, 1939), 25-108 and 152-235, respectively; cf. Van Seters, In Search of History, 8-54, esp. 11-14 on Hecataeus.

30 Many of the positions held by West have been strengthened by additional arguments and evidence in Rosalind Thomas, “Genealogy and Family Tradition: The Intrusion of Writing,” in Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens (CSOLC 18; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 155-95. She emphasizes the importance of genealogies for prestige and status (156, 177), the reflection of current socio-political relations in genealogical relations (175-76), the role of eponymous ancestors (176), the lack of concern in Hellenistic genealogy for tracing lines of descent down to the present (181-82, 195), and the complex relationship which the literary forms have with their oral sources (184-95). The final point regarding Hellenistic practice is reiterated by Knoppers, “‘Great Among His Brothers’,” n. 43. See also the more recent study by Jonathan M. Hall, Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
2.1.3 The Purposes of Genealogies

The comparative data from the Hellenistic world provide one means of illuminating the genealogical material in Chronicles. Indeed, Chronicles shares many of the same concerns as the Hellenistic genealogies and demonstrates the importance of genealogies in that time period. Thus, the functions and purposes of the genealogies in the Hellenistic world and in Chronicles appear to be remarkably similar.

That genealogies from approximately the same historical era should exhibit similar functions and purposes may not be entirely surprising. Further, that genealogies in general, from a variety of historical contexts, share similar features and serve similar ends when they are articulated has been well-established in previous scholarship. The similarities between Chronicles and the Hellenistic material both confirm and are confirmed by the leading scholarly studies on genealogies. However, these studies are not specifically focused on the Hellenistic data nor have the material in Chronicles as their main thrust. Two of these analyses have been notably influential on subsequent critical discussion of genealogies: the seminal work by Johnson and the exhaustive studies by Wilson.31

Johnson’s main concern is to provide a context for understanding the genealogies of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew (1:1-17) and Luke (3:23-38). This context is constructed by an analysis of the genealogical material in the HB, particularly the Pentateuchal sources and the material in Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah.32 In his assessment of the material in Chronicles, Johnson divides the data into three categories:

the “core material,” “geographical data,” and “other notes.”33 This third category largely consists of the narrative elements not formally genealogical or geographic in nature. Johnson concludes that the core material derives mainly from the Pentateuchal sources and is used to construct “a picture of the complete kingdom of God” under the label of “all Israel.”34 To this biological construct is added the geographical material which thus associates the people with their “promised” land in an intimate interrelationship, so that “people and land are essentially one.”35 Regarding the third category, Johnson rejects the common view that the narrative elements in the genealogies are interpolations with recourse to comparative data: Safaitic inscriptions from the region around Damascus which date from some point during the first centuries B.C.E. and C.E. Johnson’s evidence is useful for him as he intends to address the NT genealogies, but is not the best comparative data for Chronicles; he even admits that the late inscriptions do not fully account for the variety of narrative notations found in Chronicles. Instead, Johnson emphasizes the military and tribal nature of many of the notations, and concludes that the Chronicler’s “faithfulness to the details of his sources where he had no theological reason to change them, a procedure seen in his treatment of the biblical texts available to him, is sufficient to explain his inclusion of the military and historical notes.”36 However, the Hellenistic data suggest another more direct possibility than positing a consistent use of sources on part of the Chronicler: simply put, genealogies often included narrative

32 Johnson, Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies, 3-36 (Pentateuch), 37-76 (Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah), 77-82 (summary of the examples from the HB).
33 Ibid., 55-68.
34 Ibid., 56-57.
35 Ibid., 57-60, here 57.
36 Ibid., 61-68, here 68. Johnson, of course, does not discuss the Hellenistic parallels mentioned in the previous section.
comments, as the Hellenistic data show; Johnson’s Safaitic parallels, as with the ancient Near East material, are not the best comparative data for this phenomenon in Chronicles.

In summarizing his analysis of the genealogies in Chronicles, Johnson first acknowledges the role of genealogies in defining Israel’s identity against the other peoples who are related to Israel and yet excluded from the distinctive community known as “all Israel” before he concentrates on the purpose of these lists: the presentation of a “theocracy par excellence” which focuses on the lines of Judah and Levi—the ancestors of David and the priests—that is, the monarchy and the temple which it instituted. Although Johnson notes the important role of legitimacy for individuals in the preservation and construction of genealogies (particularly for the priesthood), he demurs from the commonly-held belief that this is the most important (if not the only) function of the genealogical material. Rather than providing legitimacy for the Chronicler’s “contemporary officiants,” he suggests that it is the grounding of the temple worship as a Davidic institution, a claim to continuity with the past, which takes precedence in the lengthy enumeration of the people of Israel.37 Thus, Johnson’s study touches on the most common understandings of the purposes of genealogies: legitimacy of the present, claims to continuity with the past, distinguishing between different groups by drawing ethnic boundaries, and defining the internal organizational relationships of a single group.

Wilson’s study of the genealogies in the HB echoes these four purposes for genealogies, although approaching the issue from a very different perspective than Johnson. While Johnson discusses the literary functions of genealogies with only the rare example of the Saifitic inscriptions for comparative data, Wilson focuses on the

37 Ibid., 74-82, here 79.
anthropological study of the oral nature of genealogies in pre-literate and literate tribal societies and on the comparative ancient Near East “genealogical” data. After constructing a model from this extensive analysis in order to approach the genealogies of the HB, Wilson employs it in addressing the genealogies of Genesis.38

In this model, Wilson has laid out terminology, drawn from anthropologists working in this area, which now dominates the study of genealogies by biblical scholars.39 According to Wilson: genealogies may take either the form of a list or the form of a narrative; they may be either linear or segmented in terms of relational descent;40 within these two structures they exhibit three main formal characteristics: breadth through segmentation, depth through linearity, and fluidity—contraction or expansion in either breadth or depth over time;41 they function in one (or more) of three spheres: domestic, politico-jural, and religious;42 the function of the genealogy in nearly any given context is dependent on the form (and not only content) which the genealogy takes;43 that it is typical for genealogies to extend three to five generations but extremely rare to extend beyond ten or twelve generations, with the only exception being the

38 Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World*, 11-55 (oral genealogies), 56-136 (ancient Near East), 137-98 (Genesis), 199-202 (conclusion); idem, “Old Testament Genealogies,” 182-87; cf. the application of Wilson’s insights and additional analysis of the ancient Near East material to Chronicles by Osborne, “Genealogies,” 97-98, 128-46. The most recent thorough analysis of the genealogies in Genesis also explicitly begins with Wilson’s paradigmatic system; see Hieke, *Genealogien der Genesis*.

39 Nearly every subsequent treatment of the genealogies in Chronicles, whether article, monograph, or commentary, cites Wilson’s work and uses his categories and terminology in discussing these lists.


material in 1 Chronicles 2-9;\textsuperscript{44} that legitimacy of present positions or conditions is a primary concern of the genealogy;\textsuperscript{45} and that there is overwhelming evidence for two phenomena: the relative fixation of the beginning and end of the genealogy, and the related feature of telescoping—the loss of the middle section(s) of the genealogy so that several generations may be missing in a condensed list noting only the most memorable or most significant ancestors.\textsuperscript{46}

To summarize: the purposes of genealogies, utilizing both the comparative data from antiquity (ancient Near East and more so the Hellenistic world) and the highly-influential studies of Johnson and Wilson, are: (1) group definition, both internally through organizational hierarchy and associations and externally through lines of demarcation, (2) preservation of history, (3) explanation of current social, political, or religious structures, often with the intention of maintaining the status quo, and (4) assertion of claims to continuity with the past or to the authoritative interpretation of that past, which may either support or challenge the status quo.\textsuperscript{47} All four of these functions

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 197.

\textsuperscript{45} Wilson, Genealogy and History in the Biblical World, 37-45; cf. Osborne, “Genealogies,” 69-74, 261-68; see also: Aufrecht, “Genealogy and History in Ancient Israel,” 223; Boadt, “Chronicles and Genealogies,” 207; Laato, “Levitical Genealogies”; Lefèvre, “Note d’exégèse sur les génélogies des Qehatites,” 292; McKenzie, 1-2 Chronicles, 60-61; Plum, “Genealogy as Theology,” 69; Rendsburg, “Internal Consistence,” 196-97; and Weinberg, “Das Wesen,” 110-12. Legitimacy is the major focus of the detailed essay by Chavalas addressing the comparative Old Babylonian historiographic material from the perspective of its function as literature of propaganda; Chavalas also explicitly follows Wilson’s categorization of genealogies (“Genealogical History as ‘Charter’”).


\textsuperscript{47} This seeming inconsistency over whether genealogies are designed to support or contend with existing power structures is not unique to genealogies; historiographic texts also exhibit the possibility of functioning either to “foster or to overthrow particular perspectives or ideologies” according to Marc Z. Brettler, The Creation of History in Ancient Israel (London: Routledge, 1995), 137. Thus, what one individual/group may perceive as supporting the status quo may be interpreted by another individual/group, typically of a different social location, as a call for change. In the case of Chronicles, scholars have assumed that the work is one of legitimacy rather than critique; the methodology of utopian literary theory begins with the latter as its premise instead of the former.
of genealogies can be and have been easily identified in the content, form, and structure of the material in 1 Chronicles 1-9.⁴⁸

2.1.4 Genealogy as Preface: The Literary Function of 1 Chronicles 1-9

Turning to the genealogical material in Chronicles, one of the first issues to require attention is the relationship between these genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9 and the narrative which follows in 1 Chronicles 10-2 Chronicles 36.⁴⁹ Several questions arise: Should these chapters be considered secondary (or even tertiary) in nature, added by a subsequent or multiple redactor(s)?⁵⁰ Are the genealogies linked in any way with the narrative, whether original to the book of Chronicles or as additions, whether in terms of content, scope, ideology, theology, Tendenz? Do the genealogies function as an “introduction” to the narrative, setting the stage, providing background, or are they disconnected and evidence of antiquarianism on the part of whoever is responsible for their present location?⁵¹

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⁴⁸ See also the following statement by Knoppers:
Genealogies in the ancient Mediterranean world were caught up with fundamental issues of self-definition, identity, territory, and relationships. They were composed mainly to address claims about social status, kinship ties, and territorial affiliations and not to satisfy idle curiosities about the distant past. In most, albeit not all, cases lineages ‘establish and validate living relationships’ [citing Aufrecht, “Genealogy and History in Ancient Israel,” 222]’ (“‘Great Among His Brothers”’).

⁴⁹ Chronicles has been traditionally divided into these two macro-sections based on the genre divisions between the genealogies and the narrative that follows. Almost all commentaries on Chronicles follow this division in their outlines and structures. However, see the comments by John W. Wright that such a distinction is essentially “not helpful” in either a structural sense or in terms of content (“The Fabula of the Book of Chronicles,” in The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture [ed. M. P. Graham and S. L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 263; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999], 136-55, esp. 153-54).

⁵⁰ For example, it is common to find scholars advocating at least one, two, or numerous additions to Chronicles which may be substantial in nature. Chief among the sections regarded in this way are the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9; see footnotes 13 and 14 in Chapter 1 above for further details.

The view taken here is that those arguments presented for an intimate connection, and indeed, a unified and original association between the genealogies and the narratives seem to be built on better evidence from comparative literary examples and the text of Chronicles itself. Thus, it seems best to accept the genealogical material as a whole as original to Chronicles and in concert with its overall aims, while holding out the possibility of minor later additions. However, it should be noted that not only do the genealogies share the same general concerns as the narrative, but they also share the same ideology of utopianism that has been suggested for the narrative material by other scholars. In this section, such a relationship on the level of literary function will be addressed and a piece of data not previously considered in this discussion will be


52 On the utopianism of the narrative, see the works of Boer, Murray, Nelson, and Wahl cited in footnotes 6 and 149 of Chapter 1, which discuss only some of the narrative material and make no mention of the genealogical material.
examined. Hopefully, subsequent research will follow that may clarify and refine the significance of this possible comparative concept.53

In Chronicles’ scholarship, as in any area of biblical studies, a number of preliminary issues about the text are typically addressed: date, authorship, genre, purpose, major themes, and unity of the work. The issue of a text’s unity can be assessed in a variety of ways: single authorship, multiple authorship from a school of similarly-minded individuals, single authorship with additions made to correct or adjust the text by another individual or group not so similarly-minded, an original text (by either a single or multiple authors) to which a number of additions have been inserted by any number of related or unrelated hands, to name only a few of the options. The more inconsistent or repetitious (i.e., contradictory and duplicate material) a single composition tends to be, the more redactional layers may be posited to explain this situation. This phenomenon can be found throughout HB studies, especially in Pentateuchal criticism, in the various Prophetic books, and for the composition known as the Deuteronomistic History (with an ever-expanding number of postulated redactional schemes to explain its growth and the present form of the text). Of course, Chronicles also has not escaped from the scholarly penchant to locate the supposed Urtext and stratify its layers of growth, even to the point of joining the Deuteronomistic History in its impending “death by redaction.”54

While nearly all scholars will allow for the possibility of at least minor additions to the basic text of Chronicles, there has been a long history of postulating major

53 I make no claim to have worked out the precise and complete nature of the comparison which I will present in this section. I offer these remarks with the hope that my insight can and will be further explicated in the future either by my own research or by other scholars, especially those whose primary area is the Hellenistic material.
additions or sweeping redactional strata throughout the text. As noted in Chapter 1, both a priestly and Levitical redaction have been suggested, and whole blocks of material assigned to a secondary, tertiary, or even later stage in the growth of the text: 1 Chronicles 15-16 and 23-27, and the subject of this section, the extensive genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9.\(^{55}\)

While most scholars would distance themselves from the statement of Martin Noth that Chronicles exhibits “rank textual growth,” a large number affirm that the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9 are an addition to the core text of Chronicles which does not share the same concerns of the narrative material.\(^{56}\) The separation is thus made both in terms of genre and content.

Scholars who have affirmed the unity of the Chronicles, and that 1 Chronicles 1-9 in particular should not be quickly dismissed as an addition, have focused on the issue of content and thematic consistency between the narrative and the genealogical material.\(^{57}\) In this growing trend among scholars, a variety of related terms have been used to express the relationship between these two generic divisions: prologue, introduction, preface, Vorhalle.\(^{58}\) Thus, the genealogical material is understood to “prepare the reader for the narrative which follows” or to “set forth the themes to be developed in the

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\(^{55}\) See footnotes 13 and 14 in Chapter 1 for more details and discussion.

\(^{56}\) Noth, *Chronicler’s History*, 36. See the scholars mentioned above in footnote 51.

\(^{57}\) See the scholars mentioned above in footnote 51.

\(^{58}\) Note, however, that this terminology is used also by scholars who deny the originality of this genealogical material in the text of Chronicles and its role in the purpose of the book; see, e.g., Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 1; Cancik, “Das jüdische Fest,” 337; Myers, *1 Chronicles*, xli; and Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, 17; such use is in reference only to the final form of Chronicles for these scholars. This type of labeling for these chapters originates with Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 211.
subsequent section” or “provide the historical background for the main story about to be related” or some such function which defers priority of place to the narrative.

The case made for the unity of the genealogies and the narrative in terms of purpose, scope, and theme is very convincing. In addition to providing the history before Saul and the rise of David in brief outline as a summary of the past, the major themes of Chronicles are found in these lists and accompanying narrative asides: monarchy, cult, the identity of “Israel” both internally and externally, retribution and blessing, “seeking YHWH,” and in terms consistent with the idealism in the presentation of the narrative. Two further points of connection that have been observed are worth particular mention. First, De Vries has noted that “the genealogical introduction needs the narrative, for it has no meaning in itself.” Although this is not quite an accurate statement, the genealogies would serve a different function if they existed apart from the narrative as a separate composition. As they exist as a part of Chronicles, the genealogies do introduce the narrative and must be read in connection with it. Second, Wright has argued that in a structural sense the genealogies

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59 It has been suggested that the sole purpose of the genealogies is to serve as an abbreviated historical introduction to get to the main point, the reign of David; see, e.g., Adrien-M. Brunet, “Le Chroniste et ses Sources,” RB 60 (1953): 481-508, esp. 482-97 on the genealogies; idem, “Le Chroniste et ses Sources,” RB 61 (1954): 349-86, esp. 349; and Spiro, “Manners of Rewriting Biblical History,” 11. In contrast, it has been argued (even if unconvincingly) that Chronicles contains “no preface” at all (Schaefer, “Significance of Seeking God,” 17).

60 On this theme in Chronicles, see Christopher T. Begg, “‘Seeking Yahweh’ and the Purpose of Chronicles,” LS 9 (1982): 128-41; Graham, “Setting the Heart to Seek God”; and Schaefer, “Significance of Seeking God.” Its appearance in the genealogies is evident in the “narrative” elements, esp. in the remarks about Jabez’s prayer in 1 Chr 4:9-10; see the further comments on this text below in Section 2.2.3.

61 De Vries, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 14. Thus, for example, while the genealogies do contribute much to the concern over the identity of Israel even this concept awaits further development in the narrative.

62 If this hypothetical situation of an independent genealogical document were true, then a text even more similar to the pseudo-Hesiodic Genealogy of Women in both form and content would exist and the parallels between them would be even more evident; see the above discussion in Section 2.1.2.
are the book. Formally, what is usually called the “narrative” of the book of Chronicles (1 Chron. 10-2 Chron. 36) is actually the slower paced repetition of what has already been narrated in 1 Chron. 1.1-9.34 itself. While details emerge in its retelling, 1 Chron. 1.1-9.34 narrates the fundamental structure of the book. Thus, to distinguish between the genealogies and the “narrative” is not helpful.\footnote{Wright, “Fabula,” 154.}

Wright’s narratological reading presents the genealogies not only as being intimately connected with the narrative, but as being the book in microcosm. This obviously not only enhances the importance of the genealogies, but forces a reassessment of the function of the genealogies as a lengthy introduction dissimilar in form but not overall content to the narrative which follows.

The clarification of this reassessment may proceed with attention to some considerations from Hellenistic historiography. Part of the difficulty in determining the purpose of the biblical histories (whether discussing the so-called “Primary History,” DtrH, Chronicles, or Ezra-Nehemiah) is that “no biblical historical book contains a statement of purpose, like that found in Herodotus or Thucydides.”\footnote{Brettler, \textit{Creation of History}, 135; cf. Ben Zvi, “Book of Chronicles,” 269-70, 277 n. 11. The claims for authority typically made by these authors, nearly always in a preface and always with the explicit intent to supercede previously written histories, stand in marked contrast to all examples of historiography in the HB (but see 2 Macc 2:19-32). See the discussion of this phenomenon in the Hellenistic historiographies by John Marincola, \textit{Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. 1-7, 62, 117.} This difference is particularly important for those scholars who have argued that the best source of comparison for the book of Chronicles is the Hellenistic historiographic tradition.\footnote{See footnotes 11 and 12 above.} If Chronicles follows or fits this tradition, \textit{why does it lack the most basic distinctive characteristic of that tradition}—a statement of purpose typically expressed in a preface to the work itself?
Nearly all extant historical works following in the Hellenistic tradition contain a preface which outlines the scope and theme of the work: whether the time period to be surveyed, the major themes to be addressed, the main protagonist(s) involved, the chief conflict to be resolved, and so forth. The major historical work in the NT, Luke-Acts, seems to fit well within this Hellenistic tradition as evidenced by the preface of Luke 1:1-4 and the additional introductory remarks of Acts 1:1-2. Josephus also follows this pattern (Ant. Preface 1.1-26; J. W. Preface 1.1-30; cf. C. Ap. 1.1-59). Yet, Hellenistic historiography does provide a different approach to the issue of a preface which has gone largely unnoticed and may help to elucidate the type of functional preface which is found in Chronicles. The example comes from the discussion of common historiographic practice and its abuses in antiquity as articulated by Lucian in his How to Write History composed ca. 162-165 C.E. 66

Although composed centuries after Chronicles, Lucian’s work provides evidence of the type of historiographic writing being undertaken in the Hellenistic world. 67 Lucian


67 While Lucian’s work is obviously not contemporary with Chronicles, it contains views of historiographic methodology which go back to the Hellenistic period (he cites Herodotus and Thucydides in Hist. conscr. 54 and Xenophon in 23); Lucian expresses these opinions pedagogically rather than in practice (as do, e.g., Herodotus, Xenophon, and Thucydides).
discusses the appropriate forms and strategies to be used by historians in their
construction of a historiographic text. As such a didactic work, it both criticizes and
lauds earlier works. Among the many interesting comments which Lucian makes about
the proper way to write history, the ones of concern for possibly understanding the
genealogical material in Chronicles are his musings about the function and form of a
preface (τὸ προοίμιον).

For Lucian, the preface should be: not “frigid” (ὑπέρψυχρος) or in poor style
(Hist. conscr. 16); in the same language, dialect, or style as the main body (16); not
overly long or at least not in disproportion to the length of the main body (23, 55); should
make only two points—not three like the rhetors (53); and should transition smoothly to
the narrative which follows (55). All of these comments by Lucian refer to the content
and form of what can be termed “introductory separable prefaces” that stand apart from
the main body of the narrative. Lucian, however, discusses another type of preface—the
virtual preface (ὁς δυνάμει τίνα προοίμια; 23, 52).

In these two instances, Lucian
notes that sometimes authors do not follow the common practice of these “introductory
separable prefaces” and rather seem to lack an introduction in terms of form. However,
in reality, so Lucian contends, the beginning of these works still “clarify what [the

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68 In his discussion of the standard Hellenistic forms, Sterling cites these two passages from
Lucian as evidence that Hellenistic historiography required a preface and that this form thus distinguishes
Hellenistic works from the historiography of the HB (Historiography and Self-Definition, 369, 369 n. 268);
cf. the similar use of these passages to indicate the purpose of the preface by Betz, Lukian von Samosata
und das Neue Testament, 144 n. 2. However, these passages rather provide evidence that a preface is the
standard and expected form at the beginning of a historiographic work but that a historian is not absolutely
required to include one, at least according to the possible exception noted explicitly by Lucian.

69 This is the understanding of the distinction by the Loeb edition: Lucian, How to Write History,
35 n. 3; cf. the emphasis on content by Gert Avenarius, “προοίμιον,” in Lukians Schrift zur
Geschichtsschreibung (Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain Kg., 1956), 113-18, esp. 114; and the
explicit discussion of this feature in Xenophon’s Anabasis as well as Lucian’s opinion on the matter in
Marincola, Authority and Tradition, 237 n. 107, 273.
historian] is going to say” (52). Thus, Lucian indicates that the *beginning of a text may function as a preface even if it fails to take the proper form* which is typically employed by Hellenistic historians. The genealogies in Chronicles serve this type of function for the narrative though they lack the form of the standard Hellenistic historiographic preface.\(^7\) If this noted similarity stands as a reasonable explanation of what *could be* the case with the genealogies in Chronicles, the view expressed by Wright would be confirmed and, more importantly, the *form* of the genealogies can no longer be cited as a reason for their failure to function as a preface for the book of Chronicles.

2.2 *The Genealogical Identity of “Israel” in Chronicles: A Utopian Construct*

Taken together, the insights of the previous section clearly demonstrate that one of the major purposes of the genealogical material in Chronicles is to provide the identity of the entity known as “Israel.” In this section, the construction of this identity by the Chronicler will be explored. However, two additional preliminary issues which directly impact the interpretation of this genealogical data (besides the relationship of the genealogies to the narrative discussed above) must be considered before pursuing this notion of identity and its formulation as a utopian construct in Chronicles.

First, the issue of the historical reliability of the genealogical material, and the related issue of the historicity of Chronicles as a whole, have been the subject of much debate in determining how the information in Chronicles should and/or can be used for historical reconstruction of the histories of Israel and Israelite religion, and for which

\(^7\) Unfortunately, Lucian is the only individual to refer to this literary phenomenon. He does cite the beginning of Xenophon’s *Anabasis* as an example, but mentions “other old writers” without providing names or examples of how their works began and did function as “virtual prefaces” (*Hist. conscr.* 23).
historical periods; that is, if Chronicles is historically reliable (and for many scholars that is a big “if” to be established first), then does it present historical information for the preexilic, exilic, postexilic, or all three, periods of Israelite history? Again, the opinion on this issue is extremely diverse among scholars with many holding nuanced views of the relevancy of Chronicles for historical data. If it be accepted that Chronicles contains at least some accurate historical information about the Second Temple period—a view which most scholars would allow—and that it contains in some form accurate historical information concerning the preexilic period about which it purports to speak, then the issue becomes one of sorting out “the wheat from the chaff” and by what criteria this process should be undertaken. Needless to say, no consensus among scholars can be reached on this necessary principle of demarcation. Thus, determining which information in Chronicles is historical and which existed only in the Chronicler’s imagination shows no sign of being accomplished in the near future.

That being said, it is ironic that the vast majority of scholars will assert rather confidently that a particular description of preexilic practice or detail must reflect postexilic concerns or conditions either without providing any evidence to support the

71 Listing all the various discussions on this issue would not be practical in terms of space. See the commentaries for a sample of the diverse opinions. The underlying motivation for such skepticism about the historicity of Chronicles is stated plainly by Brettler: “It is only because we no longer subscribe to the Chronicler’s ideologies that we so clearly perceive the Chronicler’s bias, and suspect that his history diverges significantly from the actual past” (Creation of History, 47); cf. the assessment of the scholarly attempts to either support or deny the historicity of Chronicles in the works mentioned in footnote 1 of Chapter 1. The interest in genealogies themselves is offered as a primary reason for locating this material squarely in the postexilic period without allowing for the incorporation of much preexilic data by Waterman, “Some Repercussions,” 49; cf. the similar logic but more reserved conclusions by Braun, 1 Chronicles, 62.

72 Compare the use of the same metaphor, the difficulty associated with this process, and the arbitrary decisions often made by scholars, as articulated by Braun, “1 Chronicles 1-9,” 102-03, 105. This ambiguity about establishing criteria from which to assess the depictions in Chronicles can be illustrated by numerous studies; see, e.g., the vague assertions by Soares, “Import of the Chronicles,” 269; and Stinespring, “Eschatology in Chronicles,” 211.
claim or by noting that there is no other evidence of the practice in preexilic texts, excluding the description in postexilic Chronicles, so that the practice must be postexilic in origin. Such circular reasoning has plagued the study of Chronicles since Wellhausen first argued that Chronicles cannot be trusted for historical information since it follows the postexilic Priestly source temporally. This impasse cannot be overcome without a new methodological approach to the question.

Second, the Chronicler’s methodology in employing source material, if there were actual sources and not merely pure fabrications, has been a topic of particular interest among scholars. This has been especially the case for the narrative sections that Chronicles shares with Samuel-Kings. It is here, so the logic holds, that the

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73 Wellhausen, Prolegomena, 189-90, 222-27. Note the summary of the impact of this view by Wright, “From Center to Periphery”; cf. the axiomatic assertion that the “author of Chronicles has carried back to the period of David regulations about the temple worship and the personnel there which clearly reflect a much later time” without any evidence being marshaled to defend such a claim as made by Welch, Post-Exilic Judaism, 12-13; see also Soares, “Import of the Chronicles,” 272; Noth, Chronicler’s History, 83; H. Neil Richardson, “The Historical Reliability of Chronicles,” JBR 26 (1958): 9-12; Smelik, “Representation of King Ahaz,” 145-46, 184; and cf. Gershon Galil, “The ‘Synchronistic History’ and the Book of Chronicles,” Hen 26 (2004): 136-44.

Chronicler’s *Tendenz* can be identified. However, such redaction criticism is flawed on a number of levels\(^7^5\) and by no means implies that all of those items in the non-synoptic sections (the Chronicler’s so-called *Sondergut*) which correspond to the Chronicler’s *Tendenz* are to be classified as the invention of the Chronicler without any possibility of deriving from a non-extant and non-canonical source, whether oral or written in nature.

As many of the details of the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 2-9 are largely unparalleled in the biblical corpus, this has resulted in great skepticism about the Chronicler’s preservation of ancient information here in particular, although the tide may be changing in some respects.\(^7^6\) At this point, redaction criticism will not help in determining how the Chronicler has utilized his sources and the historical veracity of much of the genealogical data cannot, and probably never will, be confirmed.\(^7^7\)

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\(^7^6\) There has been a significant shift in the willingness of scholars to accept that some preexilic sources, probably written and most likely from the southern tribes and select northern tribes, were preserved during the exile and were utilized in the composition of the genealogical material in 1 Chronicles 1-9; see, e.g., Braun, “1 Chronicles 1-9,” 101; the use of Chronicles to reconstruct Israelite chronology by Talmon, “Divergences in Calendar Reckoning”; the claim that most of these chapters are preexilic by Weinberg, “Book of Chronicles,” 216; the “supposition” of preexilic data by Williams, “Israel outside the Land,” esp. 159-60; the extreme optimism on the part of J. W. Wenham, “Large Numbers in the Old Testament,” *TynBul* 18 (1967): 19-53, esp. 52-53; and the commentaries on this point. See, however, the very recent claims and arguments offered for the conclusion that nearly all of the genealogical material preserved in Chronicles originated in the Second Temple period without preexilic antecedents by Levin, “From Lists to History.”

\(^7^7\) However, many scholars will disagree with this portrayal of the quest for sources as difficult at best and hopelessly irresolvable at worst; cf., e.g., the “prime importance” placed on this enterprise by Peltonen, “Function, Explanation and Literary Phenomena,” 66; and its “essential” role in understanding Chronicles by Na’aman, “Sources and Redaction,” 100.

Two types of data should be mentioned here. First, while most scholars have accepted, at least to some degree, that the Chronicler’s *Vorlage* was closer to that found in the Samuel manuscripts from
Excursus: Prophecy, Speeches, and Authority in Chronicles

The use and implied citation of sources by the Chronicler, and his references to other available ancient records, constitute significant methods by which the message of the book is communicated to its audience. Scholars have also recognized that the treatment of prophecy and the numerous speeches reported throughout the narrative perform this same function. This excursus will address briefly the utopian nature of Qumran than to the MT of Samuel, so that every change is not automatically to be ascribed to the Chronicler’s Tendenz (see, e.g., Lemke, “Synoptic Problem”; and Ulrich, Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus, esp. 151-64), it is the unfortunate case that only one fragment of Chronicles was found at Qumran (4Q118) thus preventing a thorough textual critical evaluation of Chronicles; see Julio Trebolle Barrera, “Édition préliminaire de 4QChroniques,” RevQ 15 (1992): 523-39; cf. the similar point made by Braun, “Martin Noth and the Chronicler’s History,” 73; and see Knoppers, I Chronicles 1-9, 52-55.

Second, it is difficult to hypothesize about the Chronicler’s use of sources when the only substantial source available for comparison is Samuel-Kings; did the Chronicler use the same methodology for all of his sources or were different sources treated in different ways? That the latter is most likely the case can be deduced from the methods employed for the hymnic compositions included in 1 Chr 16:7-36 and the apparent source-texts of several Psalms in opposition to those used in conversation with Samuel-Kings; thus, any general statements about the Chronicler’s methodology in using sources are open to serious debate and ultimately inconclusive; cf. the conclusion about the Chronicler’s “tendentiously selective treatment of his sources” by North, “Priestly Interpretation,” 117; the fact that “the Chronicler has no one consistent method of dealing with his sources, and that therefore inferences drawn from his style and idiom are at best equivocal” according to Valpy French, “The Speeches in Chronicles: A Reply,” The Expositor 5th ser. 2 (1895): 140-52, here 152; and the inconsistency noted by Curtis and Madsen, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 81; and by Galil, “Chronicler’s Genealogies of Ephraim,” 13; contra the explicit presumption that the Chronicler is consistent in his use of sources as advocated by Payne, “Purpose and Methods of the Chronicler,” 68.

prophecy and speeches in Chronicles. In addition, these two devices are among the multiple “authority-conferring strategies” employed by the Chronicler.\textsuperscript{79} The ability of the Chronicler to convince his audience that the utopia presented in the text is indeed a better alternative reality rests heavily on the authoritative status of Chronicles itself. Thus, some comment on the issue of authority in Chronicles is also required.

The unique roles of prophecy and prophets in Chronicles indicate a transition in the understanding of these phenomena during the Second Temple period. Schniedewind lists several observations about the prophets in Chronicles: (1) When Kings is unclear about why certain events happened, prophets may be invoked to provide the answer in Chronicles; (2) They most typically function as interpreters of past and present events, rather than predictors of the future; and (3) Perhaps most importantly, prophets have become historians, the writers of the historical sources mentioned in Chronicles.\textsuperscript{80} If prophets have now become writers, this suggests a perceived relationship between scribalism and prophecy during this period. Thus, scribal activity may be considered prophetic in nature. By association, this link established between scribalism, prophets, and historical writing functions as a means of asserting the authority of the Chronicler’s themes in Hellenistic historiographic works, see Charles W. Fornara, \textit{The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome} (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 142-68.


This third point above about prophets as writers of history is also utilized by Josephus as proof of the authenticity of the Jewish historical records (\textit{C. Ap.} 1.29, 37). For further discussion of Josephus’ view
own composition—an account of the past most likely written by a scribe who would claim the same prophetic inspiration for his own work as he assigned to the “prophetic” scribes of the past. This association between prophecy and scribalism has been extended in scholarship recently to a direct relationship between apocalypticism and scribalism.\(^\text{81}\)

However, Chronicles is not an apocalyptic text, but it does exhibit scribal features, especially those associated with the wisdom tradition.\(^\text{82}\) While Chronicles certainly exhibits characteristics of a text produced by scribes, not many scholars would argue that it is a prophetic text, at least on the basis of form. However, the lack or scarcity of prophetic oracles does not determine the “prophetic” nature of any given text. Chronicles itself claims that historical writings as well as oracular material were composed by prophets in the past.\(^\text{83}\)

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\(^{83}\) See, e.g., 1 Chr 29:29-30; 2 Chr 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 21:12-15; 24:27; 26:22; 29:25; 32:32. The division between history and prophecy on the basis of form is to be rejected. Compare the labels the “Former Prophets” assigned to the historical narrative of the Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings and the “Latter Prophets” used to refer collectively to the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Book of the Twelve. The so-called “historical psalms” are another example of the blurring of formal genre distinctions, in this case, between history and poetry (or liturgy).
seemingly contradictory, functions convey the essence of the Chronicler’s vision for a utopian future without expressing it in the form of predictive prophecy. Instead, the past and present are recorded and interpreted by prophets for the benefit of the community centered around Jerusalem—whether in the preexilic period as in the narrative or in the postexilic period during the time of the Chronicler.

The prophecies and speeches related by prophets share similar concerns with the speeches by non-prophetic figures, especially by kings. These “royal speeches” mirror the content of the prophetic words. Thus, these speeches demonstrate how two sources of authority—the prophet and the monarch—are employed as mouthpieces for the Chronicler’s message. However, the Chronicler’s concern for authoritative entities is not restricted to prophetic and royal speeches.

Indeed, the issue of authority in Chronicles should not be underestimated. Repeated references to sources of authority for praxis are vital to the Chronicler’s presentation of the proper functioning of the cult and for society in general. The Chronicler invokes the following as possessing some level of authority for determining proper action: Moses, David, Solomon, Aaron, ‘all Israel’, the book of the kings,


...That is, the Chronicler does not have his prophets proclaim *in precise detail* what the utopian future will look like as part of the content of their pronouncements. Rather, the prophets both affirm and critique the traditions of the past and the present situation in line with a particular *telos* advocated by the Chronicler throughout his composition.

...Note that the concern of these authoritative citations clearly involves action, practice, or ritual observance. These sources of authority are not typically employed to provide a basis for a particular belief or article of faith independent of its practical manifestation in the reality of the community. The Chronicler is not engaging in abstract philosophy, theology, or ideology. Rather, the implications of particular theological and ideological positions for the construction of reality are of primary importance for the Chronicler.

...1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 15:15; 22:13; 2 Chr 1:3; 5:10; 8:13; 24:6; 9; 33:8; 35:6. On the presentation of Moses in Chronicles, see Dörrfuß, *Mose in den Chronikbüchern*, 119-283; and Kegler,
the Mosaic Torah, the Word of God, the prophets, the messengers sent by God, the Levites, and several (if not nearly all) of the Judean kings. The Chronicler is obsessed with grounding his composition in recognized authorities that can support his interpretation of the past, present, and future.

In his own authoritative composition, the Chronicler has retrojected his utopian vision into the past in order to actualize it in his present and into the future. This utopian vision does not replicate the past nor continue the status quo of the present. In these appeals to authority, the Chronicler critiques the present and offers his understanding of a better alternative reality anchored in the words and inherent authority of these personages and concepts. It is significant that the Chronicler does not offer an apology

“Prophetengestalten im Deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk und in den Chronikbüchern,” 490-91. Unfortunately, the concern of both works is not Moses, but the stratification of Chronicles into redactional layers, which extend down to the Maccabean period according to Dörrfuß (Mose in den Chronikbüchern, 282-83). Scholarship would benefit from a detailed examination of Moses in the book of Chronicles undertaken from the perspective of a composition that is substantially unified. See also the analysis comparing Moses and David by De Vries, “Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles.”


89 1 Chr 28:5, 11; 29:25; 2 Chr 3:1; 7:1; 8:14; 9:2; 30:26; 35:3, 4.

90 1 Chr 24:19.

91 1 Chr 11:1-3; 15:28; 2 Chr 30:23; 31:1.

92 1 Chr 9:1.

93 2 Chr 23:18; 25:4; 30:16; 34:14; 35:12; Law of God: 1 Chr 16:40; 2 Chr 35:26. See also my Excursus on Ezra’s Law and Mosaic Torah in Chapter 4.


96 2 Chr 36:15-16.

97 1 Chr 9:2; 26, 31, 33-34; 15:2-15, 16-17; 16:4; 24:6; 26:20; 2 Chr 7:6; 8:15; 13:10; 17:7-9; 19:8; 20:14, 19; 23:6; 24:5 (only time negative); 24:11; 29:5, 12-17, 25-26, 30, 34; 30:13-22, 27; 31:2-4, 12, 14; 34:9, 12-13; 35:3, 8-15, 18. See also the more detailed discussion of the relationship between prophets and Levites in Chronicles in Section 4.4.2.
for their authoritative status. Recognition of their prestige or esteem by his audience does not seem to have been a concern for the Chronicler, who does not defend his selection of supporting authorities. In fact, the Chronicler has not created new sources of authority, but draws on those already prominent in the tradition. While the Chronicler may not have invented the terminology for these authorities, he may have created their content. In other words, the Chronicler chose categories from his own day that were already invested with authority and supplied the content to allow for these sources to support his own presentation of Israel’s past. In the creation of the content of these sources, the Chronicler anticipates a trend in later Jewish literature to appeal to sources of authority for supporting particular practices. With these various strategies for conferring authority, the Chronicler attempts to solidify the status of his own composition.

While most scholars would agree that the Chronicler asserts some claim for trustworthiness and thus acceptance of his unique presentation of history, the precise nature of the relationship between Chronicles and its apparent source material, especially the Torah and Samuel-Kings, has been the subject of much intense debate, as well as what these documents may have contained textually. According to some scholars, the

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98 This is true despite the “creation” or presentation of specific prophets known only in Chronicles. That is, the Chronicler may “invent” particular individuals, but their authority is based on their identity and function as prophets just as with those personages known from other sources who are also prophets.

99 Compare, for example, the appeal to the Heavenly Tablets and other sources of authority in Jubilees. See, e.g., Najman, Seconding Sinai, 41-69; and the similar remarks made concerning Chronicles by Knoppers, I Chronicles 1-9, 133.

Chronicler’s diverse approaches to his source material indicate that the Torah was regarded as canonical but that Samuel-Kings had not achieved such esteemed status yet. However, the recognition of a canonical Torah at this time during the postexilic period is anachronistic.\(^{101}\)

It is true that the Chronicler wrote a new text instead of editing an existing document, but this does not help to clarify the authoritative status of the source material in the perspective of the Chronicler. The relationship of Chronicles to both the Torah and to Samuel-Kings (in whatever textual forms the Chronicler may have encountered them) cannot be reduced to the simple dichotomy of a new work designed either to “supplant” or “supplement” other texts.\(^{102}\) Chronicles cannot dismiss Samuel-Kings but neither does

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\(^{101}\) See my Excursus on Ezra’s Law and Mosaic Torah in Chapter 4 for further arguments and scholarship on this point.

\(^{102}\) Does the fact that the Chronicler produced another text which contradicts Samuel-Kings indicate that this source was “authoritative” or not, and if so, to what degree? Many different positions have been taken by scholars, but the debate often includes the language of supplant or supplement. See the comments on Chronicles (and the underlying presuppositions) of Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); see also, Albright,
The Chronicler constructs a different history, a *better alternative reality*, that sometimes affirms and often contradicts both the Pentateuch and Samuel-Kings as well as the society of his own time. The same tension between continuity and innovation that is characteristic of prophecy, speeches, and authority in Chronicles is manifested in the Chronicler’s vision of the future, which is presented as a utopian history. The probability of acceptance of this utopian vision by the Chronicler’s audience is bolstered by the repeated and variegated claims to authority made throughout the work, including source citations, references to other ancient records, prophecies, and royal speeches, among others. Thus, as with many of the Chronicler’s prominent ideological motifs, these issues are not the primary concern of his composition. Rather, just as with other important concepts, these concerns also contribute to the effectiveness of the utopian ideology that dominates the Chronicler’s history.

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103 As such, Chronicles is an independent narrative and not a commentary; see Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 133-34; and Duke, “Rhetorical Approach,” 109. Nevertheless, certain information contained in Chronicles makes sense only if the traditions reflected in Samuel-Kings are assumed to be known by the Chronicler’s audience; e.g., the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite in 2 Chr 10:15, among many such examples.
2.2.1 Constructing a Lineage: Examples of the Chronicler’s Utopian Use of Sources

Rather than offer another assessment of the preservation of historical information in Chronicles or discuss the types of sources from which the Chronicler most likely drew to construct the genealogies—both projects being already done with lesser and greater success—, utopian literary theory will be employed to address a different issue: the picture of reality constructed by these lineages, and the critique of present reality accomplished by such a construction. Thus, as discussed above, while genealogies may be used as a means of legitimation, this analysis proceeds from the second interpretive option, namely that lineages may be constructed to challenge the current status quo by presenting a radically different picture of the world as if it were reality. Thus, implicitly for the readers, the historical situation at the time of the Chronicler should be adjusted to conform to the reality expressed by the genealogical utopia as articulated in Chronicles. This section, 2.2.1, begins by laying out some of the issues addressed by previous scholars and prepares the context for the further development of these points and the use of utopian theory in detail in Sections 2.2.2-4.

It should be noted that most scholars have made two assumptions from which they proceed in their analysis: (1) that the Chronicler has constructed the genealogical material as propaganda for the state of affairs in his own time; and (2) that any information which seems to work against this view (e.g., preserving what seem to be preexilic data without adaptation and describing northern tribes long since lost) is

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104 See the works mentioned in footnote 74 above and the commentaries. The type of sources typically listed as being available to and used by the Chronicler include: military census or muster lists, temple archives, oral or written tribal genealogies, resettlement lists (esp. of the type found in Ezra
included out of a sense of “thoroughness,” “conservatism,” or “antiquarianism” on his part and does not reflect authentically his own views, but merely demonstrates the Chronicler’s respect for his sources, which he maintains unaltered in these cases.\(^\text{105}\)

Three examples of how the assumptions mentioned in the previous paragraph have been used in textual interpretation will suffice to illustrate the point: (1) the missing genealogies of Dan and Zebulun (cf. the first of two Benjaminite genealogies in 1 Chr 7:6-12); (2) the short genealogy of Naphtali in 1 Chr 7:13; and (3) the assimilation of individuals and families to the lines of Judah and Levi (1 Chr 2:3-4:23; 5:27-6:66 [6:1-81 Eng.], respectively).

In the first example, although they are listed as “sons of Israel” in 1 Chr 2:1-2, Dan and Zebulun have no subsequent genealogies in the texts of both MT and LXX.\(^\text{106}\)

This has been explained in one of three ways: (1) as textual corruption (reading Benjamin for Zebulun in 1 Chr 7:6 and corrupting an originally short Danite genealogy [“sons of

\(^{2/}\) Nehemiah 7), the Torah (esp. the genealogies of Genesis), Joshua (the list of Levitical cities in ch. 21), and Samuel-Kings (which contains some relevant genealogical information).

\(^{105}\) This paradoxical view of the Chronicler’s methodology in utilizing his sources—he is simultaneously a pietistic copyist and a manipulator of the tradition for his own purposes—is reflected throughout scholarship; see the description of the Chronicler’s dual method in these same terms by Barnes, “David of the Book of Samuel,” 55. If denying that historical sources have been preserved in Chronicles, scholars tend to emphasize the second option while those affirming the existence of such material use the first option more often as an explanation of the textual content. This dichotomy lacks a degree of explanatory power and should not be accepted blindly without consideration of further options which might explain the data with more convincing arguments.

This exact line of reasoning is found in explaining the apparent lack of a Danite genealogy in Chronicles in light of its inclusive ‘all-Israel’ ideology: the Chronicler’s Vorlage, apparently from the south and apparently anti-northern, did not discuss the Danites and so neither does Chronicles, despite the fact that Chronicles is not in itself anti-northern (Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 75; but cf. his remarks on the use of Samuel-Kings that the Chronicler is the “master, not the servant, of his sources” on p. 23); such a conclusion by Williamson about the “missing” Danite genealogy is the result of multiple layers of hypotheses without any solid evidence. See also the recent survey of Dan by Mark W. Bartusch, “Interpreting Dan in the Books of Chronicles,” in Understanding Dan: An Exegetical Study of a Biblical City, Tribe and Ancestor (JSOTSup 379; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2003), 243-59.

\(^{106}\) Again, unfortunately the Dead Sea Scrolls offer no help on the majority of the textual problems in Chronicles. Although numerous emendations have been offered for this passage, there is no textual
Dan: Hushim” based on Gen 46:23] at the end of 1 Chr 7:12), (2) as a consistent polemic against the idolatrous tribe of Dan in line with an absolute rejection of idolatry throughout Chronicles, or (3) as an indication that the Chronicler lacked any source material for these two tribes and maintained the silence of his sources in this instance.107

The second example, the single generation of Naphtali’s four sons without further segmentation or linear development, in the opinion of most scholars, either reflects a muster list or was the only information to which the Chronicler had access and he therefore limited his comments on the tribe to only that which his sources would allow.108 That the Chronicler should be so careful not to expand on or adapt the material concerning this northern tribe (and Dan and the southern tribe of Benjamin for that matter) stands in marked contrast to his methodology in relating the descendants of Judah and Levi.

These final two tribes have been the recipients of a great deal of expansion and assimilation of individuals and groups to their genealogical heritage. Thus, e.g., Samuel becomes a Levite in 1 Chr 6:7-23 [vv. 22-38 Eng.] despite the fact that on a plain reading 1 Sam 1:1 provides him with an Ephraimite heritage; the singers Heman, Ethan, and Asaph gain Levitical pedigrees in 1 Chr 6:16-33 [vv. 31-48 Eng.] while all other references outside of Chronicles to these individuals are vague or silent on their tribal affiliation; Kenites become Judahites in 1 Chr 2:50b-55 without any extant source to support such a connection. In these examples, the Chronicler has either been charged

evidence to support them. The LXX is in essential agreement with the MT on the content of this first Benjaminitic genealogy.

107 Tuell states the general bias behind this line of interpretation: “To his credit, the Chronicler does not appear to have invented genealogies outright: when his sources are silent … he is silent” (First and Second Chronicles, 23; emphasis mine); see also his comments about Dan’s idolatry on p. 30.
with attempting (1) to legitimize Second Temple practice, (2) to clarify that individuals in
the source material who act like Levites in reality were of Levitical heritage, or (3) to
assimilate non-Israelites into the tribe of Judah as a means of inclusion for these
individuals or groups who had already become a vital part of the Second Temple period
community and who would otherwise be excluded on the basis of genealogical purity. In these cases, in which other texts disagree with the Chronicler’s presentation or are silent on the issue of genealogical heritage, rarely does one find a scholar contending that the Chronicler reflects accurate sources otherwise lost. Rather, since these changes are in line with the perceived *Tendenz* of the Chronicler in other passages, the conclusion that the Chronicler has adjusted his sources or simply fabricated these lineages is quickly drawn. The circular logic, selectivity, and inconsistency by scholars in assessing the Chronicler’s use of sources according to this method are readily apparent.

These inconsistencies should also be compared with the first mention of all twelve tribes in Chronicles. The order of the tribes in the introductory list of 1 Chr 2:1-2 duplicates no other sequential list, although it seems to derive from a similar account in Gen 35:23-26 that is organized by mother: Leah’s sons, Rachel’s sons, Bilhah’s sons, and Zilpah’s sons. However, the inclusion of Dan, son of Bilhah, between Zebulun and

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108 See the commentaries on this verse.
109 See the various remarks in the commentaries.
110 Although see the brief remarks about the Chronicler’s lineage of Samuel in 1 Chr 6:10-13 (vv. 25-28 Eng.) by Johann Goettsberger, *Die Bücher der Chronik oder Paralipomenon: Übersetzt und Erklärt* (HSAT 4.1; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1939), 67.
111 See the commentaries on these passages and especially the host of articles discussing the tribe of Levi for the continual repetition of this view by scholars.
112 Knoppers notes that this list follows neither J nor P (*I Chronicles 1-9*, 284-85). See the other lists of the tribes in the HB (though strangely lacking the information from Chronicles), the NT, and selected literature from the Second Temple period as presented and briefly assessed by David E. Aune, *Revelation 17-22* (WBC 52C; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 464-65. Aune discusses these tribal lists in the context of Rev 7:4-8, which also presents a distinct order.
Joseph (between Leah and Rachel) is not consistent with the order presented in the apparent source text. This has, of course, led to the conclusion that Dan was originally missing (consistent with the Dan-polemic theory) and that a redactor has inserted Dan incorrectly at this point in the text for some now unknown reason. As Williamson has demonstrated that the Dan-polemic theory cannot withstand scrutiny, it becomes unnecessary to postulate that this order is the result of a less-than-competent redactor.\textsuperscript{113} Rather than resort to this extremely popular means of explaining perceived textual difficulties,\textsuperscript{114} another look at the text reveals an interesting observation: it may be significant that Dan stands just after Zebulun in the present text of 1 Chr 2:1-2. These are the two tribes missing genealogies in the following chapters. They also stand at the center of the list, flanked by the other five children of Leah and the two sons of Rachel, the remaining one son of Bilhah, and the two sons of Zilpah (for a total of five). Is this a coincidence? Perhaps this irregular order and the failure to include the two tribes of Dan and Zebulun should not too quickly be attributed to multiple and compounded scribal errors.

Utopian literary theory would suggest that such an inconsistency is not a mistake. Rather inconsistencies provide an opportunity to reconsider the reality presented in the


\textsuperscript{114} As in Pentateuchal criticism, the author must be consistent in method and detail, while a “sloppy” redactor may be invoked to explain inconsistencies—a convenient but improbable position to maintain about the abilities of authors and redactors; see, e.g., John Van Seters, “The Redactor in Biblical Studies: a Nineteenth Century Anachronism,” \textit{JNSL} 29, no. 1 (2003): 1-19; idem, “An Ironic Circle: Wellhausen and the Rise of Redaction Criticism,” \textit{ZAW} 115 (2003): 487-500; and Whybray, \textit{Making of the Pentateuch}, esp. 19, 30, 55, 74, 221-35, 242; cf. the assertion that it is “well known that total self-consistency is rarely achieved by any writer” by Ackroyd, \textit{Chronicler in His Age}, 261.
text. The historical reality of the postexilic period may have been that Zebulun and Dan did not return or had ceased to exist (either of which cannot be known or proven at this time), but that may not account for the failure to record genealogies for these two tribes. Indeed, when noting those who returned to settle in Jerusalem, the Chronicler states that people from only four tribes did so: Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh (1 Chr 9:3), and the Chronicler then relates information about only those from Judah and Benjamin. The apparent source text of Neh 11:3-22 mentions Judah and Benjamin and the subsequent information found in Chronicles, but fails to mention Ephraim and Manasseh. Is this an indication of the Chronicler adjusting the text to his theological presuppositions or of the Nehemiah text being adjusted to conform to its exclusive ideology? No clear answer can be given. As with the other questions and answers, assessing the use of sources cannot produce a conclusion nor will attempts to hypothesize some historical reconstruction of events which can account for the data—this is an endless exercise in circular logic about the relationship of the text with historical and social conditions.

The question that should be asked instead is: why list only these tribes? What about Issachar, Naphtali, Asher, or even Simeon, not to mention the two-and-a-half tribes (Reuben, Gad, western Manasseh) who were exiled by Assyria never to return (a notice mentioned only in Chronicles; see 1 Chr 5:1-26)? Did no one from these remaining tribes return with those from the four mentioned tribes? Is this merely a reflection of the Chronicler’s “all Israel” ideology? Is it only antiquarianism or conservatism toward

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115 It has been supposed that Ephraim and Manasseh stand in as representative of the northern tribes (e.g., Braun, *J Chronicles*, 138, 144; and Japhet, *Ideology*, 300); however, this use is not consistent in Chronicles, so that at least on one occasion Zebulun is mentioned, while Ephraim is not listed, among the tribes responding to the call to worship at Jerusalem under Hezekiah, although it is clear that Ephraim
the tradition which prompted the inclusion of the genealogies of these other tribes who are thus not part of the postexilic Israelite community? What is their value in terms of legitimacy or of maintaining the status quo (the two most common explanations for the Judah and Levi material in 1 Chronicles 1-9)? The mentioning of Ephraim and Manasseh does not serve either of these functions. In fact, Williamson correctly notes that the purpose of the genealogies is not legitimacy at all, but “to paint a portrait of the people of God in its ideal extent.” However, such an ideal will not be found in textual or oral sources or in the historical situation of the Chronicler’s own day; rather, the presentation of Israel in the genealogies is accomplished by means of depicting a utopia.

In Chronicles, “Israel” is a larger entity than the tribes who returned during the Persian period. Israel also includes those tribes who did not return, from either of the exiles (Babylonian and Assyrian), and those tribes (Zebulun and Dan) who had an existence in Israel’s past and may again one day become known to their relatives who received the same call (2 Chr 30:10-11); cf. the claim that this addition in the text of Chronicles fits preexilic conditions by Curtis and Madsen, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 170. In this passage, Ephraim and Manasseh are not a circumlocution for “the faithful in the North.” Indeed, Zebulun and Dan also respond positively to David’s rise to power (1 Chr 12:33-40). Each time that either Zebulun or Dan is specifically mentioned in Chronicles the context is either neutral or positive in nature, but never negative. The same, however, cannot be said of the groups for which the Chronicler is supposedly concerned to provide an aura of legitimacy: Judahites, Levites, priests, and the Davidic monarchy. If the Chronicler wished to criticize the tribes of Zebulun and/or Dan, this is not accomplished clearly in either the narratives or in the genealogical material.

116 All of the commentaries make this point about Levi and Judah.

117 Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 39; cf. the similar terminology of “ideal Israel” used repeatedly by De Vries, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 18-28, 94. However, both scholars eventually return to the understanding that at least for the tribes of Judah and Levi, the primary concern is to provide legitimacy for certain individuals or groups in the Chronicler’s own day; cf. the similar assertions made by Pancratius C. Beentjes, “Identity and Community in the Book of Chronicles: The Role and Meaning of the Verb הָעָשׂ,” ZAH 12 (1999): 233-37, esp. 234-35. See also the presentation by Dyck which contends that the Israel presented throughout Chronicles is ideal in that it is “a people permanently connected to the land, a nation differentiated by tribes, but also a people unified by virtue of a hierarchical structure in a land permanently centred on Jerusalem” (Theocratic Ideology, 133). However, Dyck’s emphasis on the permanence of this relationship does not account for all the evidence; see the further discussion on this point below.
resettled in the land of Israel.\textsuperscript{118} There is nothing in the genealogies which would indicate that these tribes would or could not some day return.\textsuperscript{119} If anything, the conclusion of the book (2 Chr 36:22-23) serves as an open call for them to return home.\textsuperscript{120} However, while in exile outside the land, these tribes do not cease to be part of “all Israel.” What this indicates is that Israelite identity is not tied to geographic location in Chronicles; all those in the land are not necessarily Israelites and there are Israelites who live outside the land.\textsuperscript{121} It may further suggest that the community should be open to those who may claim a connection with the “Israel” depicted in these chapters of genealogies. The lack of genealogies for Zebulun and Dan and the short genealogy of Naphtali thus would

\textsuperscript{118} See the similar comments on the importance of the diaspora in the understanding of the Chronicler by Willi, \textit{Juda-Jehud-Israel}, 129; idem, “Late Persian Judaism,” 161-62; and the comments that Chronicles is theologically speaking “written while Israel is still ‘in exile’, whether among the nations of the world or even in its own land” according to Johnstone, \textit{1 and 2 Chronicles}, 1:10-11; cf. idem, “Justification by Faith Revisited,” 302.

Scholars have more recently come to recognize that many Jewish groups during the Second Temple period believed that they were living in exile well after the return in the Persian period and even while living in the land of Israel; see, e.g., the comments to this effect by James C. VanderKam, “Exile in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in \textit{Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Conceptions} (ed. J. M. Scott; JSJSup 56; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 89-109, esp. 89 and 109. Although VanderKam focuses on apocalyptic literature, this notion of continued exile is not restricted to these texts alone.

\textsuperscript{119} The notice about the Transjordanian tribes being in exile “to this day” should not be taken to imply the judgment that they will remain so forever in this condition (1 Chr 5:23-26). Rather, this statement indicates that for the Chronicler, whether in composing the phrase or by preserving it from his source, these tribes still exist though in a state of exile (see Knoppers, \textit{I Chronicles 1-9}, 392, 469-73, 487); \textit{contra} Japhet, \textit{I & II Chronicles}, 142; cf. the comments by Auld, “Joshua and 1 Chronicles,” 137; and Kallai, “Conquest and Settlement of Trans-Jordan.” See also 2 Chr 30:6-9, which explicitly holds out the restoration of the northern tribes as a viable option, and the discussion of this text in Section 3.2.7.

\textsuperscript{120} Compare the comments of Japhet regarding the function of this verse as an indication that a future restoration was still expected by the Chronicler to occur (“Periodization: Between History and Ideology. The Neo-Babylonian Period in Biblical Historiography,” in \textit{Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period} [ed. O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003], 75-89, esp. 84). She further contends that because of this conception, “… the book of Chronicles is more future oriented than any other piece of biblical historiography. The past has laid the foundation for the future, but this is still to come” (ibid.).

\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Contra} Japhet, \textit{Ideology}, 333, 351; idem, \textit{I & II Chronicles}, 74; and Myers, \textit{I Chronicles}, xxxvi.
become not means of exclusion from the genealogical tree,\textsuperscript{122} but rather excellent points for further growth and incorporation into the entity known as Israel.\textsuperscript{123} And it is this entity of “Israel,” not whether the Chronicler has preserved historical information or how he adapted his source material, which is the central concern of the nine chapters of genealogical and geographical information.\textsuperscript{124}

However, the geographical dimensions of what and genealogical parameters of who constitute “Israel” cannot be aligned with any historical period from the extant sources nor with a historical reconstruction from what can be known about Persian period Yehud.\textsuperscript{125} In this, the Israel of Chronicles exists in time and space in the narrative of Chronicles without having a correspondence with historical reality. However, for the audience of Chronicles, this utopian Israel is Israel; it is the Chronicler’s ideal that existed in the past as a real entity—at least within Chronicles’ portrayal of that

\textsuperscript{122} So Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 39; and Polk, “Levites in the Davidic-Solomonic Empire,” 16. Contra Plum who asserts that exclusion is the purpose of all of the genealogical material in Chronicles (“Genealogy as Theology,” 86).

\textsuperscript{123} While Chronicles claims Judah or Levi as the tribe of ancestral heritage for the majority of the community in the land during the postexilic period, for many individuals or groups, the lesser developed tribes would provide a better (i.e., easier) means of entrance to the community genealogically. None of the genealogies, except the Davidic (1 Chr 3:1-24) and the list of resettlement (1 Chr 9:2-34), continue into the postexilic period; all the other material stops well short temporally, thus precluding legitimacy as the obvious purpose for this material (Knoppers, “Davidic Genealogy,” 36). That the Davidic genealogy extends to the Chronicler’s own time, thus is the only lineage to do so, is rightly identified as being based entirely on an “assumption” by Ralph W. Klein, “Chronicles, Book of 1-2,” ABD 1: 992-1002, here 994; Curtis and Madsen, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 102; cf. the cautious language used by Tuell when making this same temporal claim about the text (First and Second Chronicles, 27). For this textual phenomenon, the Hellenistic material is helpful for comparison; see Section 2.1.2 above.

\textsuperscript{124} The interrelationship of genealogy and geography in this material has been noted by several scholars; see, e.g., Willi, Juda-Jehud-Israel, 124-29; idem, “Late Persian Judaism,” 152, 157; Schams, “1 and 2 Chronicles,” 70 n. 110; Kartveit, “2 Chronicles 36.20-23,” 401; and Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 74.

\textsuperscript{125} All of the scholars who have claimed otherwise have no substantial evidence for their position, merely assumptions and hypotheses about the reflection of some historical reality in Chronicles, whether from the preexilic, exilic, or postexilic period.
reality—and not any identifiable historical context. The Israel of the genealogies exists as a genealogical utopia—a better alternative reality designed as a contrast to the Chronicler’s present and not a legitimation of it.

2.2.2 The “Twelve Tribes” of Utopian Israel: Identifying “Israel”

From these previous examples and discussion it is evident that the identity of “Israel” requires further exploration. As regards the lengthy genealogical material, a more detailed and comprehensive analysis must be attempted; however, a systematic treatment of every comment and each verse in these nine chapters of Chronicles is not the procedure undertaken in this project. Rather, some preliminary discussion of the issue of identity, especially as it has been applied to Chronicles, will be followed by a treatment of this concept from the perspective of utopian literary theory with examples from the genealogical material in 1 Chronicles 1-9.

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126 Compare the observation that for the Chronicler’s geography “the ideal was in the past the real” by Augustin, “Role of Simeon,” 141.

127 This understanding of “Israel” as a utopian construct will be further developed in the remainder of this section below. At this point, the conclusion argues that scholarly attempts to adjudicate which elements in the genealogies are from historical sources, which ones are accurately reported, and which ones have been variously adapted by the Chronicler, are based on an underlying assumption: at least some of this material reflects historical conditions or ultimately derives from a historical reality. Thus, many commentators have focused on a diachronic analysis designed to identify the historical context of the individual genealogical units and what they reveal about the “history of Israel” or the specific locations of the places named and what that then reveals about the shifting borders of Israel over the centuries rather than a synchronic reading of these chapters and the picture of Israel which results from such a reading. Such a diachronic reading is not particularly helpful when the same text (and its supposed historical information) is assigned to two very different historical periods; e.g., the Judahite genealogies of 1 Chronicles 2 and 4 which are determined to reflect the situations in Judah in both the ninth (Noth, “Eine siedlungsgeographische Liste,” 116-24) and seventh centuries (Albright, “Judicial Reform of Jehoshaphat,” 65 n. 18). This is, again, a matter of multiple layers of hypothetical historical reconstruction built on one another.

This dissertation suggests that scholars begin with a different presupposition—the depiction of Israel in Chronicles is not historical (for any period or any location), but utopian in nature, both in terms of time and space. Thus, rather than a search for sources and strategy in using them, the question becomes: what is the significance of such a utopian depiction of Israel for the Chronicler’s audience?
The concept of “identity” refers to the attempts by a group at self-definition, typically through the construction of “boundary-markers,” (i.e., practices and beliefs that differentiate themselves from others). These boundary-markers may take the form of confessional statements of internal commonality regarding belief systems, adherence to a religious code or a particular worldview, or they may be expressed in the practical and external means of clothing, food, dress, culture, etc. If these boundary-markers not only separate individuals or groups on the basis of practice and/or beliefs but also on the basis of ethnic continuities, then cultural differences become tied to genealogical relationship in the attempt at group self-definition. It is at this final point, ethnic identity, that much of the research into identity, and specifically in determining the identity associated with the term “Israel” in the Second Temple period, has been undertaken. It is clear from even a cursory reading of the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9 that they are engaged in this type of definition of identity: one expressed in terms of ethnicity and biological relationship.

However, the primary function of 1 Chronicles 2-9 (ch. 1 is concerned with identity of a different sort; see below in Section 2.2.4) is not to explain how this entity of “Israel” is distinct from others in terms of boundary-markers. These chapters neither list

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129 This has been a result of many factors: first, the modern concern over ethnicity and race has greatly influenced those approaching the question of identity; second, the texts themselves from this period evidence concern over defining “Israel” at least in some respect along both ethnic and cultural lines; third, the statements in the NT about “Israel,” esp. those in the Pauline corpus, have been the subject or root cause of the investigation into how the perspective of the NT is either similar or distinctive from other ideologies of identity constructed in the HB, the Second Temple period literature, and the Hellenistic world.
those who are excluded nor do they describe the practices and beliefs that separate “Israel” from the Other. Rather, they are concerned primarily with the internal organization of this “Israel” by expressing interrelationships between those who are, or should be, considered to be a part of this “Israel.”

It has been assumed, as noted previously, that the inclusion of elements into these lists of non-Israelites (those who should be labeled as “Other” and possibly excluded) was undertaken to provide a means of legitimizing the standing of these groups at the time of the Chronicler; thus, because of the significant role in which some individuals or groups were functioning already in the historical reality of the Second Temple community despite their ethnic identity, these groups were “baptized” into the genealogical system in order to provide them with the appropriate genealogical credentials to maintain the status quo and to continue in their roles which required a specific ethnic identity of the part of those functioning in them. Thus, the issue of identity has often been reduced by scholars to one of legitimacy.

However, utopian literary theory reads this evidence in a dramatically different way with different conclusions about the functions and purposes of the genealogies of the “sons of Israel.” Utopian theory begins with the notions of “defamiliarization” and critique of the present reality. Rather, than beginning with the assumption that historical reality is reflected in the text, the foundational principle in utopian theory is that the critique of present reality through the depiction of an alternate reality is the main objective of the representation of the society being portrayed in the text. Thus, the text

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130 On the notion of “baptizing” these individuals or groups, see, among others, Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 36; cf. the “transplanting” language of Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 153. This is the standard view of nearly all the commentaries, especially for the Levitical genealogies.
does not provide an argument for the legitimacy of current social relationships, but contends in direct contrast that the present society is deficient and should instead be reformed in light of this alternate reality.

Thus, drawing on a previously mentioned example, the inclusion of Kenites into the line of Judah (1 Chr 2:50b-55) is not on account of the Kenites having risen to places of prominence in the Second Temple community and that their status as authentic Israelites needed to be undoubtedly affirmed. Rather, utopian theory would suggest that the historical importance of Kenites at the time of the Chronicler is irrelevant to their inclusion in the genealogical lists of the “sons of Israel.” Their significance lies instead in their association as “friends” or allies of “Israel,” or at least as positive examples in Israel’s past to be emulated regardless of ethnic descent, as they are depicted in various other texts, which were most likely available and certainly at least their traditions known to the Chronicler. The Kenites become a cipher for those in the land, regardless of true descent, who are part of “Israel” in terms of action or example. Numerous scholars have noted that one of the Chronicler’s common methods in using sources is that he does not need to reference in an extended way or make an explicit statement when glossing a familiar point from his source material, but seemingly assumes that the audience will be aware of the larger tradition behind the brief mention. Thus, when the Chronicler notes “These are the Kenites, who came from Hammath, father of the house of Rechab” (v. 55),

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131 *Contra* Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 46-47.
132 See the references to the Kenites in Judg 1:16; Judges 4-5; 1 Sam 15:6, 30:29; and to the Rechabites in 2 Kgs 10:15-27; Jeremiah 35.
133 See the commentaries on this technique in the Chronicler’s use of sources.
the positive portrayal of the Kenites and especially that of the Rechabites in other literature is immediately recalled.\textsuperscript{134}

If this is the case, then inclusion of foreigners among the “sons of Israel” by the Chronicler is similar to the point made by the conclusion to the book of Ruth, which provides David with a Moabite genealogy via this exemplary woman of foreign (and especially ostracized) descent. In Ruth, the great king of Israel acquires a Moabite heritage.\textsuperscript{135} Ruth, with its concluding genealogy, thus reads as a comment on the position of foreigners in society; that is, apparently saying: “even the greatest king of Israel was of foreign descent, so what is the problem with foreigners and with intermarriage with them?” Chronicles similarly may be arguing against the exclusion of foreigners and, in fact, using in a subtle way the very method of exclusion against those who hold this view.

In Israel’s past, so Chronicles contends, foreigners have either aided or been examples for “Israel” and they will continue to be so in the present and in the future.\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{134} However, it should be noted that the meaning of this verse is complicated and there is the possibility that Rechabites are not even intended here; see the articulation of this view by C. H. Knights, “Kenites = Rechabites?: 1 Chronicles ii 55 Reconsidered,” \textit{VT} 43 (1993): 10-18; idem, “The Text of 1 Chronicles iv 12: A Reappraisal,” \textit{VT} 37 (1987): 375-77. However, given the relatively few occurrence of “Rechab” in the HB, it is difficult not to see one of them in this case as well. See also the discussion of Kenites in Chronicles by Robert North, “The Cain Music,” \textit{JBL} 83 (1964): 373-89.

\textsuperscript{135} In 1 Chr 2:11-15, David’s genealogy is provided as the son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, but no mention is made of any foreign elements introduced into this line of descent. In Ruth 4:18-22, the only other occurrence of this genealogical information (Jesse’s father and grandfather are not provided in any other HB texts), Boaz’s wife is, of course, now a Moabite (a point of her ethnicity itself being made repeatedly throughout this brief book) and thus David is the third-generation descendant of this union. On the basis of Deut 23:3-5, cited as the “proof text” in Neh 13:1-3, David himself should have been excluded from the “assembly of God.”

\textsuperscript{136} Compare the overtly positive portrayals of Pharaoh Neco of Egypt (2 Chr 35:20-22) and the Persian king Cyrus (2 Chr 36:22-23). See also the explicit statement by the Chronicler indicating that the entire line of Judah is the result of Judah’s interactions with a Canaanite woman or incestuous relationship with his daughter-in-law (1 Chr 2:3-4). This information could easily have been left out of the genealogical information about Judah, and its inclusion emphasizes a particular point: the entire postexilic community which traces its heritage back to Judah is of mixed ethnic descent or the result of a prohibited union; cf. the similar conclusion regarding the genealogical heterogeneity of Judah drawn by Knoppers, “‘Great Among His Brothers’”; see also the discussion of foreigners in the genealogies by Labahn and Ben Zvi, “Observations on Women,” esp. 462-66, 478.
Chronicles seems to suggest in the genealogies, that if such foreigners will not be accepted by those claiming to be “Israel” then the correct response is simply to redefine “Israel” to include these individuals. This may seem to be similar to the position of legitimacy rejected above, but important distinctions must be noted: the conclusion just suggested does not require any particular historical situation to account for the inclusion of this particular group into “Israel” nor does it assume that the purpose is to legitimate the current status of these individuals in the community. Instead, this view contends that the argument is being waged on the level of ideology, and rather than affirming the status quo, this description is a criticism of it. “Israel” is not a “closed” entity; it is a fluid term capable of constant redefinition. In this case, such redefinition is accomplished through genealogies, and not necessarily only in retrospective attempts to justify the present. Any group may be assimilated into the entity of “Israel” regardless of historical genealogical descent; as such, this definition of “Israel” is a utopian construct, an ideological move independent of “real” circumstances that is designed to present an alternative reality to be considered as the reality.

From this understanding of the inclusion of foreign elements as not necessarily being motivated by a overwhelming penchant for legitimation, the depiction of the “sons of Israel” as a whole in these genealogies can be analyzed. As noted in the previous section, scholars have tended to mine these chapters for whatever bits of historical information may be imbedded in the genealogies. They assume that a historical reality is reflected in the text, even if only as a move for legitimacy in the postexilic community without any preexilic validity. Utopian theory abandons the perceived need to link the portrayal of these lists with one historical era or another, and instead it mines the data for
those points which transcend the historical reality to construct another alternative reality for “Israel.” In this light, the people of “Israel” is not limited to the “twelve tribes,” nor is it restricted to those returning from exile, nor is it even those in the land of Israel, nor did it exist in an ideal form at any one point in time.

First, the “twelve tribes” of Israel do not exist as such in the genealogies of Chronicles. Rather, genealogies of the following tribes appear in 1 Chronicles 2-8: Judah, Simeon, Reuben, Gad, half-Manasseh, Levi, Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, half-Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher, Benjamin. If Dan and Zebulun were not originally provided with genealogies, the list of the descendants of the “twelve tribes” is extremely irregular, so that counting them becomes a complex effort; should Benjamin be counted as two distinct tribes, do the two “half-Manasseh” units count as one or two tribes, what should be done about names and lineages noted without tribal affiliations but imbedded in these genealogies—do they count as part of the tribe or not, and if so why are they not better integrated into the genealogies? Japhet’s contention that the traditional number twelve gives way to the “inclusion of every element” for the Chronicler’s presentation is on the right track, but does not go far enough.

“Israel” in Chronicles is not simply “the twelve” plus those attached to them. Genealogically, the “twelve tribes” did not exist, but “Israel,” in the Chronicler’s notion of “all Israel”, did exist in the past and continues to exist in the Chronicler’s present. Its membership was ever changing in the past and will continue to be in a state of flux in the future. The terms “Israel” and “all Israel” resist fixed definitions in Chronicles. The

137 Compare, e.g., the ten tribes of Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 29, with the fourteen of Japhet, Ideology, 280. See also the unique listing of tribes in 1 Chr 27:16-24 that is missing Gad and Asher and seems to regard “Aaron” as a tribe distinct from Levi; cf. Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 471-72.
terms relate to genealogical, social, political, and religious groups. While this “all Israel” is enrolled by genealogies (1 Chr 9:1), it becomes clear that the genealogical definition is less significant than the religious one as the narrative unfolds. As many scholars have noted, “Israel” is: the community of YHWH centered around the Temple, and open to those from the “Israel” of Judah, the “Israel” of the northern tribes who worship YHWH, and (though far less recognized) the “Israel” of those not genealogically Israelite but also part of this community. The centrality of this religious definition of the identity of “Israel” does not displace the genealogical entity of “Israel” but shifts the importance away from the claim to genealogical heritage towards the requirement of religious fidelity to YHWH and the Temple.

Second, “Israel” is not only those who returned from exile. Although many other biblical texts seem to indicate that it was only those who returned from exile which may constitute the true people of “Israel”—whether genealogically or religiously—Chronicles denies this limited view. Rather, Chronicles should be viewed as one of the many texts which hold out hope for a future restoration of the northern tribes to the land of Israel from their exile. It was through religious “unfaithfulness” that the Transjordanian tribes (1 Chr 5:25-26), the northern kingdom (2 Chr 30:6-9), Judah (1 Chr 9:1; 2 Chr

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140 Compare the comment by Osborne that “Biological purity is not enough. There must also be a spiritual purity” (“Genealogies,” 70).


36:14-16), and even king Manasseh (2 Chr 33:1-13) were exiled; it was through the “spirit of YHWH” moving in Cyrus that Judah was restored (2 Chr 36:22-23), and by repentance and humility that both Manasseh returned from his exile to regain his throne (2 Chr 33:10-20) and that the remnant of the northern kingdom participated effectively in Hezekiah’s Passover (2 Chr 30:10-22). How will the Transjordanian tribes and remaining northern tribes still in exile be restored in the future? Chronicles does not specify the means (YHWH’s intervention or their repentance, or both), though it does not reject the genealogical claims of these tribes as “Israel” as it retains them in the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9; the book also most likely holds out for those in exile (whether from Babylon or Assyria) the call of Cyrus to return as part of YHWH’s “people”—whether in this case genealogical or religious—to the Temple in Jerusalem (2 Chr 36:22-23).  

Third, “Israel” is not synonymous with those residing in the land. Despite Japhet’s claim to the contrary, “Israel” does not continually occupy its land and does not subsume within it the foreignness of non-Israelites so that all those living in the land are de facto part of “Israel.” Although not emphasizing the Exodus and Conquest traditions, Chronicles does not completely suppress them either. Japhet notes this exception, but she does not seriously consider the statements in Chronicles which

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143 Note here the contrast between the reason given for exile in Chronicles (religious unfaithfulness) and that emphasized in Ezra-Nehemiah: intermarriage (Ezra 9:1-7, 12; Neh 9:1-2, 26-31; cf. Neh 13:23-27).

144 Ezra-Nehemiah, of course, takes this notion of people as an ethnic one, while the connotation is more ambiguous and not necessarily biological in Chronicles.


146 Japhet, *Ideology*, 374-86; her view is affirmed and developed further as an indication that the Chronicler writes from the perspective of one who remained in the land and not a returnee from the exile by Keith W. Whitelam, “Israel’s Traditions of Origins: Reclaiming the Land,” *JSOT* 44 (1989): 19-42, esp.
indicate that non-Israelites—in this case in the biological sense—resided in the land, or at least in parts of it, before the Israelites did and that these groups continued to exist alongside “Israel” throughout its history. In addition, Chronicles on two occasions notes that “Israel” itself is but a “stranger and alien” in the land, having no permanent attachment to it (1 Chr 16:19; 29:15). While there certainly is an intimate connection between the people and its land in Chronicles, the recognition of foreigners residing within it and the tenuous nature of the existence of “Israel” itself within the land are worth special notice here. The land of “Israel” is not determinative for the people of “Israel.” When the people are exiled to Babylon, leaving the land completely desolate according to Chronicles (2 Chr 36:20-23), this does not change the people’s status as being authentically “Israel.” This “empty land” theology demonstrates that the

32-36; this view is of fundamental importance in the position advocated by Dyck, Theocratic Ideology, 81, 222; cf. Philippe Abadie, “Quelle place occupe l’exode dans le livre des Chroniques?,” Cahiers de l’atelier 482 (1998): 90-100; idem, “Une historie ‘corrective’,” 72-88.


147 See the remarks regarding the “former inhabitants there [who] belonged to Ham,” (1 Chr 4:40) and the men of Gath who were born in the land” (1 Chr 7:21). The label “who were born in the land” is interestingly never applied to biological Israelites in Chronicles, but only here to the originally non-biologically Israelite inhabitants; see also further comments on this point in Section 2.2.4 below. In addition, there is a recognition of gerim (contra Japhet, Ideology, 334-51) throughout all of Israel’s history.


149 Contra Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 46, 74; cf. the nuanced view of Knoppers, I Chronicles 1-9, 486-87.

150 This same point is expressed by Dyck (Theocratic Ideology, 81, 222), who then comes to a very different conclusion regarding its significance for interpreting Chronicles; cf. Knoppers, I Chronicles 1-9, 399-400. See also the comments that the contrast between “all Israel” and “Judah” in 1 Chr 9:1 “signifies that ‘All Israel’, in the true meaning of this term for the Chronicler, had never been exiled and never left the land!” by Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 42 (italics in original). Her understanding of a supposed
connection between YHWH and “Israel” in Chronicles is not about physical location or space. “Israel” transcends space; it is not tied to the land, and it is not restricted to any particular dimensions of the land.

Fourth, “Israel” as an ideal did not exist at any one particular time. As noted above, the presentation of the dimensions of the land are not restricted to one spatial description. This is partially due to the fact that in Chronicles “Israel” is presented in atemporal terms. The “Israel” of the genealogies stands outside of time. The genealogies do not continue down to the same time period and even reflect cross-sections of different historical periods (e.g., 1 Chr 4:31; 7:2, 13). Thus, no one period can be consulted to provide the answers to the questions: who is “Israel” and what should it look like? The entity changes throughout the genealogies and throughout the narrative, while always remaining as “Israel.” Thus, there can be no “return” to a “Golden Age” by simply replicating the depiction of “Israel” which these chapters contain. However, there can be consistency or lines of continuity between the past, present, and future. The utopian “Israel” of the genealogies is not a model to be instituted as a system in the present, but a pattern from which to assess the present. This can only be accomplished in terms of the seemingly contradictory notions of continuity and of openness to continued historical change in the future. Thus, larger principles, such as the inclusion of foreigners within

contrast in this verse with such a meaning is difficult to accept given the explicit comments that the land was empty in 2 Chr 36:20-23.

151 Even the Davidic-Solomonic era does not qualify; contra Murray, “Retribution and Revival,” 96; Johnstone, “Hope of Jubilee,” 313; and Knoppers, I Chronicles 10-29, 741, 798. The genealogies do not reflect the conditions of this time period despite the fact that several lines end at this time and the apparent culmination of all this material at the time of Saul. The genealogies contain data explicitly noted as coming during the periods of later kings (1 Chr 5:17) and even down to the exile and beyond (1 Chr 3:16-24; 5:41 [6:15 Eng]; contra Osborne, “Genealogies,” 72; Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 64; and Spiro, “Manners of Rewriting Biblical History,” 11.)
“Israel” and the centrality of Judah and Levi within the social organization, stand out in the midst of genealogical and geographical details.\textsuperscript{152}

2.2.3 Judah and Levi in Privileged Positions

Scholars almost unanimously agree that the structure and content of the genealogical material in 1 Chronicles 1-9 are designed to elevate the status of Judah and Levi and to place them at the center of attention. In 1 Chronicles 1, the consistent strategy is to note the subsidiary line(s) of descent first—the ones not discussed further in the following sequence.\textsuperscript{153} Once Chronicles reaches the “sons of Israel” in 2:1-2, this structural device operates only within the tribal lines of descent but not in the movement from one tribe to the next. Japhet contends that by restoring Dan and Zebulun in their proper locations in chs. 2-8, the structure of the tribes is roughly geographical: beginning in the south with Judah and Simeon, moving to the Tranjordanian tribes of Reuben, Gad, half-Manasseh, continuing to the north with Issachar, (Benjamin), [Zebulun], (Dan), Naphtali, and then turning south back to the center with half-Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher,\textsuperscript{154} Benjamin, and finally culminating at Jerusalem (1 Chr 9:1). Such an

\textsuperscript{152} Compare the point made by De Vries that these genealogies depict Israel so that it “may yet be what it is” (\textit{I and 2 Chronicles}, 20, 94); however, the postexilic community cannot replicate these conditions in their present, but they can employ the principles advocated by the genealogical presentation of who they are and how they comprise “Israel.”

\textsuperscript{153} Osborne, “Genealogies,” 164 n. 3, following the comments of Ackroyd, \textit{I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah}, 31; cf. Japhet on this pattern in ch. 1 and on the shift to geography in chs. 2-8 (\textit{I & II Chronicles}, 8-9).

\textsuperscript{154} Japhet does note the peculiar geographical placement of Asher between the “Joseph” tribes and Benjamin, and offers another explanation for the sequence here besides geography, the diminishing size of military numbers (\textit{I & II Chronicles}, 9, 169); Osborne simply states that geography governs the first four tribes while the “rest have no discernible order” (“Genealogies,” 320). Japhet also agrees with Williamson (\textit{I and 2 Chronicles}, 47-48, 77-78), that the Benjaminite genealogy of 7:6-12 is not a corrupted genealogy of Zebulun, but that Zebulun had a genealogy at this point which was subsequently lost (\textit{I & II Chronicles}, 169). However, from these statements it becomes obvious that Japhet’s explanation is the result of a
organizational strategy is possible, and would be an interesting parallel to the similar geographical movement noted in the Hellenistic *Catalogue of Women*. Japhet also notes that Levi, having no land (but having numerous cities), is situated at the center of the list as the sixth tribe between half-Manasseh and Issachar. This positioning of Judah as the first tribe and Levi at the center of the list is paralleled by the length of treatment for all the tribes with Judah as the longest followed by Levi. Benjamin comes in third in terms of length, is the final tribe discussed in order in ch. 8, and is again invoked before mentioning the Benjaminite Saul in ch. 9 as the transition to the “narrative proper.” Thus, it is concluded, the three tribes which “actually” constitute the postexilic community receive the most treatment and are positioned at the proper points of emphasis in the list: the first, center, and final tribes discussed.

Whether the return from Babylonian exile involved members of only these three tribes or not, it is difficult to see how these genealogies could possibly function as means of inclusion and exclusion on the basis of the information which they contain. That is, it has been repeatedly asserted that the genealogies serve to legitimize the situation of the Chronicler’s time, to provide a means by which to allow some individuals to serve as priests or Levites to the exclusion of others, for example. However, this can hardly be the case as only two lists, the Davidic line and that of the leading priest, actually extend

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155 See the treatment of this work in Section 2.1.2. Another parallel to this Hellenistic work is the failure of nearly all of the genealogies in Chronicles to come down to the time of the author; see more on this phenomenon in the discussion on the subsequent pages.


157 The Benjaminite list in 1 Chr 7:6-11, which both Williamson and Japhet consider as authentic (see above), however does not fit in this line of reasoning about the importance of this tribe as demonstrated structurally.
to the postexilic period (and even the line of the leading priest does not extend beyond the return in Chronicles; only the list in Neh 12:10-11 does so). The rest of the lines of descent for all of the tribes in chs. 2-8 stop well short of the exile, including that of Benjamin. It is only in the additional resettlement list of 1 Chr 9:1-34 (apparently lifted and adapted from Neh 11:3-22) which extends other parts of the lines of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi into this era, and then only briefly without detailed or precise genealogical trees connecting these individuals and families back into the past. So, for example, the repeated references to other unnamed sons and relatives (יְנַעב and מְנוֹהָנ) and the mention of only the “heads of families according to their ancestral houses” (v. 9) in this list leave an ambiguous aura about how this postexilic information would be employed as a device for legitimacy. Rather than restricting access or incorporation into the lineages of the postexilic community, this postexilic list provides an opportunity (a “loophole”) for the individuals or groups to attach themselves to these tribes as descendants of these unnamed returnees, in a similar way to that suggested above for the tribes with limited information.

The primacy of Judah and Levi in these genealogies seems correct; however, the argument from structure based on the hypothetical geographical sequence of the tribes is

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158 On this argument, see the above references to Williamson and Japhet.

159 See the detailed discussion of the genealogy of the leading priest in Section 4.3 in the discussion of the Chronicler’s cultic utopia.

160 In light of this limited information about the postexilic period in these genealogies, it is worth noting that Japhet argues that the list in 1 Chr 9:1-34 originally presented the Chronicler’s view of the inhabitants of Jerusalem at the time of David; although a resettlement list in Neh 11:3-22, it was reshaped here as a preexilic portrait of Jerusalem (I & II Chronicles, 206-08). If this view of Japhet is followed, then the amount of postexilic data in Chronicles is reduced further leaving only the Davidic and leading-priestly lines to extend into the exilic and postexilic periods.

161 See the comments on the ability to use the genealogies of the “lesser” tribes in this manner above.
not without its problems and lack of textual support; the argument from length of coverage at least has some grounding in the text itself. With this qualification to the commonly-accepted view of the structure of the genealogies, an examination of the content of 1 Chronicles 1-9 indicating an important role for these two tribes is required.

To begin, Judah is explicitly said to have become “great among his brothers” and a “ruler [יְהוֹוָה] came from him” (1 Chr 5:1-2). This statement, of course, does not actually occur in the Judahite genealogies of chs. 2-4. When Judah’s genealogy is the first to be listed following the naming of Israel’s twelve sons in 2:1-2, no reason for beginning with Judah rather than Reuben (or Joseph or Levi, for that matter) is provided. Indeed, this explanatory statement occurs after the genealogy of Simeon (4:24-43) and immediately before Reuben’s (5:3-10) without expressly stating that this is the reason that Judah was listed first. The statement regarding Judah’s prominence is actually a side-comment in the larger discussion of why Reuben is not listed first, as one might expect. The major concern is to explain that Reuben was not listed first due to his infidelity, as drawn from Gen 35:22, 49:3-4, and that the sons of Joseph are the authentic recipient of the birthright in his place, an association not stated in Gen 48:1-22, but made explicit in Chronicles.

This concern to elevate the (northern) Joseph tribes has attracted much scholarly attention, especially given the larger debate over a supposed “anti-Samaritan” or “anti-Northern” polemic in Chronicles. While this is understandable, two points should be brought to the fore: (1) if the loss of birthright is the reason for Reuben’s demotion from

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the head of the list, then the converse *should* be expected to be the case, though it is not: Joseph, as the true holder of the birthright, should be listed first. Further, there is nothing apart from these statements in 1 Chr 5:1-2 to indicate any special importance for the Joseph tribes in the remainder of 1 Chronicles 1-9.  

(2) Judah’s attainment of greatness is not a result of hostility toward or manipulation of his brothers. Reuben’s own sin causes his loss and Joseph does not yield the birthright to Judah. The reason for Judah’s ascendancy to prominence is not explicitly stated, though the fact that one of his descendants was a “ruler” is at least part of his enduring claim to fame. This ambiguity over the precise reason to list Judah first is all the more striking given the discussion regarding Reuben and Joseph. Is this refusal to attribute the birthright (and its accompanying power) to Judah a limitation on Judah which the Chronicler seeks to maintain? That is, the ascription of the birthright to Joseph (which is first attested in Chronicles) poses a serious problem for those advocating the priority of Judah over Israel for all time because of the Davidic monarchy’s previous authority. The Chronicler acknowledges other forms of power by recourse to the birthright which he emphatically associates with Joseph. This could be seen in terms of a utopian critique of claims from Judahites for power or increased power during the Chronicler’s own time. Thus, according to the Chronicler, the descendants of Judah do not have a *de facto* claim to positions of authority based on genealogical descent from either David or the eponymous

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163 However, it is possible that the “addition” of Ephraim and Manasseh to the returnees mentioned in 1 Chr 9:3 may reflect their continued importance for the Chronicler.

164 There is no explicit causality in the verse; i.e., Judah’s prominence is not explicitly stated to be a result of this ruler nor is Judah’s prominence the reason that the ruler comes from his line. The verse states the “facts of history” without drawing the implicit connections as one might expect; *contra* Willi, “Late Persian Judaism,” 155.
ancestor himself. The Chronicler, at least based on 1 Chr 5:1-2, would allow a means for the descendants of Joseph to contest such a view.

The focus of the Judahite genealogies is, of course, the Davidic line in ch. 3. However, even this simple statement requires qualification: while the many sons of David are listed and alluded to vaguely in the segmented genealogy of vv. 1-9, it is only the descendants of Solomon who are recorded in a linear fashion in vv. 10-24. Following the pattern of the practice adduced in the other lineages, it should thus be concluded that the primary line is the Solomonic line rather than the larger Davidic line. While many scholars have pointed to this passage as evidence for at least “Davidism” in Chronicles (if not eschatological or messianic expectation), perhaps a better understanding of the structure and content would be to label this centrality of Solomon as part of the larger phenomenon of “Solomonism” in Chronicles. That being the case, the focus of the Judahite lineage is the Solomonic line. Whichever association is accepted, it is clear from the two previous examples that the monarchy plays a vital role in the importance of the tribe of Judah.

Another indication of the significance of Judah is the “Prayer of Jabez” recorded in 1 Chr 4:9-10. This prayer to God couched in a brief narrative which is entirely unconnected to the genealogy of Judah in which it is found deserves special comment on two points. First, it is the first example of a prayer or speech in Chronicles, a form which is used repeatedly throughout the narrative of 1 Chr 10-2 Chr 36 to express some of the

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165 That this is the case structurally, by means of chiastic pattern, has been argued with wide acceptance by Williamson, “Sources and Redaction,” 358-59.

166 See also the brief comments on Chronicles contributing to a larger “Solomonic Discourse” (as well as Davidic and Mosaic ones) in footnote 164 of chapter 1 above; cf. the discussion of Solomon in Section 3.2.1.

As the first occurrence of this form, it is of particular significance. Second, the prayer and narrative speak directly to the relationship of Israel and its land. Jabez prays for additional land and is granted it by God. In a recent article, R. Christopher Heard argues persuasively that this text functions as an example to the Chronicler’s contemporaries about the proper acquisition of land in peace without violent or military means.\footnote{Heard, “Echoes of Genesis.” He also notes that this is the first association of prayer and land acquisition in Chronicles, two important themes which are brought together for the first time here.} As part of this conclusion, Heard notes that Jabez’s reception of land in peace stands in marked contrast to the violence employed by the Simeonites and Reubenites in their successful conquest of land in the following two genealogies (1 Chr 4:24-5:10) and that a similar point is made in the narrative concerning Jehoshaphat’s non-battle in 2 Chronicles 30. Such a portrayal of this individual as exemplar in contrast even to David, the man of war with blood on his hands (1 Chr 22:7-9), reflects a utopian critique of military and violent conquest.\footnote{The Chronicler does depict victory in battle as being from God, and righteous kings as victorious in fighting their battles. However, the portrayals of Jabez and Jehoshaphat undercut a clear equation between being righteous and being victorious in battle. Rather, this utopian presentation of victory suggests an alternate reality that can be effected without recourse to military encounters and with better results than what can be achieved by engaging foreign armies in conflict.} Jabez is successful without military effort. Perhaps, as Heard suggests, this is the message to the
Chronicler’s audience. If this is accepted, the inclusion of this exemplary individual into
the lineage of Judah, even if and especially as he is rather poorly integrated into it, serves to highlight further the tribe of Judah.

Finally, as noted previously, Judah’s significance among the tribes is indicated by the numerous individuals or groups who are assimilated to or associated with it via the genealogies. Knoppers notes the following ethnic groups involved in this: Calebites, Jerahmeelites, Qenizzites, Canaanites, Qenites, Ishmaelites, Arameans, Egyptians, Moabites, Midianites, Horites, Seirites, and Edomites. There is no comparison with the other tribes of Israel—Judah is by far the tribe most involved in these types of relationships, and without a single hint that this is not acceptable or to be avoided in the future. Thus, Knoppers states that Chronicles presents “a Judah that is very much connected with its neighbors. The descendants of the patriarch, who ‘became great among his brothers,’ do not appear as an unadulterated, homogeneous, and internally fixed entity.” While not explicitly commending the Judahites for this practice, there can be little doubt that the Chronicler portrays these extensive genealogies (i.e., many descendants) as one of the blessings on Judah. This portrayal would fit the theology of retribution throughout Chronicles (cf. 1 Chr 3:27 which explicitly contrasts the Judahites and the Simeonites in this regard). Utopian theory suggests that those foreign elements should be considered authentically Israelite; they are included among the genealogies but have no other known genealogical connection to Israel in extant sources. Rather than

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170 The failure to provide Jabez with even a minimal Judahite lineage is all the more striking given the Chronicler’s repeated integration of foreign elements into the line of Judah by a variety of methods.

171 Knoppers, “‘Great Among His Brothers’.”

172 Ibid.
providing legitimacy for the current situation, these incorporations suggest an alternative reality in which these elements should be welcomed within the entity known as “Israel.”\textsuperscript{173} Such a portrayal reflects one position in the larger debate regarding proper interactions with foreigners in the Second Temple period; if so, this type of overt inclusion of foreigners could be seen as a utopian critique of those holding a more restricted view of who constitutes “Israel.”\textsuperscript{174}

Turning now to the tribe of Levi, the case for its “privileged position” rests on a structural argument of its “central” placement among the tribes, its overall length, the inclusion of the so-called “high-priestly” genealogy of 5:27-41 (6:1-15 Eng.), and the importance of the tribe in the narrative which follows. That is, there are even less explicit statements about the importance of Levi in the genealogies than could be adduced or inferred for the tribe of Judah. The larger concern for the temple and its cult in Chronicles brings the significance of the individuals mentioned in the Levitical genealogy into clearer focus.

It should be noted, however, that the information about Levi consists of far more than a genealogy; the genealogy proper consists of the names in 5:27-6:15 (6:1-30 Eng.), the partial repetition in 1 Chr 6:35-38 (vv. 50-53 Eng.), and the genealogies provided for the three chief Levitical singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan in vv. 3-17 (vv. 18-32 Eng.). The remaining section (vv. 39-66 [vv. 54-81 Eng.]) is a description of the towns and pasturelands assigned to the tribe, the so-called Levitical cities, intimately connected with

\textsuperscript{173} Contra Snyman, “Possible World of Text Production,” 45-48, 59.

\textsuperscript{174} This issue is the subject of the following section, 2.2.4. See the further discussion of the Chronicler’s utopian portrayal of this point there.

The scholarly assessment of this material concerning Levi is fairly consistent. The “high-priestly” genealogy is regarded as a construct, meant to authorize the Zadokite control of the office by giving the eponymous ancestor an Aaronite and Levitical heritage, without any claims to historical reliability;\footnote{Although a few scholars would defend parts of the list as historically based, rarely does one find anyone arguing for its entire authenticity.} the singers, without explicit Levitical heritage apart from Chronicles, have been the focus of several elaborate analyses which attempt to isolate the development of their Levitical heritage in the history of Israelite religion;\footnote{See the ground-breaking study by Adolf Büchler, “Zur Geschichte der Tempelmusik und der Tempelpsalmen,” \textit{ZAW} 19 (1899): 96-133, 329-44; and the highly-influential essay by Hartmut Gese, “Zur Geschichte der Kultsänger am zweiten Tempel,” in \textit{Abraham unser Vater: Juden und Christen im Gespräch über die Bibel. Festschrift für Otto Michel zum 60. Geburtstag} (ed. O. Betz, M. Hengel, and P. Schmidt; AGSU 5; Leiden: Brill, 1963), 222-34; repr. in \textit{Vom Sinai zum Zion} (ABBT; Munich: Kaiser, 1974), 147-58. Almost all subsequent research on the singers assumes at least parts of Gese’s three-stage development to be correct in some form.} and the geography of the Levitical cities has been consulted for what it may reveal about the borders and scope of the Israelite settlement of the land of Canaan—although it is dated variously to periods during the pre-monarchy,
united monarchy, and divided monarchy, or as an imagined geography without a corresponding historical reality.\textsuperscript{178}

Thus, in this scholarly assessment, the Levitical material reveals the true concerns of Chronicles: the authority and primacy of the temple cult and its personnel, and the organization of the larger Levitical order. However, it should be pointed out again that just as the Davidic (or rather Solomonic) lineage is the only Judahite line to continue into the postexilic period, so too the high-priestly line is the only Levitical one even to reach the exile. The remaining Levitical lines do not extend anywhere near this time. In addition, the singers’ lineages are not continued down from Heman, Asaph, and Ethan. It is difficult to imagine that these lineages were used to exclude individuals from these offices or to guarantee that only those biologically qualified to serve did so.\textsuperscript{179} These lists distinguish and organize within the Levitical line,\textsuperscript{180} but they do not serve as a means of adjudicating Levitical claims by precisely delineating these lines of descent through the exilic and postexilic periods (with the possible exception of 1 Chr 9:10-12). That is, from this material, it would be impossible during the time of the Chronicler to contradict or confirm the claims made by individuals to be a member of one of these lines. In addition, the “Zadokite claim” to the high priesthood may be reflected in the two genealogies, but no similar claims are made for the rest of the Zadokites in this text. It is clear that

\textsuperscript{178} This final view is related to the depiction of the land in Ezekiel 40-48, with both texts being thus labeled as “utopian” since they were not, or could not be, actualized historically. As noted previously, this “impossible” understanding of “utopia” is not the meaning when the term is used in literary criticism.

\textsuperscript{179} Contra Laato, “Levitical Genealogies,” 98.

\textsuperscript{180} As do the lists of priestly courses and Levitical divisions in chs. 23-27, which also do not provide subsequent genealogical information for these branches of the highly-complex family tree.
Chronicles considers all the descendants of Aaron (and not just Zadok) to be priests,\(^\text{181}\) while it does *implicitly* limit the high priesthood to the sons of Zadok through Jehozadak. Thus, even for the priests, such a genealogy is not restrictive nor is it “pro-Zadokite” in orientation apart from the high priesthood itself.\(^\text{182}\)

As concerns the Levitical cities, it is difficult to imagine that this list reflects the historical situation of the Chronicler’s day, given what is known about the settlement of Yehud during the late Persian and early Hellenistic period.\(^\text{183}\) Despite the various suggestions for a historical context during the preexilic period, the evidence is not clear and none of the suggestions has superior explanatory power over the others. While acknowledging that the list *may possibly* reflect conditions and borders which are otherwise unattested in both the extant literary and archaeological data, the description of the cities does exist in space, in utopian space, at some point in Israel’s past (as the text itself presents the temporal location of these settlements in the past, although not with a precise moment stated). Are these cities which the Levites are expected to have in the future? Should they attempt to replicate the geographic “reality” presented by this list? If the answer to these questions is “yes,” then should not the same response be given to the geographical notations included for the other tribes in the genealogies? Should not Judah, Simeon, Reuben, Gad, Ephraim, and Benjamin attempt to regain their territory as depicted in their genealogies? If those tribes who returned from exile were the only

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\(^{181}\) See the distinguishing of the Aaronide (but not Zadokite) priests in 1 Chr 6:34-38 [vv. 49-53 Eng.]; 23:12-14, 28-32; 24:1-19.

\(^{182}\) See the further discussion of the leading priest and the Zadokites in Chronicles in Section 4.3.

\(^{183}\) Most scholars have accepted the idea of a “small” Yehud during the Persian and Hellenistic periods; see the highly-influential work by Charles E. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study* (JSOTSup 294; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999); cf. Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1-9*, 450.
recipients of the geographical markers, then such an explanation would more likely suggest that Chronicles advocates a return to some ideal borders (from the Golden Age of David and Solomon, for example). However, this is not the case.

First, only five tribes are listed as returning (in 1 Chr 9:3-34): Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Levi. Of course, Manasseh has no specific geographical associations other than dwelling in the region “from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon” (1 Chr 5:23). In addition, in 1 Chr 4:41 Simeon’s information comes from the time of Hezekiah (not David or Solomon); the tribes of Gad and Reuben are still in an Assyrian exile along with Manasseh in 1 Chr 5:25-26, and their genealogical information dates to the time of Jotham (v.17). Thus, no one time is depicted by the geographical data in the genealogies, and the assumption that such a list functions as a call to replicate its contents does not fit the evidence contained in Chronicles itself. Finally, as all twelve tribes do not provide land for the Levites—Dan is missing—the use of the term “ideal” or an association with the inclusive “all Israel” ideology is difficult to maintain. This is one step further removed from the notion that the Chronicler advocates a literal replication of the list. So, what of the Levitical cities?

The Levitical cities are one of the examples of utopian space in Chronicles. The presentation is better than the actual reality of the Second Temple period, but not idealized. It exists in a real space, defies depiction graphically, stands outside of one time frame, and cannot be aligned with historical reality—all common features of utopian

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184 While scholars have suggested that this reflects part of the Dan polemic in Chronicles, Williamson has refuted this view as noted previously. Further, the failure to list Dan has not deterred scholars from the use of these ideologies of “idealism” or “all Israel” to explain the phenomenon of the cities. However, is this depiction really “ideal”? No. Is it “utopian”? Yes. See the main discussion above.
Rather than attempting to reconstruct the history of Israel from this list of cities, utopian theory suggests that the present reality is called into question by what is presented and the reader is challenged to consider the possibility of an alternative reality. In this alternative reality, the Levites—all of them, from all three major clans—were provided with towns and lands from the tribes who were able to do so. Is this included to demonstrate that in the past the Levites were all given towns and pasturelands without exclusion to some groups within the lineage? Perhaps this is indeed part of the Chronicler’s Tendenz to emphasize the cult, but in this case it is specifically to present the Levitical case for inclusion in land distribution and as recipients of the care of the community during the Chronicler’s own day. It is extremely doubtful that the Chronicler included this information to give authority to the current Levitical situation and it is also doubtful that he advocated that the Levites should be given these particular locations. Rather, in concert with his method elsewhere, it seems that the principles being demonstrated by the account should be enacted in his present situation. Thus, these Levitical cities serve a decidedly utopian function within Chronicles: they represent the desired social and economic arrangement between all of the Levitical groups and the rest of the community, which arrangements apparently did not exist at the time of the Chronicler.

To sum up: Whether the reading of these texts and the points made here are accepted or not, the fact remains that Judah and Levi stand in privileged positions within space. Rather than attempting to reconstruct the history of Israel from this list of cities, utopian theory suggests that the present reality is called into question by what is presented and the reader is challenged to consider the possibility of an alternative reality. In this alternative reality, the Levites—all of them, from all three major clans—were provided with towns and lands from the tribes who were able to do so. Is this included to demonstrate that in the past the Levites were all given towns and pasturelands without exclusion to some groups within the lineage? Perhaps this is indeed part of the Chronicler’s Tendenz to emphasize the cult, but in this case it is specifically to present the Levitical case for inclusion in land distribution and as recipients of the care of the community during the Chronicler’s own day. It is extremely doubtful that the Chronicler included this information to give authority to the current Levitical situation and it is also doubtful that he advocated that the Levites should be given these particular locations. Rather, in concert with his method elsewhere, it seems that the principles being demonstrated by the account should be enacted in his present situation. Thus, these Levitical cities serve a decidedly utopian function within Chronicles: they represent the desired social and economic arrangement between all of the Levitical groups and the rest of the community, which arrangements apparently did not exist at the time of the Chronicler.

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185 See the Excursus on Spatial Theory in Chapter 1.

186 If Dan is not to be restored to the text of 1 Chr 7:12, then Dan had no genealogy and thus no land with which to provide towns for the Levites. The inclusion of Zebulun in 1 Chr 6:62 (v. 77 Eng.), of course, would not support this theory, if Zebulun was not present originally in the genealogies in 7:6 as advocated above.
the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9. As they were certainly a powerful if not substantial segment of the population during the Chronicle’s time, this is not surprising. However, such positions are not as explicit as one may expect, especially with the tribe of Levi. Much of what can be said about their positions of power is derived from the Davidic (Solomonic) and high-priestly lines, the structure of the genealogies with Judah first and Levi in the center, and the significance of the two tribes (and their chief representatives) in the narrative which follows. That is, the genealogies themselves do not elevate these two tribes or exclude individuals from them as directly as may have been thought. If the primary concern of the Chronicler was to provide an authoritative basis for the positions of Judah and Levi in his own period, the case could have been made much more directly and in stronger terms, especially for the Levites. However, if the Chronicler wished to demonstrate the continuing importance of these tribes while at the same time suggesting some changes in the perception and practice of his own time, then this less-than-direct approach would fit better with the textual evidence. Thus, even in advancing the positions of Judah and Levi, the Chronicler uses these genealogies in a utopian manner—not to support the status quo, but to critique it subtly.

2.2.4 “Israel” among the Nations: Universalism and Particularism in Chronicles

Having discussed the internal organization of utopian Israel, this analysis now turn to the issue with which the book of Chronicles itself begins, Israel’s place among the

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187 Most of the analyses come to this conclusion or they start from it before proceeding to reconstruct a social context in which such a text may have been composed. This information in the genealogies has been viewed almost entirely as a means of providing an authoritative past for the present situation; rarely is any discussion of critique offered by scholars as a possibility.
nations of the world.\textsuperscript{188} Whereas 1 Chronicles 2-9 is primarily concerned with the “sons of Israel,” chapter 1 traces the lineage of humanity from Adam down to Jacob (almost always called “Israel” in Chronicles)\textsuperscript{189} and attempts to situate the people of Israel in their proper location and relationship to the outside world.\textsuperscript{190} This opening genealogy functions in several ways: (1) it summarizes in a concise form the material in Genesis prior to the appearance of Israel, ignoring most of the narrative which surrounds the genealogical data embedded in the stories, providing a quick review of the mythical/ancient past;\textsuperscript{191} (2) it acknowledges that the descendants of Israel are part of the larger human family, related biologically and ethnically to all elements of humanity on some level; (3) it shows special interest in those neighboring nations which played a significant role in Israel’s past (and some scholars would assert in the Chronicler’s present or recent past) and who were some of their closest relatives according to the Genesis accounts;\textsuperscript{192} and (4) the map of the world is not updated to conform to new social realities: the description of the mythic/ancient past as found in Genesis (especially in the genealogies of P and the Table of Nations) is not adjusted to conform to the new

\textsuperscript{188} The extremely common use of “among the nations” by scholars as the description of this structural device demonstrates the near consensus on the purpose of this chapter in Chronicles; see, e.g., Curtis and Madsen, \textit{Critical and Exegetical Commentary}, 57; Johnstone, \textit{1 and 2 Chronicles}, vol. 1 (the book’s subtitle!); and Williamson, \textit{1 and 2 Chronicles}, 40.

\textsuperscript{189} “Jacob” is found only in 1 Chr 16:13, 17 as the poetic parallel to “Israel.” This uniform use of Israel to the near exclusion of Jacob has been noted frequently as a structural device which separates the Israelites from non-Israelites; see, e.g., Japhet, \textit{I & II Chronicles}, 62; Williamson, \textit{Israel in the Books of Chronicles}, 62; and Siedlecki, “Foreigners,” 237, 237 n. 21.

\textsuperscript{190} Johnstone asserts that the opening chapter itself constitutes the “preface” to the whole work, rather than the larger block of 1 Chronicles 1-9 (\textit{1 and 2 Chronicles}, 1:24).

\textsuperscript{191} This is the purpose of the chapter according to Japhet, \textit{I & II Chronicles}, 56. She also notes that Chronicles follows “the content, order and structure” of Genesis in relating the information in this opening chapter (53).

\textsuperscript{192} This understanding of those closest to Israel, whether biologically and ethnically or geographically, as being the groups with whom conflict and separation are most intense is not restricted to
historical present of the Chronicler’s day—that is, while the information recorded here is selective, it is drawn without much alteration from the material in Genesis.

This consistency between Genesis and Chronicles may be somewhat surprising when compared to the Hellenistic material concerning the mythic/ancient past that was continually adapted to the present world situation; that is, this type of genealogy serves as a means of explaining current national and socio-political relationships. For example, one may have expected a greater emphasis on the Persians or the Greeks or other surrounding nations. Some scholars have suggested that the inclusion of the descendants of Seir and the Edomite kings may reflect the continuing significance of these groups (or the people now living in their territory) for the Chronicler’s own time. However, the significance of these two groups in Israel’s past (note their additional appearances in 1 Chr 4:42; 18:11-13; 2 Chr 8:17; 20:2, 10, 22-23; 21:8-10; 25:11-20; 28:17; almost all in some type of conflict or military context) sufficiently explains their inclusion here.

From this opening chapter detailing the larger human family, the Chronicler proceeds to discuss the lineage of Israel exclusively in chs. 2-9. As noted previously, within ch. 1 the order of presentation follows a clear pattern: the subsidiary lines are Chronicles or even to Israelite literature, but can be found in the Genesis source, the accounts of the Deuteronomistic History, and numerous comparative sources from other cultures outside Israel.

Another explanation for their similarity could be their derivation from the same or nearly the same time period, and thus reflecting the same historical situation. If P, however, predates Chronicles by a century or two (dating P closer to the exile and Chronicles closer to the Hellenistic period), then their historical context would be very different. Further, the origin of the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 is not clear; it could derive from P, while many hold that it is from J or an independent source which predates P. Whatever the true chronological sequence of these texts, the failure of the Chronicler to alter significantly his source material in this case (as he does regularly with other source information) is worth further consideration. Does this use of the Genesis material demonstrate respect for the “canonical” status of the Torah on the part of the Chronicler? His adjustment of other Torah material in other contexts would not be consistent with such a conclusion here.

See the commentaries. While such a direct relationship is possible, the stereotypical use of these particular nations in Chronicles would seem to indicate that they function as ciphers for whoever is
listed first followed by the line of greater significance. Thus, Japheth and Ham precede
Shem, Ishmael precedes Isaac, and Esau precedes Israel. The genealogical tree is
progressively narrowed until the main object of attention comes into focus: the sons of
Israel (1 Chr 2:1-2). This literary device and the emphasis on the figure of Jacob as the
first Israelite in Chronicles (as opposed to Abraham or Isaac) have been noted by scholars
repeatedly. What has not been much discussed by scholars is the failure of the Chronicler
to comment explicitly upon the reason for this apparent selection of Israel as a chosen
entity, especially given his inclusion of narrative comments concerning individuals
within the opening genealogy and in the genealogies of the tribes which follow. Is the
special status of Israel assumed, accepted, and in need of no argumentation by the
Chronicler? Or, is the unique position of Israel accepted without hesitation while the
issue is the composition and scope of the entity represented by the name “Israel”; i.e.,
“Israel” is chosen, but just who is “Israel”?

The distinction between the two questions rests on the distinction of audience or
intended readership and their historical situation. Chronicles is not propaganda literature
to outside communities (i.e., the Samaritans or the Persians) to argue for the claims of the
Yehudites and convince the Other of the correctness of that position. Chronicles is
opposed to Israel rather than any particular group actually residing to the southeast of Yehud at the time of
the Chronicler.

This silence about Israel’s “election” is all the more remarkable given the repeated references to
and reasons for the chosenness of David and Solomon and the city of Jerusalem in Chronicles (1 Chr 28:4-
6, 10; 2 Chr 6:5-6, 34, 38; 7:12-18; 12:13; 33:7), and the explicit discussion of this issue in Deuteronomy
(e.g., 7:7-11; 9:4-7). Knoppers notes further that this status of two individuals not firstborn is similar to the
rejection of the firstborn Reuben and election of Judah and Joseph in 1 Chr 5:1-2; thus, he concludes that
this device is one of the many patterns in Chronicles which demonstrate that the “unexpected becomes the
expected” (“Preferential Status,” 125). Such unexpectedness also serves a utopian purpose in criticism of
possible contemporary social practice during the Chronicler’s own time.

Hints of this perspective are found in Ezra-Nehemiah, especially in the Aramaic sections which
prima facie have the Persian government in their purview.
definitely “insider” literature, assuming particular concepts to be true that other groups would have difficulty accepting. Chronicles is concerned with the issues important to the internal affairs of the Israelite/Yehudite community. While books such as Ezra-Nehemiah and Deuteronomy appear to have the characteristics of “crisis literature” written during a period of struggle for identity and definition against the Other, Chronicles reflects the views of a community not as concerned with establishing external borders and boundaries, but with the proper relationships within a community not currently struggling for its own survival amid a hostile environment.  

197 Put another way, Chronicles is not so much concerned with threats from without as it is in addressing the various issues of contention and dispute that have developed within the entity known as “Israel.”

Though primarily concerned with internal relationships, in the course of these opening genealogies in ch.1 and in chs. 2-9, the Chronicler does participate in a debate which is found throughout the corpus of Second Temple literature about the proper parameters for relationships with other nations and about the possibility of non-Israelites being included as part of the community of the “true Israel.”  

198 Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 26. This raging debate was not confined to any one part of the Second Temple period; see, e.g., the significance of this concern over the proper relationship with foreigners in Ezek 44:4-9; Ruth, Jonah, Third Isaiah (56:3-8), Malachi (1:8-14; 2:10-12), Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Judith, Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, L.A.B. (9:5; 30:1; 45:3). In the NT, the Pauline epistles (Rom 1:16-4:25; 9:1-11:36, esp. 10:11-13; Gal 2:1-5:12; Eph 2:11-3:14; Col 1:25-27; 3:11; 1 Cor 7:1-40; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1), the Gospels (Mark 16:15-18//Matt 28:16-20//Luke 24:44-49), and Acts (1:8; 10:1-11:18; 14:44-52; 15:1-35) also engage in this debate.

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197 Some of the recent literature on Ezra-Nehemiah has emphasized its depiction of a struggling, minority group as opposed to a dominant, secure hegemonic power; see, e.g., Smith-Christopher, “Mixed Marriage Crisis”; and Thomas C. Römer, “Transformations in Deuteronomistic and Biblical Historiography: On ‘Book-Finding’ and other Literary Strategies,” ZAW 109 (1997): 1-11. Japhet also states that “Chronicles does not represent ‘religion under stress’. It is an expression of a religion that came to terms with the past, formed a solid theological basis for its existence, and was looking forward, to the future” (“Exile and Restoration,” 44).

198 Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 26. This raging debate was not confined to any one part of the Second Temple period; see, e.g., the significance of this concern over the proper relationship with foreigners in Ezek 44:4-9; Ruth, Jonah, Third Isaiah (56:3-8), Malachi (1:8-14; 2:10-12), Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Judith, Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, L.A.B. (9:5; 30:1; 45:3). In the NT, the Pauline epistles (Rom 1:16-4:25; 9:1-11:36, esp. 10:11-13; Gal 2:1-5:12; Eph 2:11-3:14; Col 1:25-27; 3:11; 1 Cor 7:1-40; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1), the Gospels (Mark 16:15-18//Matt 28:16-20//Luke 24:44-49), and Acts (1:8; 10:1-11:18; 14:44-52; 15:1-35) also engage in this debate.
dichotomy, of course, cannot be so easily separated, as the demarcation of the qualifying characteristics for one of the two categories of concern naturally influences the extent of the other category. It is in this light that the Chronicler’s concern over the identity of “Israel” touches upon the issues of “inclusion/universalism” and “exclusion/particularism” as so labeled by a long history of scholarship on this complex and controversial motif.199

Discussions of this issue in Chronicles often begin by addressing the presentation of similar concerns in Ezra-Nehemiah. This has been a direct result of the once commonly-held belief in the unity of a Chronistic History, consisting of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah as an edited collocation in its final form.200 From this position, the similarities in perspective on the issues of foreigners and especially intermarriage between the two units of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah were emphasized while the differences were typically attributed to the preservation of source material or downplayed by previous scholars. As the consensus about the unity of these works gave way, one of the main thematic issues raised was the distinctive treatment of these themes in the two books.

199 The validity of this dichotomy is questioned pointedly and correctly by Joel S. Kaminsky, “Did Election Imply the Mistreatment of Non-Israelites?,” HTR 96 (2003): 397-425, esp. 399. He notes here that the texts which supposedly demonstrate the “universal/inclusive” and “particular/exclusive” perspective are not this simple in approach to the issue, but rather that both derive ultimately from an understanding of the special election of Israel in contrast to the Other. In contrast to the “universalism” of Jonah or the “exclusivist” position of Ezra-Nehemiah and Joel, Chronicles has been viewed as a representative of “internationalism” (Newsome, “Chronicler’s View of Prophecy,” 219-221). However, while Newsome is correct in observing a distinction among these texts beyond the dichotomy so often used, his category of “internationalism” is not helpful in further clarifying the differences either. In his recent analysis of 1 Chr 1:1-2:2, Knoppers concludes: “The universal is very much tied to the particular [in Chronicles]” (“Shem, Ham and Japheth,” 31).
Recent scholarship on the topic of foreigners and especially the inhabitants of the North in Chronicles have rightly pointed out the more tolerant and even accepting position towards these individuals ostracized in Ezra-Nehemiah. This is demonstrated in a number of ways: first, the numerous notes about intermarriage in the genealogical material and especially in the Judahite line without a hint of condemnation; second, the repeated invitations made to the Northern tribes to participate in the religious festivals made by the reforming kings of the South that some Northerners accepted; third, the presentation of “all Israel” as extending beyond the narrowly defined unit of the returnees or of those in Yehud in particular. However, to say that Chronicles welcomes foreigners without placing any demands upon them or as a polar opposite position to that of Ezra-Nehemiah would be just as incorrect as understanding it to reflect the same restrictions as Ezra-Nehemiah on this particular issue.

While business or personal interaction and even intermarriage are not prohibited, the religious loyalty of both foreigners and Israelites from the Northern tribes is expected to be shown toward the temple cult in Jerusalem. Indeed, a proper attitude on the part of all participants toward the temple and its cult provides the source of unity for these diverse individuals. This concern is made most pointedly in the account of Hezekiah’s Passover, in which those from the Northern tribes who are ritually unclean but had “set their hearts to seek God” are allowed to participate in the festival “even though not in accordance with the sanctuary’s rules of cleanness,” and though the Pesach was eaten “otherwise than as prescribed” (2 Chr 30:17-20). Hezekiah not only allows this improper

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200 On the concept of a collocation, see the explanation of De Vries, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 7-8; cf. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9*, 57.
ritual to occur, but prays to “the good LORD” for a pardon of the people, and God “healed” them in response to this apparently unorthodox petition not concerned with the proper functioning of the cultic ritual.

In addition to this primacy of religious loyalty as a requirement, Chronicles depicts conflict, especially of a military nature, with some of the inhabitants of the land who were not ethnically Israelite and with some of the nations surrounding Israel. Thus, while the Conquest traditions are downplayed in the Chronicler’s version of Israelite history, it is incorrect to claim that Israel always occupied the land or did not have to engage in military struggle to gain at least some of it for themselves. In this light, the tribes of Simeon (1 Chr 4:39-43), Reuben (1 Chr 5:10, 18-22), Gad and half-Manasseh (1 Chr 5:18-22), and Benjamin (1 Chr 8:13) attack the people in the land and acquire their territory or towns. In addition, while attempting to raid cattle, Ephraim is attacked by the “people of Gath, who were born in the land” and many of the tribe are killed (1 Chr 7:20-21).

This very brief account in the genealogy of Ephraim deserves special comment as it has been much discussed by scholars. This attention is a result of the tension which this brief narrative element creates when read in conversation with the accounts at the end of Genesis and beginning of Exodus. These accounts clearly state that the twelve sons of Jacob died in Egypt (Exod 1:1-8) and only after the passage of considerable time did the Israelites leave Egypt for the land of Palestine. This stands in marked contrast to the

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201 It may be of special significance that this is the only time in the entire HB that the God of Israel is termed “the good LORD” (יהוה הושיע), although the “LORD is good” (יהוה טוב) occurs several times (e.g., Jer 33:11; Nah 1:7; numerous times in Psalms; 1 Chr 16:34 [citing Ps 106:1]; 2 Chr 7:3, Solomon’s temple dedication without a parallel in Kings). The highly-exceptional nature of this event is repeatedly stressed throughout the narrative; however, it is the exception which proves the
repeated statements in the Chronicler’s account that Ephraim himself was apparently in
the land of Canaan at the time when his descendants were killed by these men of Gath.202
While the rabbinic tradition attempts to reconcile these conflicting accounts by
suggesting a “premature entrance” into the land by portions of Israel and especially from
the Joseph tribes, which has received some scholarly support,203 the contradiction of the
Exodus narrative concerning all twelve brothers dying in Egypt as well as the
chronological discrepancy cannot be so easily harmonized. Rather, as with other texts in
Chronicles, this narrative about Ephraim reflects a different tradition than the one
preserved in the Torah. While it comes as no surprise that this blatant conflict with the
Torah has attracted attention, the phrase which should attract further notice in this
passage is “the men of Gath who were born in the land” (v. 21). Japhet has contended
that in Chronicles there is an intimate link between the people of Israel and the land so
that those who reside in the land are “Israel.”204 In light of this position, it is worth noting
that she does not address the implications of this passage and how these “natives” of Gath
in particular could fit into her understanding of an autochthonous Israel. These non-
Israelites who were born in the land of Canaan indeed cannot be worked into the claims
which have been made about the Chronicler’s land theology. In fact, along with the other
references cited previously, the Chronicler here explicitly rejects an equation of residing

202 See Japhet’s helpful discussion of this complicated text (I & II Chronicles, 181-82; idem,
 Ideology, 376-78); cf. the remarks by Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 39; Galil, “Chronicler’s
Genealogies of Ephraim”; and Kallai, “Settlement Traditions of Ephraim.”

203 See b. Sanh. 92b; Targum to Chronicles; and the additional sources discussed by Martin J.
Mulder, “1 Chronik 7:21b-23 und die rabbinische Tradition,” JSJ 6 (1975): 141-66. See also the view

204 See footnote 121 and the related discussion above.
in the land and belonging to “Israel.” Thus, geography does not determine identity in Chronicles.

Moving from geography to genealogy, Chronicles has recently been viewed as a “compromise” response in comparison with the contrasting perspective of Ezra-Nehemiah, which certainly has genealogical purity as one of its primary concerns. This view assumes a particular historical reconstruction of the restored community in Yehud: a political struggle between groups or parties vying for supremacy and power which has been played out by claims to ethnic continuity with the “Israel” of preexilic times. Thus, in this view, the refusal to confer priestly status on those who could not provide proof of their genealogical connection to the “legitimate” priestly family as recorded in Ezra 2:62//Neh 7:64 is extended as a principle governing the recognition of those who were authentically a part of “Israel” (not just the priesthood) at the time. Thus, in the wake of this method of constructing identity, Chronicles is viewed as providing such a genealogical connection for individuals or groups who would otherwise have been excluded from “Israel” on the basis of their non-Israelite ethnicity. The method of Chronicles then is cast as a response to the concerns of Ezra-Nehemiah: providing a genealogy (even if imaginary in nature) to maintain the status quo of the community’s organization versus the expulsion or rejection of these individuals as the solution to a perceived problem with the status quo (i.e., Chronicles attempts harmony by legitimizing the present, while Ezra-Nehemiah brings disunity by establishing a means of excluding those who should not be in the community but nonetheless currently are). In this

205 Compare also the removal of all those of foreign descent on the basis of the limited exclusions found in Deut 23:3-5 as recorded in Neh 13:1-3. It is worth noting that this passage makes no mention of the method used to determine who was and was not included in this group now excluded from “Israel.”
reconstruction, scholars have further tended to describe the view of Ezra-Nehemiah as “exclusive/particular” and that of Chronicles in contrast as “inclusive/universal.”

However, this dichotomy simply does not account for the evidence. Chronicles presents a complex picture of the relations between Israel and the nations that cannot be labeled so easily. As stated above, the war and other conflicts with foreigners, the openness to the Northerners who accept the religious program at Jerusalem, and the frequent reference to intermarriage without criticism are not easily encapsulated within the traditional dichotomies imposed on these ancient texts. Chronicles has much to say about this issue, but this information cannot be placed neatly into two distinct categories. Chronicles as a whole does not fit within one or the other. Rather, the view of foreigners in Chronicles is mixed in nature. They are neither welcomed without reservation nor rejected flatly; they can be part of “Israel” genealogically, but it is ultimately religious fidelity that indicates identity. The same holds for true for all the individuals named within the genealogies. Thus, those who are genealogically “Israelites” but participate in “unfaithfulness” and/or “transgression” will find a very different end than those who are righteous, whatever their ethnicity.

It seems that Chronicles does not disregard

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206 This is one of many instances in which the concerns of scholars or theological and philosophical debates have been read into or brought to a text which cannot provide answers in the categories being used. The variety of positions held within a single text, let alone those present among the numerous texts from antiquity, on the issue of the proper relationship between “Israel” and “the nations” cannot be streamlined into two distinct groups. Rather, the nuances of the disagreements and points of complete agreement should be allowed to speak on their own before any attempt to systematize them should be undertaken.

207 Note the following examples: Achar (1 Chr 2:7), the tribes exiled by Assyria (1 Chr 5:23-26), the southern kingdom of Judah (1 Chr 9:2), Saul (1 Chr 8:29-40; 9:35-10:14), David’s mighty men (1 Chr 11:26-47), Huram-abi (2 Chr 1:13), the kings of the Davidic dynasty mentioned throughout 2 Chronicles who act in both ways, and the leading priests and the people (2 Chr 36:14). The contention that Saul is not ethnically Israelite, but only geographically situated in Benjamin (so Stanley D. Walters, “Saul of Gibeah,” *JSOT* 52 [1991]: 61-76, here 71) disregards the concluding sentence of this lineage, which explicitly claims a Benjaminite heritage for Saul’s family (1 Chr 8:40).
genealogical heritage, but rather uses it to demonstrate the superiority of religious fidelity for the purpose of identity formation.

While such a reading of Chronicles may seem to support the aforementioned typical reconstruction of Chronicles as a compromise intended to maintain the status quo, it rather may point to a criticism of the status quo and an attempt to refocus the community in a different area of concern. Utopian theory recognizes that such a varied response towards foreigners in Chronicles may function as part of such a critique and not as a sign of multiple redactional layers or an attempt to validate the present policy. Instead, the depiction of “Israel” and the nations in Chronicles can be read as one that critiques the present policy by presenting an alternative reality for consideration. Perhaps Chronicles is arguing that the relationship between “Israel” and the nations is one of great complexity (which it is in historical reality), and that no clear policy can be instituted to cover the variety of concerns that will arise. However, some principles for this relationship according to Chronicles can be adduced: (1) intermarriage is not condemned; (2) war against foreigners is not condemned; however, victory is not guaranteed in every instance, so the people should not be hasty to engage in conflict and should rather depend on God’s intervention to occur; and (3) religious fidelity, seeking God with the proper attitude, supporting the temple and its cult, and the proper internal relations of the community are of primary concern—much more important for the continued existence of the community than the establishment of borders and boundaries to distinguish between “us and them.” Thus, Chronicles advocates neither “inclusive/universal” nor “exclusive/particularistic” positions, as typically understood. Chronicles does comment
on foreigners in a variety of contexts; the understanding that most fully accounts for this complex portrayal can be described best as being utopian in nature.

2.2.5 Genealogy as Utopia

In conclusion, several questions seem appropriate: What can be said about the genealogies of Chronicles? What type of reality, if any, do they depict? How can, and should, they be understood as utopian? How does utopian theory aid in reading this material? The previous sections have answered these questions in some form; at this point, the major conclusions advanced in this chapter will be summarized.

First, the foundational issue in using utopian theory to analyze any material in Chronicles, but these genealogies in particular, is a change in fundamental assumptions. Most scholars working on Chronicles begin with the assumption, with little to no clear evidence, that the genealogies in Chronicles were composed to reinforce or legitimate the status quo. While this understanding derives partially from the work of Wilson and is certainly true in some cases, the “legitimacy” purpose is invoked to explain virtually all cases of what scholars have deemed to be postexilic practice or situations without preexilic precedent or corroboration. That is, (1) if Chronicles presents a detail that may enhance or support the power structure of the Second Temple cult and its personnel and that cannot be found in texts taken to be earlier than itself, then this reveals an anachronism designed to establish a line of continuity between the past and the present; or, (2) if individuals or groups are provided genealogies in Chronicles who are not found in genealogies or with clear genealogical ties in earlier texts, then their incorporation within particular lines (especially those of Judah and Levi) was meant to provide a line of
continuity to maintain their current socio-, politico-, and/or religious status within the community—a status which was in some danger of being questioned or threatened.

Utopian literary theory changes this presumption from one of legitimacy for the present to the questioning of the present, to presenting an alternative reality which does not align with the present situation, to depicting a line of continuity into the past for changes to be made in the future. Thus, the same descriptions are read in an entirely different manner about what historical information and situations they may reflect. Instead of attempting to reconstruct Israelite history (whether preexilic, exilic, or postexilic) from Chronicles, utopian theory may be used to formulate the types of issues and particular points which were debated or being challenged in the Second Temple period. Chronicles does not present a picture of the Second Temple period, even a partial one; it does present a picture of the concerns of at least one individual or group, however idiosyncratic, about the current state of affairs within the entity known as “Israel.”

Second, the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9 have much in common with Hellenistic genealogies both in form and content. In particular, these chapters may serve as a “virtual preface” to Chronicles by introducing the major themes and providing background for the following narrative. In this function, the genealogies establish key theological, philosophical, and ideological principles which are further developed in the remaining chapters of the history. As such, the genealogies should not be dismissed as late additions only loosely connected with the main or original work. Instead, as will be seen in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation, the genealogical utopia of these chapters informs the reading of both the political and cultic utopias that are also present. To discuss either the political or cultic programs of Chronicles without addressing the
information and presentation of the genealogies is to miss not only a considerable amount of data but also the information which first confronts the reader and provides the initial categories through which the remainder of the data will be interpreted.

Third, the genealogies are overtly concerned about issues of “identity.” However, rather than attempting to provide precise lines of division which separate the community of Israel from the Other, the genealogies serve to organize “Israel” internally. This is consistent with the Hellenistic genealogical model discussed above, and suggests the possibility of an “ever-expanding” sense of who belongs to the entity known as “Israel.” The fluid and incomplete genealogies of many of the tribes provide not a means of demarcation, but a variety of places in which to “graft on” lines of descent and growth. This fluidity exists not only in terms of space but also of time. The genealogies do not present an “ideal” Israel at any one point in time. The entities which constitute “Israel” are neither crystallized nor idealized for any geographical borders or for a lost “Golden Age” that can easily be identified. Instead, “Israel” transcends such minimal definitions and serves as a term of solidarity.\textsuperscript{208} The book does not say, “Israel” can be restored again if only the conditions which existed in the past at its moment of perfection could be replicated somehow; rather “Israel” \textit{is} and will continue to exist despite historical circumstances. Its identity is not in jeopardy of being lost; even the exile and the

\textsuperscript{208} \textit{Contra} Weinberg, who thinks that the imprecision of “Israel” makes its position as a unifying term suspect and prefers “Judaean” as the term of self-definition for the community of Yehud (\textit{Citizen-Temple Community}, 65-66). However, it is clearly the definition of who belongs to “Israel,” or who is the “true Israel,” which is debated in the literature, esp. of the sectarian variety, during the Second Temple period; the other terms become of secondary importance to the claim of being the “authentic Israel”; see, e.g., the helpful survey of several of these terms by Graham Harvey, \textit{The ‘True Israel’: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew, and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature} (AGJU 35; Leiden: Brill, 1996).
The destruction of the temple cannot eradicate it. The question which Chronicles asks is not “Will Israel continue to exist?,” but “How will Israel continue to exist?,” or “What will be its ‘quality of life’?” Chronicles rejects the notion that disputes over “who” belongs to “Israel” are of primary significance; rather, “all of [YHWH’s] people” are to support the temple, the one institution from Israel’s past that has been restored and can serve as a source of identity and unity. While this genealogical utopia exists alongside a political utopia and a cultic utopia—as will be seen—it is the cultic utopia that subsumes all other utopian elements into its portrayal of an alternative reality worth pursuing.

Fourth, while Chronicles does advocate the privileged positions of Judah and Levi among the tribes, it does so in terms which are not as strong as scholars may have been led to believe and in ways which also critique these positions of power. Thus, the power of these portions of “Israel” is limited by the concern for “all Israel” which transcends the population of these tribes. Also, these groups do not escape criticism for failures in the past. The Davidic line fails and Judah itself is unfaithful (1 Chr 9:1); exile was the result. While Levi is not openly criticized in these chapters (as it will be at least once in the narrative [2 Chr 24:4-8, 30:15]), the tribe is not empowered carte blanche to do as

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209 The desolation of the land and removal of all of its inhabitants does not destroy “Israel” (2 Chr 36:17-21); in addition, while the cultic objects are preserved, the temple itself is destroyed and the cult is defunct (vv. 18-19). Thus, “Israel” does not cease to exist when its temple does or when it is removed from its land. In many respects, this view of the Chronicler on the continued existence of “Israel” without temple and without land is paralleled by several texts written after the destruction of the Second Temple (e.g., 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra) and by rabbinic literature in particular (cf. Knoppers, I Chronicles 1-9, 137).

210 Note that the edict of Cyrus in 2 Chr 36:22-23, the conclusion to Chronicles, emphasizes the religious sense of “people” without specifically restricting the return to the exiles who were descended ethnically from “Israel.” The parallel text of Ezra 1:1-4 reflects this similar idea; however, the genealogical connotation of “people” is emphasized in the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and is particularly evidenced in the two distinct groups of the תִּלְתֵּי נֵכָּרָה and the מַגּוֹל מֻגְּלָה; cf. my similar remarks above in Section 2.2.2.

211 Pomykala notes that the line of David is not singled-out for special mention in the restoration of the people from exile in 1 Chr 9:2-34 (Davidic Dynasty Tradition, 107). Is this silence a criticism? Possibly, but the silence itself is worth noting regardless of the answer to this question.
it pleases. The levitical cities are a reflection of this: the tribes gave these towns and pasturelands willingly, and the re-appropriation of these specific locales would be impossible given the extent of the borders of Yehud during this period. Thus, there is no notion of forced acceptance of this policy nor of the Levites’ “rights” to particular towns and their surrounding lands. Rather, a principle of generosity and benevolence on the part of the community for the members of this tribe is to be seen. There is no hint that such actions were commanded or instituted by law, by the Torah, or by God. This further minimizes the claims of the Levites to reinstate such a policy; they are dependent on the goodwill of the people. In this utopia, the powers-that-be cannot exercise control over every aspect of the community, but they must work alongside the members of the community with each group fulfilling their obligations to the other, especially as concerns the cult.

Fifth, the genealogies are part of the debate over the relationship between foreigners and “Israel” which took place throughout the Second Temple period. Through its explicit incorporation of intermarriage, the conflicts between these groups, and the emphasis on religious loyalty as of primary concern, Chronicles maneuvers a sophisticated position within the range of possibilities. Chronicles demonstrates that the simple dichotomy of “inclusive/universalism” and “exclusive/particularism” should be abandoned when discussing the variety of comments and formulations that were made about this hotly-contested issue in the ancient sources.

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While many instances of ritual practice, cultic concern, and Levitical responsibility in Chronicles are performed “as it is written” or “as Moses commanded,” the distribution of land to the Levites in Chronicles is merely recorded as an event lacking any invoked authority. Also contrast the claims made for Levitical rights, esp. for the tithe and land, in Num 35:1-8; Deut 12:11-12; 14:22-29; 18:1-8; Josh 21:13; Mal 2:4-9; 3:8-12; Neh 10:29-40 [vv. 28-39 Eng.]; 12:47; 13:10-12.
In the complex understanding of the Chronicler, this relationship is truly a utopian one: a chief point of contention (intermarriage) is nullified as a means of dividing the community, foreigners are summoned to support Israel and to serve as a sign of its blessing by God, the source of unity is emphatically located in the temple cult and in the worship of God there and not in the reestablishment of a political entity or even in the establishment of a closed organization of people through genealogical restrictions, and any notion of an idealized relationship is disavowed with mentioning of wars and other conflicts in which “Israel” is not always successful. This portrayal of Israel is not “perfect” or “ideal,” but it is definitely “better than” the current situation in which Israel found itself. Israel is portrayed as a unity internally despite the presence of outside threats. And it is this concern for internal unity which drives both the genealogies and the narrative which follows. The tension which remains in Chronicles between the nations and Israel is a part of the utopian character of these genealogies. All of the issues, means, and concerns are not smoothed out, resolved, or removed, but are part of what makes these chapters feel “real,” as if this was “reality,” and that is the sign of utopia, at least from the perspective of literary criticism on utopian literature as outlined in Section 1.2.  

Utopias are presented as realities despite their imaginary character; they

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213 See also the comment regarding the future program which the Chronicler advocated according to Japhet:

It will be a continuation of the monarchical period as it was ideally realized in the time of David and Solomon. The contours of this period may be sketched briefly: It will encompass ‘all Israel’, in the broadest ethnic, geographical and political terms; it will have a Davidic ruler, a descendant of David and Solomon; the people of Israel will live in full adherence to the Law given to them by Moses, and will be amply rewarded by God’s providence; and it will be a time of peace. … The Chronicler’s aspirations are for a realistic transformation in the history of Israel, along the lines that characterized the kingdom of David and Solomon and in accordance with the laws and principles that govern the history of Israel” (“Exile and Restoration,” 44; my emphasis).

Of course, I agree with her statement except as concerns the Davidic monarch; in addition, her observation is consistent with the view that Chronicles presents a “realistic” depiction of the past which is not historical in nature, but is a utopian critique of the present designed to challenge the status quo.
are not merely abstractions or speculations about ideals, but they reflect the concerns of the particular individual or group who articulates this reality in terms which critique their own present.

To summarize: by reading these genealogies through the lens of utopian theory, it has been suggested that the Chronicler’s use of genealogies is not simply one of legitimization, antiquarianism, preservationist tendencies, or the maintenance of the society’s status quo. Rather, by such a construction of an alternative reality, the Chronicler critiques the present reality through an innovative use of previous sources and his own material (whether reflecting actual sources or an imagined variety) in the formulation of a genealogical utopia. Thus, these genealogies in Chronicles are certainly about the past and the present, but they are primarily concerned with the future—and particularly the formation of a very different future than the present in which the Chronicler composed his work.
CHAPTER 3

A POLITICAL UTOPIA

3.1 Political Utopias in the Ancient World: A Survey

The importance of the Davidic monarchy in Chronicles has been much discussed. Its continuing significance for the Chronicler given the failure to reestablish the institution during the Second Temple period has been explained in a variety of ways. Two of the primary ways are: the expectation of a future restoration and the replacement of this institution by another (typically either the temple cult or the Persian kings). As noted previously, the idealized portrayal of the Davidic-Solomonic era has been at the center of such readings of the political aspirations of the Chronicler. However, it is not only the reigns of these two kings that can rightly be labeled “utopian.” Rather, the entire Davidic monarchy and its accompanying political system may be viewed as an example of the utopianism present throughout the book of Chronicles.¹ Before addressing the political utopia constructed in Chronicles, the comparative data from the Hellenistic world, the HB, and related Second Temple literature will be surveyed briefly in order to provide a context for discussing the method and concerns of the Chronicler’s political

¹ See the introductory comments on this issue in Section 1.1.4.2; and the remarks in Section 1.2.3 and Section 1.2 in general for secondary literature on utopian theory and utopianism in the ancient world; these references will not be repeated here, except when necessary.
utopia couched in his unique presentation of the Davidic monarchy. All of these texts discussed below are inherently concerned with the social structure and political governance of the various communities which they describe in such extravagant and detailed terms.

3.1.1 The Hellenistic Utopias: Golden Ages, Ideal States, and Distant Lands

The portrayals of utopias in Hellenistic literature briefly discussed in this section can be divided into three categories: Golden Ages, Ideal States, and Distant Lands. The first category describes a period in the past in ideal terms which stands in marked contrast to the present state or condition of society, often located at the dawn of history or in the mythic origins of humanity, and especially that of the Greek civilization. The second category contains descriptions of a society founded or structured on better principles, laws, or human interactions than the present circumstance. This ideal social enterprise is most often conveyed in an abstract philosophical discussion about a hypothetical state which is not necessarily located in the past—it may be a future development or a contemporary community as well; thus, while related to the first category, this category does not restrict the ideal to the hoary past, which may be irrecoverable, but suggests the possibility of future actualization. The third category consists of accounts of lands located at a great distance from the Hellenistic world, often at the “ends of the earth,” told by visitors to these lands who have since returned to recount the wonders and practical benefits of living in a society governed by a different set of principles, values, or political structure. While this category is obviously related to the second, a key difference between them is the claim to have seen life actually lived out under different
organizational schemes—thus moving from a hypothetical “what-if” to a “real” society that may be seen in some ways as admirable and worthy of imitation, and thus further emphasizing the possibility of attaining to or at least working towards this ideal in the present.

3.1.1.1 The Golden Age of Hesiod

In his epic *Works and Days*, the Greek poet Hesiod bemoans that “the gods keep hidden from men the means of life.” He then relates how the present miserable state of humanity had come about: Zeus punished humanity for the stealing of fire on their behalf by Prometheus. In response to this apparently detestable act, Pandora and her box of gifts are created. However, when opened, plagues begin to afflict humanity, leaving only Hope in their possession. Prior this catastrophe, Hesiod notes, the “tribes of men lived on earth remote and free from ills and hard toil and heavy sicknesses.” However, now humanity is resigned that there is “no way to escape the will of Zeus” (*Op.* 42-105).²

This abbreviated account of humanity’s better existence in the remote past is followed by a more detailed version of the past. Human history can be divided into five successive generations or races: gold, silver, bronze, demi-gods, and iron. In the “Golden Age” humanity “lived like gods” in a state of bliss without sorrow or fruitless labor or the evils of old age; and though being mortal, their deaths were all peaceful just as were their lives.³ This “Golden Age” was followed by a “Silver Age” in which foolishness, which led to sorrow, reigned. Third, the “Bronze Age” of violence came and passed. Fourth,

² Compare the similar account in *Theog.* 507-616.

³ The term “Golden Age” which is used in reference to any ideal time in the remote past is apparently derived from its use in precisely this manner here in Hesiod, *Op.* 110-120.
the demi-gods, who were more noble and righteous than those of the “Bronze Age,” were
created by Zeus. While many died in battle and most notably in the Trojan War, those
who survived were removed to the “ends of the earth” to the “islands of the blessed” to
dwell without sorrow. This inferior echo of the “Golden Age” is then followed by the
present era, an “Iron Age,” in which the “men never rest from labour and sorrow by day,
and from perishing by night” despite there being “some good mingled with their evils.”
The poet laments his unfortunate lot to be a part of this generation, which shall end in a
downward spiral of family strife and societal chaos (Op. 106-201). This pessimistic myth
is followed by extended advice to princes on how to live properly and prosperously given
the current evil situation. A host of topics are discussed including: gaining wisdom,
dispensing justice, care for strangers, avoiding the evils of violence and bribes, choosing
work over idleness, gaining wealth in the proper manner, social interactions, the proper
times for different agricultural and maritime enterprises, and the benefits of observing the
proper rituals and sacrifices at the appropriate times. Finally, all of these things are to be
done by the prince “without offending the deathless gods” and who may thus live a happy

The advice given to the prince on living properly in the present reinforces many
of the brief comments made in the description of the five ages: imitate the good qualities
of the ages of gold and of the demi-gods and avoid the evil qualities of the other three.
While the prince may not in reality attain to the blessed state of either the “Golden Age”
of the mythic past or the better life of those dwelling at the “ends of the earth,” whatever
can be emulated will certainly enhance the life of the prince (and those in his realm)
beyond the drudgery and bleakness of the present. Hesiod does not advocate simply a
resignation to the status quo or to despair without hope; rather, the prince must live under the principles of a different order of long-past and far-removed societies. Although such a life will not produce a new “Golden Age,” it will produce a “utopia”—a society (and particularly an individual life) which is better than the present reality so blatantly described as “miserable.” This connection between political philosophy and utopianism in Hesiod is echoed throughout utopian literature, often being reflected in the quest for the ideal political system, both in ancient and modern times. In addition, as will become evident, many of these issues raised in Hesiod will be employed and explored in the subsequent Hellenistic tradition, which often blends the concerns of politics with utopianism.

3.1.1.2 Atlantis and the Republic of Plato

The Republic of Plato is most obviously a work of political philosophy, outlining an ideal system of government, but as such it is thus also a utopian piece—filled with articulations of a better reality in contrast to the present state of affairs in Greek politics and society. Indeed, as Walsh rather bluntly notes, all utopian literature is but a vast body of footnotes to Plato’s Republic. The relationship between political philosophy and utopian literature noted in Hesiod above is perhaps no better illustrated than in Plato’s masterpiece. In his Laws, Plato notes that the purpose of this work, which is related to his Republic, is to “discover how best a State might be managed, and how best the individual citizen might pass his life” (3.702a-b). Hesiod’s prince has become Plato’s philosopher—the ideal ruler, whose role will be the subject of continued discussion in

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4 From Utopia to Nightmare, 40.
Hellenistic literature following the influential position taken by Plato. Throughout these two works, Plato affirms some aspects of contemporary society while the main thrust is criticism of its mores and structures by depicting an alternative reality, in this case a future society superior to that of the present.

Of a different quality is the myth of Atlantis recorded in *Crit.* 108e-115d and *Tim.* 23d-25d.⁵ As the result of an earthquake which formed a barrier separating it from the rest of the world, the island exists “in marvellous beauty and endless abundance.” Plato notes that it has been 9,000 years since the Greeks have had contact with this long-lost society, which in many respects reflects what the Athenian society used to be like. That society consisted of a hierarchy of several distinct classes: priests, craftsmen, shepherds, hunters, farmers, and the military. Plato’s implicit criticism here—in contrast to the more explicit *Republic*—is that the political and societal structure of ancient Athens and ancient Atlantis were superior to that of his present, and indeed such a structure forms the foundational basis of his own ideal society of the *Republic*. Thus, while the past cannot be exactly replicated in the future, for Plato it can be drawn on as a source of inspiration and a *concrete alternative reality* on which to base the form of a desired political utopia.⁶ Plato both affirms and critiques his society in these texts, offering a different reality upon which the Greeks should ponder and strive to imitate for the continued improvement and success of their society.


⁶ Compare the attempt by Plato to actualize a political utopia founded on his philosophical system on the island of Sicily, which ultimately fails miserably as recorded in *Epistle* 7.323d-352a.
3.1.1.3 Distant Lands in Homer, Herodotus, Theopompus, Hecataeus of Abdera, and Heliodorus

The various fragments concerning spectacular lands and their impressive societies located in the far remote areas of the known world are scattered in a number of writings. They provide the details of the societies mentioned somewhat cryptically as the “islands of the blessed,” which are assigned by Hesiod to the age of the demi-gods (Op. 156-169). In these fragmentary notices, the various authors proclaim the long-life and often superior height and strength of the inhabitants, their abundant vegetation and wealth, the peaceful internal and external relations they have cultivated, their unique social structures, and somewhat egalitarian or communal practices. While some of the descriptions are vague, the emphasis on the quality of life as being superior to that of the present society in the Hellenistic world resounds clearly. This “better reality” is understood to be a result of different political and societal structures accompanied by the obvious helps of being far removed from threat of invasion and of possessing a superior climate in which to dwell. However, these authors focus their attention on describing the means of societal structure and political governance, suggesting that although Greece may not be able to do much about invasions or climate it definitely can do something about its political and social organization. These utopias which appear in the writings of some of the most popular and influential historians and poets do not seem to be recorded merely out of antiquarianism or curiosity at the novel; their frequency and similarity in both form and content suggest that these alternative societies offer a social critique by depicting real societies at the edges of the earth that are governed much differently than anything

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known to exist in the Hellenistic world. In this regard, they are properly labeled as utopian societies.

3.1.1.4 The Panchaeans of Euhemerus

The societies mentioned in the fragment from Euhemerus (in Diod. Sic. 5.41.1-46.7) and from Iambulus (in Diod. Sic. 2.55.1-60.3; see below) are treated separately from the accounts mentioned just above because of their length and their greater importance in the subsequent history of utopian thought and literature. Hesiod’s notion of islands at the ends of the earth seems at work again in both accounts. Euhemerus notes that incredible amounts of sacrificial spices are produced on the island (5.41.4-42.3), and are sold throughout the known world by Arabian merchants. While isolated geographically, this island not only has the occasional commercial visitors but also has several groups of foreign descent who apparently reside among the native Panchaeans long-term: Oceanites, Indians, Scythians, and Cretans (5.42.4). While most Panchaeans live under a stereotypical king, the city of Panara receives special comment for its democratic government without a monarch, its elected triumvirate of magistrates, and its ruling class of priests who judge the “weightiest affairs” (5.42.5). Following this unique concern for priestly leadership, a description of the temple of Zeus and its surrounding lands is given in almost excruciating detail (5.42.6-45.2). This section concludes with statements regarding the fruitfulness of the land and the ancient warlike character of its inhabitants (5.45.3a). The political hierarchy of the Panchaean caste society is then explicated: priests along with artisans, farmers, and soldiers along with herdsmen. The

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8 Euhemerus’ fixation with priestly political leadership is atypical in the Hellenistic literature; see the comments by Finley, “Utopianism,” 9; and Geus, “Utopie und Geographie,” 76.
priests clearly stand at the top of the hierarchy in that they are the supreme judges and control the apportionment of the community’s common fund to all in equal shares, except for the provision of rewards to the most industrious among all the farmers and a double amount to each priest (5.45.3b-5).

After a brief description of clothing (5.45.6), the military is mentioned with the apparently contradictory notice that one section of this land is “infested with robber bands, composed of bold and lawless men who lie in wait for the farmers and war upon them” (5.46.1). While such an element is hardly “utopian” in the common understanding of “ideal” or “perfect,” it is consistent with the observation by utopian theorists regarding the inclusion and even necessity of such “inconsistencies” in the depiction of societies in utopian literature.\(^9\) Euhemerus’ discussion then abruptly returns to his primary concern, the priests. This group wears superior clothing and has a higher standard of living. Their duties include sacrifice, the singing of the hymns of praise and the recitation of prayers. Their myth of origin claims that Zeus himself founded their temple and that their traditions are faithfully handed down through the generations (5.46.2-3). Finally, Euhemerus’ account concludes with the richness of the land and the restriction of the priests to their land with threat of death if discovered outside the sacred area (5.46.4-7).

Several of the common utopian elements noticed in the previous selections are readily apparent. However, Euhemerus does not merely repeat these details. Rather, he offers yet another possible political scenario: priestly rulers who have power even over elected officials. In addition, his island is not closed to outsiders, but foreigners

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\(^9\) See the discussion of this methodological point in Section 1.2.
(especially Cretans) are welcomed and trade relations encouraged. However, even here the distinction between the priests and the rest of the community is emphasized: the priests are too holy to leave their assigned location. This priestly utopia comes with one possible drawback: they can never leave it, even if they wanted to do so.

3.1.1.5 The Island of the Sun in Iambulus

Iambulus presents an account of a series of kidnappings which eventually results in his and his companion’s being adrift at sea for four months until coming upon an island and its utopian society (in Diod. Sic. 2.55.1-6). The manners and physical nature of the inhabitants are “greatly different” from those in the known world, and this contrast with contemporary society is immediately brought to the fore of the account (2.56.1-6). The climate is “most temperate” and the passage from Homer’s Odyssey (7.120-121) describing the climate of the utopian Phaekia is cited (2.56.7). Common utopian motifs such as the fruitfulness of the land and long life are mentioned (2.57.1-4), while additional practices are discussed: the expulsion of the crippled and the deformed, their alphabetical system, their practice of common children without marriage (echoing Plato, Resp. 464a-c), their continual striving for internal harmony (2.57.4-58.1), fabulous animals (2.58.2-5), the geographic symmetry of the main and surrounding islands (2.55.6, 58.7), the rotation of duties among the entire population excluding the extremely elderly (2.59.6), and the succession of leadership without conflict from the eldest man upon his imposed death at age 150 to the next eldest and so forth (2.58.6).

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10 See also the comments on this point by Ferguson, Utopias of the Classical World, 106.
The account concludes with the ejection of Iambulus and his companion from the island after seven years “against their will, as being malefactors and as having been educated to evil habits.” This vague statement has been wrongly taken to indicate that “most utopians expel their visitors as evil-doers” and are thus closed to foreigners.\(^1\) However, while this particular expulsion is so defined, the seven-year cohabitation of Iambulus and his companion would seem to mitigate against the inherently exclusive nature of “most” utopias in ancient literature. Finally, his companion dies and Iambulus eventually returns to Greece to tell his tales of this island (2.60.1-3).

Iambulus engages in this phenomenon of utopian literature in the Hellenistic world and provides some interesting details about this society far removed from, but contemporary with, his own. As noted above, it is the “reality” of this society’s existence which suggests that the present political and social systems are not the only options available for the Hellenistic world; the invocation of Plato’s ideals as actual practice is particularly noteworthy.

### 3.1.1.6 The Fantastic Voyage of Lucian

In the middle of the second century C.E. Lucian wrote a story parodying a host of previous and contemporary material (\textit{Verae Historiae}). Among his many victims are the stereotypical introductions claiming the truthfulness of the following account employed by historians of both greater and lesser quality, the myths of Homer, and the utopian societies portrayed in Euhemerus and Iambulus.\(^2\) Although not constructing a utopia,

\(^{11}\) Winston, “Iambulus’ Islands of the Sun,” 223.

\(^{12}\) Iambulus and Homer are cited by name in \textit{Ver. hist.} 1.3; see Ferguson, \textit{Utopias of the Classical World}, 174-75; and the literature cited in n. 102 in Chapter 1.
Lucian clearly engages in the same method of defamiliarization as utopian literature does; indeed, in many respects the events narrated have a decidedly dystopian quality to them, which when read in conversation with his own time point out the absurdities and deficiencies of the present.

Instead of locating a utopian society at the “ends of the earth,” Lucian claims to travel to the moon, where he encounters a rather dystopian culture of violence and war between a host of mythical hybrid creatures (1.11-19). A treaty mocking the famous Athenian-Spartan treaty is recounted (1.19-21), and the traveler seeks to leave but is allowed to do so only after seven days have passed (1.21). During this waiting period, he observes that no women exist there, but the men bear children from their legs (1.22). This impossibility is followed by a series of similarly impossible descriptions of their life and culture (1.22-26). After finally returning to this world, the party is swallowed by a gigantic whale (1.30). After a violent conflict with others trapped inside (1.31-42), Lucian recounts his attempt to escape and the further islands encountered, which includes the Island of Blessed and its host of famous inhabitants (2.1-22). However, even here war breaks out (2.23-26), and Lucian is expelled to encounter further islands and adventures before finally being shipwrecked (2.27-47).

While this composition is parody, satire, and a self-conscious work of fiction (1.2, 4), it demonstrates the popularity that such types of writing apparently enjoyed in antiquity. In addition, the theme of the inevitability of war is particularly poignant. Rather than a utopian critique of the present, Lucian paints a rather bleak dystopia for his readers to consider as he simultaneously ridicules philosophers and utopists. Lucian does not hold out an ideal to be emulated, but conditions to be avoided.
3.1.1.7 The Ideal King in Xenophon’s Cyropaedia

While the previous six examples have focused on lands or societies, the final example of a political utopia from the Hellenistic world is the *Cyropaedia* of Xenophon. In this lengthy narrative, Xenophon presents an idealized account of the life of Cyrus the Great. This utopian account of an ideal king builds on the “philosopher-king,” Plato’s ideal ruler, but pushes the description beyond the theoretical and hypothetical qualities and organization of Plato to the realization of these qualities and the accompanying political system as a *lived reality* in the person of Cyrus. However, as Drews notes, whenever “the facts [of history] did not enhance the image of Cyrus, Xenophon freely altered them.” In this respect, the *Cyropaedia* is an alternative presentation of Cyrus which reveals something not about the past, but about the desired future. It portrays not only the model ruler but also the desired way in which all of society should live and come under the political governance of such an individual for the good of all society. By striving after the utopia—both individual and political—of the *Cyropaedia*, the present state of affairs in the Hellenistic world will be greatly improved, at least in Xenophon’s opinion.

Xenophon thus provides an example of a utopia constructed around an individual who exemplifies the best qualities to emulate. However, even this individual is not

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13 See also the brief discussion of this work, secondary literature, and especially the dissertation by Mitchell (“Ideal Ruler as Intertext”) in n. 104 in Chapter 1.

14 See the comments by Reichel, “Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* and the Hellenistic Novel,” 18; and Tatum, “Education of Cyrus,” 23.

15 Drews, *Greek Accounts of Eastern History*, 120.

16 See the various comments to this effect by Due, *Cyropaedia*, esp. 207-41; and Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World*, 56-60.
without fault and his reign is not perfect, merely better than the current situation of Xenophon’s Greece. Its utopian quality lies in its alternative reality that suggests a critique of the present and the possibility of something better in the future.

3.1.2 The Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature: Theocracy, Eschatology, and Communism

Discussions of utopianism in the Bible have typically focused on the portrayal of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2, the New Jerusalem of Rev 21:1-22:5, and the eschatological visions—particularly of the “messianic” variety—in the prophets. The Urzeit-Endzeit myths have been the most common means of interpreting this material. In addition, several descriptions of community organization have been labeled as “utopian” because of the seeming implausibility of their implementation in reality: the cultic system of the Priestly Source, the temple society of Ezekiel 40-48, and the Jerusalem Christian community of Acts 2-4. In this section, a brief survey of this material from the HB and NT will be provided as well as some comments on texts from Qumran, Philo, and Josephus which closely parallel these descriptions. As will be seen, these texts are not “utopian” because they are implausible historically (an anachronistic value judgment imposed on them), but they operate within the definition of utopia as social critique. As will be seen, they also have many points of commonality with the description of societal and political structure in Chronicles.
3.1.2.1 The Garden of Eden: The Urzeit in the Hebrew Bible

Perhaps the prototypical “biblical” utopian text, the description of the ideal conditions of the Garden of Eden has been at the center of discussions of utopia in the Bible. While this physical space may be viewed as ageographical and thus nonexistent, such a reading fails to consider that the Garden is provided with a rather vague location: in the East, at the headwaters of four rivers of which at least two exist in reality (the Tigris and Euphrates). Its location at the edge of civilization is similar to the placement of utopias in the Hellenistic literature discussed in the previous section; it is not unreachable, but is very distant, its precise location a mystery, and its entrance guarded. At least on one level, the Garden is utopian because it is located spatially.

On the second level, the Garden is utopian because of its description of living conditions that stand in marked contrast to the present situation of humanity. In the Garden, the human works but without effort, eats freely from all its produce save one tree, lives in harmony with all animal species, and the possibility of eternal life is at least implied. The prohibition to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil has been understood to work against the utopian character of the Garden when in fact the opposite is the case: this prohibition is vital to its utopian quality. As noted in Section 1.2, utopianism employs inconsistencies in its system as a means of engaging its audience in the process of evaluation and social critique; that is, by apparently breaking its own closed system, utopian literature invites further reconsideration of its own system and thus by implication the society which is the subject of its criticism.

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3.1.2.2 Eschatological Futures: The Prophets


\(^{18}\) It is worth noting that this concern for holiness, often associated with the Priestly Source and its “movement,” is absent from the account of the Garden, which is typically assigned to a source other than P; that is, the social location of the authors of these utopian works clearly influences their content—which is not static in the Israelite traditions.
priesthood under the Levites (Isa 66:20-21; Jer 33:14-26; Zech 6:11-14; Mal 2:4-9; 3:1-4). However, it is not eschatology (however that may be defined) which makes these visions “utopian.” It is rather the content of their visions, which stand in direct tension with the present conditions of their societies. Utopias offer a better vision of reality, and that is precisely what these various texts do.

As can be seen, while many of these texts are directly related to the language of Genesis 2-3, the images and language used are not restricted to what could be termed a “restoration” of the Garden. Thus, the common interpretation in the strict terms of Urzeit-Endzeit, in which the final state of the future is merely a return to the conditions of the mythic origin, is not sufficient to explain the eschatological visions of the prophets. As will be seen further in the next section, both the eschatological prophecies and the theocratic visions incorporate new understandings of a better future drawn directly from the social circumstances of the composers of these utopias.

3.1.2.3 Cultic Theocratic Visions: Priestly Source, Ezekiel 40-48, Temple Scroll, War Scroll, the New Jerusalem texts from Qumran, and the Book of Revelation

The separation of these texts from the earlier collection of eschatological visions of the prophets is not necessarily self-evident. These texts depicting better future societies could have been included in the previous section quite easily. However, it is their common concern to depict a theocracy, and in particular a cultic theocracy, which unites them. In addition, the level of detail provided in describing the nature of how this cultic theocracy would operate is far greater in these texts than in the more vague proclamations of those in the previous section. Thus, these related texts share a further
point of connection with Chronicles: the overwhelming concern for the cult, while still expressing it in the form of political organization.

While a relationship between the Priestly Code and the legislation in Ezekiel 40-48 is apparent, the dependency of one on the other has not been established. The arguments favoring the priority of the Priestly Code and reactionary nature of the Ezekiel material are accepted here.\textsuperscript{19} Thus, the legislation of P will be addressed first. In this material, the Priestly writer constructs a community centered around a cult in worship of the god YHWH. Under the deity are his spokesperson Moses and the priest Aaron. There are civil leaders from each of the twelve tribes, but the priesthood clearly wields the authority in legal matters, particularly as the final authority in any dispute. Of course, there is no monarch, save YHWH himself.\textsuperscript{20} The implausibility of implementing the elaborate sacrificial system along with its rituals, its Jubilee legislation, and its provision for Levitical cities has been the primary factor in labeling P a utopian text.\textsuperscript{21}

Much the same can be said for the Temple society described in precise detail in Ezekiel 40-48. The Second Temple is not the one described in these chapters; thus, this temple was not a historical reality. The temple’s dimensions, rituals, supreme holiness, and the distribution of land along with the topographical changes accompanying the river


\textsuperscript{20} Note also that Zechariah 14, a chapter heavily influenced by the ideology of P, anticipates the final restoration of YHWH’s monarchy over all the earth in the future (Zech 14:9). However, the kingship of YHWH alone is not enough to associate the text with the ideology of P, as the kingship of YHWH is also an integral part of the Deuteronomic theology. Indeed, Zech 14:9 is also the only verse apart from Deut 6:4 to use the phrase "יְהֹוָהֽ יָדַעְתָּם".
flowing from the temple itself have been taken as utopian elements in the picture of this society. However, it is again not the historical implausibility of these details, but the tension that such a picture creates with historical reality that suggests that this text operates within the ideology of utopianism.

A few additional points concerning this utopia in Ezekiel 40-48: (1) there is a civil leader termed a prince (םִּלְיוֹן)—who may be of Davidic descent—22—who provides for the sacrificial cult and has privileges in the temple precincts while the nature of his political power and duties is almost completely shrouded in silence; (2) this cultic utopia lacks any mention of a leading priest or of the high priest in particular; while the descendants of Zadok are given pride of place over the Levites (especially in the so-called “Zadokite stratum”); 23 the high priest—assumed by many but not all scholars to be a Zadokite during most of the Second Temple period—is nowhere to be found in a text which one might expect to laud his position and elevate his standing in the community; while it is certainly possible that the aforementioned prince is indeed this leading priest, such an interpretation is only one possibility of many; (3) the river flowing from the temple does not “recreate” everything, as 47:11 states that the “swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt”; this should be seen as part of the utopian character of

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21 On the Levitical cities, see the discussion in Section 2.2.3.

22 The ancestry or tribal affiliation of this individual is never stated in Ezekiel 40-48; he, his duties, and his privileges are mentioned in 44:3; 45:7-9, 16-17, 21-25; 46:2, 4-8, 10, 12-15, 16-18; 48:21-22. The Davidic heritage of the prince (םִּלְיוֹן) is only explicitly stated in Ezek 37:25. The issue is thus whether the single statement in this verse should be applied to the individual mentioned in the subsequent chapters. See the helpful comments on this figure by Paul M. Joyce, “King and Messiah in Ezekiel,” in King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar (ed. J. Day; JSOTS 270; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 323-37, esp. 331-37.

the passage—while the point may be that it is in this manner that salt will still be available for use, the “better” rather than “perfect” aspect of utopian literature arises once again in that the world is not “perfected” but is significantly improved; (4) in a similar way, the “leaves for healing” in 47:12 beg the question “Healing of what, from what, and for whom?”; again this is not a perfect or ideal existence without disease, but one in which healing is readily available; and (5) many of the rituals described in detail throughout these chapters do not align with the procedures outlined in the Mosaic Torah; while this has been noted and much discussed, it seems quite clear that the legislation in these chapters is to be that which is implemented in the eternal future and is of superior authority than the earlier stipulations.

Drawing on the imagery in Ezekiel 40-48, several texts from Qumran further develop the idea of a cultic theocracy. First and perhaps not as obvious a connection, the eschatological army of the War Scroll (1QM) is structured as a military unit led by priests under the leadership of the high priest (II, 1), and it is the heavenly liturgy recited by the army which accomplishes the victory and not fighting (X, 8-XVI, 1; XVI, 2-XIX, 13; cf. the liturgical victory of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chr 20:1-30). Second, the lengthy Temple Scroll (11Q19-20) depicts a temple and its cult in precise detail in a similar fashion to the report of Ezekiel 40-48 using language and concerns found only in that text. The high priest is mentioned repeatedly in the extant text as the leading authority (XV, 15; XXV, XXV,

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24 See the comments by Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40-48*, 37; and the repeated references to the heroic attempt at resolving these inconsistencies by a certain Hananiah ben Hezekiah in the Talmud (b. Hag. 13a; b. Menach 45a; b. Shabb. 13b).

16; XXVI, 3; LVIII, 18), and the king to rule over the people is clearly subservient to the high priest (LVI, 1-LIX, 21). The difficulty in determining whether this description of the temple, its rituals, and its accompanying social structure is intended to be a future temple of a temporary or permanent nature arises from the statements in XXIX, 8-9 which seem to indicate that the temple previously explicated in the scroll will be replaced by another temple, which God himself will create—apparently in contrast to the current temple made by human hands. However this interpretative question is resolved, it does not diminish the utopian nature of the temple and its community that are portrayed in the text.

Third, the fragments of the Aramaic New Jerusalem text (2Q24; 4Q554-555; 5Q15; 11Q18) describe the future city of Jerusalem following the pattern of Ezekiel 40-48. While the city itself is the main focus, there is clearly a temple present (2Q24 4, 3; 11Q18) with sacrifices being offered (2Q24 4, 1-21; 11Q18), and a high priest present (11Q18 13-14). Although the details are not consistent with the Temple Scroll, this text

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26 Schiffman suggests that the “Law of the King” in the Temple Scroll is aimed directly at criticizing the practice of the Hasmonean rulers, as many of the details align with events from that period (“Temple Scroll and the Nature of Its Law,” 49). While Schiffman does not label this “utopian,” this section of the text would serve a utopian function in its description of a better political order than the present one.

27 This text demonstrates that the blurring of terms like “utopian” and “eschatological” does not aid in interpreting the text. Whether this temple is the “final” temple does not detract from its “utopian” qualities. The Temple Scroll is an excellent example of the need for precision in terminology and for both synchronic and diachronic readings of texts to provide the largest possible context for interpretation.

shares its concern over the proper layout and organization of the community worshipping at this temple.²⁹

Although explicitly lacking a temple (Rev 21:22), the New Jerusalem described as the final abode of the righteous in the book of Revelation may be classified in this category for two reasons: first, the obvious relationship which it has to the content and form of these previous works also drawing on Ezekiel 40-48; and second, the city lacks a temple because of the immediacy of God himself to his people so that even without one localized space for worship this society is first and foremost a community of worshippers who praise God day and night for all eternity (22:3). On the first point, the detailed descriptions of the layout and structures of the city echo, though not exactly, those in Ezekiel 40-48 including: the angelic guide (21:15-17), the wall and the gates (21:12-14), the river flowing with trees and the leaves of healing (22:1-3), and the supreme holiness of those dwelling within (21:8, 27; 22:14-15).³⁰ In addition, themes from the other eschatological prophetic visions reappear: the dwelling of God with humanity in a restored relationship (21:2-3, 7, 23; 22:3b-5), the removal of sorrow, weeping, and even death itself (21:4), and peace with the nations (21:24-26). On the second point, this

²⁹ The possibility that the New Jerusalem text provides a description of the “final” temple mentioned in the Temple Scroll should not be dismissed too readily; such a relationship between the two texts is certainly possible though not the only option; see Florentino García Martínez, “The ‘New Jerusalem’ and the Future Temple of the Manuscripts from Qumran,” in Qumran and Apocalyptic: Studies on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran (STDJ 9; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 180-213, esp. 209.


³⁰ Note also the inconsistency in describing the state of those excluded from the city: in Rev 21:8 all who are not in the city are in the lake of fire suffering “the second death” while 22:15 does not specify the location of those excluded are except in the vague term “outside.” In addition, in 21:26-27 a third group seems envisioned who do not reside in the city but still have access to it as they also apparently have their names written “in the Lamb’s book of life.” Such inconsistency could function as a utopian critique.
society is a true theocracy—the direct rule of God over humanity; it is also a cultic theocracy, as it is the worship of God which unites all of its members despite the fact that there is no temple, no high priest, no sacrificial system. This vision is defined as utopian based on the dissimilarity between its depiction of society and reality; in addition, it also happens to be eschatological in nature.

3.1.2.4 Communism: The Essenes in Philo and Josephus, and Jerusalem’s Christian Community in Acts 2 and 4

The final type of political utopia to be discussed returns to the type of society presented as an ideal in the writings of Plato instead of that presented in the prophetic eschatological visions and the cultic theocracies. While standing in the tradition of societal ideals in the HB, these three communities presented as lived realities in Philo, Josephus, and the book of Acts echo the concerns of Hellenistic political utopias, especially in the harmony between its members and their common ownership of goods. The Essenes of Philo and Josephus live as ascetics, in community, and in devotion to the Torah. In many ways, they are model philosophers. The Christians living in Jerusalem held their property in common and assisted the poor among them (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37), being united in fellowship and meals (2:42, 46-47) and in their religious education from the apostles and in times of prayer (2:42). While these communities lack the

of those claiming to know which individuals or groups are included and which ones excluded from the New Jerusalem. Such claims cannot be made with certainty given the nature of the details in this passage.

Mendels rightly emphasizes this neglected aspect of the presentation of the Essenes in both Philo and Josephus, but moves too far in the other direction of disavowing the utopian elements which are indeed present in both accounts (“Hellenistic Utopia and the Essenes”).

See the comments in the brief but insightful article by Mealand, “Community of Goods and Utopian Allusions.”
wondrous elements of the utopian societies set at the “edges of the earth,” they participate in the discussion about the construction of a political utopia, as it would be manifested in society. These small (but often growing) groups of individuals exemplify alternate visions of political utopia, which exist in historical reality and are not abstract political philosophies. They are utopian not because they are unattainable or impossible to implement; on the contrary, they exist (or did exist) and stand in tension with other existing realities, which are thus critiqued as deficient in comparison.  

Excursus: St. Thomas More’s Utopia

A discussion of utopian literature in the ancient world would seem somehow incomplete without discussing the text that has provided the name for both the genre and the ideology itself. However, this text is not from the ancient world; it is, of course, the composition by St. Thomas More from 1516 entitled “The Best State of a Commonwealth, the Discourse of the Extraordinary Character, Raphael Hythlodaeus, as Reported by the Renowned Figure, Thomas More, Citizen and Sheriff of the Famous City of Great Britain, London,” which describes in two books this political community located on the island with the suggestive name “Utopia” (meaning “good place” and/or “no-place”). This excursus will provide some comments on the basic content of the work and those points that are significant for the reading of utopianism in Chronicles.  

More’s work clearly draws on the utopian traditions of the Greek world, especially Plato, and is influenced by the Christian tradition and Augustine’s De civitate

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Dei in particular.\textsuperscript{35} The basic plot framework of the entire work is as follows: the character More and his companion Peter Giles have an extended conversation with a traveler named Raphael Hythlodaeus (whose name translates as “purveyor of nonsense”),\textsuperscript{36} who has returned from a journey to the new world originally in the company of Amerigo Vespucci but who then set out with other adventurers. This individual relates an account of his time among the inhabitants of the island of Utopia who live in many respects a superior life than those in Europe (and in England and France in particular). Before this description (which is really the subject of Book II), however, Raphael addresses other societies such as the Polylerites among the Persians and debates the various objections of More and Giles to his political philosophy and his criticism of English society. In this dialogue, Raphael pointedly remarks, “What if I told them the kind of things which Plato creates in his republic or which the Utopians actually put in practice in theirs?” This is a key point in the work for two reasons: first, it establishes the reality of the Utopian society in contrast to the hypothetical nature of Plato’s\textit{Republic}; and second, as such a reality it challenges directly the reality of the present day England, which can no longer simply defer such criticism as coming only from an abstract and hypothetical society; that is, the alternative reality of the Utopian society is not “nowhere,” but exists in the present somewhere just as the Hellenistic utopias aside from the\textit{Republic} often did. Still in Book I, Raphael notes the benefits in the practice of commonality of goods versus the dangers of private property, which will

\textsuperscript{34} See also the discussion of More’s\textit{Utopia} and the secondary literature cited in Section 1.2.

\textsuperscript{35} On the relationship of More and Augustine see the comments by Hertzler,\textit{History of Utopian Thought}, 84-94, 127-46, esp. 129; and Wagar, “Millennium as Utopia,” 216-17.

\textsuperscript{36} This pun on Raphael’s name is only one of the many employed by More; such a practice is also common in the Hellenistic material; see, e.g., Ferguson,\textit{Utopias of the Classical World}, 105.
be a recurring theme in Book II. Raphael then emphatically invites his listeners to hear his eyewitness account of the five years he spent in the incredible Utopia (he left only to make known its wonders) in terms reminiscent of the ancient historian’s claims to authority and trustworthiness.\(^3\)

In the final paragraphs of Book I, Raphael begins to relate the history of the island before the trio decides to eat, and then return to hear the remainder of the tale continued in Book II. Raphael relates the shape of the island (a circle, but actually more of an oval), with its harbors and terrain. Raphael reports that the island was formerly named Abraxa and was connected to the mainland before the eponymous Utopus conquered the land at least some 1,760 years in the past\(^3\) and ordered the digging of the great trench to separate it as an island. The island now has fifty-four city-states identical in language, culture, and laws, and are laid out in a similar fashion and distance from each other as the topography will allow. Besides this “less than perfect” positioning, there is also a capital city at the center of the island. The utopian (but not perfect) geography again is brought up in discussing the cities themselves and the river Anydrus (“no-water”) which runs asymmetrically across the island.


\(^3\) See this number of years in *Utopia*, p. 121 lines 26-34; see also the claim of Romans and Egyptians being shipwrecked there some 1,200 years ago on p. 109 lines 1-11. This shipwreck allows for many of the similarities between Utopian culture and European, including its language, to be possible and somewhat more credible.
This discussion of utopian geography is followed by an extended explanation of:
the political system, work duties, leisure, education, the pursuit of the arts and science,
the repudiation of gold and wealth and fine attire, social relations which function as if the
inhabitants were all a single family, avoidance of pride and greed, a certain degree of
asceticism and patience in their actions, the allowance of visitation to the world outside
the island, the lack of morally corrupt institutions such as brothels and alehouses, their
inconsistent attitude toward war, their love of philosophy, their affirmation of Greek
literature and language, their more humane institution of slavery, marriage practices, their
allowance of suicide, the rarity of divorce (allowed only for adultery or “intolerable
offensiveness of disposition”), the need for relatively few laws given their education and
their equal distaste for lawyers, their avoidance of treaties, their relations with
neighboring peoples, and their diverse religious beliefs.

When Raphael has finished his account, the character More offers his own
reflections on what he has just heard: (1) much of it is absurd especially in light of
common practice in England; (2) he would like to discuss these matters further if
possible; and (3) he cannot agree with all of the description, but “readily admits that there
are very many features in the Utopian commonwealth which it is easier for me to wish for
in our countries than to have any hope of seeing realized.” With this final comment,
Utopia concludes.

One of the main interpretative questions brought to this text has been how to
judge More’s own position and advocacy of these ideas. Is “Raphael” More or is the
character “More” More? Do his concluding paragraphs indicate that this account
contains many ideas with some of greater and some of lesser value? However these
difficult questions are answered, More clearly constructed a society in tension with his present, especially the England of 1516; he also doubts that any of the “improvements” which he has offered in this alternate society would become actual practice in his historical reality. Nevertheless, *Utopia* exists as an alternative reality that offers a critique of the present social and political organizations and practices, and More has had his say. His desire to continue the dialogue with Raphael about these matters stands, in many respects, as an invitation to further discussion to whoever will engage More in the details of his text and the society described therein. More’s utopian *Utopia* is a call to question the *status quo*, to reevaluate commonly-held beliefs, and to probe the possibility of what England would look like if even some aspects of the society of Utopia were implemented in place of current practices and beliefs. Thus, More’s *Utopia* is not chiefly about the past or even present, but it is most concerned with the future.

3.2 *The Davidic Monarchy in Chronicles*

A few prefatory comments seem appropriate to establish the parameters of this study: An analysis of the Davidic monarchy in Chronicles must be limited in some way, given its complex nature and the numerous matters which could be discussed. This section will focus on the utopian characteristics of the portrayal of the monarchy in Chronicles. While Chronicles is to be read as a narrative in its own right without the necessity of a detailed synoptic comparison of Samuel-Kings, many of its utopian elements are expressed most clearly in the differences between the two texts. Thus, reference will be made to divergences in the accounts that illuminate the utopianism of Chronicles. In addition, some correctives to previous interpretations of particular points
will be offered, and the reader will be directed to other studies which address topics of interest that are not explored here in much detail. Also, in an effort to cover the entire monarchy and not only the “ideal” Davidic-Solomonic era or the presentation of the popular “reforming kings”—something not typically done in studies on Chronicles—this section will include discussions of each monarch and how each contributes to the utopian ideology of Chronicles.

Many of the cultic issues which are associated with the monarchy will be deferred to the discussion in Section 4.2, especially in 4.2.3, although some brief comments will be provided throughout this section. An excursus on burial notices as utopian space concludes Section 3.2. In the final section of this chapter (3.3), a synthesis of the Chronicler’s utopian presentation of the monarchy will be offered. Also, the unique role of the exile as a political and social concept and the understanding of the Persian Empire in Chronicles will be examined. As will be seen, this political utopia in Chronicles has much in common with the texts addressed above in Section 3.1 on political utopias in the ancient world. These texts will be referenced throughout the remainder of this chapter when appropriate and especially in Section 3.3.

3.2.1 Saul, David, and Solomon (1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9)

The repeated genealogy of Saul in 1 Chr 9:35-44 forms the transition from the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9 to the narrative that extends from 1 Chronicles 10 to the

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end of 2 Chronicles. Included with slightly different details in the line of Benjamin in 1 Chr 8:29-40, this information about Saul appears again following the list of returnees from the exile (in 1 Chr 9:3-34) which notes particularly those connected with the temple cult: the priests, Levites, gatekeepers, and singers. It has been suggested that this placement may indicate that the family of Saul should also be reckoned among the temple functionaries, in this case as part of the Nethinim or the “Servants of Solomon,” but such a relationship is not explicitly mentioned in the text. It may also suggest that the family of Saul had returned from exile to dwell in the land. While this second possibility may account for the presence of the lineage in 1 Chronicles 8, the duplication in ch. 9 requires another explanation.

Given the Chronicler’s emphasis on the importance of the Davidic monarchy in Israel’s past, it certainly would have been possible for the Chronicler to begin the narrative of the monarchy directly with David and avoid, or at least downplay, the significance of Saul or the reality that he was Israel’s first king. However, by beginning with Saul’s defeat at the hands of the Philistines, there are at least two significant points which can be made: First, the demise of Saul can be an explicit example of those who are unfaithful to YHWH and suffer the consequences at the hand of God. While the

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40 The Persian Empire will be addressed again with special attention to Ezra’s Torah and the Temple Restoration in Section 4.1.

41 Contra Demsky, “Genealogy of Gibeon,” 20. See the treatment of these groups by Weinberg, Citizen-Temple Community, 75-91, and the literature cited there.

42 Although, as noted in Chapter 2, such a reason is only one possibility for explaining the inclusion of particular information in a genealogy. Information about various tribes and families who evidently did not return from exile are included in these genealogies as well.

Chronicler has followed the narrative in 1 Samuel 31 rather closely with only a few changes to the story, the comments in 1 Chr 10:13-14 which follow this account are apparently the Chronicler’s own understanding of the significance of the preceding story. In these verses, the Chronicler explains that Saul dies as a result of unfaithfulness to the command of YHWH and, in addition, sought guidance from the medium instead of YHWH.

Second, the Davidic monarchy exists entirely as an action of YHWH who “turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse.” Will the Davidic dynasty practice the ways of Saul and his unfaithfulness or will it choose to be faithful? The assessment of the Davidic dynasty by the Chronicler on this issue will vary greatly from king to king. In addition, the reigns for some of the kings can be divided into periods of faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Thus, this episode about Saul introduces one of the main criteria by which the evaluation of subsequent monarchs can be made. The dynasty itself ceases to exist with Zedekiah (2 Chr 36:11-13). This king is described as being evil and rebellious against Jeremiah and Nebuchadnezzar; he also refused to turn to YHWH. The leading


44 The use of the root “unfaithful” (בלי צדקה) is the strongest evidence for this being the Chronicler’s own composition, as it is a repeated theme throughout Chronicles and appears often at points in the Chronicler’s Sondergut as the commentary to the events recorded (see, e.g., 1 Chr 2:7; 5:25; 9:1; 10:13; 2 Chr 12:2; 26:16, 18; 28:19, 22; 29:6, 19; 30:7; 33:19, 36:14). Note that there is no mention of unfaithfulness during the reigns of David and Solomon. According to 1 Chr 9:1, the exile of Judah is itself a result of their בלא צדקה. Thus, unfaithfulness is depicted negatively for both the individual and the community. See William Johnstone, “Guilt and Atonement: The Theme of 1 and 2 Chronicles,” in Chronicles and Exodus: An Analogy and its Application (JSOTSup 275; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 90-114; repr. (with slight revision) from A Word in Season: Essays in Honour of William McKane (ed. J. D. Martin and P. R. Davies; JSOTSup 42; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 113-38.

45 The first charge may be derived from Saul’s disobedience of Samuel in 1 Samuel 15, but the specific wrongdoing is not made clear by the Chronicler in contrast to the explicit statements in 1 Sam 28:18-19. The second charge contradicts 1 Sam 28:3-7, which states that Saul consults the medium only after he had inquired of YHWH but that YHWH had failed to respond at all. The theme of “seeking God” is also prominent in Chronicles; see, e.g., the works cited in footnote 60 in Chapter 2.
priests and people during his reign were “exceedingly unfaithful” (לְחִמָּהַּ לְמַעֲלָה), and the result was exile (2 Chr 36:14-21; cf. 1 Chr 9:1).

While the Davidic dynasty lasts much longer than the Saulide kingship, it is the people who are released from exile;\(^46\) indeed, the call at the conclusion of Chronicles is for the temple to be rebuilt and not for the reestablishment of the Davidic or any other monarchy. In other words, the Davidic dynasty is conditional and temporary in Chronicles.\(^47\) Just as YHWH made David king in place of Saul, so too the Davidic dynasty can be replaced at the will of YHWH in response to continued unfaithfulness (מָאָל). While not an explicit criticism of the Davidic dynasty, the remarks in 1 Chr 10:14 regarding the nature of David’s selection as a replacement for Saul provides a subtle critique of the claims for the necessity of the Davidic dynasty in the Second Temple period; after all, David was not Israel’s first or only king.\(^48\) Although the primary function of Saul’s death is to set the stage for David’s kingship as an anti-type, the Chronicler’s version also suggests a subtle critique of the monarchy itself.

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\(^{46}\) Note the failure to mention explicitly the fate of Zedekiah and that there is nothing similar to the “muted hope” for the dynasty in a story reminiscent of Jehoiachin’s release from prison in 2 Kgs 25:27-30 at the conclusion of Chronicles; cf. Mason, “Messiah in the Postexilic Old Testament Literature,” 363.


\(^{48}\) It is significant that Chronicles affirms that the “kingdom” (דָּוָּלָהּ וְזֶבַּזִּים) existed under Saul. For YHWH to turn it over to David, as stated in 1 Chr 10:14 (cf. 1 Chr 12:23), it must have had a prior existence and presumably with Saul as the caretaker; see also the explicit recognition of Saul as king in 1 Chr 11:2. This idea of “turning over” the kingdom seems to speak against emphasizing the uniqueness of David’s kingship, special selection, or status as the original monarch in Chronicles.
The remaining chapters of 1 Chronicles, 11-29, are concerned with the reign of David. While the vast majority of scholars have viewed the Chronicler’s presentation of David as “pristine” or “whitewashed” or “ideal,” these terms fail to capture the true nature of David’s depiction in Chronicles. It is rather a utopian view of this monarch—a better alternative picture without being perfect. It is certainly true that the David in Chronicles is not the same as the David of Samuel-Kings. The accounts which portray David in overtly negative terms in 2 Samuel and 1 Kings are not repeated in Chronicles: the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah the Hittite (2 Samuel 11:1-12:25), the internal family intrigues among his children and Absalom’s subsequent revolt (2 Samuel 13-19), Sheba’s revolt (2 Sam 20:1-22), and his depiction as an ailing old man who cannot keep warm (1 Kgs 1:1-4). However, Chronicles does not remove all of David’s flaws (1 Chr 13:7-13; 15:11-15; 22:8; 28:3), nor is he sinless (1 Chr 21:1-22:1), nor does he rule “all Israel” without elements of internal dissent (1 Chr 12:30 [v. 29 Eng.]; 15:29). These particular notices disallow an understanding of David as an ideal ruler during an ideal time.


See the intense debate over the inclusion of the episode of David’s census in Chronicles in the references cited in footnote 73 in Chapter 1. Knoppers correctly states that David does sin in this account as he confesses himself in 1 Chr 21:17 (“Images of David,” 453). He is also correct to note that David may thus serve as a repentant sinner in the Chronicler’s theological agenda (469-70).
David’s reign should not be seen as a legitimation of the monarchy by the Chronicler. Instead, in Chronicles it is David who reorients the monarchy towards its chief purpose: the worship of YHWH and his temple, which stand at the center of concern in the Chronicler’s account of Israel’s history and not the monarchy itself. Saul’s failure to seek YHWH is corrected by David’s concern for the cultic worship of YHWH and in his preparation for the construction of the temple by Solomon. The true monarch provides for the cult. However, even in this task, David does not establish practices that cannot be adapted or changed by subsequent monarchs. Thus, for example, his juridical reforms are not reenacted by Jehoshaphat in the same manner (cf. 1 Chr 26:29-32 and 2 Chr 19:4-11), his reforms of the Levitical and priestly orders are not merely reinstituted in exactly the same form by the reforming kings, and new methods of collecting funds are developed at later times (2 Chr 24:4-14).

Chronicles does not use David as a means of legitimizing current cultic practices by retrojecting them into the time of David or of the other kings. If this were the intent of Chronicles, then one should expect to find greater continuity between the depictions of cultic practice throughout Chronicles. The depiction of the cult in Chronicles should not too quickly be assumed to reflect the Chronicler’s supposed desire to reinforce the status quo. While the inconsistencies in the description of cultic practice have been attributed traditionally to redactional strata, there is another possibility. The Chronicler was not attempting to legitimize current practice, but was suggesting innovative ways for the cult to be organized or to perform in the future. The Chronicler recognized that the cult was not a static entity. Its organization and practices must be adapted over time. However, there must also be continuity between the past, the present, and the future. Thus, the
reforming kings “restore” cultic practice in line with that established by David or Solomon, but with new features given a new situation. In presenting the cult in this manner, the Chronicler emphasizes that the cult can always be reformed and restored, even when it has fallen into a period of inactivity during the exile. It also does not have to mirror the practices of the time of David, but it must stand in continuity with them.

Along with Solomon (see below), David is presented as a utopian ruler.\(^5\) His kingship is established by God in accordance with prophecy (1 Chr 10:14-11:9). His army is likened to “an army of God” (12:23 [v. 22 Eng.]) which is comprised of all the tribes of Israel (12:24-41 [vv. 23-40 Eng.]), including ambidextrous Benjaminites of Saul’s kindred (12:1-2) and chiefs of Issachar “who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel should do” (12:33 [v. 32 Eng.]). Thus, David is pictured as the leader of a unified people that even included relatives of his predecessor and as surrounding himself with individuals who can provide wise counsel. He is attentive to the cult of God as represented by the ark—in explicit contrast to Saul’s failure to do so (1 Chr 13:3).\(^6\) His military exploits are successful against the surrounding nations and his fame spreads among the nations (1 Chr 14:8-17; 18:1-13; 19:1-20:8; cf. 1 Chr 29:30). He also


\(^6\) Compare the claim in the Cyrus Cylinder that while Nabonidus had neglected Marduk, it was Cyrus who was chosen by Marduk to be the true king of Babylon who would restore his cult (\(COS\) 2.124:314-16; \(ANET\) 315-16). The building or care of temples by kings for deities is a common motif in ANE literature; see, e.g., Richard E. Averbeck, “Sumer, the Bible, and Comparative Method: Historiography and Temple Building,” in \(Mesopotamia and the Bible: Comparative Explorations\) (ed. M. 192
“administered justice and equity to all his people” (1 Chr 18:14//2 Sam 8:15), a stereotypical desire for all kings to perform on behalf of their subjects in the ANE.53 He

53 See, e.g., the ancient texts collected below:

_Ugaritic:_ “Kirta Epic” (KTU 1.16.vi.30-34, 45-54; COS 1.102:333-43; ANET 142-49); “‘Aqhatu Legend” (KTU 1.17.v.6-8; COS 1.103:343-56; ANET 149-55).

_Phoenician:_ “Inscription of King Yahimilk” 5-6 (COS 2.29:146-47; ANET 499); “‘Inscription of King Yehawmilk” 8b-11a (COS 2.32:151-52; ANET 502); “Azatiwada Inscription” i.3-13; ii.9 (COS 2.31:148-50; ANET 499-500).

_Akkadian:_ “Assurbanipal’s Coronation Hymn” 8, 12-17 (COS 1.142:473-74); “An Assurbanipal Hymn for Shamash” rev. 3 (COS 1.143:474; ANET 386-87); “Inscription of Lipit-Ishtar” 30-35 (COS 2.95:247-48); “Laws of Hammurabi” Prologue i.27-49; v.14-25; xxiv.b.6-8, 50-61, 65-79, 89; Epilogue xlvii.79-9xix.17 (COS 2.131:335-53; ANET 163-80); Edicts of Samsu-iluna and his Successors Preamble (COS 2.134:362-64).


_Greek:_ Hesiod, _Op. 225-237 (LCL 19-21)._ The contrast between the scarcity of this ideal in Greece and its prominence in the ANE is most pointedly evident in the massive amount of Egyptian texts discussing the intimate relationship between Maʿat (the Egyptian goddess of wisdom, truth, order, justice) and kingship; on this association see, e.g., the Pyramid Texts: Utterances 1, 249, 260, 519, 573, 586, 627, 758 (AEPT 1, 60-61, 69-70, 192-94, 228-29, 238, 260-61, 318-19); the Coffin Texts: Spell 624 (AECT 2.207-08); “Book of the Dead” 125 (BD 189-205; COS 2.12:59-64); “Book of Opening of the Mouth” (BOM 118-19, 140-43, 221-25); “Inscription of Nefer-seshemre called Sheshi” 1-4 (AEL 1.17); “Instruction of Ptahotep” Maxim 19, Epilogue (AEL 1.61-80; ANET 412-14); “Instruction to Merikare” 34-35, 47-50 (AEL 1.97-109; COS 1.35:61-66; ANET 414-18); “Prophecies of Neferti” 58-71 (AEL 1.145-49; COS 1.45:106-10; ANET 444-46); “Boundary Stela S of Akhenaten from El-Amarna” (AEL 2.48-51); “Great Hymn to Osiris” (AEL 2.81-86; COS 1.26:41-43); “Short Hymn to the Aten” (AEL 2.90-92); “Two Hymns and a Prayer in the Tomb of Ay” (AEL 2.92-96; COS 2.14:66-67).


In the HB, only three kings are explicitly associated with doing justice and righteousness: David (2 Sam 8:15//1 Chr 18:14); Solomon (1 Kgs 10:9//2 Chr 9:8); and Josiah (Jer 22:11, 15-17); cf. also Ps
established a judicial system in matters of both cult and state (1 Chr 26:29-32) and a
rotation of service for military and civil officials (1 Chr 27:1-34). He engaged in some
building projects (especially in fortifications of Jerusalem in 1 Chr 11:8) and assembled
the materials and structured the cultic organization for the construction of the temple. He
was generous in his own personal donation to the funds for the temple construction,
which engendered an overwhelmingly magnanimous response on the part of his
leadership to give freely of their own wealth (1 Chr 29:2-9). Finally, the transition of
time from David to Solomon is performed smoothly without dissension and to the
benefit of all (1 Chr 29:23-25).

The transfer of leadership from David to Solomon is clearly patterned on the
“installation” of Joshua as successor to Moses in Joshua 1. Solomon will complete the

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45:4, 6; 72:1-4, 12-14; 89:14; 97:1-2; Jer 22:1-3. However, in Samuel-Kings, the idolatrous end
of Solomon (1 Kings 11) seems to mitigate against such expectations and thus leaves David as the only
monarch to implement actually such practices throughout his reign. In Chronicles, Solomon’s failure is
absent, thus preserving both David and Solomon as utopian rulers who enacted these ideals in the better
alternative reality presented as Israel’s past. In addition, there is envisioned explicitly a future king who
will replicate these ideals; see, e.g., Isa 9:1-6 [9:2-7 Eng.]; 11:1-9; 16:4b-5; 32:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15.

54 This administrative system established by David is apparently maintained by Solomon in
Chronicles. Contrast the account of Solomon’s famous reorganization of the land into twelve districts in 1
Kgs 4:7-19.

55 Klein contends that this action by David is to “serve as a model for the post-exilic community of
the Chronicler’s day” (“Last Words of David,” 20, 22, 23); cf. Knoppers, I Chronicles 10-29, 625, 965.
This is certainly a possibility; however, even this reading should be understood from a utopian perspective:
the action presented is desired and not a reflection of historical events already performed by the community
of the Second Temple period. The relationship between joy and giving as an act of free-will is noted and
explored as a common motif by Yochanan Muffs, “Joy and Love as Metaphorical Expressions of
Willingness and Spontaneity in Cuneiform, Ancient Hebrew, and Related Literatures: Divine Investitures
in the Midrash in the Light of Neo-Babylonian Royal Grants,” in Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-
36; idem, “Love and Joy as Metaphors of Volition in Hebrew and Related Literatures, Part II: The Joy of

56 These statements by the Chronicler, of course, stand in contrast to the pressure on David to
select Solomon as successor and the series of struggles which Solomon had to overcome in his
consolidation of power in 1 Kgs 1:5-2:46.

57 See Abadie, “La figure de David,” 181-82; Auld, “Joshua and 1 Chronicles,” 138-40; Braun,
“Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder,” 586-88; Raymond B. Dillard, “The Chronicler’s Solomon,” WTJ
work begun by David (especially the temple) and will exemplify the ruler who “seeks
God” without unfaithfulness. Some scholars have argued that Solomon should be viewed
as secondary in status to David in Chronicles, while others have argued more
convincingly that the reigns of David and Solomon are presented as a unified period
which considers Solomon to be equal—if not superior—to David.\(^5\) Indeed, whereas
David is not without his faults, Solomon is presented as the nearly perfect ruler who
exceeds the success of his father, and is presented in categories that are not only utopian
but also ideal. Solomon is first and foremost “chosen” (\(\text{סֵאָרָא} \) by God, just as his father
David was. It is significant that in Samuel-Kings only David receives such laudatory
claims, while in Chronicles the term is applied to both David and Solomon—but to no
one else.\(^6\) Thus, Chronicles makes a clear point in these additional comments regarding
the status of Solomon. Further, while David was a “man of war” (1 Chr 22:7-8; 28:3),
Solomon is a “man of peace” (1 Chr 22:9).\(^6\) In Chronicles, peace is one of the many

\(^5\) On the second position see the widely accepted arguments by Williamson, “Accession of
Solomon,” 356-59.

\(^6\) The connection between peace and rest was seen repeatedly in the Hellenistic utopian literature
cited in the previous section. A similar point is made in the Chronicler’s portrayal of Solomon at the
temple dedication. Not only is he the “one of peace” without military conflict, but Solomon invites God to
“rest” among his people (2 Chr 6:41). The fire consuming the sacrifice and the glory filling the temple in
the subsequent verse demonstrate God’s acceptance of this invitation. This is a better alternative reality
than the claim by Solomon in 1 Kgs 8:56 that God had given rest to his people; see also Gerhard von Rad,
“There Remains Still a Rest for the People of God: An Investigation of a Biblical Conception,” in The
Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays (trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken; New York: McGraw Hill,
1966), 94-102, esp. 97-98; and Raymond Kuntzmann, “Dieu vient vers son lieu de repos (2 Chr 6,41),” in
blessings of the righteous; while victory in war is also a blessing from God, not fighting in the first place is perceived as the superior of the two.\textsuperscript{61}

In Chronicles, Solomon began his reign with attention to the cult—he and the leadership of the people sacrificed at the tabernacle of Moses in Gibeon (2 Chr 1:1-6).\textsuperscript{62} Following his cultic inquiry, Solomon receives wisdom from God to rule the people (2 Chr 1:7-13). At this point in the narrative, the Chronicler transposes the final paragraph from 1 Kgs 10:26-29, which immediately precedes the recounting of Solomon’s unfaithfulness and ultimate decline in 1 Kings 11. All such indications of this negative aspect of Solomon’s life are absent from Chronicles, and the transposition of this concluding text from 1 Kings may indicate that the Chronicler wished his readers to see


\textsuperscript{61} See Heard, “Echoes of Genesis.” The only exception to this depiction of Solomon is 2 Chr 8:3, which states that Solomon captured Hamath-zobah. While many have seen this as problematic for the depiction of Solomon as the ideal ruler of peace, it serves a vital function in the utopian geography of the Chronicler: Solomon’s empire was not exactly the same dimensions as David’s—Solomon’s was larger. This small detail thus serves to enhance the statement regarding the utopian extent of Solomon’s kingdom in 2 Chr 10:26 (see further below).

\textsuperscript{62} The contrast between Kings and Chronicles concerning the beginning of Solomon’s reign could not be more clear. In addition to the intrigues of 1 Kgs 1:5-2:46, Solomon marries Pharaoh’s daughter in a political alliance (3:1), and only then goes to Gibeon to sacrifice and apparently by himself (3:3-15). In Chronicles, the first action of Solomon is to assemble the leadership to go with him to sacrifice at the tabernacle at Gibeon (the specific notice about the tabernacle being unique to Chronicles). After both Solomon and the assembly inquired (גַּקְלָה) at the bronze altar (both details not in 1 Kings), God appeared to Solomon at night (without specifying “in a dream,” in contrast to 1 Kgs 3:5; see the comments by Schniedewind, \textit{Word of God}, 191-92).

The assimilation of the tabernacle tradition and the explicit notice about seeking God serve utopian functions in this narrative to bolster Solomon’s status. The direct communication between God and Solomon is unparalleled by any other monarch. Solomon is the only monarch not to require the agency of a prophet to hear God’s word; even his father David requires a prophet (1 Chr 17:1-15); see the further comments on this final point by John W. Wright, “Beyond Transcendence and Immanence: The Characterization of the Presence and Activity of God in the Book of Chronicles,” in \textit{The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein} (ed. M. P. Graham, S. L. McKenzie, and G. N. Knoppers; JSOTSup 371; London: T&T Clark, 2003), 240-67, here 248-49; and the claim that Solomon himself is presented as a “super-prophet” by Mitchell, “Ideal Ruler as Intertext,” 222-23.
all of Solomon’s reign as prosperous and that it was not divided into two distinct periods as in 1 Kings.63

Solomon then turns his attention immediately to preparations for the construction of the temple (2 Chr 1:18-5:1 [2:1-5:1 Eng.]). In this section, small differences (variant and additional information) between the accounts in 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles reveal a utopian concern on the part of the Chronicler. Connections are made between previous Israelite cultic traditions and Solomon’s temple apart from any historical reality or explicit statements in the source material. These clarifications, contradictions, and innovations serve to enhance the status of Solomon’s temple and by extension the Second Temple. However, even in this, these utopian critiques do not necessarily reinforce the status quo. Rather they may be indications of the Chronicler’s challenge to the prevailing understanding of the traditions and authoritative texts. While many (but not all) of these differences have been noted and discussed previously, their function as utopian elements in the text has gone largely unnoticed.

First, in 1 Kgs 5:1-4, Solomon notes in his message to King Hiram of Tyre that David could not build the temple because of his continual wars, but that God had given him, his son, rest. In 2 Chr 2:2 [v. 3 Eng.], Solomon merely reminds Huram of his previous provision of cedar for David’s own house. Thus, as Japhet notes, the apologetic nature of the text in Kings is not found in Chronicles.64 In the latter text, Solomon merely cites precedent without attempting to justify his actions to the foreign ruler. This may

63 Note that while the periodization of Solomon’s reign in 1 Kings is not present in Chronicles, the reigns of several other kings which lacked periodizations in Kings now have them in Chronicles. Thus, this schematization of the reigns serves a utopian function in Chronicles: by this device, Chronicles expresses a view of the kings which fits the alternative history in Chronicles and its purposes regardless of the parallel account in his source material. Compare the comments by Ehud Ben Zvi, “About Time: Observations about the Construction of Time in the Book of Chronicles,” HBT 22 (2000): 17-31.
indicate the Chronicler’s understanding of what accountability the Israelites of his own
time should have toward the surrounding foreign authorities—a very different approach
than the one taken in the appeals and letters in Ezra-Nehemiah, for example.

Second, this is followed by statements regarding the cultic activities to take place
in the new temple in 2 Chr 2:3 [v. 4 Eng. ]—details which are lacking in Kings. Japhet
also notes that this list of cultic activities happens to coincide with the order of their
appearance in the Pentateuchal legislation and that it is the only text to provide such a
summary of the regular cultic observances.\textsuperscript{65} This concern for the cultic tradition(s) and
its implementation is one of the Chronicler’s main motifs; these details affirm the
Pentateuchal traditions while serving as a model of what normal activities should be
occurring at the temple, whether they were being practiced or not.\textsuperscript{66}

Third, two explicit statements regarding YHWH are found only in Chronicles and
not in Kings: (1) the superiority of YHWH over all other gods; such a statement may
have been offensive to the non-Israelite king, but the Chronicler has no difficulty in
expressing this theological point; and (2) YHWH created the heaven and the earth,
according to Huram. While Israelites contended that this true, and even do so to non-
Israelites (e.g., Jon 1:9), it is rare that a non-Israelite made such a statement about the
God of Israel.\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{64} Japhet, \textit{I & II Chronicles}, 539.

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 539-40.

\textsuperscript{66} It is assumed that the Chronicler reflects the practice of his own time here; however, it is just as
likely that he uses this opportunity to remind his readership of what should be occurring according to both
the tradition(s) and \textit{actual} historical precedent as expressed in the \textit{reality} of the Chronicler’s version of
Solomon’s temple, truly a utopian construct in Chronicles; cf. Mosis, \textit{Untersuchungen}, 122.

\textsuperscript{67} Compare the confession of Naaman in 2 Kgs 5:15-19; see also the comments by Tuell, \textit{First and
Fourth, the identity of the Tyrian who fashioned the temple vessels, cultic objects, and curtains is different in 1 Kgs 7:13-14 and 2 Chr 2:12-13 (vv. 13-14 Eng.). In Kings this Hiram has a Tyrian father and a Naphtalite mother, but in Chronicles this Huram-abi has a Tyrian father and a Danite mother. The changes of name and tribal affiliation are significant. First, it has been suggested that both the addition of “-abi” and the Danite heritage may have been to echo the name and tribe of one of the two craftsmen of the tabernacle in the Pentateuch, Oholiab (Exod 35:34; 38:23). The concern for the Chronicler to establish continuity between the tabernacle tradition and the temple has already been noted in 2 Chr 1:2-6, which also explicitly names the other craftsman, Bezalel. That the Chronicler’s utopian reading of this tradition was successful in bringing his understanding of the relationship between the tabernacle and temple to the fore is reflected in a rabbinic tradition that follows his lead in drawing such lines of continuity.

Fifth, in direct contradiction of 1 Kgs 5:13-18, and 11:28, the Chronicler is insistent that Solomon did not use forced labor from the people of Israel. Instead, Solomon had subjected the resident aliens to the task of building projects with the Israelites involved acting as their overseers (2 Chr 2:16-17 [vv. 17-18 Eng.]; 8:7-10//1 Kgs 9:20-22). The Chronicler appears to have no qualms with such a methodology.

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69 Compare also the Chronicler’s inclusion of Bezalel in the genealogy of Judah in 1 Chr 2:18-20.

70 See the comments by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 541; and Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 124; both citing Pseudo-Rashi.
Similar to Xenophon’s utopian depiction of Cyrus, the Chronicler simply changes or ignores his sources whenever they do not fit his ideology of what constitutes a utopian ruler. Thus, for the Chronicler, Israelites should not be enslaved in the present either. These changes also affect the presentation of Jeroboam’s revolt in 2 Chr 10:1-11:4 and contribute to the complex presentation of Rehoboam in Chronicles (see below, Section 3.2.2).

Sixth, in 1 Chr 3:1 the Chronicler provides the earliest attestation of an explicit connection between the temple site and the location of the Akedah, the binding of Isaac from Genesis 22. The site which David had selected is further described here, and only here in the HB, as “Mount Moriah” which certainly refers back to the “land of Moriah … on one of the mountains” (Gen 22:2). While expressly emphasizing the Abrahamic tradition, the Exodus tradition that is of primary importance in the chronology of 1 Kgs 6:1 is entirely absent in the Chronicler’s version. This utopian geography may either reflect the writing down of an understanding or is the innovation of the Chronicler—it is impossible to determine which is the case. For the Chronicler, this is the reality of the

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71 See the comments above in Section 3.1.1.7.

72 In Kings the issue seems to be whether Solomon used forced Israelite labor to construct the temple versus his other building projects, whereas Chronicles denies any such practice at all. In addition, the policy of Solomon is already anticipated in David’s similar use of resident aliens as recorded only in 1 Chr 22:2.


74 The Chronicler does indeed downplay the Exodus motif, but he does not eliminate it completely from his narrative (1 Chr 17:21; 2 Chr 5:10; 6:5; 7:22; 20:10-11); cf. Abadie, “Quelle place occupe l’exode dans le livre des Chroniques?”; idem, “Une historie ‘corrective’,” 72-88; Japhet, “Conquest and Settlement”; idem, *Ideology*, 379-86; and Kegler, “Das Zurücktreten der Exoduustradition in den Chronikbüchern.”
relationship of these spaces and provides another level of continuity for the history of Israel’s cult.

Seventh, the dimensions of the temple and its vestibule are one of the examples of utopian space in Chronicles. It is significant that no text in the HB provides a clear or consistent statement of the size of the temple, whether the First or Second. While textual corruption is commonly postulated for the numbers and terms, Boer has argued that the description of a disproportionate structure is an example of utopian space that defies graphic representation, especially as revealed in the Chronicler’s account. The gigantic dimensions of the temple complex clearly present it as the dominating structure in Jerusalem—towering over everything else. If the Solomonic temple in Chronicles represents the utopian quality of the Second Temple—what the temple should be—this type of depiction may suggest a subtle critique of the present temple similar to the complaints voiced in Haggai and Ezra 1-6 about the inferiority of the Second Temple to the First (Hag 2:3-9; Ezra 3:10-13). However, Chronicles articulates this without any overt criticism of the present situation, only in portraying the past temple using utopian dimensions.

Eighth, while the remainder of narrative relating the actual construction of the temple and its contents is largely identical to the text in 1 Kings 6-8, several points are worth noting in 2 Chr 3:8-7:22. In both texts, Solomon must offer sacrifices on an altar other than the bronze altar made by Bezalel due to the large amount of animals. Kings fails to note the origin of this altar (1 Kgs 8:64). Chronicles, however, provides an

75 Only Ezekiel 40-48 attempts such a description of a desired future temple that is understood to not be the current Second Temple. There are disagreements between 1 Kgs 6:2-3 and 1 Chr 3:3-4, and the text of Ezra 6:3 seems to describe a cube, although again most consider this final passage corrupt.
explanatory note and clarifies its recent construction (2 Chr 4:1; 7:7). The concern for cultic detail is also reflected in the unparalleled description of the liturgical singers and music which immediately precedes the filling of the temple with the glory of YHWH (2 Chr 5:11-13).

In contrast to this concern for detail, the ambiguity in Chronicles concerning the length of time required for the building of the temple stands in marked contrast to the explicit statements in 1 Kings. Although both texts agree that Solomon took twenty years to build both the temple and his palace (1 Kgs 9:10//2 Chr 8:1), the respective amounts of seven and thirteen years appear only in 1 Kgs 6:37-7:1. While both texts also agree that Solomon began to build the temple in the second month of his fourth year and dedicated the temple in the seventh month (1 Kgs 6:1, 8:2; 2 Chr 3:2, 4:3), Chronicles does not provide a year for this completion, perhaps implying that the work took approximately five months. However, it is also possible that the ambiguity in Chronicles is meant to imply that the dedication took place closer to the end of the twenty-year construction period rather than after only the first seven. In Chronicles, it is only after the twenty years that Solomon clearly turns his attention away from constructing the temple and his palace to other aspects of his kingdom, which is not strictly the case in 1 Kings (esp. 3:16-4:34). Thus, Solomon’s reign does divide into two periods in Chronicles, but appears positive in nature: the construction of the temple and blessings on the righteous

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76 Boer, *Novel Histories*, 146; cf. the commentaries on this passage.

77 Of all the major commentaries, only De Vries notes that Chronicles fails to supply this temporal information (*1 and 2 Chronicles*, 249). He suggests, in agreement with my view, that this may have been to highlight the importance of the temple as the “the one most important project” of these twenty years.
ruler.  However, by obscuring the amount of time required to build the temple, Chronicles may be suggesting that the temple required a great deal more attention and time from Solomon than recorded in 1 Kings. Whatever the nature of this temporal adjustment (compression or expansion), such a feature is common in utopian literature—time is often manipulated to account for the plausibility of the depiction of certain details within the utopian society. Such a utopian manipulation of time in Chronicles can be seen in the failure to provide a specific timeline for Solomon’s activities.

Solomon’s reign following the temple construction is portrayed in completely utopian terms in 2 Chr 8:1-9:31. There is no hint of idolatry or of failure to seek YHWH. In addition, the possible negative implications of the giving of twenty cities by Solomon to King Hiram (1 Kgs 9:11-14) is presented in Chronicles as the reverse: it was Huram who gave the cities to Solomon (2 Chr 8:2). The cryptic remark about the dwelling place of Pharaoh’s daughter (1 Kgs 9:24) is clarified in Chronicles in a way which deflects any possibility of cultic corruption (8:11). In 1 Kgs 9:25 there is a brief notice that Solomon celebrated three annual cultic observances which states that Solomon also offered incense to YHWH. In 2 Chr 8:12-15, the notice is much more detailed. According the commandment of Moses (המשנה מ læא), Solomon offers daily sacrifices, celebrates the

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78 This stands, of course, in contrast to the division in 1 Kings into periods of righteousness and idolatry.

79 See the discussion of utopian time in Section 1.2.2.
sabbaths and the new moons, and the three observances are specified as the festivals of unleavened bread, weeks, and booths. According to the ordinance of David, he appointed the priests, Levites, and gatekeepers to their duties. Thus, Solomon stands in continuity with both the Mosaic Torah and the Davidic cultic organization. The temple personnel function in complete harmony with the Solomonic program. Also, the reference to the offering of incense by Solomon in 1 Kings is absent in Chronicles, which further highlights its significant inclusion in the Chronicler’s narrative of Uzziah (2 Chr 26:16-21).

The narrative then recounts his trading policies, the visit by the Queen of Sheba, and the extravagant wealth and wisdom of Solomon (2 Chr 8:17-9:28). In this passage, the relationship between Solomon and Huram is again discussed. Japhet notes correctly that the numerous small differences with the text of Kings have the effect of suppressing Huram’s independence and emphasizing his provision for the superior Israelite monarch. She concludes that this demonstrates the Chronicler’s lack of concern for “actual circumstances” and his ideological agenda. However, the Chronicler’s ideological agenda produces a different historical reality in his narrative—a utopian one, a better alternative reality—that provides a different understanding of Solomon.

This utopian picture of Solomon’s kingdom receives further enhancement by the dimensions of the kingdom in 2 Chr 9:26. These dimensions—from the Euphrates to the border of Egypt—recall the promise of land made to Abram by God at the conclusion of

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80 Japhet notes that the language of this verse combines both Priestly and Deuteronomistic terminology and that it probably reflects “the actual circumstances of the Second Temple” (I & II Chronicles, 627-28). However, this could also be a utopian presentation of the cult operating as it should.

81 Ibid., 630.
the first covenant ceremony in Gen 15:18. The same language is used in 1 Kgs 5:1, 4 [4:21, 24 Eng.] to describe the borders of Solomon’s kingdom. Thus, both Kings and Chronicles agree that Solomon’s kingdom is the high-point of Israelite geographic expansion, and possibly should be seen as a partial fulfillment of that promise. However, the placement of the two notices is significant. In Kings, the notice comes early in Solomon’s reign and prior to the temple construction. In Chronicles, the identical information is found at the conclusion of Solomon’s reign after his construction of the temple and just before his death. Thus, its placement in Chronicles may further highlight the connection with the Abrahamic promise of Gen 15:18. As one of the many blessings of Solomon as a result of his faithfulness to the cult, he presides over the kingdom of Israel in its utopian dimensions—never to be approached before or rivaled again.

In this section, the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon have been assessed for what they contribute to the Chronicler’s utopian ideology. The demise of Saul contrasts with David’s success while presenting a subtle critique of the monarchy itself. David sets the stage for Solomon’s implementation of cultic and, though to a lesser extent, political policies. The depiction of Solomon appears to exceed that of David, especially in his ability to follow established cultic practices; however, innovations in cultic practice seem to rest on the authority of David more than Solomon in Chronicles. These monarchs depict a political utopia, a better alternative society, but one primarily concerned with the temple and its cult.

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82 These dimensions are also found in Exod 23:31; Deut 1:7-8; 11:24; and Josh 1:4.
83 Solomon is correctly declared to be the single “highpoint in Israelite history” and one incomparable king by Knoppers (I Chronicles 10-29, 957).
3.2.2 Rehoboam and Abijah (2 Chr 10-13)

Both Kings and Chronicles treat the reigns of Rehoboam and Abijah as a related unit. However, they portray these rulers very differently and with important implications for the larger concerns of both books.\(^8\) Like 1 Kings 12, the united kingdom under David and Solomon is divided following the death of Solomon in Chronicles. Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, assumes the throne but quickly finds himself in the midst of an internal crisis that results in the secession of all the tribes except Judah and Benjamin. While the Chronicler’s version of the actual division is very similar to that in Kings, some notable differences both highlight the key concerns of the Chronicler and help to paint an ambiguous picture of Rehoboam that is best understood as a utopian critique of this monarch, the Davidic monarchy, and the northern kingdom.

First, the background (1 Kgs 11:11-13, 26-40) concerning the conflict of Jeroboam ben Nebat with Solomon and his flight to Egypt mentioned in 2 Chr 10:2 is lacking in Chronicles. However, the Chronicler provides information which alludes to this material (or tradition) in his account, both in parallel sections and in his *Sondergut*:

1. the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite is mentioned as a document containing descriptions of the acts of Solomon (2 Chr 9:29). This is the same prophet who symbolically gives ten pieces of his garment to Jeroboam and declares that he will be king in 1 Kgs 11:29-39; and
2. the narrative describing the exchange between Rehoboam and Jeroboam which leads to the rebellion is virtually identical, including

\(^8\) Knoppers states that the “Chronicler diverges more radically from Kings in his coverage of the early monarchy than anywhere else in his history” (“‘Battling against Yahweh’,” 531). While difficult to judge the degree of difference objectively, his essential point is nonetheless correct. Williamson also notes
references to forced labor, Solomon’s “heavy-hand” on the Israelites, Ahijah’s prophecy, and YHWH’s direct involvement in Rehoboam’s decision. Lacking in Chronicles, however, is the conclusion in 1 Kgs 12:20 that notes the coronation of Jeroboam by “all Israel.” While Jeroboam and other northern monarchs are called “king” in Chronicles, there is no report of their installation as monarch contra 1-2 Kings. Is this a subtle critique of the validity of the northern kingdom’s political system, made more explicit in other ways in Chronicles?  

Second, the issue over the political authority of the northern kingdom is complex. Chronicles clearly affirms that the division of the kingdom was YHWH’s doing (2 Chr 10:15; 11:3-4). However, there is some tension between these statements and the speech of Abijah to Jeroboam and all Israel in 2 Chr 13:5-7. This text seems to excuse Rehoboam’s actions on the basis of his youth and “weakness of heart” (רָע לְבֵב). Rehoboam is presented as the victim of Jeroboam and his “worthless scoundrels” (אֲלֶפֶּשׁוֹת רֹכַבָּם בָּנֵי הֶלֶל). This text also proclaims that the kingdom of “Israel”—and not only Judah—belongs to “David and his sons” on the basis of God’s covenant with them. This has been interpreted to indicate that the political authority of the northern kingdom is rejected in Chronicles despite the notice that its creation was a result of God’s actions. Knoppers suggests that this directly relates to the situation of the Chronicler’s own time: how the northern neighbors—Samaria in particular—should be viewed.  

While they are authentically Israelites, they have no right to separate political authority as

the “crucial importance” of the Abijah narrative for the Chronicler’s understanding of the divided monarchy and for the principles that it advocates (1 and 2 Chronicles, 250).

85 For example, 1 Chr 5:17; 2 Chr 13:1; 16:1, 3; 18:3; 20:35; 22:5; 25:17, 23, 25; 28:2.

86 See, e.g., Knoppers, “‘Battling against Yahweh’”; idem, “Rehoboam in Chronicles.”
the true Israelite political authority resides in the Davidic house. Knoppers further suggests that this reveals the Chronicler’s desire to reestablish the Davidic-Solomonic state, but this is not a necessary conclusion. Instead, as with the presentation of the previous three monarchs, the political significance of the kingship resides in its concern for the cult. Thus, for the Chronicler, the Davidic covenant is not primarily political in its nature; the Davidic monarchy’s primary concern is with the cult, and the cult has been reestablished without necessitating the reestablishment of the political dynasty.

This understanding of the political significance of the monarchy is reinforced by the Chronicler’s unparalleled description of the influx of priests and Levites to Jerusalem from the north (2Chr 11:13-15). The exclusion of these proper individuals as cultic functionaries by Jeroboam and his appointment of a different priesthood worshipping satyrs and calves is explicitly contrasted with the valid cult of Jerusalem (2Chr 13:8-12). In addition, Israelites from the north who had “set their hearts to seek YHWH God of Israel” migrated south to strengthen Rehoboam’s kingdom through their cultic faithfulness to the “way of David and Solomon” (2Chr 11:16-17). This will be the first of several migrations of faithful northerners to Jerusalem to participate in cultic worship. Such passages may indeed serve as precedents for the inclusion of faithful northerners in the worship of the temple cult during the Chronicler’s own time. While numerous scholars have recognized this, it should be emphasized that none of these accounts is explicitly paralleled in Kings. All of them are unique to Chronicles. These texts collectively serve a utopian function in Chronicles—they present a different reality.

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87 Knoppers, “‘Battling against Yahweh,’” 531.
88 Ibid., 532.
of the past than the one in Kings. In Chronicles, from the beginning of the divided monarchy all faithful Israelites are welcomed, if not invited, to participate in the cult and the community is better for it. Regardless of historicity, these accounts are reality for the Chronicler—a better alternative reality that has direct implications for the policies of the present and future. Thus, despite Knoppers’ desire to focus on the political point made in 2 Chr 13:5-6, the emphasis in vv. 8-12 is clearly on the invalidity of the northern cult and their failure to worship YHWH, and is consistent with the host of similar comments noted previously. It is the cultic failure of the north which also renders it politically invalid—just as such “unfaithfulness” will ultimately result in the end of the Davidic monarchy and in the exile.⁹⁰

Third, while Kings depicts Rehoboam’s reign as evil without any period of faithfulness to YHWH (1 Kgs 14:21-31), Chronicles has a more complex portrayal of Rehoboam. Following his obedience to the word of YHWH through Shemaiah not to attack Jeroboam, Rehoboam undertakes the building of his defensive cities (2 Chr 11:5-12). This successful enterprise is followed by the notice of the incorporation of priests, Levites, and faithful northerners mentioned above. Next, Rehoboam is reported to have eighteen wives, sixty concubines, twenty-eight sons, and sixty daughters (v. 21). Rehoboam also indicates his successor and insightfully provides for his other sons apparently to appease them and discourage revolt against the chosen heir (vv. 22-23). Up to this point, Rehoboam is presented in terms that would suggest his faithfulness as demonstrated by the blessings which he has received: ability to engage in building projects, further security from his newly-enlarged population, and many descendants.

⁹⁰ See the comments and references cited in Section 3.2.1 on this point.
However, these conditions of blessing are presented explicitly as the source of his subsequent unfaithfulness (ልuffers in 12:1-2. The implicit connection between Rehoboam’s cultic infidelity in 1 Kgs 14:21-24 and the plundering invasion of Shishak in vv. 25-28 are explicit in the Chronicler’s version (12:1-11). However, the Chronicler notes the humility and repentance of Rehoboam and his officers. This, an important point made repeatedly in Chronicles, results in deliverance by God. In this case, the deliverance is only partial: they are still plundered and still subjected to “serving the kingdoms of other lands,” though not destroyed completely, and the enigmatic statement that “conditions were good in Judah” closes this passage (vv. 6-12). Thus, it would seem that the Chronicler has presented Rehoboam’s reign as consisting of three periods: faithfulness with blessing, unfaithfulness with punishment, and repentance that tempers the judgment. Whereas other kings continue to respond in repentance by making reforms of the cult, no actions are attributed to Rehoboam. This omission may be the source for the final criticism of Rehoboam as ultimately evil and failing to seek YHWH (12:41). Finally, he dies naturally and receives a royal burial (12:16). The ambiguous presentation of Rehoboam, the first monarch of the divided kingdom, functions in a utopian manner. Both the positive and negative characteristics of

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91 I would suggest that this claim provides the favorable context in which to view Abijah’s confident faithfulness to YHWH that ultimately results in military victory and the death of the unfaithful Jeroboam in the following chapter.

92 The reigns of the kings in Chronicles are structured in several ways. The pattern of faithfulness, sin, repentance, reform applies only to David. Rehoboam and Hezekiah move from faithfulness, to sin, and repentance but without reform. Jehoshaphat proceeds from faithfulness, to sin, reform, and sin. Manasseh’s reign alone moves from unfaithfulness, to repentance, and reform. Kings who begin in faithfulness and then sin without repentance include: Asa, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, and Josiah. Kings who are completely faithful: Solomon, Abijah, and Jotham. Kings completely unfaithful: Jehoram, Ahaziah, (Athaliah), Ahaz, Amon, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Only Jehoahaz receives no such explicit evaluation of his reign.
his reign will be repeated by subsequent rulers. However, his reign demonstrates not only the necessity of repentance on the part of the unfaithful, but further emphasizes the requirement of reformation—and specifically cultic reformation—for those who will truly seek YHWH. The invasion by Shishak also explicitly provides the nation with a taste of subjugation—a foretaste of the exile and a state of affairs reflecting the Chronicler’s own time. However, in none of these instances does God allow the complete destruction of his people, but continues to act on their behalf.

Finally, the notice that conditions were good in Judah despite the depravation at the hands of Shishak is a utopian description par excellence. In this reduced and impoverished state, the Chronicler nevertheless asserts the true condition of the people. As suggested above, this may provide the Chronicler with the necessary context for the explaining the faithful reign of Abijah. In a thoroughly different portrayal of his reign from Kings, Chronicles presents an Abijah who is confident in YHWH’s support.

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93 See the Excursus on Burial Notices as Utopian Space in this Chapter for a further discussion of the significance of this for evaluating Rehoboam and the monarchy as a whole.

94 Although Hezekiah shares the same sequence as Rehoboam, he is in the end evaluated positively by the Chronicler. His earlier reforms may have been of such magnitude as to affect this assessment. However, what this further demonstrates is the inability to classify clearly individual kings according to a rigid system of evaluation, as Kings does in formulaic language. The Chronicler’s anthropology is much more sophisticated: actions alone—even cultic reforms—do not account for one’s fidelity, but intentions are also important, and humans can be inconsistent in their orientation towards good and evil; cf. the similar remarks about the Chronicler’s anthropology as related to Asa by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 741. This type of subtlety on a variety of topics in Chronicles that resist simple classification has been recently advocated by Ben Zvi (“Book of Chronicles,” 267; “Sense of Proportion”). His assertions are supported by this extremely brief discussion of the qualities which indicate that an individual monarch is faithful according to Chronicler’s own criteria.

95 Even the monarch’s name is different: Abijam in 1 Kgs 15:1-8. Also, the reign of Abijah is the only instance in which the Chronicler’s version does not contain the characteristic phrase of doing “what was right in the sight of YHWH” found in the parallel account in Kings. This phrase is used in Kings and Chronicles to describe the positive nature of the reigns of David (1 Kgs 5:5; 11; 2 Kgs 14:3; 16:2//2 Chr 28:1; 2 Kgs 18:3//2 Chr 29:2; 2 Kgs 22:2//2 Chr 34:2), Asa (1 Kgs 15:11//2 Chr 14:2; 1 Kgs 22:43//2 Chr 20:32), Jehoshaphat (1 Kgs 22:43//2 Chr 20:32), Joash (2 Kgs 12:2//2 Chr 24:2), Amaziah (2 Kgs 14:3//2 Chr 25:2; 2 Kgs 15:3//2 Chr 26:4), Azariah/Uzziah (2 Kgs 15:3, 34//2 Chr 26:4, 27:2), Jotham (2 Kgs 15:34//2 Chr 27:2), Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:3//2 Chr 29:2), and Josiah (2 Kgs 22:2//2 Chr 34:2). Ahaz is negatively contrasted with David by this phrase in both texts (2 Kgs 16:2//2 Chr 28:1). The negative
claims cultic continuity with the past and authority for the present and future, defeats his enemy when attacked by an army twice as large as his own, has numerous wives and offspring, and provides the security for his faithful son to enjoy ten years of rest (2 Chr 13:1-13:23 [14:1 Eng.]). Knoppers notes the similarity in the Chronicler’s own time and early period of the divided monarchy under Rehoboam and Abijah as related in Chronicles. This may be the case; indeed, if the Chronicler suggests that “conditions were/are good in Judah” in the present situation of foreign subjugation in late Persian Yehud, he may be using this narrative to support a policy of non-revolt against foreign powers. That is not to exclude the repeated assertion that the community may or should defend itself when attacked. However, neither does Chronicles seem to advocate initiating military campaigns to rid itself of foreign oppressors. What is clearly being contrast between David and Abijam in the first appearance of the phrase in Kings (1 Kgs 15:5) is not found in Chronicles; instead, Chronicles explicitly notes the covenant with David in Abijah’s reign (2 Chr 13:5). The only other notice in Chronicles that mentions the Davidic covenant without a parallel in Kings occurs in the evil reign of Jehoram (2 Kgs 8:19//2 Chr 21:7; cf. 1 Kgs 8:24//2 Chr 7:18). The consistency with which the Chronicler parallels Kings in including this phrase even when his overall evaluation of the particular king is more negative further highlights the importance of presenting Abijah as a faithful ruler in his text regardless of his presentation in Kings. Note that the Chronicler also does not contain the explicit comparison to David in Asa’s reign (1 Kgs 15:11//2 Chr 14:2) and in Amaziah’s reign (2 Kgs 14:3//2 Chr 25:2), which coincides with his enhanced negative view of both of their reigns in comparison with Kings (see further below). It is certainly possible that the Chronicler preserves an alternative historical account of Abijah as advocated by several scholars; see David G. Deboys, “History and Theology in the Chronicler’s Portrait of Abijah,” Bib 71 (1990): 48-62, esp. 61; Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 688; Jones, “From Abijam to Abijah,” 434; and Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 250; cf. Klein, “Abijah’s Campaign Against the North.” However, Knoppers’ correct contention that the concerns in Abijah’s reign coincide rather nicely with the Chronicler’s own time is highly suggestive of a constructed account regardless of its historicity or theological adjustment of a historical source (“‘Battling against Yahweh’,” 531-32).

96 Knoppers, “‘Battling against Yahweh’,” 531-32.

asserted in this context, however, is not complacency and the simple affirmation of the
*status quo*. Rather, the “good” conditions of the present are used by Abijah to create a
better future on the basis of his confidence in YHWH and the efficacy of the Jerusalem
cult. This thoroughly positive assessment of Abijah by the Chronicler—only Solomon
and Jotham receive the same evaluation—can do nothing but present his three-year reign
as an exemplar of a utopian ruler to be emulated.

3.2.3 Asa and Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 14-20)

The reigns of Asa and Jehoshaphat continue the emphasis on many of the themes
already prominent in the accounts of previous monarchs. The length and content of both
of the accounts of their reigns stand in marked contrast to their abbreviated parallel texts
in 1 Kings (15:9-24; 22:1-50). In addition to numerous clarifications, Chronicles
explicitly contradicts the version of Kings at several points.

One of the most obvious tensions is the chronological data in Asa’s reign,
especially the notices of peace until Asa’s thirty-fifth year and the beginning of war with
Baasha of Israel in the following year (2 Chr 15:19-16:1). Many attempts have been
made to defend and to deny the historicity of these data and to harmonize them with

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98 Another possibility for the final criticism of Rehoboam in 2 Chr 12:14.
However, as noted previously, the manipulation of time is a typical utopian methodology and functions within the Chronicler’s narrative to present an alternative reality of the past. It is explicitly stated in 1 Kgs 15:16 that Asa was at war throughout the reign of Baasha—in the chronology of Kings this would thus mean from Asa’s third year to his twenty-seventh based on 1 Kgs 15:33. However, the peaceful nature of his kingdom for the first thirty-five years of his forty-one year reign is noted quite emphatically in Chronicles (2 Chr 14:4-5 [vv. 5-6 Eng.]; 15:19). With this chronological displacement, Asa’s prosperity is seen as a direct result of his cultic reforms and determination to seek YHWH (2 Chr 13:23-14:4 [14:1-5 Eng.]; 15:1-19).

The text of Kings notes Asa’s cultic reforms in similar terms to Chronicles, but immediately proceeds to note his continual war and the appeal to Aram for assistance. Kings then quickly closes its account of Asa by noting his foot disease during his “old age” (1 Kgs 15:23) without any direct causation drawn between his alliance and his disease. However, Chronicles explicitly condemns the alliance with Aram by the speech of Hanani the seer and promises only war in Asa’s future for his failure to rely on YHWH for his defense (2 Chr 16:1-9). Asa responds by imprisoning the seer and inflicting unspecified cruelties on the people (v. 10). Chronicles also provides the thirty-ninth year


100 The lone exception is the attack by Zerah the Cushite in 14:9-15, which results in the further enhancement of Asa’s wealth. Compare also the contrast made to previous times of peril in 2 Chr 15:5-6; see the further discussion on these points above.

101 Note, however, the unique information in Chronicles that Asa commanded Judah to seek YHWH and to keep the Torah and the commandment (2 Chr 14:4). These details, of course, reflect the specific concerns of the Chronicler, repeatedly emphasized throughout his work.
as the advent of his foot disease; Asa is again criticized for not seeking YHWH for help (v. 12). Finally, his elaborate burial concludes the Chronicler’s account (v. 14).

Thus, in these differences, Asa is presented as a righteous king who experiences a loss of fidelity in his final years, ending his reign without repentance or reform. The faithfulness of Asa resulting in his overwhelming victory over the ridiculously large Cushite army is directly contrasted with his unfaithfulness in seeking the military assistance of foreigners. The call for dependency on YHWH for military protection has already been emphasized in the previous reign of Abijah (2 Chronicles 13) and will be prominent again in the subsequent reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20). The contrast developed between the response of these three rulers to similar threats—that climaxes in the extended narrative of Jehoshaphat’s deliverance through liturgical song—advances utopian critiques of military strength and reliance on foreign powers in Chronicles. Is it too much to speculate that the Chronicler is presenting an argument against a common view in his own time: the necessity of military buildup, possible incursions against surrounding areas, and forging alliances? The Chronicler advocates another position: YHWH defends and prospers those who seek him, especially through the cult and its

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102 See the excellent summary comments on the significance of Asa in Chronicles by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 740-41.

103 This is in explicit contrast to Kings, which notes that all three rulers experienced war while none experienced such deliverance by God—and not even on a far lesser scale—as portrayed in Chronicles.

worship.\textsuperscript{105} He supports this contention by constructing an alternative reality in Israel’s past that most likely relates to and critiques his present situation.

While the differences between the Asa in Kings and in Chronicles are significant and rather straightforward, the two accounts of Jehoshaphat are radically different with important implications for the Chronicler’s utopian portrayal of the monarchy. Although 2 Chronicles 18 is virtually identical to 1 Kgs 22:1-35a, the remainder of the Chronicler’s version of Jehoshaphat’s reign is either completely independent of or explicitly contradicts the abbreviated account in Kings.\textsuperscript{106}

The Chronicler begins his account with the statement that Jehoshaphat strengthened himself over/against Israel (יָדַעְתְּךָ עָלָיו בְּרַם) in 2 Chr 17:1. Japhet argues that this should be understood just as the same phrase is taken in 2 Chr 1:1 in reference to Solomon: “to establish himself over/to consolidate his rule” without the connotation of “against someone/something.” She further notes that such an interpretation is consistent with the Chronicler’s view of the last years of Asa life as a “time of unrest.”\textsuperscript{107} In addition, YHWH is with Jehoshaphat as he seeks him and walks in the “earlier ways of his father” (2 Chr 17:4).\textsuperscript{108} Thus, the Chronicler continues his narrative of Jehoshaphat on the basis of his unique portrayal of the reign of Asa. The similarities and contrasts between the two rulers are thus further heightened.


\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Contra} the claim by Raymond B. Dillard that the Chronicler may have derived his expansions from the brief (and vague) notices in 1 Kgs 22:43-47 (2 Chronicles [WBC 15; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987], 130).

\textsuperscript{107} Japhet, \textit{I \& II Chronicles}, 745. Both of these details, of course, are not found in Kings.

\textsuperscript{108} Following the common emendation to delete “David” from the text supported by the LXX; see Dillard, 2 Chronicles, 132; and Japhet, \textit{I \& II Chronicles}, 746.
Jehoshaphat is the first monarch in Chronicles to deal explicitly with Baalism and to be described in contrast to the northern kingdom (vv. 3-4). These details, unique to Chronicles, stand in juxtaposition to the actions of Jehoshaphat that directly result in his condemned military expedition with Ahab of Israel recorded in 2 Chr 18:1-2. In these verses, again unique to Chronicles, Jehoshaphat’s great wealth, marriage alliance with Ahab, and participation in a cultic sacrifice performed by Ahab are briefly recounted. At this questionable event, Ahab convinces or induces (תָּשֶׁר) Jehoshaphat to join him in going to Ramoth-Gilead. Subtle differences in their recorded dialogue are significant here. In 1 Kgs 22:3-4a, Ahab asks him to go to battle; in 2 Chr 18:2b-3a, Ahab’s request lacks an explicit mention of war. The final part of Jehoshaphat’s reply in 1 Kgs 22:4b states that “my horses are your horses”—which clearly implies battle—while the Chronicler’s version has Jehoshaphat introduce the explicit mention of war into the text (2 Chr 18:3b). Thus, in contrast to previous rulers in Chronicles, Jehoshaphat initiates battle—something Chronicles rejects as an inappropriate policy. These verses also stand in contrast to the description of Jehoshaphat’s military strength and peaceful kingdom as a result of his cultic policies in 2 Chr 17:10-19. In vv. 10-11, Jehoshaphat is not attacked by the surrounding nations, but instead receives tribute from the Philistines and Arabs without any fighting whatsoever. This utopian portrayal of foreign relations is followed by a description of his building projects and large military with adept commanders (vv. 12-19). While Jehoshaphat has gained his security by one method (seeking YHWH and cultic reform) he now attempts to increase this by another (alliance and battle). The Chronicler emphatically favors the former and thoroughly condemns the latter.
Jehoshaphat’s early success was a result of his cultic faithfulness. He seeks only YHWH and not the Baals (17:3), removes the high places and Asherim (v. 6), and institutes the teaching of the book of the Torah of YHWH (תּוֹרָה יְהוָה) throughout the cities of Judah to the people by an itinerant group of five officials, nine Levites, and two priests (vv. 7-9).109 This innovation in cultic practice has been repeatedly interpreted as an anachronism of postexilic practice.110 Regardless of its historicity or reflection of actual postexilic practice (an assumption with only the evidence of Ezra 7:25 for support), it functions as an indication of the utopian nature of Jehoshaphat’s cultic endeavors. Whether performed in reality (in either preexilic or postexilic times) or not, the Chronicler presents this practice as reality. Should this not be a possible way to act in the present? Rather than attempting to legitimate current practice by an anachronism, the Chronicler may be suggesting a change in current cultic practice based on the model of Jehoshaphat.

Following his escape from battle, Jehoshaphat is confronted by Jehu son of Hanani the seer (2 Chr 19:1-2).111 Jehu condemns Jehoshaphat actions, but encourages him by citing his earlier cultic fidelity (v. 3). Jehoshaphat responds, in contrast to his father Asa, with the institution of further reforms—in this case, innovations to the judicial system that involves cultic personnel (vv. 4-11). Again, this system instituted by

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109 See the explicit statement to his father Asa that during Israel’s past there was a time when Israel was “without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.” Jehoshaphat’s actions can be understood as an attempt to correct this situation by official policy. This common concern creates yet another connection between Asa and Jehoshaphat by the Chronicler.

110 Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 749.

111 This is yet another connection in Chronicles between Asa and Jehoshaphat. Hanani had rebuked Asa but with very different results than his son (2 Chr 16:7-10).
Jehoshaphat has been treated as an anachronism of postexilic practice. As with the previous example, this is not necessarily the case; the Chronicler could be advancing an innovation couched as reality in utopian terms. First, the institution of the judicial system follows only after the statement that Jehoshaphat caused the people throughout the entire land under his control to return to YHWH (v. 4). Thus, the ability of any political system to operate properly is dependent on the status of the people’s faithfulness to YHWH.

Second, in Jerusalem “certain Levites and priests and heads of families” were given final authority to decide disputed cases (v. 8). This court is headed by the chief priest (נערו) and the governor/prince (יוסף) of the house of Judah—not explicitly a Davidide—who have distinct spheres of responsibility: the matters of YHWH and the matters of the king, respectively. There is no evidence that such a political structure existed during the postexilic period. The assumption that actual practice is reflected here is just that—an assumption. As with all of Jehoshaphat’s innovations involving the cult, this presentation could just as likely been a suggested innovation for the Chronicler’s own time. That is, the Chronicler uses these depictions of a better alternative reality as utopian critique of the current systems—political and cultic—in his own day.

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The emphasis on the utopian function of the cult and seeking YHWH climaxes in the account of the miraculous deliverance in ch. 20. The invading army of Moabites, Ammonites, some Meunites, approaches Judah for battle (vv. 1-2). Jehoshaphat proclaims the only instance of a fast in Chronicles, and all Judah responds to seek YHWH with him (vv. 3-4). Jehoshaphat’s prayer, which reminds God of his past interventions, gift of land, and promise to respond when called upon from the temple (vv. 5-11), concludes with the dramatic expression “humble helplessness” in waiting for God to act (v. 12). The spirit-inspired Levite, Jahaziel of the Asaphite line, proclaims encouragement to the king and people stating that God will fight on their behalf the next day (vv. 13-17). The response is worship, including the praise offered by Levitical singers (vv. 18-19). The next day, Jehoshaphat commands the people to believe in God and his prophets. As he begins to follow Jahaziel’s prophetic instruction to head out to the site of their victory, Jehoshaphat consults with the people (vv. 20-21a). As no specific instructions had been given for the procedure, this interchange may have been to determine the appropriate arrangement. Jehoshaphat then appoints the Levitical choir to sing praise to God in front of the army (vv. 21b-22a). As they begin to sing, YHWH “set an ambush” and caused the enemy armies to destroy themselves without

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113 On this complexity of identifying this third group see the helpful summary by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 785-86.

114 In 2 Kgs 18:6, Hezekiah proclaims a fast, but Chronicles does not record this.

115 Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 792.

116 That this is also the only instance of this type of impromptu prophetic utterance and of a Levite prophesying greatly enhances the nature of Jehoshaphat’s response to what could be considered atypical prophecy. This is one of the numerous utopian elements of the chapter (see further below).

117 The text echoes the famous conditional statement made to Ahaz in Isa 7:9. However, the emphasis here is on the certainty of their success (the deletion of the conditional language); see Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 797. The further command to believe God’s prophets reveals the Chronicler’s positive attitude to prophecy as being authoritative and worthy of the same fidelity shown to YHWH in the cult.
the Israelites needing to fight (vv. 22-24; cf. vv. 15-17). After plundering their enemy, the Israelites joyfully returned to Jerusalem to praise God with music in the temple (vv. 25-28). The final result is the quiet and rest which results in Jehoshaphat’s kingdom as word of YHWH’s victory spreads among the surrounding peoples (vv. 29-30).

In this passage, the Chronicler emphasizes several key concepts by now quite familiar: faithfulness to cult, seeking YHWH, dependency on God instead of military power, the appropriate response to authentic prophecy, the people’s involvement in decision-making,¹¹⁸ and the resulting peace which comes from obedience. The account is thoroughly utopian in its advocacy of the proper response to military threat. The Chronicler is presenting a better alternative reality in numerous points made by this elaborate depiction of events: (1) the efficacy of the cult extends beyond the sacrificial system to its ritual liturgy; (2) Levites, particularly singers, may be the recipients of authentic prophecy, even if impromptu; (3) society will have rest and peace only when it completely trusts in God for its protection and not on human military power; (4) the political leadership does not always have the correct solution or the right to implement policy without consultation of the larger community; and (5) despite their temporary exile and whatever additional threats may come, Israel’s claim to the land is based on the promise of God and will not be denied. While scholars have assumed that many of these points are made to reinforce the status quo, they could be challenges to the current socio-political order or to common beliefs during the Chronicler’s time. The utopian quality of the portrayals of society throughout Chronicles would seem to fit better with an implicit

¹¹⁸ For the democratizing tendency in Chronicles, see the comments by Ben Zvi, “Book of Chronicles,” 271-74; Japhet, Ideology, 416-28; Boer, Novel Histories, 159; and Im, Davidbild in den Chronikbüchern, 52-58.
critique of the present than with an affirmation of a present that looks little, if anything, like the society depicted in Chronicles. The traditional labeling of these portrayals as “ideal” or “paradigmatic” does not capture the full force of their utopian function when read as the depiction of reality, at least as such a reality is presented by the Chronicler.

However, from this crescendo of utopianism, the Chronicler moves into a different portrayal of Israel’s past, a dystopian one set in contrast to the previous utopian constructions. Beginning in faithfulness, then to unfaithfulness, then repentance with reform, and further faithfulness rewarded by deliverance and blessing, Jehoshaphat’s reign concludes with criticism of his return to unfaithfulness. While clearly similar to the parallel account in 1 Kgs 22:41-50, the account differs in its assessment of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:31-37). First, the statement that he followed the ways of Asa his father (v. 32) emphasizes all the appropriate actions which Jehoshaphat had undertaken—the Chronicler does not wish this point to be missed. Second, the notice that the high places had not been removed (v. 33) is the first negative assessment of Jehoshaphat in this passage. This qualification to his level of obedience, of course, conflicts with the explicit statement that Jehoshaphat did indeed remove them at the beginning of his reign in 2 Chr 17:6. Rather than viewing this textual tension as a tendency by the Chronicler to preserve sources verbatim without attempting to harmonize inconsistencies, it is more likely that

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119 Contra Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 800-01. If this were the case in this passage, it becomes difficult to explain the change of wording in some of the Chronicler’s key phrases at the end of v. 33 and, more significantly, the deletion of the information from 1 Kgs 22:46 that Jehoshaphat had removed the remnant of the male temple prostitutes from the land that had existed during the time of Asa (mentioned in 1 Kgs 15:12, but not in the parallel of 2 Chr 14:3). While the aversion to the idea of male temple prostitutes by the Chronicler has been noted (see, e.g., Paul E. Dion, “Did Cultic Prostitution Fall into Oblivion during the Postexilic Era? Some Evidence from Chronicles and the Septuagint,” CBQ 43 [1981]: 41-48; and Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 706), it is significant that the positive statement which their removal makes about Jehoshaphat in Kings is also thus lacking in the summary of his reign in Chronicles as no substitute positive remark is included. Compare also the claim that the Chronicler has removed references
the Chronicler suggests, in line with his source, that there were indeed high places at the end of Jehoshaphat’s reign. However, for the Chronicler this would imply that they had been rebuilt during his reign—though not necessarily by the king himself since the following line indirectly implicates the people’s involvement.

This negative assessment of Jehoshaphat is continued in the Chronicler’s unique ordering of the information in vv. 35-37. In the version of 1 Kgs 22:48-49, the order of events is clear: Jehoshaphat builds ships, they are wrecked, then Ahaziah of Israel offers a partnership, which Jehoshaphat declines. The point in Kings is equally clear: Jehoshaphat had learned from his mistake in working with the northern kingdom from the Ahab incident. However, the events in Chronicles have a different order: Jehoshaphat acts “wickedly” in partnering with Ahaziah in building ships for an expedition, a prophet predicts the destruction of the ships due to the alliance with Ahaziah, and the ships are wrecked. The point is clear in Chronicles: Jehoshaphat did not learn his lesson about alliances, but repeats his mistake of the past. Thus, Chronicles portrays the end of Jehoshaphat’s reign negatively. This dystopian portrayal of the monarchs will continue with the Chronicler’s presentation of the next three rulers, ultimately resulting in the temporary period when the ruler was not a Davidide.

3.2.4 Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah (2 Chr 21-22)

The negative assessment of Jehoshaphat’s final years continues in the Chronicler’s description of the succession of Jehoram as king (2 Chr 21:1-7). The unique information concerning Jehoshaphat’s distribution of gifts and cities to his sons but the

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kingdom to Jehoram parallels the explicitly prudent policy of Rehoboam who appointed Abijah as his successor (2 Chr 11:23). However, in contrast to Rehoboam, Jehoshaphat selects his successor based on primogeniture.¹²⁰ This decision to follow the common practice of primogeniture will be a poor one. Once Jehoram secured his position as king, he murdered all his brothers and some leading officials—eliminating all competition. In agreement with 2 Kgs 8:16-18, the Chronicler notes that Jehoram married the daughter of Ahab and imitated the evil practices, presumably cultic, of the northern kings. The added information in Chronicles about Jehoshaphat’s practice of a marriage alliance and cooperation with Israel is stressed by the actions of his son. However, both Kings and Chronicles note that God did not destroy Jehoram because of the covenant made with David (2 Kgs 8:19//2 Chr 21:7). This proclamation will be seriously challenged in the narrative that immediately follows regarding Athaliah (in both Kings and Chronicles).

The revolt of Edom and Libnah from Judah at the time of Jehoram is noted in both 2 Kgs 8:20-22 and 2 Chr 21:8-10a. The Chronicler’s account also includes the explanation: he had forsaken YHWH (v. 10b). With his cultic unfaithfulness in erecting high places, Jehoram receives special condemnation in the form of a letter sent from Elijah the prophet (vv. 11-15). Much attention has been given to two aspects of this account: (1) the difficulty of this action being taken by Elijah during Jehoram’s lifetime on the basis of the chronology in Kings; and (2) this singular use of a prophetic writing as a method of proclamation in Chronicles.¹²¹ In Elijah’s letter, YHWH contrasts Jehoram’s

¹²⁰ Note that Abijah is the firstborn of Rehoboam’s second wife (2 Chr 11:20). While not stating why Rehoboam chose Abijah, it was not on the basis of primogeniture. The practice of primogeniture seems to be critiqued by the Chronicler who rejects its automatic and blind implementation; see Knoppers, “Preferential Status.” This is a utopian critique of the practice in Chronicles.

¹²¹ While the Chronicler uses prophetic speeches repeatedly for this purpose, this is the only instance of prophetic writing performing the same function. The other instances where the Chronicler
ways with those of Asa and Jehoshaphat and charges Jehoram with cultic impropriety and the murder of his brothers. Thus, even though both Asa and Jehoshaphat end their reigns with periods of unfaithfulness, the reign of Jehoram is thoroughly unfaithful; the positive aspects of their reigns stand out in comparison. YHWH further predicts a plague on his household and a terrible disease that will befall him personally. In fulfilling the first part, YHWH incites against Jehoram the Philistines and Arabs. It is no coincidence that these are the two groups who spontaneously brought tribute to Jehoshaphat during his early period of faithfulness in 2 Chr 17:11. The invading army captures his entire house except for his son Jehoahaz/Ahaziah (vv. 16-17). Jehoram is then struck with a disease that causes him a painful death after two years. He dies unmourned and “with no one’s regret” (vv. 18-20).

This abysmal picture of the monarch, much more negative than the portrayal in Kings, is a major departure in the depiction of the monarchy in Chronicles. Up to this point, the Chronicler notes the unfaithfulness of the kings and criticizes it, but does not express his disgust as pointedly as with Jehoram. He serves a dystopian function: this is the worse alternative reality. If this is the model, destruction is assured. For the Chronicler, the dystopian elements include: (1) the misuse of primogeniture; (2) invalid cultic worship, particularly on the high places; (3) marriage alliances that result in unfaithfulness; (4) exclusively negative judgment by the prophet without hope or a call to

mentions the writings of prophets are all references to source information or prophetic books, such as Isaiah (1 Chr 29:29-30; 2 Chr 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 24:27?; 26:22; 32:32; 33:18?; 33:19?; 35:25). Other historical sources not explicitly prophetic in nature or authorship are cited in 1 Chr 9:1; 2 Chr 16:11; 20:34; 24:27?; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 33:18?; 33:19?; 35:26-27; 36:8. There is also no pattern to these citations; i.e., righteous kings are not strictly associated with prophetic works while unrighteous ones have only non-prophetic court records or no additional written accounts at all. See also the discussion in my Excursus on Prophecy, Speeches, and Authority in Chronicles in Chapter 2.
repentance;\textsuperscript{122} and (5) the threat to the dynasty caused by all of this.\textsuperscript{123} While the view taken here is that the Chronicler does not advocate the restoration of the dynasty, this additional dystopian feature may possibly be the Chronicler’s attempt to show the futility of attempting to reestablish it in the midst of threats from the other dystopian practices. If indeed the Chronicler were composing this narrative to expose some of the negative repercussions of his present society, such elaboration on these particular points would also serve to enhance the overall schemes of the Chronicler’s utopian ideology in formulating the \textit{better alternative reality} for his present and future.

In reporting the one-year reign of Ahaziah, son of Jehoram, Chronicles closely parallels the account of this monarch from 2 Kgs 8:26-29 in 2 Chr 22:1-6, which emphasizes his association with the house of Ahab and their corrupt practices. In contrast, Chronicles summarizes rather succinctly the narrative recorded in 2 Kgs 9:1-28 in 2 Chr 22:7-9.\textsuperscript{124} One significant difference in the Chronicler’s abbreviated account is the location of Ahaziah when he is caught and murdered by Jehu son of Nimshi. In 2 Kings 9, Ahaziah is in Jezreel (v. 17), shot while fleeing, and dies at Megiddo (v. 27). Chronicles locates Ahaziah entirely in Samaria (2 Chr 22:7-9a), the capital of the north,\textsuperscript{125}

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\textsuperscript{122} This is unique in Chronicles. All other prophetic judgments in Chronicles provide some other form of hope or a call to repentance. The Chronicler may be expressing his view that, while rare, such a completely negative prophecy is possible, and should be avoided by his audience; cf. his negative assessment of the end of the kingdom in 2 Chr 36:15-16, which clearly serves as a commentary for the readers.

\textsuperscript{123} Japhet notes that while Athaliah attempts the eradication of the dynasty in 2 Chr 22:10 (//2 Kgs 11:1), Chronicles alone assigns “dynastic endangerment” to Jehoram on two different occasions (I & II Chronicles, 807). See also Simon J. De Vries, “The Schema of Dynastic Endangerment in Chronicles,” \textit{PEGLMBS} 7 (1987): 59-77. However, his conclusion that this motif reflects the Chronicler’s continued hope for the restoration of the Davidic dynasty is not the “only” explanation for its intensification in Chronicles (73-74). Rather, as suggested above, the tenuous nature of the dynasty may be a utopian critique of its reestablishment as being unnecessary and even dystopian in the context of his own time.

\textsuperscript{124} Japhet notes that this method is rare for Chronicles (I & II Chronicles, 820), but it does reflect his tendency to avoid or shorten throughout his work references mostly concerned with the northern kingdom present in Kings.
\end{flushright}
and of particular significance during the Chronicler’s own time. In addition, he receives a burial because of his descent from Jehoshaphat according to v. 9b, although the location is not specified. Three key dystopian features of Jehoram’s reign are repeated in Ahaziah’s: (1) invalid cultic worship, particularly on the high places; (2) alliances that result in unfaithfulness; and (3) the resulting dynastic endangerment. By following the practice of forming an alliance with the north and their cultic practices, Ahaziah again endangers the dynasty as he is murdered and his mother assumes the throne.

Athaliah, granddaughter of Omri, attempts to replicate the elimination of competition for the throne undertaken by the Chronicler’s Jehoram (2 Chr 22:10; cf. 21:4). Ahaziah’s son Joash is saved by his sister Jehoshabeath from death at the hands of Athaliah. For six years, Athaliah rules as queen over the land, temporarily interrupting the reign of the Davidic dynasty, which has gone into hiding for its very survival.

While Chronicles closely parallels 2 Kings 11 in narrating the events surrounding Athaliah, Jehoiada’s revolt, and the appointment of Joash as king, minor details reveal special concerns on the part of the Chronicler. However, even in the midst of this dystopian picture, a utopian presentation of the cult is maintained. To summarize the utopian elements of this cultic presentation briefly: the cult is still operative, with the proper functionaries, and with the proper regard for its status as a holy space. However,

125 Japhet contends that Samaria is more likely than Jerusalem, which would deny Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah proper burials (I & II Chronicles, 823-24). While this may be correct, her additional comments about the concern of the Chronicler for proper burials is overstated; see my Excursus on Burial Notices as Utopian Space below.

126 Although she is not called a queen in either Kings or Chronicles, both texts describe her as “reigning” over the land (מַלְכֶּה על לה). Thus, while both texts denounce her actions, her status as the ruling monarch is nonetheless affirmed; it is not her identity as a woman that is problematic for either text, but her association with the northern kingdom and its cultic practices. See also Carol Smith, “‘Queenship’ in Israel? The Cases of Bathsheba, Jezebel and Athaliah,” in King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient
in the Chronicler’s narrative it is the failure of Jehoiada to perform one of his duties which allows for the opportunity to carry out the planned revolt: he does not dismiss the Levitical divisions (2 Chr 23:8). This is a utopian critique of the ritual practices themselves: while the ritual practice and even written “ordinances” are to be followed, there are occasions which may warrant ignoring the procedure in favor of a greater good.\textsuperscript{127}

Athaliah’s death after the successful revolt allows for the restoration of the Davidic Joash to the throne, largely due to the efforts of a (priestly) woman and the priest Jehoiada. The cult not only continued to exist during this dynastic interlude, but also eventually is responsible for its reinstatement. This clearly emphasizes the priority of the cult over the dynasty. When both institutions are defunct during the exile, it is only the cult that is restored to the postexilic community. The cult alone is the source of Israel’s hope for the future, as repeatedly expressed in utopian (and dystopian) ways throughout Chronicles.

3.2.5 Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah (2 Chr 23-26)

The previous three monarchs (Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah) are presented with entirely negative reigns. The following three monarchs (Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah) are presented with reigns that begin in faithfulness and end in unfaithfulness without repentance. While Kings clearly portrayal the first triad negatively, its presentation of the second triad is more ambiguous. In Kings, each of the three receive the positive

evaluation of doing what was “right in the sight of YHWH” (2 Kgs 12:2; 14:3; 15:3), but qualifications are made to this claim—particularly evident in the violent deaths of Joash and Amaziah and the disease sent by YHWH on Ahaziah (Uzziah)—that imply failure on their part in some aspect of their rule. Further, while Kings details the restoration of Joash to the throne, the rest of his reign and those of his two successors are only briefly recounted in comparison to the coverage of the northern kingdom during this same period (2 Kgs 11:4-15:31). While including the information found in Kings, Chronicles contains significantly longer accounts for each of these three monarchs. This additional information serves to clarify their reigns, providing details to passing remarks in Kings, and to emphasize the utopian presentation of the monarchy in Chronicles.

Joash, hidden as an infant in the temple for six years, receives his kingship from Jehoiada the priest in a coup d’etat. In his coronation ceremony, Joash is crowned, given the treaty (תְּנֵי עִבְרֵי), proclaimed as king, and anointed by the priest and his sons (2 Chr 23:11). Jehoiada clearly sees his actions as consistent with the promises made to David by YHWH (v. 3). After the murder of Athaliah, Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, the people, and the king. The people destroy the foreign cult of Baal. While

127 Compare the cultic violations in Hezekiah’s Passover in 2 Chr 30:2, 17-20, and their apparent approval by God.

128 In Kings, this is the period immediately prior to the destruction of the northern kingdom by Assyria, so the focus on these northern kings is understandable given the period’s significance in DtrH.

129 These three monarchs are further connected by an emphasis on the condition of the heart, and especially the danger of pride; see 2 Chr 24:4; 25:19; 26:16; cf. the remark about pride as “a basic cause of sin” in Chronicles by McKenzie, 1-2 Chronicles, 57.

130 These same actions are reflected in 2 Kgs 11:12, but with a significant difference: all the verbs in Chronicles are plural while the first two are singular in Kings—the crowning and giving of the treaty done only by Jehoiada. This is one more instance of the democratizing tendency in Chronicles; see Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 833-34; and the citations in n. 118 above.

131 This statement is not found in Kings. The Chronicler emphasizes the priestly initiative in restoring the dynasty.
these points are found in Kings, the notice that Jehoiada restored the Levitical service with its liturgical music according to David’s order (נְלֵי דְמוֹד מִן דְמוֹד) and the written Torah of Moses is unique to Chronicles (v. 18).

However, it seems that Chronicles does not suggest that these actions taken by the leading priest are paradigmatic for his own time. Rather, the exceptional conditions of the coup and Joash’s age of seven (2 Chr 24:1) provide the explanation for Jehoiada’s increased political and cultic authority. As the narrative continues, Jehoiada is depicted as returning to the power structure reflected throughout Chronicles in which the king has ultimate authority over the cult. Thus, the Chronicler does not use this incident to augment the authority of Jehoiada (and thus the Second Temple priesthood or, more specifically, the high priesthood) in either the cultic or political spheres. Nor does the depiction of Jehoiada reflect the Second Temple role of the high priesthood. Instead, the authority of the Davidic king over the cult is affirmed in this narrative and throughout Chronicles. While partially an argument from silence, it is clear that the role of the king and his officials in cultic matters are increased in the Chronicler’s version while lasting changes in the authority of the (high) priesthood are not emphasized.

In fact, the textual evidence points in the opposite direction. While the (high) priesthood has assumed political authority in the past (as stated in 2 Kings 11 and repeated in Chronicles), such a condition was only temporary and did not continue beyond this highly exceptional case. Indeed, it rather establishes “royal responsibility for

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132 Contra Ackroyd, I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, 159-60; Coggins, First and Second Books of the Chronicles, 240-41; and Dillard, 2 Chronicles, 192.

133 See the authority of the king over cultic matters in 2 Chr 24:4-6, 8, 11-12, 14. While the statements in vv. 4-6 essentially agree with 2 Kgs 12:4-16, the king’s increased role in vv. 8, 12, 14, and the subordination of the Levites to the king’s officials in v. 11 are unique to Chronicles.
the restoration of the Temple.”¹³⁴ In the political utopia of the Chronicler, this point is highly significant. The political authority is responsible for the financial maintenance of the cult.¹³⁵ Thus, this narrative functions as a utopian critique of both the political and cultic administration of the Chronicler’s own day. Each has its proper sphere, role, and responsibility; they should not be confused, and traditions about the past cannot be invoked as precedent for increased authority on the part of either group.

Although the section of the narrative concerning Joash discussed thus far (2 Chr 22:10-24:14) differs from the version in Kings mainly in small (but important) details, the remainder of the Chronicler’s account of Joash (2 Chr 24:15-27) diverges significantly from the parallel in 2 Kgs 12:17-21. The royal burial given to the priest Jehoiada contrasts with the previous Davidic monarchs denied their expected burial privileges and with Joash himself who is denied burial with the kings—contradicting 2 Kgs 12:21.¹³⁶ Second Kings 12:17-21 suggests, though not in explicit terms, a change in Joash’s concern for the temple cult and his lack of faith in trusting YHWH for deliverance from foreign military attacks. In contrast, Chronicles explicitly describes the cultic unfaithfulness of the political leaders and Joash following the death of Jehoiada including even the rejection of prophetic warnings (2 Chr 24:17-19, 24). In addition, the reason for the murder of Joash by his servants is not provided in 2 Kgs 12:19-21. However, 2 Chr 24:25-27 declares that he had been wounded in the attack of Aram, was murdered by

¹³⁴ Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 842.
¹³⁵ See also the enormous supply of sacrifices provided by Hezekiah and his officials (2 Chr 30:24) and by Josiah and his officials (2 Chr 35:7-8), in comparison with the smaller amounts contributed by the priestly and Levitical leadership (2 Chr 35:8-9). The role of the Persian kings in providing for the construction of the Second Temple may be reflected in this particular emphasis in Chronicles (cf. 2 Chr 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4, 6-11; 6:3-4, 8-12, 22; 7:12-24; 8:36; Neh 2:7-8).
¹³⁶ Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 193. See the further explanation of the significance of this point in the Excursus on Burial Notices as Utopian Space below.
foreigners because of his own murder of Jehoiada’s son, and had many oracles made against him (יְהוֹיָדָא סְעֵד). Thus, the implicitly negative end of his reign in Kings is explicitly and poignantly expressed in Chronicles.

The earlier utopian portrayal of this monarch has become a dystopian picture of a ruler who abandons the cult of YHWH for other gods, rejects prophecy, even murders, fails to seek YHWH, and finally dies violently and without proper honor in his burial. Only Jehoram receives more explicitly critical remarks than Joash at the conclusion of his life (2 Chr 21:18-20). The notation of a cultic impropriety as the key event leading to the demise of Joash is also found in the Chronicler’s account of Amaziah (2 Chr 25:14-16) and Uzziah (2 Chr 26:16-21).

Amaziah’s reign begins with a sense of hope for reversal of Joash’s failure, but it soon fades away. In contrast to Joash’s murder of Zedekiah, the son of the priest Jehoiada who had done him and the nation so much good, Amaziah does not execute judgment on the children of those who murdered his father in accordance with the legislation of Deut 24:16, which is cited in both 2 Kgs 14:6 and 2 Chr 25:4 as Mosaic Torah. The king has been obedient to the Torah, but even this worthy action is critiqued by the Chronicler.

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137 Note the inclusion of the ethnic identities of these individuals as compared to 2 Kgs 13:21. It difficult to determine whether Chronicles has added information or Kings has deleted it for ideological reasons; see Curtis and Madsen, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 439; Dillard, 2 Chronicles, 193-94; Graham, “Connection Proposed”; and Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 854.

While 2 Kgs 14:3 notes that Amaziah did “what was right in the sight of YHWH, but not like his ancestor David,” the clarifying phrase in 2 Chr 25:2 does not mention David but instead states “only not with a whole heart” (ךֵּֽלְּ֔מָה בַּלָּֽהַלְּבָּֽם). The condition of one’s heart is very important for the Chronicler.139 The contrast between the depictions of Amaziah and Hezekiah in Chronicles is particularly noteworthy in this regard. In 2 Chronicles 25, Amaziah obeys the written Torah in one instance, but subsequently pursues questionable and unacceptable practices: enlists a mercenary force from the north, worships the Edomite gods whom he had defeated, challenges the north out of pride, is defeated by the north and loses the temple vessels, and is murdered by conspiracy. In 2 Chronicles 30, on the other hand, Hezekiah celebrates Passover at the wrong time (vv. 2-4), allows northerners to eat the Pesach “otherwise than as prescribed” (בַּלָּֽהַלְּבָּֽם; v. 18) and disregards the “cleanness of the sanctuary” (לֹא תְּמַרְּדוּת הַמְּדוֹר; v. 19). Nevertheless, his concern is for those who have “set their hearts to seek” YHWH (בַּלָּֽהַלְּבָּֽם לָלֹא חוּמַת לַדּוֹר), and God hears Hezekiah’s prayer. Their good intentions without the proper observance of ritual, and even when written authoritative texts are contradicted (vv. 19-20), are accepted by God. Although the Mosaic Torah is not explicitly mentioned in connection with Hezekiah, the contrast in the obedience to written regulations and the conditions of the heart between these two rulers nonetheless remains. Chronicles does not diminish the importance of observing written ordinances, even of the Mosaic Torah itself, but it does place a priority on the condition of the heart in seeking YHWH. Thus, the Mosaic Torah should be obeyed, but there also

139 See, e.g., the brief comments by Braun, *1 Chronicles*, xl-xl; Graham, “Setting the Heart to Seek God,” 140-41; and Schaefer, “Significance of Seeking God,” 104-05.
may be times when circumstances dictate a “greater good” to be achieved in not following the written commandments. This critique of “Torah piety” without an authentic internal desire to seek YHWH serves a utopian function in Chronicles. The better alternative reality of the Chronicler requires both obedience to Torah and seeking YHWH, but elevates the latter over the former.

However, in Chronicles Amaziah is not only obedient to the Mosaic Torah. He also obeys the prophetic oracle given by an anonymous “man of God.” In gathering an army to fight—itself a questionable policy in the Chronicler’s view—Amaziah hires mercenary soldiers from the north. However, these Ephraimites are to be sent home and Amaziah must trust in God to be victorious in battle. Amaziah is obedient and is successful in battle against the Edomites (cf. the brief statement in 2 Kgs 14:7). However, even in this victory, his actions are subtly critiqued. The results of his temporary employment of these individuals now angry with Judah (2 Chr 25:10) are the plunder of several Judean cities and the death of many of their inhabitants (v. 13). The dystopian quality of Amaziah’s policies culminates in his worship of the gods reverenced by the now defeated Edomites (v. 14). Amaziah is warned by a prophet, but this time he refuses to listen (vv. 15-16). In addition to his cultic misconduct (v. 20), the Chronicler emphasizes that the “boastfulness of his heart” (דַּבָּר קְבֵל קְבֵל K$#nw; v. 19) drives Amaziah to engage in battle against Israel. He is defeated and captured (vv. 21-23a).

Part of Jerusalem’s wall is broken and the treasuries of the palace and temple and its

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\(^{140}\) Compare the notion of supererogation in Catholic moral theology that emphasizes the “better” over the “good” in performing actions that are not required but bring about a greater good for either the individual or the community. In this understanding, the requirements are still necessary, but not the limit of the individual’s call to proper conduct.
vessels are plundered (vv. 23b-24). The dystopian portrayal of Amaziah thus climaxes in actions reminiscent of the exile of Judah (cf. 2 Chr 36:18-19).

The emphasis on the condition of the heart is continued in the reign of Uzziah (2 Chr 26:1-23). Uzziah begins in faithfulness, seeking God, and even being “instructed in the fear of God.” Uzziah experiences great military success and building projects recounted in details reminiscent of his righteous predecessors—David, Solomon, Abijah, and Jehoshaphat. However, the end of his reign is reminiscent of his two immediate predecessors who failed to continue in their faithfulness. Like Amaziah, Uzziah’s heart grew proud (נִבְגָד). This pride, the result of his success, leads him to an action of unfaithfulness: attempting to offer incense—a priestly duty (vv. 16-18). This passage (2 Chr 26:16-21) clearly advocates the exclusion of political leadership from specific cultic duties. While many have taken this as a reflection of the situation in the Chronicler’s own time, it is also possible that this is the Chronicler’s utopian portrayal of the relationship between the political and cultic spheres. The text in Kings lacks a reason for Uzziah’s disease, but Chronicles contains a very clear explanation: the violation of cultic protocol by a proud ruler. The emphasis on the condition of Uzziah’s heart is further highlighted by the notation of when he was struck by YHWH with his disease. The Chronicler twice states that it is only after he became angry that Uzziah is afflicted.

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141 It is difficult to say whether these two concepts are equivalent in Chronicles. While they most often seem to be, this is not true in every case.

142 Contrast the acceptance of cultic violations by a ruler “whose heart is in the right place,” i.e., Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30). See further below.
While his attempt to enter the temple is evidence enough (2 Chr 27:2), it is his anger which reveals the true nature of his heart, and it is explicitly his anger that is the cause of his punishment.

Thus, Uzziah serves both utopian and dystopian functions in Chronicles: in his period of seeking YHWH, God prospers him in military victory and national security; in his period of unfaithfulness, his cultic transgression, pride, and anger lead to his demise and his inability to rule. In his depiction of Uzziah, the Chronicler critiques the security offered by military victory and strength, suggesting that it leads ultimately to trust in the wrong source of hope. He also affirms the distinction between cultic and civil spheres advanced earlier in the narrative. The description of Uzziah may have been constructed to criticize either actual practice or common beliefs from the Chronicler’s own time. The community should not trust in military security and it must demand the support of the cult from the political leadership while denying them access to rituals assigned only to the priesthood. However, even more significant than either of these points are the repeated emphases on the condition of the heart and seeking YHWH. Uzziah’s utopian beginning results in a dystopian end because of unfaithfulness motivated by a proud and angry heart.

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143 This verb appears four times in Chronicles: the excessive action of the north in killing Judahites (2 Chr 28:5-9); the response of Asa to Hanani’s prophecy (2 Chr 16:7-10); and twice in reference to Uzziah (2 Chr 26:19).

144 See especially the administrative judicial systems of David (1 Chr 26:29-32) and Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 19:4-11).
3.2.6 Jotham and Ahaz (2 Chr 27-28)

In contrast to the periodization of the reigns of previous monarchs into times of faithfulness and unfaithfulness, Jotham and Ahaz are depicted as having reigns entirely positive and negative, respectively. In this regard, Jotham is particularly noteworthy. Solomon is the only ruler to escape criticism completely in Chronicles. Although Jotham himself is not criticized, the comment that “the people still followed corrupt practices” (v. 2) denies him an ideal reign—but not a utopian one. As the dystopian images of the monarchy have been recounted over the past several chapters, this brief account of a period of respite, of a better reality, demonstrates one of the key theological points of the Chronicler: each generation or individual can make decisions and is not bound to repeat the mistakes of the past. Jotham alone is said to have “ordered his ways before YHWH” (יהוה ילבש לו הכהן יחל; v. 6), and this laudatory action results in his becoming strong, achieving military success, and building projects. However, in contrast to his father, Jotham does not become proud as a result. His reign is utopian—a better alternative reality than both the preceding accounts and, most likely, the Chronicler’s own time. Although extremely similar to the account in 2 Kgs 15:32-38, the Chronicler’s version emphasizes the utopian quality of Jotham’s reign. While the Kings’ version ends with the ominous note that it was during Jotham’s time that YHWH began to send Aram and Israel to invade Judah, nothing of this is reflected in Chronicles.\footnote{Although Chronicles does mention wars of Jotham (2 Chr 27:7), it does not mention the identity of his opponents or hint at any subsequent disaster. In contrast to his supposedly typical methodology, the Chronicler is not compelled to provide an explanation for this seemingly unjustified punishment on Jotham in his source material.} The thoroughly positive picture of Jotham in Chronicles is not a result of his lack of additional sources.
for this monarch, but the utopia under Jotham is precisely that—the depiction of a better alternative reality which critiques not only the Chronicler’s present but also the fatalistic inevitability of the book of Kings. However, this utopia under Jotham is short-lived, as his son Ahaz institutes what is the clearest picture of a dystopia in Chronicles.

Whereas Manasseh is the epitome of evil in Kings, Ahaz serves the similar (though not exact) role in Chronicles. Like his predecessors Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah, the reign of Ahaz is thoroughly negative, and is mostly concerned with cultic misconduct. However, Ahaz’s actions exceed everything that has come before. Chronicles depicts Ahaz as the first king to practice child sacrifice (2 Chr 28:1-4). Because of his cultic practices—implicit in Kings but explicit in Chronicles—Ahaz is attacked by Aram and Israel. While 2 Kgs 16:5 clearly states that Ahaz could not be conquered, Chronicles presents Judah being devastated at the hands of these nations (2 Chr 28:5-8). Whatever the historical reality behind these texts, the prophetic oracle of Oded provides the key to understanding the Chronicler’s version of events (vv. 9-15).

This prophet addresses the army of the northern kingdom telling them to send the Judahite captives back. His words are reinforced by certain Ephraimites. After a remarkable exhibition of compassion and humanitarianism, the captives are returned to the city of Jericho (v. 15). While Japhet rightly emphasizes the significance of claims to “the brotherhood of Judah and Israel” and the text’s function as a “model of moral integrity,” there is an additional point to be made here.

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146 Contra Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 890-91.
147 This is also the case in 2 Kgs 16:1-4; although the text in Kings is not as emphatic as Chronicles about the sons (singular in Kings) being burned in sacrifice.
148 Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 900.
The people of the north are obedient to the prophet and take appropriate, even unrequired, action in response. Ahaz, however, will continue his cultic misconduct and bring further disaster upon Judah (vv. 19, 23, 25). His appeal for assistance against the Edomites and Philistines results in his subjugation to Assyria instead of deliverance for Judah despite plundering the royal and temple treasuries (vv. 16-21). His excessive unfaithfulness (מעלToFront; v. 19) finally culminates in the worst unfaithfulness yet recorded in Chronicles (וירסמל; v. 22): Ahaz worships the Assyrian gods and finally, according to Chronicles, shuts the doors of the temple (vv. 23-24). Thus, the temple cult of YHWH ceases under Ahaz until its restoration under Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:7). The dystopian reality under Ahaz is emphatically rejected by the Chronicler. However, if the community mistakenly follows this example it too will be “subdued” (הנה; v. 19). Nevertheless, Ahaz does not doom Judah to destruction or exile. Reform, and utopia, are still possible—in the past, present, and future.

3.2.7 Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah (2 Chr 29-35)

The portrayals of Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah in Chronicles have been the subject of numerous analyses. These studies have typically concluded that Hezekiah is

149 Such a detail also could serve as a precedent for reestablishing the defunct temple cult in the postexilic period; see the further discussion of this point in Section 3.3 below.

150 Compare the language about serving other nations in 2 Chr 12:8; and the further discussion in Section 3.3 below.

idealized as a Second David-Solomon, that Manasseh serves as a metaphor for the exilic community, and that the reforms of Josiah are idealized while his death is one of the many examples of the Chronicler’s explanatory method of providing information to clarify difficulties (whether textual or theological) in his Vorlage. Apart from the commentaries, the reign of Amon has not received much attention. The Chronicler’s concern for the cult is clearly evident in the amount of space dedicated to this institution in their reigns. In addition, the utopian ideology of the Chronicler is perhaps best understood in the context of these four rulers. It is in their reigns that many of the theological themes culminate, that the distinction between ideal and utopian is readily apparent, that hope for the future is held out repeatedly to those still in exile, and that the proper relationship between the community and the foreign empire is articulated. These issues will again be restated at the book’s conclusion (2 Chr 36:15-23), but their appearance in these chapters further emphasizes their importance in the Chronicler’s utopian ideology and overall argument throughout the book.

Hezekiah converts the dystopia under Ahaz into a utopia by instituting numerous reforms. 152 At the very beginning of his reign (in his first month as ruler) according to 2 Chr 29:3, Hezekiah opens the temple again and begins the process of sanctification for

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152 Most of the actions taken by Hezekiah in chs. 30-31 lack parallels in Kings. The Sennacherib invasion and Babylonian envoys are the key events of Hezekiah’s reign in Kings while the version presented in Chronicles gives priority to the earlier unparalleled cultic reforms. This analysis will focus on
the temple and the restoration of its cult (vv. 4-36). Several key points are made in this section: the death and captivity of the Israelites is a direct result of their cultic misconduct (v. 9), a covenant will be made between the people and YHWH (v. 10), the various types of offerings are performed at the king’s command (vv. 20-24), the Levitical music and priestly trumpeters are reestablished according to the prophetic Davidic organization (vv. 25-30), and the temple cult is restored (v. 35). Hezekiah’s heart for God (v. 10) is matched by the people’s “willing heart” (בֵּית־דָּרוּךְ; v. 31) and the Levites’ dedication to being “upright in heart” (בֵּית־הָדִיָּה; v. 34). While the priests are criticized in this respect (v. 34; 2 Chr 30:3), Hezekiah and the assembly (בְּלִי־לְעֹלָם) together decide to celebrate the Passover with an invitation extended to the north to join them (2 Chr 30:2-4).

In this written invitation, those Israelites not exiled by Assyria, but who remained in the land, are encouraged to return to YHWH, who is “gracious and merciful” and who will bring the Assyrian captives back to the land in response to their actions (vv. 6-9). This brief passage is highly significant for the utopian ideology of Chronicles. First, it recognizes that not all northerners were exiled (contra 2 Kgs 17:6, 18-24). Second, this remnant in the north is still regarded as authentically a part of Israel. Third, the possibility of a return of the Assyrian exiles is held out as a certainty if they repent and return to YHWH. Of course, the final point is also applicable to those exiled by Babylon.

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153 The details provided for the actions of the priests and Levites further indicate the utopian quality of this portrayal.
who continue to reside outside the land of Israel. If the community in Yehud repents, will God restore these tribes also? The implication of v. 9 is an emphatic “Yes!”

The responses by the northerners and the Judahites also serve utopian functions. First, in response to Hezekiah’s letter only a few northerners come to Jerusalem in repentance while most reject his invitation with laughter and mockery (vv. 10-11). This response cannot be labeled “ideal,” but “utopian” does seem appropriate. If the Chronicler’s purpose was to describe an “ideal” past on which to base present and future action, then the number of individuals responding with repentance may be expected to be larger than the meager few who do so. Second, the people of Judah are supportive of these atypical events because God had given them “one heart” to be obedient to their leadership and the command of God (תפנ ±ו; v. 12). These two responses have direct implications for the Chronicler’s own day. The northerners are still invited (or should be) and they are to be received openly and without dissent in whatever number they should choose to do so.

In addition, the depiction of Hezekiah as a Second David-Solomon ruling over a unified Israel including resident aliens (ץ"נ±ו) is explicitly emphasized at the conclusion of the Passover celebration (2 Chr 30:25-27). Hezekiah, the first king of Judah to reign after the deportation of the north to Assyria, has the opportunity to re-unite all of the people of Israel in the worship of YHWH. This unique role of Hezekiah is formulated in a variety of ways. First, although he exercises religious authority over some parts of Ephraim and Manasseh (2 Chr 31:1) Hezekiah does not attempt military expansion into the former northern kingdom. It is not the concern of the Chronicler to depict righteous kings as restoring, or attempting to restore, the geographic boundaries of the Davidic-
Solomonic empire. Instead, the restoration of the cult is the primary concern for Hezekiah, including the destruction by the people of all cultic sites other than the Jerusalem temple (31:1). Further, in the reign of Hezekiah, the security of Israel is entirely dependent on God and his faithfulness to deliver the people (2 Chr 32:8). Hezekiah prepares and builds defenses for the people, but he does not attack his enemy and he does not depend on military strategy to gain victory. In his defensive posture, he is delivered from the impending threat only after he and the prophet Isaiah had prayed to God (2 Chr 32:20). As a result, he receives “rest on every side” and an influx of gifts in line with the Solomonic precedent (2 Chr 32:22-23).

Second, he models his reformation of the cult on the Davidic-Solomonic organization. However, even in this, he does not simply replicate the earlier regulations. Rather, Hezekiah orders store-chambers to be built to hold the collected tithes for the clergy (2 Chr 31:2-11). Then along with Azariah, the chief officer of the house of God, he appoints Levites to oversee their collection, storage, and distribution (vv. 12-15).

While this passage has some parallels to David’s appointment of the priests with the assistance of both Zadok and Ahimelech (1 Chr 24:3), the differences between the accounts are striking. It is clear that Azariah is a leading cultic official, but may not be the “leading priest,” so that the parallel to the two priests at the time of David is

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154 Accepting the common emendation suggested for this phrase based on the LXX version; see Curtis and Madsen, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 490; Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 991-92; and Williamson, I and 2 Chronicles, 385. Gabriel rejects this emendation (Friede über Israel, 152-55), which results in a different understanding of Hezekiah’s reign.

155 While storage facilities are mentioned during the reigns of David and Solomon (1 Chr 26:15-17, 20-28; 2 Chr 5:1), the ones at the time of Hezekiah are apparently new constructions and separate from the temple treasuries.

156 See the further discussion of this complicated issue in Section 4.3.1.
inexact. Also, the appointments are for priestly divisions at the time of David and for Levites overseeing the storage locations at the time of Hezekiah.

Third, the Chronicler’s evaluation of his reign is expressed as the zenith of monarchic faithfulness in the post-Solomonic era. In the initial summary of his reign, Hezekiah is “good, right, and faithful” before YHWH, his reforms were also in accordance with the Torah and the commandment, and he sought God with all of his heart, all of which thus led to his prosperity (2 Chr 31:20-21). However, following this equation of righteousness and blessing, the Chronicler explicitly juxtaposes the arrival of Sennacherib and his army (2 Chr 32:1). This presents a tension in the Chronicler’s theory of “immediate retribution,” at least as it is commonly understood by scholars. Faithfulness has led to an immediate threat, not prosperity. However, Hezekiah’s faithfulness delivers him and the people from this desperate situation (2 Chr 32:7-8, 20-23). Thus, rather than destroying the Chronicler’s ideology, it serves to advance his belief that continued faithfulness is the key and that such difficulties are not signs of God’s abandonment, but opportunities for demonstration of faith. This sentiment is echoed in the following passage that notes Hezekiah’s sickness, his prayer, and his healing. However, in contrast to his previous response, Hezekiah’s heart was proud (נביים לבר; v. 25) and wrath is the result. Yet, Hezekiah and Jerusalem repent, and the wrath of YHWH ceases. Hezekiah’s pride thus prevents him from escaping criticism altogether, as does Solomon. However, he serves as a model for repentance and thus continued blessing, as does David. Thus, just as with David, Hezekiah’s reign is not

\[\text{157} \] Japhet notes the “consistent conjunction” between Hezekiah and the people in Chronicles (I & II Chronicles, 994). This is a further development of the democratizing Tendenz and the utopian quality of the reign of Hezekiah in Chronicles.
ideal, but it is most certainly utopian. In the final summary of his reign (2 Chr 32:27-31), Hezekiah’s prosperity and the incident of the Babylonian envoys are recorded. However, in contrast to 2 Kgs 20:12-19, Hezekiah’s actions are not criticized. Rather, God uses this to test Hezekiah and “know all that was in his heart” (v. 31). Hezekiah evidently passes this test without qualification.158

The depiction of Hezekiah in Chronicles is thoroughly utopian. His cultic reforms, openness to the north, responses to blessings and difficulties, relationship with the people, and commitment to seek YHWH provide a better alternative reality that rivals the Davidic-Solomonic era. The Chronicler offers another example apart from David and Solomon to be emulated, and in doing so he suggests that the “glory days” of these two rulers can be approached again. However, it is also significant that the reign of Hezekiah is not merely a replication of the Davidic-Solomonic period.159 Historical circumstances are different and thus the utopia under Hezekiah will also take a different form. Indeed, part of the Chronicler’s argument in constructing this type of continuity with the past in the reign of Hezekiah may be precisely to advocate a similar response on the part of his audience: it is impossible in their present to reinstitute the Davidic-Solomonic era, but another version of that utopia is possible; just as it took another form under Hezekiah, so utopia may yet again become reality for the Chronicler’s present and/or future.

However, the utopia under Hezekiah is short-lived. Manasseh reverses his father’s religious policies and institutes a dystopia similar to that under Ahaz (2 Chr 33:1-

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158 See the comments in support of this positive evaluation by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 995-96; and Williamson, I and 2 Chronicles, 387-88.

159 Compare the similar conclusion by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 998.
9). Many of the details in the opening section of Manasseh’s reign are in verbatim agreement with the parallel text in 2 Kgs 21:1-9. However, while his reign is thoroughly negative in Kings, the Chronicler presents a radically different series of events. After being warned, Manasseh is taken captive to Babylon by the king of Assyria under the agency of YHWH (2 Chr 33:10-11). Manasseh subsequently repents in his distress and is restored to Jerusalem and his kingdom (vv. 12-13). Following this, he engages in defensive military building projects and religious reforms in Jerusalem and the temple (vv. 14-16). Yet the actions by Manasseh are a pale comparison to the vast scope of the religious reforms of Hezekiah. Thus, utopia is only partially initiated, and remains unrealized, under Manasseh.

Many scholars have suggested that Manasseh is a model of repentance for the exilic/postexilic community and that his lengthy reign of fifty-five years in 2 Kgs 21:1 is the textual reason for the necessity of his repentance in Chronicles. However, while both of these contentions are possible, the Chronicler’s utopian ideology better explains the unique presentation of Manasseh in Chronicles.\textsuperscript{160} Regardless of the historicity of this narrative,\textsuperscript{161} Manasseh demonstrates the efficacy of repentance in his restoration to the land and to his kingdom (בָּא לְכָל מָקוֹם; 2 Chr 33:12-13). The Chronicler’s present was no different: if the Davidic monarchy wished to be restored again to its place, its leader(s) must repent and await God’s hand in restoring the throne. It is worth noting that

\textsuperscript{160} The description of Manasseh’s state as one of distress (רָעָה) which leads to repentance stands in contrast to the distress (רָעָה) which results in Ahaz’s extreme dystopia (2 Chr 28:22-27).

\textsuperscript{161} The second point is rejected by Mosis (Untersuchungen, 194).

\textsuperscript{162} The historical probability or improbability of this narrative has been much discussed and the history of interpretation of this text has been often repeated in scholarship; see, however, the little-read and balanced article by Roy Gane, “The Role of Assyria in the Ancient Near East during the Reign of Manasseh,” AUSS 35 (1997): 21-32.
Manasseh does not revolt against the foreign power of Assyria to regain his kingdom; the impetus for his restoration to the throne comes solely from God in response to Manasseh’s change of heart. While this point could be used to argue that the Chronicler advocated the restoration of the Davidic monarchy, it instead places the responsibility on the leadership to repent and on God to do the restoring—if that is God’s intention. Thus, the Chronicler certainly does not use the example of Manasseh to illustrate the violent overthrow of the foreign power in an attempt to restore the Davidic monarchy—even if there has been the necessary prerequisite of repentance. Also, the restoration community may have seen much of their present situation in the description of Manasseh, especially in the limitation of reforms to the immediate sphere of influence in the defensive strategy throughout the cities of Judah and to the cult only within Jerusalem. Thus, Manasseh may have served as a utopian depiction of appropriate steps to begin the process of reform, if the depictions of David, Solomon, and Hezekiah seemed unattainable for the present. However, the Chronicler clearly conveys to his audience that Manasseh’s utopia is not the final destination, even if it is technically a better alternative reality than the Chronicler’s present.

While Amon’s reign is merely an extension of Manasseh’s evil practices in 2 Kings (21:19-26), his reign serves a different function in Chronicles (2 Chr 33:21-25). In Chronicles, Manasseh ends his reign with a period of partial reform and Amon returns to Manasseh’s earlier dystopian practices thereby setting the stage for the following reforms of Josiah. Thus, the vague description of the dystopia under Amon stands out in the context of three reforming kings in Chronicles—Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah. The Chronicler makes the explicit point that Amon does not humble himself before God (2
Chr 33:23) while noting the other three have indeed done so (2 Chr 32:26; 33:12; 34:26-27). Thus, Amon’s brief reign is a dystopian example of the failure to repent. He “incurred more and more guilt” (נאמנש והרחב; 2 Chr 33:23) in this two-year period and condemned himself to murder by a political coup. Through repentance, Hezekiah experiences the removal of wrath (2 Chr 32:26), Manasseh is restored to the land and his throne (2 Chr 33:12-13), and Josiah avoids seeing the coming destruction (2 Chr 34:28). While these other rulers serve as utopian models for the Chronicler’s audience, Amon’s rejection of their humility in repentance is the point of his brief dystopian reign in Chronicles.

With Josiah, the Chronicler presents the final attempt at utopia under the Davidic monarchy in his work. Josiah is not the exemplary hero in Chronicles that he is in Kings, but his reign is utopian nonetheless. The reign of Josiah exhibits several utopian features: chronology and geography, cultic organization and reformation, obedience and disobedience to the prophetic word, humility and repentance, the accountability of each generation/individual for their actions, and relationship to foreign powers. The chronology of Chronicles for Josiah’s reign provides a different understanding of Josiah’s reforms and a different geography to be associated with them. Whereas 2 Kgs 22:3 implies that Josiah began his reforms in the eighteenth year with repair to the temple, 2 Chr 34:3 states that Josiah began to seek God in his eighth year and started reforms in his twelfth year. These reforms took place throughout Jerusalem, Judah, Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and Naphtali and purged the land of its idolatrous religious objects (vv. 3-7). Second Kings 23:15-20 places Josiah’s reforms in the north after his discovery of the Book of the Torah and the covenant renewal, but the Chronicler’s version locates
these reforms in the north prior to the discovery of the Book of the Torah and the covenant renewal. The different order of events in Chronicles allows for the northerners to contribute financially to the temple repair project, affirming their solidarity with the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chr 34:8-9). The geography of Josiah’s reforms in Chronicles includes parts of the northern kingdom and is reminiscent of the appeal to the north and the actions taken by the people at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:1, 10-11; 31:1). However, the geography is not identical: different tribes are mentioned in each instance.

This is consistent with the Chronicler’s use of geography as a utopian device elsewhere in the work. No one area is designated nor is one particular point in time. The borders of Israel and the regions that are under a particular king’s influence are constantly shifting and changing with the events of history. The Chronicler’s present may have been no different. By using different geographical markers, the Chronicler argues that the political leadership should extend its reforms to the area that it is capable of, regardless of its extent. It is also worth repeating that none of the three reforming kings (Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah) takes military action to gain more surrounding territory with the intention to impose their religious reforms in that area subsequently. Thus, the

163 It is also significant that in the remainder of Josiah’s reign the distinction between Judah and Israel seems virtually to disappear as the people again seem to be brought together under Josiah’s leadership as a unity. Although Hezekiah is the first to rule over a reunited Israel, the reforms of Manasseh seem to apply only to Judah. Thus, the people are reunited under Josiah for a second time. This type of pattern is suggestive again for the Chronicler’s present: the people of Israel have been separated and reunited more than once in the past, and their current separation should not be viewed as a permanent condition without hope of change in a utopian future.
spread of religious reform is advocated, although it must be done without political, military expansion.\(^{164}\)

Josiah’s cultic reforms may also be compared to the Chronicler’s account of Hezekiah’s reforms. While they are similar in scope, they are different in detail and in their implementation. Just as Hezekiah, Josiah re institutes the Levitical and priestly divisions, celebrates Passover, renews a covenant with people, and destroys the idolatrous religious objects.

Unlike Hezekiah, Josiah has the opportunity to respond to prophetic warnings (2 Chr 34:22-33; 35:21-22).\(^{165}\) Also, Hezekiah is threatened by a foreign invasion and must defend Jerusalem, but Josiah attacks Pharaoh Neco, who has no interest in attacking Jerusalem (2 Chr 35:20-22). While the vast majority of scholars have seen the explanation for Josiah’s death in Chronicles as a “last ditch effort” of theodicy to salvage his theory of retribution,\(^{166}\) its function in Chronicles is expressly utopian and is consistent with other ideological points advocated by the Chronicler. First, this is consistent with the repeated assertion in Chronicles that a defensive military strategy is

\(^{164}\) Contrast the actions of the Maccabees and the Hasmoneans in this regard, especially in the forced circumcision of Israelites by Mattathias, the conquered Idumeans by Hyrcanus I, and the conquered Itureans by Aristobulus I (1 Mac 2:46; Josephus, *Ant.* 13.257-258, 318-319; respectively).

\(^{165}\) Although the prophet Isaiah is explicitly active at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chr 33:20, 32), no prophetic utterance is given by Isaiah or any other prophet directly to Hezekiah. Thus, in light of the numerous similarities between the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, the importance of prophecy in the reign of Josiah is further emphasized by this contrast.

acceptable while offensive excursions should be avoided and may have disastrous, or at least ambiguous, outcomes.

Second, until the very end of his reign Josiah had been faithful to YHWH—approaching the illustrious level of obedience and utopian description of the likes of David, Solomon, Hezekiah, and Jotham. During this period the prophetess Huldah promises him a peaceful death as reward for his repentant heart and humility (2 Chr 34:26-28). However, this hardly seems to fit the description of his death in battle at the hands of Neco. What has happened? Why this apparent inconsistency in Chronicles? Despite the prophecy—or maybe because of it—Josiah prepares to engage Neco in battle and is warned not to continue with his plan. However, he is disobedient to the “words of Neco from the mouth of God” (ניבור יורה המלך אל עדוה; 2 Chr 35:22). Thus, in this commentary on Josiah’s death, the Chronicler explicitly acknowledges the authenticity of Neco’s “prophetic” words. Perhaps Josiah had assumed that he would be protected from harm on the basis of the earlier prophetic word by Huldah. However, as Josiah unfortunately learned, the promise of protection by God is not a “blank check” to engage in inappropriate actions. Similarly, the people of Israel have a covenant with God, a promise from YHWH to preserve them, but in the Chronicler’s view this does not allow them to act irresponsibly.

Any assessment of the Chronicler’s view of prophecy must incorporate this exceptional passage about Neco as mouthpiece for God. The Chronicler clearly acknowledges that foreign rulers may be used to fulfill prophetic words (Cyrus in 2 Chr

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167 Compare the similar description of Jeremiah’s prophecies as being “from the mouth of YHWH” (לשם ה’; 2 Chr 36:12); cf. the assessment of Neco’s authentic prophecy by Schniedewind, _Word of God_, 121.
36:22-23), but he also acknowledges that foreign rulers may authentically prophesy and that such claims must be obeyed. In addition, in his criticism of Zedekiah he implies that violating oaths made in the name of God to foreign rulers is not an acceptable practice. Thus, with these comments the Chronicler advocates submission to the authority of foreign rulers and does so particularly in the context of being faithful to YHWH. This is one element of the Chronicler’s political utopia: foreign powers are a reality, one which God can and will use for the benefit or detriment of the people, and the people—especially the leadership of Yehud—must respond accordingly. The appropriate response to foreign powers is not to intervene in the political situation by revolt or military attack, but to recognize God’s direction of history and operate within the current political system.

Third, just as the invasion of Sennacherib occurs after Hezekiah’s faithfulness (2 Chr 32:1), so Neco’s passage through the land occurs after Josiah has established the temple (2 Chr 35:20). However, rather than violate the Chronicler’s theory of retribution, these events reinforce the notion of continued faithfulness that is required on the part of the individual. Circumstances may seem to be inconsistent with blessings on

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168 The significance of this point in Chronicles is further highlighted by the claims of Neco which have no parallel in Kings and the Chronicler’s lack of the identical claim by Sennacherib to be acting at God’s behest in 2 Kgs 18:25. Thus, in Chronicles only those rulers actually acting in concert with YHWH are depicted as making such claims. The question then becomes, are all claims to acting at God’s command authentic? Is this how the Chronicler’s present should view such claims and the foreign powers exercising control over them? In the Chronicler’s utopia, the answer is a startling “yes”; see the further discussion in Section 3.3.

169 It has been suggested that this claim about the establishment of the temple under Josiah indicates the completion of the monarchy’s usefulness, since its primary function to care for the temple has been accomplished (Riley, King and Cultus, 138-40, 149, 155-56, 179-80). Therefore, the monarch is no longer necessary for the restoration or operation of temple worship. However, this reading fails to account for the similar comments in Hezekiah’s reign and the continuation of the temple cult until its pollution at the time of Zedekiah prior to its destruction. Thus, the argument for a “culmination” under Josiah would have better support if the cult immediately ceased or remained in this correct form until it was destroyed.
the righteous, but the final outcomes demonstrate the results of faithfulness and
disobedience: Hezekiah depends on God and is delivered; Josiah takes inappropriate
action himself, even fails to heed the prophetic warning, and is killed as a result. Thus,
the circumstances of Josiah’s demise present a dystopian view of this otherwise entirely
utopian ruler in Chronicles. While Josiah’s cultic reforms and obedience to Torah are
lauded by the Chronicler (2 Chr 34:31; 35:4-6, 12-13, 18), his failure to respond to
contemporary prophetic warning—even from an extremely atypical source—brings about
his own death and the beginning of the downward spiral that ends in the cessation of the
monarchy, the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, and the exile to Babylon.

With respect to the Chronicler’s own time, the message is clear: Torah obedience
and appropriate cultic observance is very important and even central to the life of the
community, but the leadership also cannot ignore contemporary prophecy without
suffering for their disobedience. In the Chronicler’s ideology, there are many ways to
bring about a dystopia, but only one means of establishing utopia: continued faithfulness
both to the written and oral traditions of the past and to the prophets of the present
(whether by Levites or even foreign leaders) who provide direction in the midst of
changing historical circumstances as time marches on.\textsuperscript{170}

\textsuperscript{170} Note also the appearance of both oral and written communication (a herald and an edict) in
declaring an end to exile and hope for restoration in 2 Chr 36:22. See the further discussion of the
Chronicler’s view of prophecy in my Excursus on Prophecy, Speeches and Authority in Chapter 2 and of
the Levitical role in prophecy in Section 4.4.2.
3.2.8 The Final Four: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah (2 Chr 36)

The untimely death of Josiah brings the Chronicler to the final four kings of Judah before the Babylonian Exile. The abrupt and abbreviated descriptions of their reigns stand out in contrast to the longer narratives that are presented for most of the monarchs in comparison with Kings. With the death of Josiah, the Chronicler seems to “rush to the end” of his work. However, even in the brief accounts of these monarchs, his utopian ideology is present, although mostly in the negative form of a dystopia.

Jehoahaz, the people’s appointed ruler after his father’s death, is the only king to receive no judgment of faithfulness or unfaithfulness by the Chronicler. Although many scholars have assumed that his exile to Egypt is enough proof of his failure or that his death notice has been eliminated as the result of a scribal error, these explanations should not be accepted too hastily. Also, the brevity of the final four reigns cannot be used to explain its absence here, since negative evaluations do appear in the subsequent three accounts. Rather, the removal of Jehoahaz from the throne should be seen as a continuing effect of Josiah’s death. Although the Chronicler is at pains to hold each generation accountable for its own actions, here Jehoahaz seems to suffer from his father’s mistake given the historical circumstances of the time. Neco may not have trusted this apparently non-firstborn son of a contentious king who had been appointed by the people. Also, the fact that he was appointed by the people is not inherently a negative statement as other kings not thoroughly evil are also installed in this manner (e.g., David in 1 Chr 11:3; Joash in 2 Chr 23:11; Uzziah in 2 Chr 26:1; and Josiah in 2

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172 Japhet, I &II Chronicles, 1063.
Chr 33:25; cf. Ahaziah in 2 Chr 22:1). Yet, Jehoahaz seems a victim of his circumstances in Chronicles. Mistakes of the past can and do have continuing effects into the present and future; each generation is responsible for itself, but it also inherits circumstances that may be somewhat, but not totally, beyond its control.\footnote{See the comments supporting this interpretation by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 1062-65.}

The next two rulers, Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, are summarily dismissed by noting their evil ways, the plundering of the temple vessels, and their exiles to Babylon (2 Chr 36:5-10). The final king, Zedekiah, brings the dystopia to its nadir by his refusal to listen to the prophetic word. He does evil, refuses to humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah, rebels against Nebuchadnezzar even in violation of an oath to God, stiffens his neck, and hardens his heart (2 Chr 36:12-13). However, he is not alone in this misconduct. “All leading priests” (ֹל שָׁלוֹם הָבֹאוֹתִים) and the people were “exceedingly unfaithful” (וֹאֵדֵב לוֹמֵל מְלָעָל), polluted the temple (v. 14), and rejected the messengers and prophets sent by YHWH out of compassion (vv. 15-16).\footnote{The people bear some responsibility in this since they are the ones who select Jehoahaz as king; cf. David A. Glatt-Gilad, “The Root kn’ and Historiographic Periodization in Chronicles,” CBQ 64 (2002): 248-57, esp. 255-57. See the Chronicler’s similar treatment of Rehoboam in 2 Chr 10:1-12:15; 13:6-7; and the comments by Knoppers, “Rehoboam in Chronicles.”} Finally, the city and temple are destroyed and those surviving the onslaught are exiled as servants to Babylon (vv. 17-20). This servitude lasts until the rise of Persia, which begins a new era for the people of YHWH (vv. 20-23).\footnote{While these two verses could be taken as a summary for the entire history of Israel or at least of an extended period at the end of the nation’s existence (Dillard, 2 Chronicles, 300-01), the actions taken in the verses are clearly performed by the same subjects of v. 14—those at the time of Zedekiah and the destruction itself. Thus, while Kings blames Manasseh and the people at the time of Zedekiah for the exile (2 Kgs 23:26-27; 24:3-4, 18), Chronicles is quite clear that the exile was the result of those at the time of Zedekiah regardless of the downward spiral evident in the period immediately preceding his reign.}

\footnote{If vv. 20-21 do imply that the status of servitude ended with the rise of Persia, then this understanding of the foreign power sharply contrasts with the sentiment that this negative condition did continue to exist under Persia as expressed in Neh 9:36-37; see the further discussion of this topic in}
end of the narrative, along with the similar silence on Jehoiachin’s release from prison (2 Kgs 25:27-30), is hardly suggestive of an overt hope for the restoration of the Davidic dynasty at the conclusion of the book. Rather, all of the reigning monarchs after Josiah are explicitly exiled or simply forgotten without any further information about their condition or death.\(^{177}\) Hope for the future is not attached to the Davidic dynasty, but to the opportunity for an end to exile, the return of the people to the land, and the building of the temple.\(^{178}\) Thus, the dystopia under Zedekiah is replaced by the possibility of utopia under the Persian monarchs if the people act accordingly.\(^{179}\)

**Excursus: Burial Notices as Utopian Space in Chronicles**

The Chronicler’s burial notices for the monarchs are treated collectively in this excursus. There has been no systematic treatment of the Chronicler’s burial notices published to date. In previous studies, all discussions of these data occur in the context of other topics or as passing remarks.\(^{180}\) This excursus presents an analysis of the data in Section 3.3.3. This acceptance of Persian authority serves a utopian function in Chronicles. The Chronicler does not advocate revolt against the foreign power, but offers utopian changes that will enhance the community’s situation and that can be implemented in the present reality.

\(^{177}\) On the basis of the account in 2 Kgs 25:5-7 it is assumed that Zedekiah is also among those exiled in 2 Chr 36:20; however, the Chronicler’s text is silent about his ultimate fate (contra Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 243).

\(^{178}\) Contra the claims that the fates of the Davidic dynasty and the temple are paralleled in the final chapter of Chronicles (Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 412; and Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 297). Both come to an end, but the temple alone is the subject of restoration at the book’s conclusion in 2 Chr 36:22-23. Begg suggests that this silence is intentional given the Chronicler’s Persian setting and that his readers would have been able to ascertain his implicit message (“Fate of Judah’s Four Last Kings,” 81-85).

\(^{179}\) Note the contrast between the rejection of Jeremiah’s words by Zedekiah and the fulfillment of his prophecy by Cyrus. This detail highlights the disparity between the two options for response by the readers. The Chronicler’s position is clear: Foreign rulers supporting YHWH and his people are to be preferred to a Davidic monarch who leads the people into destruction; cf. the comments by Halpern, “Sacred History and Ideology,” 53; Ben Zvi, “When the Foreign Monarch Speaks,” 227; and Murray, “Dynasty, People, and the Future,” 75-79.

\(^{180}\) See also the discussion in my essay, “Exploring the Utopian Space of Chronicles: Some Spatial Anomalies,” in *Constructions of Space in the Past, Present, and Future* (ed. J. W. Flanagan and J. L.
their entirety from the perspective of utopian and spatial theories. In this method, the depiction of space as a utopian construct will be assessed and applied to the Chronicler’s burial notices.\textsuperscript{181}

Chronicles exhibits considerable interest in such burial notices throughout the narrative. While Samuel-Kings mentions many royal burials, Chronicles provides more detailed and variant forms of such notices than the often stereotypical language of the parallel text. Since much of this information is regarded as part of the Chronicler’s Sondergut, scholars have suggested that these burial notices carry an evaluative quality in accordance with the Chronicler’s Tendenz. Thus, for example, according to the Chronicler’s supposed retributive theology, the righteous kings are blessed even in death and the unrighteous ones are denied the full benefit of their royal position. However, the evidence demonstrates that such is not consistently the case.\textsuperscript{182} The relevant data is collected in Table 1.

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\textsuperscript{181} See the Excursus on Spatial Theory in Chapter 1 for further explanation of the spatial theory to be employed here and its relationship to utopian literary theory.

\textsuperscript{182} Contra Sugimoto who notes the qualifying remarks for some, though not all, of the “evil” kings as being negative, but proceeds to interpret the qualifiers for Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah as being positive (“Chronicler’s Techniques,” 54). Dennerlein states that “burial in the graves of kings honours those who have deserved well of the Lord and the cult” (“Jerusalem in the Book of Chronicles,” 147). McKenzie also has recently asserted that the burial notices function as “expressions of favor or disfavor” in Chronicles (1-2 Chronicles, 356-57).

The idea of using the burial notices as indicators of the Chronicler’s depiction of the moral character of the kings has been recently asserted by Kelly (Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles). Kelly notes this Tendenz in passing (37, 106), claims Asa and Hezekiah are enhanced in burial with “special honours” (97, 105), notes exclusion from the tombs is a negative comment for Jehoram, Joash, and Ahaz (100, 105), and declares that Jehoiada’s “singular honour” does not indicate the Chronicler’s sympathy for high-priestly supremacy over the king (203). As with Sugimoto, Kelly ignores the evidence
\end{flushleft}
TABLE 1
THE DEATH AND BURIAL NOTICES OF THE MONARCHS IN CHRONICLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Monarch</th>
<th>Death and Burial Language</th>
<th>Same details as Sam-Kgs?</th>
<th>Verdict on monarch (+/-)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Chr 10:5, 12</td>
<td>Saul</td>
<td>suicide; under the oak of Jabesh</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chr 29:26-30</td>
<td>David</td>
<td>old, rich, honored; burial not mentioned</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 9:31</td>
<td>Solomon</td>
<td>slept with his ancestors; in the city of his father David</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 12:16</td>
<td>Rehoboam</td>
<td>slept with his ancestors; in the city of David</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 13:23</td>
<td>Abijah</td>
<td>slept with his ancestors; in the city of David</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 16:12-14</td>
<td>Asa</td>
<td>diseased, slept with his ancestors; in the tomb that he had hewn out for himself in the city of David, with elaborate funeral pyre</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pos then Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 21:1</td>
<td>Jehoshaphat</td>
<td>slept with his ancestors; in the city of David with his ancestors</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pos and Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 21:18-20</td>
<td>Jehoram</td>
<td>in agony to no one’s regret; no pyre, in city of David but not in the tombs of the kings</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 22:9</td>
<td>Ahaziah</td>
<td>murdered; buried as Jehoshaphat’s grandson, without specific location</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 23:15, 21</td>
<td>Athaliah</td>
<td>murdered; burial not mentioned</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 24:25</td>
<td>Joash</td>
<td>murdered; in city of David, but not in tombs of the kings</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pos then Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 25:27-28</td>
<td>Amaziah</td>
<td>murdered; with his ancestors in city of David</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pos then Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 26:23</td>
<td>Uzziah</td>
<td>slept with his ancestors; near his ancestors in burial field belonging to kings, due to disease</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pos then Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 27:9</td>
<td>Jotham</td>
<td>slept with ancestors; in city of David</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

for “evil” kings receiving “good” burials and also fails to discuss the silence over Amon. While I agree with his basic conclusion about Jehoiada (see below), I obviously disagree with his reading of the other burial notices. Compare the claim by Halpern that “Jehoiada is a royal figure for Chronicles. His 130-year life span is plain testimony to his righteousness; his burial among kings is proof” (“Sacred History and Ideology,” 49 n. 28).
The monarchs can be classified into three groups: (1) Those buried with their
ancestors in the “city of David” without qualification: Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah,
Jehoshaphat, Amaziah, Jotham, and Josiah.\(^\text{183}\) (2) Those receiving some type of
additional statement about where they were buried: Asa (with ancestors in own tomb);
Jehoram (with no one’s regret and not in tombs of kings); Ahaziah (buried without
further specific location, but honored since a grandson of Jehoshaphat); Joash (not in
tombs of kings); Uzziah (near ancestors in burial field belonging to kings); Ahaz (in city
[but not “of David”] in Jerusalem, but not in tombs of kings of Israel); Hezekiah (on the
ascent to the tombs of the descendants of David); Manasseh ( ambiguously buried “in his

\(^{183}\) Although the Chronicler has additional material regarding the laments made for Josiah and their
continued use in the tradition, the details of the burial notice itself are identical to those for the other kings
listed in this group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Monarch</th>
<th>Burial Details</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 28:27</td>
<td>Ahaz</td>
<td>slept with ancestors; in the city, in Jerusalem, not in the tombs of kings of Israel</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 32:33</td>
<td>Hezekiah</td>
<td>slept with ancestors; on ascent to tombs of descendants of David, honored by people</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 33:20</td>
<td>Manasseh</td>
<td>slept with ancestors; in his house</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Neg then Pos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 33:24-25</td>
<td>Amon</td>
<td>murdered; burial not mentioned</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 35:23-25</td>
<td>Josiah</td>
<td>killed in battle; in tombs of his ancestors, mourned by people</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 36:3-4</td>
<td>Jehoahaz</td>
<td>exiled to Egypt; death not mentioned</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>not explicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 36:6</td>
<td>Jehoiakim</td>
<td>exiled in fetters to Babylon; death not mentioned</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 36:10</td>
<td>Jehoiachin</td>
<td>exiled to Babylon; death not mentioned</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 36:12-20</td>
<td>Zedekiah</td>
<td>not explicit</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chr 24:15-16</td>
<td>Jehoiada</td>
<td>old, full of days; in city of David among the kings</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{183}\) Although the Chronicler has additional material regarding the laments made for Josiah and their
continued use in the tradition, the details of the burial notice itself are identical to those for the other kings
listed in this group.
house”); and finally, the chief priest Jehoiada is buried in the city of David among the kings. (3) Those lacking burial notices: David receives no burial notice (cf. 1 Kgs 2:10); Amon is condemned as evil, but receives no burial notice; Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin are exiled without death or burial notices; Zedekiah’s fate is not explicit.

Two brief observations: first, the burial notices are almost consistently the final information given about a king before moving on to his successor (thus, the “last word” on a given king); second, the details of the burial notices do not conform to any pattern of “good” or “evil” kings. The appearance of both good and bad kings in the second group (especially including Hezekiah here instead of with Solomon and Josiah in the first group), the ambiguity surrounding Manasseh’s unique burial, and the missing notices for David and Amon all work against a simple pattern of “good king = good burial” in Chronicles. Thus, the Chronicler does not use this information to reinforce the evaluative judgment on a specific monarch. In fact, if anything, the Chronicler’s burial notices complicate the assessment of a monarch’s reign.¹⁸⁴ The Chronicler does not have a simplistic understanding of the monarchy conveyed through a dichotomy of righteousness and unrighteousness. Instead, the individual monarchs reflect the nature of reality from the Chronicler’s perspective: life and people are highly complex, and they cannot be reduced to simplistic categorization.¹⁸⁵

In his spatial theory, Lefebvre notes that one of the examples of “priestly” control of the spatial matrix of a society is the establishment of proper location and

¹⁸⁴ This similar complexity can be seen in the Chronicler’s periodization of the reigns of the monarchs. See the schematic patterns laid out for the monarchs in n. 92 above.

¹⁸⁵ This is consistent with observations regarding the complex nature of various themes in Chronicles: see, e.g., Ben Zvi, “Book of Chronicles”; idem, “Gateway”; idem, “Secession of the Northern Kingdom in Chronicles”; idem, “Sense of Proportion”; idem, “Shifting the Gaze”; Kelly, “Retribution”
differentiation via burial practice.\textsuperscript{186} Even in death, the leadership of a community may be distinguished from the rest of society. And even within the burials of the leadership, a value judgment on these individuals may be indicated by the elaborateness or physical location of one’s grave in comparison with another.\textsuperscript{187} Thus, the ruling class or individuals may reinforce its position of power by appealing to the burial practices of the community as evidence of their authority, honor, and mandate to rule.

Although the use of burial notices for hegemonic purposes in Chronicles has been asserted, the evidence taken holistically indicates otherwise. Indeed, the burial notices in Chronicles are utopian spaces which critique claims to power that are based on the location of an individual or familial ancestry.

Spatially, burial notices in Chronicles locate monarchs (and one leading priest) in relationship to David and to the Davidic line. As stated above, the Chronicler does not use this space as a means to reinforce patterns or to comment on the quality of the kings. Good kings do not always receive the best burials and evil kings may receive burials not befitting their moral (and thus, for the Chronicler, theological) character. Could this “non-pattern” be an attack on those who claim superiority by pointing to their family’s superior burial plots or their physical proximity to the Davidic tombs in particular?

While speculative, an affirmative answer would help to make sense of the utopian space of burial notices in the Chronicler’s narrative. Chronicles rejects any sort of inherent power or theological correctness on the basis of where one’s ancestors are buried. Such a


\textsuperscript{186} Lefebvre, \textit{Production of Space}, 240.
conclusion has significant implications for considering power struggles or class conflict in Jerusalem during the Persian and early Hellenistic periods. While ancestry is obviously important in Chronicles—the extensive genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9 are proof enough of this—\(^{188}\) the hierarchy of authority in the Second Temple period is not reflected by burial practices from the First Temple period, at least according to its presentation in Chronicles.

In addition, Jehoiada’s inclusion in the tombs of the kings is especially provocative as part of the Chronicler’s construction of utopian space. This information about Jehoiada is unique to Chronicles and is also the only reference to any priest being buried among royalty. One could conclude from this that Chronicles creates the possibility of priestly or high-priestly claims of power based on burial practices. If (high) priests can be buried among Davidic royalty, then does this not indicate a transfer of power from the Davidic line to the “Zadokite” high-priestly office? As part of the refutation of such a position, it should be noted that in Chronicles Jehoiada is not explicitly a Zadokite, he is not a high priest, and he is the only priest to have such an honor.\(^{189}\) Again, no pattern is established in Chronicles indicating that all priests, all high priests, or all Zadokites receive such a distinguished burial. Jehoiada’s burial notice is clearly an anomaly and further contributes to the creation of a “non-pattern” in Chronicles. Thus, Jehoiada’s “royal burial” should not be interpreted as an indication of Zadokite supremacy in the Second Temple period.

\(^{187}\) Such a hierarchical view of burial practice persists even to the present day, with elaborate mausoleums for the “important” individuals or families and “mass graves” for the insignificant (as horrible as such an actuality is).

\(^{188}\) However, even the Chronicler’s genealogies are utopian in nature. They provide a critique of the status quo rather than reinforcing those in positions of power; see Chapter 2.
Indeed, such details may also serve as a critique of those claiming (whether individuals contemporary with the Chronicler or modern scholars) that such burial practices indicate righteousness before God, and therefore the location of true authority in the community. Chronicles may even turn such priestly claims on their head by creating Jehoiada’s burial in the narrative and then “neutralizing” it with the inconsistent burial notices of the Davidic kings. Such burial places existed, or at least were claimed to exist, in the reality of the Second Temple period. The Chronicler redefines their (non)-significance.

In the terms of spatial theory, the Firstspace of these sites had a definite function in Thirdspace; this analysis suggests that these burial spaces have been infused with a new understanding by the Chronicler from Secondspace—they are utopian spaces, no longer spaces of power and control, but spaces emptied of whatever associations may have been attached to them. In Chronicles, burial space in the Second Temple period is now a space of contention, and not political or religious oppression. These burial notices thus reinforce the utopian ideology of Chronicles by constructing a better alternative reality in which burial space and practice do not indicate social status in the community.

3.3 A Utopian Future in Chronicles: Conclusions about the Political Dimension

This section concludes the analysis of the Chronicler’s political utopia. Three main issues will be discussed: the view of the role of the monarchy in the future, the importance of the exile, and the possibility of producing a utopia while under the rule of a

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189 See my article, “High Priest in Chronicles,” for further discussion.

190 The “graves of David” (דְּמוֹן דָּוִד) are mentioned as present realities in the Second Temple period in Neh 3:16.
foreign power. As will be seen, the Chronicler’s positions on these issues are presented with a certain amount of ambiguity, but a great deal of possibility.

3.3.1 Restoration or Reapplication?: A Synthetic Reading of the Monarchy in Chronicles

Throughout the previous section it has been argued that the Chronicler presents the Davidic monarchy in utopian terms. The portrayal of certain monarchs presents a utopian society, a better alternative reality, for the Chronicler’s own time. However, the monarchy is not idealized in Chronicles. Of all the monarchs receiving a positive assessment in Chronicles, only Solomon and Abijah escape any criticism or wrongdoing. While many other kings approach the conditions of their reigns, all of them are better understood as utopian models and not as ideal types. In addition, much of the portrayal of the monarchy is dystopian in nature: a demonstration of the failure of the Davidic dynasty to produce a utopia because of the actions of the rulers, the priests, and the people throughout the history of the nation. The monarchy was the reality in Israel’s past, but its role in the future society that the Chronicler envisioned is not overtly stated in the text. Thus, the continuing significance of the Davidic dynasty for the Chronicler has been assessed by scholars in a variety of ways.

Since the concept of an alternative reality is a key component of utopian literature, it is a possibility that the Chronicler advocates a restoration of the Davidic dynasty in contrast to its absence in his present. Such a position finds support from those scholars who adopt an eschatological, messianic, or royalist understanding of Chronicles.

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191 Although even in this instance, Solomon is superior to Abijah since that latter experiences war and the former is the “man of peace.”

192 See the secondary literature and conclusions cited in footnotes 68 and 74 in Chapter 1.
However, there is another possible utopian reading of the Davidic dynasty in Chronicles. The utopian future in Chronicles is a cultic society that does not require any specific political system or a Davidide in particular to bring it into existence. The key word in the previous sentence is “require.” The brief assessment in this section contends that a better understanding of the Chronicler’s utopian ideology for the future is to allow that the Davidic dynasty may be part of the future of Israel, but that its restoration is not necessary for achieving utopia as it is constructed in Chronicles.¹⁹³

As explained in Chapter 1, one of the common misconceptions about utopian literature is that it portrays an unchanging society based on a blueprint of exact details which are necessary for its existence. However, this understanding of utopia has been rejected. Rather, utopias sketch out a better alternative reality that may adapt as historical circumstances change. Thus, historical reconstruction of a society based on utopian literature is problematic, but the enumeration of debated issues and societal conflicts at the time of a utopia’s composition is a better understanding of the nature of this genre. It is within such a framework that the Davidic monarchy in Chronicles can be assessed more coherently.

First, it is clear that the chief purpose of the dynasty is responsibility for the cult. The Chronicler’s version of the “dynastic promise” emphasizes that Solomon is chosen as David’s successor for the explicit purpose of building the temple (1 Chr 17:10b-15; cf. 1 Chr 22:9-10; 28:2-7; 2 Chr 7:17-18). Thus, all of his descendants who properly

¹⁹³ From this perspective, Chronicles has much in common with the utopian society of Ezekiel 40-48 with its future society of a restored Israel that is thoroughly cultic without a revived Davidic monarchy; cf. Laato, “Messianic expectations in the Chronicles,” 234-35; and Janzen, Social Meanings of Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible, 237-42. Janzen, however, is incorrect to conclude from this that the Chronicler was interested in maintaining the status quo (p. 242). See also the comments on Ezekiel 40-48 above in Section 3.1.2.3.
administer and support the temple are portrayed in utopian terms even to the point of subtly critiquing righteous kings who fail to institute additional reforms after periods of sin and repentance. In addition, at the conclusion of the work the focus is clearly on the temple and cult while the monarchy simply disappears from the scene (2 Chr 36:14-23). Finally, in this passage, the people are to return to restore the temple under the auspices of the Persian kings. The monarchy, or even a Davidic descendant, is absent (cf. 2 Kgs 25:27-29).

Second, the foreign rulers and the Persian kings in particular are presented as fulfilling the duties of the Davidic dynasty in attending to the cult. Neco speaks the words of God (2 Chr 35:21-22), and Cyrus acts to fulfill them (2 Chr 36:22-23). Specifically, Cyrus is used by God to restore his people to the land and to rebuild the temple. The repeated concerns for the restoration of the tribes in exile and for the maintenance of the temple in Chronicles have been noted previously. There is no such explicit concern for the restoration of the dynasty in Chronicles.

This is not to say that the Chronicler disallows the possibility of a future restoration of the monarchy. The “covenant of salt” made with David (2 Chr 13:5) suggests a possible future for the dynasty, as does the recording of the Solomonic genealogy well into the postexilic period (1 Chr 3:10-24). However, these texts hold out the possibility of restoration and not its necessity. The Chronicler is somewhat vague about this issue: he does not explicitly advocate the restoration of the dynasty and neither does he explicitly doom the dynasty to oblivion. However, he is clear that military revolt against the foreign power or the forcible appointment of a Davidic king in the present is.

\[194\] See the similar remark by Beentjes, “Jerusalem in the Book of Chronicles,” 26; and the conclusion about the relationship between Israel and Cyrus by Mitchell, “Ideal Ruler as Intertext,” 321-23.
not the proper course of action. Just as Chronicles holds out the possibility that the remaining tribes will be restored if God so acts in history,\textsuperscript{195} the Chronicler preserves the option for a restoration of the dynasty by God’s agency.\textsuperscript{196} However, the Chronicler does not depend on it for the future existence of the community. Instead, the Chronicler reinforces the necessity of the temple cult and continued faithfulness to YHWH on the part of all those in the land.\textsuperscript{197}

Third, the Chronicler provides a subtle argument that at its heart Israel is a theocracy in the true sense of the word whether it has a Davidic monarch, a Persian overlord, or any other political system in place. God rules the people. The Chronicler directly associates the throne of the king with the throne of God (1 Chr 28:5; 29:23; 2 Chr 9:8; 13:8).\textsuperscript{198} This relationship implies that even though a human, a Davidide, is the visible monarch that, in reality, YHWH is the true ruler. The kingship of YHWH is not affected by the identity of whoever is currently ruling over the people; thus, the unrighteous kings, the usurper and non-Davidide Athaliah, and the Persian kings do not negate this reality. In addition, David himself affirms that kingship belongs to YHWH (1 Chr 16:31; 29:10-12), and the belief is repeated by Jehoshaphat at a critical point in Judah’s existence (2 Chr 20:6).

\textsuperscript{195} See the arguments for this position in Sections 2.2.1-2.

\textsuperscript{196} Compare the similar comments by Gabriel, 	extit{Friede über Israel}, 4-5. Braun also notes the ambiguity of this presentation in Chronicles, but concludes that it is possible that the Chronicler simply “did not know” the outcome of the Davidic hope (“Cyrus in Second and Third Isaiah, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah,” 163-64). My view differs from Braun in affirming that the Chronicler is aware of numerous options for restoration (of people, temple, and land) and any of these could be utilized by God in reestablishing the Davidic dynasty if that was part of divine plan. However, as stated above, Chronicles is silent about the necessity of the Davidic dynasty in Israel’s future.

\textsuperscript{197} The democratizing 	extit{Tendenz} in Chronicles further supports this reading of the monarchy’s future as being unnecessary in the Chronicler’s utopia.
Finally, and most significantly, the Davidic dynasty has demonstrated its own futility in attempts to establish a utopia. The apparent utopia at the time of Solomon dissipates. Dystopia is formed all too easily and can only be forged into a temporary utopia that has no permanence. The monarchy cannot sustain a utopian society. The temple cult alone provides the means for establishing utopia. ¹⁹⁹ Unfaithfulness (בַּלְשָׁנָה) has been the problem but faithfulness (אמון, נאמין, אָמַר) is the means by which the Chronicler’s better alternative reality can be achieved.

3.3.2 The Exile and its Implications for Utopia in Chronicles

The two exiles imposed on the people of Israel (the Assyrian deportation of 722/721 B.C.E. and the Babylonian exile of 587/586 B.C.E.) are catastrophic events in both the genealogies and narrative of Chronicles. ²⁰⁰ “Unfaithfulness” (בַּלְשָׁנָה) has produced these dystopias for the people. However, this is not the end of history. Indeed, although the northern kingdom was still perceived to be in a state of exile, Chronicles suggests the possibility of a future return for these tribes (2 Chr 30:6-9). ²⁰¹ In the same regard, the Babylonian exile was not the end for the southern kingdom of Judah, but it was only a

¹⁹⁹ See the evidence provided to support this claim in Chapter 4.

²⁰⁰ See the previous discussion of the exiles in Sections 2.2.1-2. Contrast this with the concern only for the kingdom of Judah presented in the Deuteronomistic History. While it reports the destruction of the capital of Samaria, the deportation of the people, and the resettlement of the land by foreigners (2 Kings 17), it does not present any hope of restoration in the future, and functions in the narrative as a warning to Judah not to replicate their failure. See also the claims for the historicity of the Babylonian exile as depicted in Chronicles (and not only a narrative construct) by Lester L. Grabbe, ““The Exile” under the Theodolite: Historiography as Triangulation,” in Leading Captivity Captive: The Exile as History and Ideology (ed. L. L. Grabbe; JSOTS 278; ESHM 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 80-100.
temporary period of rest which “wiped the slate clean” to provide a new opportunity to rebuild a society that is not hindered by the failures of the past. Thus, in Chronicles, the land is empty during the exile (2 Chr 36:21), which disrupts the spatial-temporal lines of continuity with the past.

The period of exile witnesses the cessation of the monarchy, the temple cult, the people’s dwelling in the land, and, at least by implication, the prophetic word. Cyrus’ decree indicates that the temple will be rebuilt, the people will return to the land, and the prophetic voice and its fulfillment are active once again. However, the only monarch mentioned is the Persian Cyrus, who speaks with a message from God and acts in obedience to it. The dystopian political organization of the past remains in the past. The future utopia in Chronicles will not necessarily be realized through the reestablishment of the dynasty.

The exile serves as the spatial-temporal line of demarcation in Chronicles. The future cannot be the same as the past, nor is it a simple continuation of it. Much of the

201 Historical change is not opposed to utopia and its continued development or origination; see the discussion of this point in Section 1.2.2.


203 See the comments by Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 43.

204 Wright correctly notes that this assertion of direct divine communication by Cyrus is a “Solomonic claim” by the foreign ruler, but proceeds to state that “No assessment is made of the validity of this claim, however” (“Beyond Transcendence and Immanence,” 258). Yet, coupled with the Chronicler’s previous attribution of direct divine communication to Pharaoh Neco, the Chronicler’s assessment seems to affirm the claim by Cyrus and indeed heightens the prestige of Cyrus by recourse to a Solomonic discourse.

205 This is a common device in the Hellenistic utopian literature and in More’s Utopia for establishing a key point in the historical development of a utopian community; see Section 3.1. See the remarks about the exile’s relegation to an “interruption” in Chronicles by Knoppers (I Chronicles 1-9, 514; idem, I Chronicles 10-29, 889).
past is irrevocably lost (e.g., the temple vessels, the ark, and the borders of the Israelite nation) without any possibility of restoring these original conditions or items. Instead, adaptation, historical change, is the avenue to be pursued in the construction of a better alternative reality to the past and present. The Chronicler’s rejection of a single ideal time or condition in the past opens up numerous possibilities for the future. This is particularly evident in the details of cultic reforms. None is identical. Variation and adaptation are the keys to success. So also with the political dimension: none of the judicial systems in Chronicles is identical nor is the spatial extent of Israel’s land consistent nor does the Davidic monarchy seem to have a particular function in the restoration society. The past should not be replicated, but its positive and negative lessons should be learned for living in the present and future. There is no blueprint for a future political utopia in Chronicles. Rather, Chronicles presents a better alternative reality that has a political dimension, but which focuses on the cult rather than political organization.

The exile is both ongoing and over for the Chronicler. Cyrus’ decree has been made, but its complete fulfillment in the restoration of the community and the return of all exiled Israelites still lies in the future. It has been suggested that the Chronicler evinces something of a “realized eschatology”—or, even better, an “already-not yet”

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206 See the discussion of this point with regard to the Chronicler’s cultic utopia in Chapter 4.

207 The final point about the Davidides is made rather emphatically by Pomykala, Davidic Dynasty Tradition, 107.

208 Contra Nel, “In the eyes of the beholder,” 389-91.

209 As noted previously, this makes Chronicles very different from Hellenistic utopian literature, which almost never discusses a utopia with cultic concerns as a key component of its political program. The exception to this is the political utopia with priests as the final authority in Euhemerus (in Diod. Sic. 5.42.5; 5.45.3b-5; 5.46.2-3); see Section 3.1.1.4.
component to this vision for the future. For the Chronicler, the opportunity for utopia exists as many of its constitutive elements are already present, but the full realization of a better alternative reality still awaits the community. The exile cannot prevent this from becoming reality, but instead this traumatic event and time period are the catalyst that separates a dystopian past from a utopian future.

3.3.3 Utopia under the (Persian) Empire?

The subjugation of Israel under a foreign power without an independent political system raises serious questions concerning the Chronicler’s advocacy of such prospects for the future. Whether the foreign power from the fourth century B.C.E. in question is Persia or Greece is relevant to the discussion, but the answer does not alter the main points that follow. Is political independence a necessity for utopia, or can utopia exist under an empire?

If the Chronicler, as seems to be the case, fails to advocate the overthrow of or revolt against the imperial regime, then the implementation of a better alternative reality by the removal of the foreign power can only come through God’s action. The Chronicler may allow for such to happen (see the discussion above in Section 3.3.1), but this is not the primary message which he wishes to convey. The readers of Chronicles gain no insight into the process by which such events would occur. Instead, the Chronicler does provide evidence that the current power is to be accepted and dealt with

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210 So Johnstone, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 1:16; idem, “Justification by Faith Revisited,” 301-02.

211 The issue of whether the late Persian period or early Hellenistic era is more probable will not be addressed here; cf. Section 1.1.2 on the date of Chronicles. The subject in this section is restricted to the issue of Israel’s subjugation to a foreign power as an ideological problem for a utopian construction of reality.
for the benefit of the community, as they are the instruments of God at this time. God’s control of history is a central concern in Chronicles. If this present empire (whether
Persian or Greek) should be overthrown by another, then that must be the will of God or a result of his involvement in human affairs. However, the community is not to seek the overthrow of the foreign power as it is the will of God for them at this time.

God provided the means to attain a utopia, a lasting utopia, by the actions of Cyrus and the Persian Empire. The community’s obligation is to respond accordingly and take advantage of the situation in which they find themselves. Two passages are significant in this respect: Shishak’s invasion at the time of Rehoboam (2 Chr 12:7-12) and a section of Solomon’s prayer at the temple dedication (2 Chr 6:36-40).

In the first, God allows Jerusalem to become temporarily subject to Egypt to instruct the Israelites in “the difference between serving [God] and serving the kingdoms of other lands” (2 Chr 12:8). This verse could be read as a reflection by the Chronicler on the state of subjection to Persia (or Greece) in his own day. Such a reading would echo the perception of slavery to Persia expressed as a complaint in Neh 9:36-37. However, the Chronicler is quick to conclude the section on Shishak’s invasion with the comment that “conditions were good in Judah” (2 Chr 12:12).

This assumes a Persian date for Chronicles, but is still valid for a Hellenistic date. The process begun under the Persians could continue under these new leaders. The point of departure for a new future in Chronicles is the exile and the promised restoration, not the subsequent shift in world powers. Compare the remark that “the effective political power of the day is not a matter of concern to the Chronicler” by Richard J. Coggins, “Theology and Hermeneutics in the Books of Chronicles,” in In Search of True Wisdom: Essays in Old Testament Interpretation in Honour of Ronald E. Clements (ed. E. Ball; JSOTSup 300; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 263-78, here 266. One is tempted to agree with Dyck that if the Chronicler had been among those in the procession to greet Alexander the Great as recorded in Josephus (Ant. 11.326-339), the Chronicler would have been at the front leading the way for the arrival of this next instrument of God (Theocratic Ideology, 3).

See the earlier discussion of this verse in Section 3.2.2.

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212 This assumes a Persian date for Chronicles, but is still valid for a Hellenistic date. The process begun under the Persians could continue under these new leaders. The point of departure for a new future in Chronicles is the exile and the promised restoration, not the subsequent shift in world powers. Compare the remark that “the effective political power of the day is not a matter of concern to the Chronicler” by Richard J. Coggins, “Theology and Hermeneutics in the Books of Chronicles,” in In Search of True Wisdom: Essays in Old Testament Interpretation in Honour of Ronald E. Clements (ed. E. Ball; JSOTSup 300; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 263-78, here 266. One is tempted to agree with Dyck that if the Chronicler had been among those in the procession to greet Alexander the Great as recorded in Josephus (Ant. 11.326-339), the Chronicler would have been at the front leading the way for the arrival of this next instrument of God (Theocratic Ideology, 3).

213 See the earlier discussion of this verse in Section 3.2.2.
state of affairs were thus better and more desirable than those under most of the subsequent Davidic monarchs.

In the second, Solomon concludes his prayer with a brief petition for God to forgive the people once they have repented in their state of punishment: an exile from the land (2 Chr 6:36-40). What Solomon does not say about the state of exile in this prayer is significant. If the Davidic-Solomonic era is an “ideal” state to which Israel should hope to return by replication, as many scholars have believed, then this would be an appropriate location for comments regarding the future restoration of the people from exile, of the temple complex, and of the restoration of the Davidic dynasty. However, all that the text relates is that God should forgive them without specifying how that forgiveness would take practical form. Chronicles also lacks the line in 1 Kgs 8:50b-51 that God should cause their “captors” (םֹהָבִים) to grant the people compassion. Perhaps the Chronicler wishes to avoid the possible labeling of the Persians (or Greeks) as “captors” who are holding the community as prisoners. Perhaps this is one additional way in which the Chronicler presents the foreign kings as the legitimate political authority in his utopian construction of reality. In the Chronicler’s opinion, the Persians (or Greeks) should not be compared to the Egyptians who held Israel in the “furnace of iron” (ברא ברזל), as they are negatively described in 1 Kgs 8:50b-51. Instead, the foreign empire is the divine agent through whom God is working to establish a better alternative reality for the community if they too will join in this process.

If this position of tolerance by the Chronicler for foreign powers in his political utopia is accepted, then Chronicles has no direct political parallel in the utopian literature from antiquity. All of these texts surveyed in Section 3.1 above, except one, present their
utopias as independent communities. That the Hellenistic utopias should be independent city-states is not surprising given the Greek’s loathing of kings and propensity toward local autonomy.\textsuperscript{214} The vast majority of texts in the HB, NT, and Second Temple period reflect the belief that either a Davidic descendant or God himself will rule over the chosen community. The lone exception is the local Christian communities of the NT and of the book of Acts in particular (see Section 3.1.2.4). These utopian communities accept—or are instructed to accept—many, though not all, of the social parameters imposed on them, working within the overall limits of the socio-politico-economic system of the Roman Empire. These communities do not attempt social upheaval or political revolt. The Chronicler has a parallel interest: identifying what must change and what cannot change given the present historical situation. The Chronicler fails to see the wisdom of political revolt, so that course of action is discouraged. However, the future of the community can be built on the cult, since this institution has the backing of the political power of his day, and provides the source of stability and identity for the community.

With the lack of direct parallels to the Chronicler’s political utopia in antiquity, the similarities between the single Hellenistic priestly utopia (Euhemerus; see Section 3.1.1.4) and the few HB and Second Temple cultic utopias (see Section 3.1.2.3) are all the more significant. Thus, the Chronicler is not entirely alone in advancing the idea that the political sphere operates in service of the cultic, but he does construct his cultic utopia in

\textsuperscript{214} See the comments by Erich S. Gruen, “Introduction,” in Images and Ideologies: Self-definition in the Hellenistic World (ed. A. Bulloch, E. S. Gruen, A. A. Long, and A. Stewart; HCS 12; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 3-6, esp. 4-5.
an entirely different manner than any of these other texts, as will be explored in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 4

A CULTIC UTOPIA

4.1 The Temple Cult in the Postexilic Period: A Survey

“One of the few points about which all commentators on Chronicles are agreed is that the temple was of central significance to its author.”¹ This claim by Williamson is certainly a correct assessment of a rare consensus among scholars working on Chronicles. However, this consensus begins to dissolve almost immediately as scholars attempt to clarify further the identity of the author and the precise nature of the interest exhibited by the Chronicler in the operation of the temple cult.

In addition, the date of Chronicles and its perceived relationship to social reality also impact the interpretation of the arguments advanced by the Chronicler in support of the temple. Thus, for example, if Chronicles (or at least its earliest stratum) is dated to the period of the temple construction in the early Persian period, then the book is seen as a piece of propaganda literature designed to encourage support for the proposed or recently completed building project. However, if Chronicles is dated to a much later point in either the Persian or Hellenistic periods, then the conflict with the Samaritans and their rival temple often is postulated as the appropriate context in which to

understand the claims made about the temple and its cult. In both of these cases, the depiction of the temple cult is understood as a defense of the present cultic organization, its validity, and claims to authority.

In this common view, the portrayal of the cult during the First Temple period in Chronicles frequently is assumed to reflect Second Temple practice and the discrepancies in the details throughout the book indicate multiple redactional layers from new historical contexts that attempt to anchor these innovations, which have already been implemented, in the hallowed past. This assumption has been supported by and built on numerous analyses of the development of the priesthood and temple cult in the HB and Second Temple literature. These studies have tended to relegate the practices of the detailed cultic system of Chronicles to the postexilic period. Thus, while the historical value of Chronicles for the reconstruction of the temple cult during the First Temple period has been largely rejected (with a few exceptions), its value for reconstructing a history of the temple cult in the Second Temple period has been largely embraced in scholarship. As noted previously, the criteria by which such a determination of assigning specific practices and details to one of these two periods are ambiguous at best. However, there is another interpretative option: the description of the temple cult in Chronicles does not reflect any historical reality—neither preexilic nor postexilic—but instead is a utopian construction by the Chronicler revealing his vision for a better alternative reality to be enjoyed in the future if it will be accepted by the community of his own time. Thus, from the perspective of utopian literary theory, Chronicles does not reflect historical reality, but instead critiques it and suggests in its place a different society that may yet exist.
The utopian portrayal of the temple cult in Chronicles will be the subject of this chapter. This cultic utopia is expressed in the descriptions of the sacrificial system and the organization of the priests and Levites. While most (but not all) of the other utopian societies discussed previously are political in nature, the utopian society in Chronicles exists as a cultic community. In this respect, the identity and duties of the temple personnel in the utopia are of particular interest, and these topics will be the focus of Sections 4.2-4.4. This first section (4.1) will survey the portrayal of the temple cult and related issues in selected literature of the Persian period. This information about the cult can be collected into six categories: (1) the physical structure of the temple and its environs; (2) affirmation for the personnel involved; (3) affirmation for the rituals performed; (4) criticism of the personnel involved; (5) criticism of the rituals performed; and (6) the role of God in the present and future of the temple and the community aligned with it. These data will provide a basis for comparison with the depiction of similar topics and details in the complex cultic utopia of Chronicles.

4.1.1 The Temple Cult in Persian Period Prophetic Literature: Haggai and First Zechariah, Second Zechariah, Third Isaiah, Joel, and Malachi

The promise of a restored temple is not common in exilic or early postexilic prophetic texts. This hope for a future restoration of the temple and/or its cult is explicit

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only in Second Isaiah, Ezekiel, Haggai and First Zechariah (chs. 1-8). In addition, distinctions in the concern for the temple and its cult in these texts should be noted. Second Isaiah notes as a passing remark that one of Cyrus’ “messianic” duties will be the building of the temple. No other reference to the temple or its cult is made in the chapters typically associated with Second Isaiah. Ezekiel receives what is presented as a vision of the future in which a restored temple exists. This incredibly detailed description of the temple and its cult is remarkably without any indication of how this the temple will be brought into existence or who is responsible for its construction. In contrast, the chief concern of Haggai and First Zechariah is to persuade the people of the restoration community that the time to rebuild the temple had arrived; these two prophets call the community to action in response to God’s command and encourage them to continue after the initial work had begun.

In four other prophetic texts (Second Zechariah, Third Isaiah, Joel, and Malachi), the existence of a restored temple and operational cult is clearly presupposed. Instead of

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3 Isa 44:28; Ezek 37:28; 40:1-48:35; Hag 1:1-2:23; Zech 1:16; 2:14-4:14 [2:10-4:14 Eng.]; 6:9-7:7; 8:9, 18-23. Whether the hope expressed in Second Isaiah and Ezekiel should be located in the exilic or postexilic period is debatable, but such a decision does not affect the points being made in this section; the dates attached to the prophecies in Haggai and First Zechariah that locate them in the early Persian period are almost universally accepted as authentic. On possible relationships between the prophecies of Haggai and First Zechariah and those of Ezekiel, see Steven S. Tuell, “Haggai-Zechariah: Prophecy after the Manner of Ezekiel,” in Thematic Threads in the Book of the Twelve (ed. P. L. Redditt and A. Schart; BZAW 325; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 273-91. See also the survey of the restoration of the temple cult in Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Third Isaiah by Sara Japhet, “The Temple in the Restoration Period: Reality and Ideology,” USQR 44 (1991): 195-251.

Because of its detail and its great importance in assessing the temple cult in Chronicles, the temple cult in Ezekiel will be dealt with separately in the following section (4.1.2).

4 While Ezek 37:26-28 clearly states that God will establish the future temple among his people, this statement is not echoed in the separate vision which elaborates on the temple and its cult in chs. 40-48.

5 I have accepted the common scholarly division of the books of Isaiah and Zechariah into distinct units of differing dates, while also agreeing with the recent propensity to affirm the literary unity of each book as a whole. On Isaiah see, e.g., Willem A. M. Beuken, “The Unity of the Book of Isaiah: Another Attempt at Bridging the Gorge between its Two Main Parts,” in Reading from Right to Left: Essays in Honour of David J. A. Clines (ed. J. C. Exum and H. G. M. Williamson; JSOTSup 373; London: Sheffield Academic, 2003), 50-62; Joseph Blenkinsopp, Isaiah 1-39: A New Translation with Introduction and
calling the people to a building project, these postexilic prophetic texts focus on the proper response of the community and the temple personnel to the present operations of a functional cult. Yet, the response advocated is not uniform but varied within these four texts and even within a single text. Thus, in this material, the community is encouraged to support the temple, its personnel, and its rituals; at the same time, all of these entities are critiqued for their shortcomings.

### 4.1.1.1 Haggai and First Zechariah

In the prophecies of Haggai and First Zechariah, few details of the temple and its cult are provided. The scant information will be assessed using the six categories mentioned above.

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A similar concern can be found in the sapiential book of Qoheleth (4:17-5:6 [5:1-7 Eng.]), although the book should probably be dated to a period later than the prophetic texts surveyed here. On the date of Qoheleth see, e.g., Tremper Longman III, The Book of Ecclesiastes [NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 2-15; C. L. Seow, Ecclesiastes: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary [AB 18C; New York: Doubleday, 1997], 11-38; and Roger N. Whybray, Ecclesiastes [NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989], 3-16.)
(1) Physical description: The new house will be built of wood and stone (Hag 1:8; 2:15). No dimensions of the temple or its constituent parts are given, although it is apparently small, or at least significantly smaller than the First Temple (Hag 2:3, 9).

(2) Affirmation of personnel: Zerubbabel the governor of Judah (בֵּיתוֹ של הָעֲדָן) will have a special role in the future of the community (Hag 2:20-23; cf. Zech 4:6-14; 6:11-13 [emended]). Joshua the high priest will have a special role in the future of the community (Zech 3:1-4:14; 6:9-14). In the future, the royal and priestly leadership will exist in peace (Zech 6:13). The clothing of Joshua is described in a vision in terms reminiscent of the clothing allotted to Aaron and his sons in the Torah (Zech 3:4-5).\(^7\) Those “who are far off” will help build the temple (Zech 6:15). The leadership and the remnant of the people assist in the building project (Hag 1:14). There are unidentified priests who apparently have authority to make legal rulings (נָשָׁי) in cultic matters or at least to communicate the previous tradition in the present (Hag 2:11-14; cf. Zech 6:2-3).

(3) Affirmation of rituals: the people are making offerings of consecrated meat (בְּשֵׁי; Hag 2:14). Fasting was performed regularly in commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem (Zech 7:1-7), but these times should now become celebratory instead (Zech 8:18-19). A lampstand similar to the one found in the tabernacle described in the Torah is seen in a vision (Zech 4:1-14)—however, this text does not indicate if such a lampstand existed or will exist in the restored temple. The text may only be concerned with this imagery without requiring a lampstand to exist currently.

\(^7\) On this connection to the clothing of the high priest and his sons in the Torah, see James C. VanderKam, “Joshua the High Priest and the Interpretation of Zechariah 3,” CBQ 53 (1991): 553-70, esp. 563-64, 567-70; and idem, From Joshua to Caiaphas, 24-27.
(4) Criticism of personnel: Joshua and the people are currently unclean and must be cleansed in Zech 3:1-9.

(5) Criticism of rituals: the offerings of the people in the new temple are declared to be “unclean” (מכלת; Hag 2:14). Joshua and the people are currently unclean and must be cleansed in Zech 3:1-9.

(6) Role of God: the spirit of the people and its religious and political leadership are “stirred up” by YHWH to perform their work (Hag 1:14). The current economic depression is stated to be a result of the neglect of the temple and its cult by the community; their fortunes can be reversed by giving appropriate attention to them (Hag 1:5-11; 2:15-19; Zech 8:9-15). The newly-rebuilt temple pales in comparison to the early glorious one, but in the future this present temple will far surpass the former one (Hag 2:3-9; cf. Zech 4:10). The nations will come to Jerusalem to worship YHWH, implicitly at the temple (Zech 8:20-23; cf. 1:10-13).

In these two texts, little is said about the specific identity and duties of the priests or any other attendants. Joshua the high priest alone has an ancestry. There is silence about the heritage of the priests; they are not described as Aaronides, Levites, or Zadokites. A group or groups known as “Levites” are completely absent. Additional temple functionaries known from other texts are not mentioned (see below on the additional groups named in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles). The current leading priest is designed as the “high priest” (ךֵּפָרוֹן) who is apparently but not explicitly descended from the last leading priest of the First Temple. By noting that Joshua is the “son of Jehozadak,” it is assumed that this is a claim of descent to the Jehozadak son of Seraiah and thus a connection to the line of leading preexilic priests—a relationship explicit only in Chronicles (1 Chr 5:40-41 [6:14-15 Eng.]). In 2 Kgs 25:18, the last preexilic leading priest
described only in vague terms. The present inferiority of the temple stands in contrast with the hope placed in its future splendor, which is also described in imprecise language. Only a few sacrificial offerings, vows, and fasts are mentioned, and then without any details of the procedures involved. Clearly, the operation of the cult and its personnel is not the concern of these texts, its restoration and immediate continued support is.

4.1.1.2 Second Zechariah, Third Isaiah, Joel, and Malachi

The situation is somewhat different in these four prophetic texts. As noted above, these texts assume an operational temple and a functional cult existing in the present. The community is called to continue its support, but, unlike Haggai and First Zechariah, several criticisms are offered of the people, the temple personnel, and the cult throughout these texts. The information will be assessed using the same six categories with one further frame of reference: in addition to criticism of the rituals performed (5a), there is also criticism of other ritual practices performed by the people, though not explicitly occurring at the temple (5b).

(1) Physical description: there is a potter/treasury (כֶּסֶף)\(^9\) in the temple (Zech 11:13).\(^10\) The temple has an altar (Isa 56:7; Joel 1:13; 2:17; Mal 1:7, 10; 2:13), doors (Mal 1:10), a storehouse for tithes (Mal 3:10), and courts (Isa 62:9).

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\(^9\) On the difficulty of translating this word and the possible options, see Meyers and Meyers, Zechariah 9-14, 276-78.

\(^10\) The basin and altar mentioned in Zech 9:15 have been taken as indications of an operational cult (Meyers and Meyers, Zechariah 9-14, 176), although this is not required given both the metaphorical language of the text and the common use of such objects in the past without necessitating their present existence for the text to be meaningful to the book’s audience.
(2) **Affirmation of personnel:** God has made a covenant with Levi who will instruct people as he walks in integrity (Mal 2:4-6). The priest is the messenger of God, and the people should consult him (Mal 2:7). In the future, the people will be called “priests” and “ministers” to God, and not only one segment within the population (Isa 61:6). In the future, all of the people’s “kindred from all the nations” (כָּלֶּאָדְוָהְמִים מֵאַסְּפָה יָסְדִים) will come to Jerusalem to serve as priests and as Levites (Isa 66:18-21).

(3) **Affirmation of rituals:** an acceptance of the correct rituals and personnel is implicit, but not explicit, in many of the criticisms listed in the following three categories. Also, the people commonly bring offerings in clean vessels to the temple (Isa 66:20). In the future, the people will eat their own crops and drink their own wine in the temple courts, rather than their enemies (Isa 62:8-9).

(4) **Criticism of personnel:** the house of Levi will mourn in the future (Zech 12:13). Priests are accused of polluting the temple with impure offerings (Mal 1:6-14), so that God wishes the doors of the temple would be shut in contrast to the incense offered to his name, which is great among the nations (Mal 1:10-11). Priests have given bad instruction to the people, shown partiality, and corrupted the covenant with Levi (Mal 2:8-9). The people have profaned the sanctuary by intermarriage (Mal 2:11). The priests are instructed to proclaim with a trumpet a fast and an assembly since the people have stopped bringing their offerings (Joel 1:13-14; 2:12-17). The people are to keep the Sabbath appropriately (Isa 56:2; 58:13).

(5a) **Criticism of rituals:** In the future, the festival of Sukkoth will be celebrated, holiness will be so pervasive that cooking pots will be acceptable at the altar, and
Canaanites/traders (םִנָּה נֵאִים) will not be allowed in the temple (Zech 14:16-21). In the future, Jerusalem will be holy and strangers (םֵאֲרֵנָה) will be excluded (Joel 4:17 [3:17 Eng.]). Eunuchs who observe the Sabbath and foreigners who “join themselves to YHWH” are to be accepted in the temple, the house of prayer for all nations (Isa 56:3-7). In the present, the people have not brought the “full tithe into the storehouse” with their tithes and offerings, and thus have been suffering economically (Mal 3:8-12). The people have stopped bringing grain and drink offerings (Joel 1:9). The performance of rituals (offerings of bulls, lambs, goats, celebrating new moons and festivals, and praying) by the people is not accompanied by social justice and is thus rejected by God (Isa 1:11-17). The people fast but do not practice social justice (Isa 58:3-7). In the future, animals of foreigners will be accepted for sacrifice in the temple (Isa 60:7). In the past, the sanctuary was trampled by enemies (Isa 63:18), the temple burned, and continues to lie in ruin (Isa 64:10 [v. 11 Eng.]), but the full restoration via God’s intervention is still awaited (Isa 63:15-64:11 [v. 12 Eng.]). In the future, fine wood from Lebanon will enhance the beauty of the temple (Isa 60:13). The future temple will have an altar (Isa 60:7; Zech 14:20). In the future “new heavens and new earth,” no temple is explicitly

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11 On this term, see Meyers and Meyers, Zechariah 9-14, 489-92.
12 The latter two points are apparently to be taken as contrasts to the present practice, which may suggest the same for the festival of Sukkoth as either not being performed at all or done so inappropriately or incompletely in the present.
13 This type of accusation is not unique to exilic or postexilic prophetic texts. Similar condemnations are expressed in the preexilic oracles of Amos (5:10-15, 21-24; 8:4-6).
14 This description of the cult as currently being defunct in this passage has received much attention in the history of scholarship on the book of Isaiah. Blenkinsopp seems to conclude that this a lament that originated earlier during the exile, near the time of the composition of the book of Lamentations, but has been preserved in this context as part of the chapters typically assigned to Third Isaiah (Isaiah 56-66, 257-66). If accepted, this passage (Isa 63:7-64:11 [v. 12 Eng.]) could be included with the discussion of Second Isaiah in the previous section. However, the emphasis in this text on the future restoration still awaited by the community is consistent with the other material found in Third Isaiah.
mentioned, but there will be regular worship before God (Isa 65:17-25; 66:22-23). The existence and necessity of the temple itself is questioned (Isa 66:1-2), and the offerings of oxen, lambs, grain, and frankincense are rejected given the people’s refusal to cease their evil practices (Isa 66:3-4).

(5b) Criticism of other rituals: divination is practiced (Zech 10:1-2). In the future, idols, prophets, and unclean spirits will be removed (Zech 13:2). Idolatry, ritual sex, and child sacrifice are practiced (Isa 57:5-10, 13). Idolatrous sacrifices including incense offerings, necromancy, the consumption of impure food and drink, and feasting in honor of other deities are being practiced (Isa 65:3-4, 7, 11).

(6) Role of God: a fountain will be opened to cleanse the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from sin and impurity, which is language associated with cultic rituals (Zech 13:1). God will purify the children of Levi in the future (Mal 3:3). God has and will curse the priests and their offspring who reject him (Mal 2:1-3). God has rejected the people’s offerings because of their practice of divorce (Mal 2:13-16). God will come suddenly to his temple to rectify the situation (Mal 3:1-2). God will reverse their economic poverty if the people perform their duties regarding tithes and offerings (Mal 3:8-12). God speaks against his enemies from the temple (Isa 66:6). God will create new heavens and a new earth (Isa 66:22).

In these four texts, the dominant concern with the temple and its cult is one of open criticism. The prophets affirm some practices (e.g., the Sabbath), but are chiefly...
concerned with the condemnation of improper practices. Only vague references to current practices are made, without virtually any details about procedures or requirements being given. Practices mentioned include: new moon, the Sabbath, a few different types of offerings, the collection of tithes, fasting, and prayer. The temple building and environs itself, as in Haggai and First Zechariah, are only vaguely described.

The present personnel are clearly priests and Levites, but no leading priest is mentioned. Both groups are affirmed as the selected officiants, and both are criticized for their failures. In addition, there seems to be a hope that in the future a significant number—if not all—of the people will be able to serve as ministers in the temple, and not only those currently designated as “priests” or “Levites.” In these particular passages, non-Levites can become or serve as “Levites,” which may suggest that the term is being used here to denote social class or occupation and is not restricted to genealogical heritage. While the “house of Levi”—a genealogical term—is mentioned once (Zech 12:13), the remaining citations that mention priests or Levites do not provide clear evidence for their identity or for the criteria which distinguish between these groups.  

4.1.2 The Temple Cult in Ezekiel 40-48

The lack of details regarding the physical structure, ritual practices, and personnel of the Second Temple found in the previously surveyed prophetic literature stands in marked contrast to the meticulous depiction of the temple and its environs recounted in Ezekiel 40-48. This vision of a future temple—and not the Second Temple that was

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17 Compare the detailed analyses of the temple personnel in Malachi and the cultic issues raised in Third Isaiah by Judith M. O’Brien, Priest and Levite in Malachi (SBLDS 121; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), esp. 27-48, 85-148; and Brooks Schramm, The Opponents of Third Isaiah: Reconstructing the Cultic
constructed—contains numerous data regarding the temple and its cult. This information will be assessed using the six categories outlined above. As will be evident, the first three of these six categories are the primary focus of the vision in these nine chapters.

(1) **Physical description:** the temple area is located on a mountain in Israel (Ezek 40:2) and is surrounded by an immense wall designed to protect the holiness of the temple complex (40:5; 42:20; 43:10-12). This wall has gates on the east, north, and south and has space for vestibules, windows, and pillars (40:6-16, 20-37, 48-49). There are thirty chambers in the outer court (40:17-19), and two chambers in the inner court that are designated for use by the singers and by the officiating priests—who are apparently all Zadokites (40:44-47). There are tables for the sacrifices and the instruments to be used (40:38-43). The temple court is a square (40:47). Dimensions are provided for all of these pieces of furniture and for the enclosures. Dimensions and descriptions are given for the nave, the most holy place (41:1-4), for the three-story side chambers that are taller...

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"History of the Restoration" (JSOTSup 193; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), esp. 112-82; cf. the treatment of these texts by Berquist, *Judaism in Persia’s Shadow*, 73-79, 94-102.

18 The program in Ezekiel may have been intended to be implemented in the reconstruction of the Second Temple or it may be another alternative to the actual Second Temple; in either case, it is clear that the temple and its cult as described in Ezekiel 40-48 are not a historical reality at any point during the Second Temple period. Ackroyd claims that Ezekiel 40-48 is a “utopian” vision that is a “critique of the actualities [of the present and] … a measure against which practicalities can be judged” (*Chronicler in His Age*, 237).

19 The existence of a western gate in this future temple area is not explicit in Ezekiel’s description. The Second Temple had a western gate according to rabbinic literature (*m. Mid.* 1.3). Josephus, however, disagrees with this and denies the existence of a western gate (*B.J.* 5.38 [implicit]; 5.200; 6.324-325). The Chronicler states that Solomon’s temple had gatekeepers on the west, which may imply the existence of a western gate in the First Temple or possibly the Second Temple (1 Chr 9:24; 26:17-19; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 8.96). As it is often asserted that the second of these texts reflects Second Temple practice (e.g., Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 458; and Wright, “Guarding the Gates,” 79)—a conclusion with which I do not agree—the confusion over the existence or non-existence of this western gate during the Second Temple period is only intensified. Thus, this simple issue (was there a western gate?) demonstrates that the relationship between these three temples and the historical realities which they may reflect is highly complex, is not easily recoverable from the sources, and that assertions about the “actual conditions” of the Second Temple from these texts (esp. the utopian texts of Chronicles and Ezekiel 40-48) should be made with caution.
at the top than the base—an architectural oddity—with a stairway and raised platform (41:5-11), for a building situated on the western wall directly behind the most holy place (41:12), for the courtyard (41:13-15a), for the interior decorations of paneling, windows, and doorposts (41:15b-21a, 23-26), for the priests’ chambers for eating and changing their apparel (42:1-14), and for the entire temple compound (42:5-20). There is an altar in front of the temple for sacrifice (40:47), an altar of wood in front of the holy place (41:21b-22). The dimensions of the altar for burnt offering are given (43:13-17). The kitchens that the priests use for boiling the guilt and sin offerings and for baking the grain offering are described (46:19-24). The description of the temple area (40:1-46:24) includes a brief discussion of the immediately surrounding land to be occupied by the priests, Levites, and the prince (45:1-8). The description of the rest of the land (47:1-48:35) includes: a river which flows from the temple to the Dead Sea and brings it back to life (47:1-12), the borders and extent of the land (47:13-20), the division of the land among the twelve tribes in a unique order (47:21-48:14, 21-29), and the perfectly square city with its gates (48:15-20, 30-35). The priests, Levites, and prince have special allotments of land (48:8-14, 21-22).

(2) Affirmation of personnel: the singers and officiating priests in the temple and at the altar are all Zadokites of the Levitical line, and are the only ones allowed to

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20 This distribution of land is utopian and not based on a historical or previous model as Levenson notes (Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40-48, 116, 118). However, rather than stress its utopian quality, Levenson asserts that the allotment “is purely ideal, and its idealism, incidentally, argues strongly that it is the product of the Exile, where the practicalities of living-patterns, especially as limited by geography could be easily forgotten by a nostalgic priest” (p. 116). This vision is not ideal, but it is utopian; and misplaced nostalgia brought on by the “trauma of Exile” is not the best explanation for this distribution of land. It is a utopian construct that is based neither on the ideal intended borders of the land in the Torah and Joshua (from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River) nor on the distribution of land resulting from events of historical circumstance (Israelite tribes settled east of the Jordan River). See, e.g., Gen 15:18-21; Exod 23:31; Num 26:52-56; 32:1-42; 34:1-15; Deut 1:7-8; 3:8-22; 11:24; and Josh 1:4; cf. the ideal extent of Solomon’s kingdom in 1 Kgs 5:1, 4 [4:21, 24 Eng.]//2 Chr 9:26.
minister to YHWH (40:44-46). The priests who are “levitical priests of the line of Zadok” (הכהנים הלוהים Açאר החומש זדוק) will sanctify the altar for burnt offering, offer the sacrifices, throw salt on them, and be responsible for this particular sacrifice henceforth (43:18-27). These priests, in contrast to the Levites, will minister to YHWH, will have special clothing and hair styles, will observe distinct practices for drinking wine, marriage, and touching dead bodies, will teach the people the laws of holiness, will act as judges, will observe the laws, festivals and Sabbaths, and will have no property, but will partake of the offerings and tithes (44:15-31). These priests will have land allotted to them for their houses (45:1-4; 48:8-13). The Levites are allotted a separate section for their houses (45:5; 48:12-14). The prince (ץ"פ) may eat his food before YHWH at the eastern gate (44:1-3) and has a separate section of land for himself and his household (45:7-8a; 48:21-22). The prince is responsible to provide for the burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings, sin offerings, offerings of well-being, and the offerings at the festivals, new moons, Sabbaths, and appointed celebrations (45:17, 22-25), and he has a special role in the ceremonial procedures of these events (46:1-15). During Rosh Hashanah, “the priest” (ך"נ) has the responsibility for the application of the blood (45:19). The priests prepare the offerings separately so as not to consecrate the people (46:20).

(3) Affirmation of rituals: the burnt offerings are to be washed (40:38) and slaughtered on special tables using designated instruments (40:39-43). The priests have designated chambers in which to place and to eat the grain, sin, and guilt offerings, and in

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21 This is the only appearance of this leading priest, who is here distinguished from the other priests in Ezekiel 40-48. No further indication of his responsibilities, duties, or privileges is provided. It is rather the prince who receives this attention in these chapters.
which to change into ordinary clothing from their holy vestments used while ministering to YHWH (42:13-14). The ritual procedure for sanctifying the altar for burnt offering is given in detail (43:18-27). In the past, the people had offered food to God: the fat and the blood (44:7). The Zadokite priests will offer sacrifices of the fat and the blood and will observe the festivals and the Sabbaths (44:15-24). The balances and measurements are established (45:10-12). The size of the grain offering, burnt offering, and offering of well-being are fixed (45:13-15). The procedures for sacrifice at the festivals of Rosh Hashanah, Passover, and Sukkoth (45:18-25), for the new moon and the Sabbath (46:1-8), for entering the temple complex (46:9-10), and for other sacrifices (45:11-15) are provided. Sacrifice is performed to make atonement for sin (45:20, 22). The laws of inheritance are different for the sons of the prince and for his servants (46:16-17). The “year of release” (שָׂנָהּ דָּיוֹד) will be observed, although it is mentioned only in passing without much detail (46:17). The guilt offerings and sin offerings are boiled (לַב) and the grain offerings baked (חֲמָן) (46:20, 24).

(4) Criticism of personnel: in the past, the people and their kings have defiled God’s name (43:7b-9). Strangers (בָּנָיָֹה), uncircumcised in heart and in flesh, are to be excluded from the sanctuary (44:5-7, 9). In the past, the people had allowed these strangers into the temple and even appointed them to be in charge of the sanctuary (44:6-8). The Levites will be ministers in the sanctuary, oversee the gates, slaughter the burnt offering, and sacrifice for the people, attending them and serving them, because they had previously been idolatrous and caused Israel to stumble (44:10-12, 14). However, while

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22 This time is not termed a “Jubilee” (בָּנָיָֹה) as in Lev 25:8-34 and 27:16-25, but the appearance of “release” (דָּיוֹד) in both texts (Lev 25:10; Ezek 46:17) certainly connects them linguistically and
they perform these services, they are to be excluded from the priesthood and the most holy sacrifices (44:13). In the past, the princes of Israel oppressed the Israelites, but they are not to do so again (45:8b-9; 46:18).

(5) Criticism of rituals: in the past, the people and their kings performed abominations including idolatry and buried their royal dead inappropriately (43:8-9).

(6) Role of God: God is directly responsible for the existence of this future temple and its cult (37:26-28). The glory (יָהּ) of YHWH enters the temple, and fills it (43:1-5), indicating that God will now dwell among his people (43:6-7a; 48:35) and that the earlier vision of its departure from the soon-to-be destroyed First Temple in Ezek 11:22-23 is now reversed.

From these data, a few conclusions can be made. First, the vision in Ezekiel 40-48 presents a utopian temple and cult that is not the same as the Second Temple. While it is tempting to see the practices described in this vision as representative of those performed at the Second Temple, the text is clearly about a future temple which is superior to that of the past or present. Thus, while similarities and differences between this future temple and the Second Temple may be noted, it is difficult to assert that the practices reflect those at some point during the Second Temple period. They could rather be, and most likely are, a projection of hopes and dreams of a better alternative reality—a utopia.

23 As noted above, this claim does not occur in chs. 40-48. However, these nine chapters can be viewed, and perhaps best understood, as a very detailed explanation of or commentary on these three brief verses (cf. Joseph Blenkinsopp, Ezekiel [IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1990], 178). A similar difficulty in interpretation concerns the prince (נַחֲלָה), who is explicitly a Davidide in Ezek 37:24-25, but who is not so designated when mentioned in chs. 40-48 (see the discussion of this point in Section 3.1.2.3). The notion that God is directly responsible for the existence of the future temple is also found in 1 En. 90:28-29 and 11Q19 XXIX, 8; cf. the divine origin of the future New Jerusalem in Rev 21:1-22:5.
This utopia in Ezekiel, similar to More’s famous island, contains inconsistencies which do not negate the utopia but instead attempt to bring it into reality. These tensions include: the failure of the river to convert the swamps and marshes into fresh water that remain as sources of salt (47:11); the leaves of trees being sources of healing (47:12), which begs the question “from what?” in this city where God dwells; sacrifice is necessary because sin still exists (45:20, 22); foreigners who are uncircumcised in heart and flesh still reside among the Israelites (44:9; 47:22-23); people die (44:25); animals still die and tear each other apart (44:31); the “year of release” is practiced, which implies that debts still exist and must be rectified (46:17). In a common utopian use of geometry,\(^2\) the city and the inner temple court are perfect squares (40:47; 48:16, 35) and the temple is situated in the center of the priestly allotment of land (45:1-4; 48:8-10). However, even in this instance, the remainder of the apportionment of the city and the land are not based on squares, but are offset and do not simply reflect “degrees of holiness” emanating from the center to the margins in something similar to concentric circles. The expression of this type of utopianism in these chapters is not limited to these examples, as many more could be adduced.

Second, Ezekiel 40-48 is concerned to emphasize the Levitical heritage of the Zadokites and their authority as the officiants in the temple rituals. Also, the Levites are excluded from priestly duties and assigned other tasks in the temple cult. The failure of the Levites and faithfulness of the Zadokites in the past are repeated and highlighted as explanations for the organizational structure of the cultic personnel. This suggests a

\(^2\) Note the (mostly) circular island of Utopia, the geographical symmetry of Iambulus’ Island of the Sun and its surrounding islands (in Diod. Sic. 2.55.6, 58.7), and the dimensions of the New Jerusalem that describe the city as a cube (Rev 21:16).
clearly pro-Zadokite apologetic in the text. In this regard, Ezekiel is distinct from the previous prophetic literature that neither clarifies the identity of these various personnel nor clearly distinguishes between their duties. In the previously discussed texts, the priests and Levites are often mentioned in tandem, but their duties are often blurred, overlap, or not made explicit.

Third, Ezekiel 40-48 is much more concerned than any of the previously discussed prophetic literature to describe in detail the physical description of the temple and the operation of its cult. It is somewhat ironic that this non-existent temple in Ezekiel 40-48 is the one source that has the most detailed description of any temple and its cult provided by these prophetic texts. Thus, the amount of detail or the development of the cult into more complex forms cannot be assumed unilaterally to reflect either a historical reality or a subsequent stage in the history of the cult. As a utopian text, Ezekiel’s data about the temple cult may aid in reconstructing the debates about the cult and its proper operation, but not in serving as a source that contains details about the actual practice of the cult at a particular point in time.

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25 Although many scholars do not accept the date assigned in the text to the vision of Ezekiel 40-48 as authentic, this judgment is based on assumptions about and reconstructions of the development of the temple cult that are open to debate. If this date is accepted (ca. 573/572 B.C.E.), then the vision of Ezekiel is necessarily earlier than all of the prophetic literature discussed in Section 4.1.1; see also the cautions expressed by Blenkinsopp, Ezekiel, 7-8. However, even if the date is rejected as being part of a claim in this vision to harness the authority of Ezekiel, the relative dating of these prophetic texts cannot help in reconstructing the history of the cult’s development since the other prophetic texts clearly distinguish between descriptions of the present temple and cult and their vision for the future while this section of Ezekiel is patently not about the present but is almost entirely concerned with a future reality.
4.1.3 The Temple Cult in Ezra and Nehemiah

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah contain information regarding the temple and its cult during the Second Temple period. While some of the descriptions found in Ezra 1-6 are paralleled in Haggai and First Zechariah, the portrayal of the temple and its cult is most closely related to the depiction of these entities in Chronicles. These data will be assessed using the same six categories mentioned previously.

(1) Physical description: The first cultic object reinstituted at the new temple is the altar of burnt offering (Ezra 3:2-3). Cedar from Lebanon is used in the construction of the temple (Ezra 3:7). In a letter to Darius, the temple is called “the house of the great God” and contains hewn stone and timber in the walls* (Ezra 5:6-8). The copy of the decree of Cyrus found by Darius states that offerings take place at the temple, that its height and width will be sixty cubits, that it will have three courses of hewn stone and one course of timber, and that its building costs will be covered by the royal treasury* (Ezra 6:1-4). The temple has chambers guarded by the gatekeepers that serve as storage areas for the tithes, contributions, and the vessels used in the temple service by the priests, the gatekeepers, and the singers (Ezra 8:29; Neh 10:38-40 [vv. 37-39 Eng.]; 12:25, 44; 13:4-5, 9). Public assemblies may be held in the square in front of the temple (Ezra 10:9). Nehemiah requests a letter from Artaxerxes that will authorize timber to be

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26 The polemical nature of much of the material in Ezra and Nehemiah is well known. This is especially true for the several letters recorded and the tense interactions between the community and the surrounding peoples that are mentioned. In these contexts, in particular, the usefulness of the descriptions of the temple and its cult in reconstructing the present reality of the Second Temple is questionable at best. How should descriptions of temple practice found in the words of the community’s enemies or their Persian supporters be judged? I have elected to report this uncertain information in this survey, but to note its appearance in these doubly-polemical contexts (propagandistic literature reporting what others claim to be the case) with an asterisk (*) in the main text above.

27 Compare the different dimensions of Solomon’s temple in 1 Kgs 6:2-3 and 2 Chr 3:3-4.
supplied for the beams of the gates of the temple fortress, which he receives* (Neh 2:8).

There are stairs used by the Levites, apparently in some part of the temple area (Neh 9:4).

(2) Affirmation of personnel: A list of families of priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, temple servants, and descendants of Solomon’s servants who returned from exile is recorded (Ezra 2:36-58//Neh 7:39-60; cf. Neh 12:1-9). Priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, and temple servants dwell in their ancestral towns upon their arrival (Ezra 2:70//Neh 7:73; 11:3; 12:28-29). Jeshua son of Jozadak with his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel with his brothers build the altar of burnt offering (Ezra 3:2) and, encouraged by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the two leaders begin to rebuild the temple (Ezra 5:1-2). Masons and carpenters are employed to build the temple (Ezra 3:7). Levites over twenty years old are appointed to have oversight of the work of the temple (3:8). Certain priests and Levites are in charge of the workers (Ezra 3:9). At the laying of the foundation of the temple, priests are dressed in vestments and blow trumpets and Levites descended from Asaph play cymbals in line with David’s stipulations; both groups sing praises to God (Ezra 3:10-11). The local satrapy of Beyond the River is instructed by Darius to support the temple project* (Ezra 6:6-10). The priests in Jerusalem are given authority by Darius to make their daily needs for the temple sacrificial system known to the leaders of the satrapy and to expect that they will be met* (Ezra 6:9). Priests are set in divisions and Levites are set in courses for temple service according to the law of Moses at the temple dedication (Ezra 6:18). Priests and Levites purify themselves to celebrate Passover and kill the Pesach for the returnees, their fellow priests, and themselves (Ezra 6:19-20). Ezra who is a scribe and a priest, whose

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28 Following the reading of the MT for these texts; the parallel text of 1 Esd 5:46 locates the priests and Levites in Jerusalem and the other groups in their ancestral towns.
genealogy extends through the lineage of leading priests back to the chief priest Aaron, journeys to Jerusalem from Babylon with some of the people of Israel, priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, and temple servants (Ezra 7:1-9, 13). When Ezra begins his journey, no Levites accompany him, but a small number of them along with some temple servants join him in Casiphia (Ezra 8:15-20). Ezra commissions twelve leading priests to take care of the vessels and the funds for temple until they should be deposited before the officers of the priests and Levites in the chambers of the temple (Ezra 8:24-29; cf. v. 30 which mentions priests and Levites performing this duty that was assigned to the twelve priests). In his letter, Artaxerxes commands that the priests, Levites, singers, doorkeepers, temple servants, and other types of servants in the temple are not to be taxed by the satrapy of Beyond the River* (Ezra 7:24). Ezra is given authority by Artaxerxes to appoint magistrates and judges and to teach the law* (Ezra 7:25-26). Two leading priests and two Levites receive the vessels and funds from the group associated with Ezra (Ezra 8:33-34). Ezra is told that it is his duty to correct the intermarriage practices, and he appoints individuals to investigate (Ezra 10:4, 16). Priests are among those in Jerusalem upon Nehemiah’s arrival (Neh 2:16). At the time of Nehemiah’s arrival, Eliashib is high priest (Neh 3:1). Eliashib and fellow priests rebuild and consecrate the Sheep Gate (Neh 3:1). Eliashib’s house is along the city wall (Neh 3:20-21) as are the houses of other priests and the temple servants (Neh 3:22, 28, 31). At the time of building the wall, the gatekeepers, singers, and Levites were appointed to their posts (Neh

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29 It is Ezra’s status as a priest, and as a priest of the lineage of leading priests in particular, that makes his actions and duties of interest here rather than a hypothetical situation in which he would be only a scribe without a claim to priestly authority. The title “chief priest” (יהוה נֵּרָה) in this passage could refer grammatically either to Aaron or to Ezra; see the further discussion of this point and the preference for Aaron in Section 4.3.1.

30 See also the Excursus on Ezra’s Law and Mosaic Torah below.
7:1). Ezra the priest reads the law while certain Levites explain it to the people (Neh 8:1-8). The Levites lead the people in the blessing of God before the prayer of repentance (Neh 9:5). The priests, Levites, and the people are chosen by lot to provide for the wood offering on a rotating basis (Neh 10:35 [v. 34 Eng.]). The Levites who collect the tithes in the towns will be accompanied by “the priest” who is descended from Aaron (Neh 10:39 [v. 38 Eng.]). The priests, Levites, and the gatekeepers who live in Jerusalem are listed (Neh 11:10-19); the rest of the priests, Levites, and temple servants live in the towns (Neh 11:20-21). One of the Asaphite Levites is in charge of beginning the thanksgiving in prayer and another is over the work of the temple (Neh 11:16-17, 22; cf. Neh 12:8, 24). The singers receive a set daily provision by the king’s command (Neh 11:23). Some of the Levites in Judah were associated with Benjamin (Neh 11:36). The descendants of Jeshua, apparently the leading priest at the time of Zerubbabel and who is explicitly a Levite in this text, are listed (Neh 12:10-11). The priests at the time of Joiakim are listed (Neh 12:12-21). The Levites and some gatekeepers who lived during the times of four leading priests are mentioned (Neh 12:22-26). The priests and the Levites purify themselves for dedication of the wall (Neh 12:30). Collectors were appointed to gather the tithes designated for the priests and the Levites (Neh 12:44). The priests, Levites, singers, and gatekeepers performed their duties according to the command of David and Solomon (Neh 12:45). The singers and their performance go back to the times of David and Asaph (Neh 12:46). A priest, a scribe, and a Levite are appointed as treasurers over the storehouses by Nehemiah (Neh 13:13). Nehemiah claims to have done good for the temple and its service (Neh 13:14). Nehemiah appoints
the Levites to guard the gates of the city to prevent trade on the Sabbath (Neh 13:22). Nehemiah claims to have appointed the priests and Levites to their duties (Neh 13:30).

(3) Affirmation of rituals: Cyrus instructs local peoples to assist the returnees with silver, gold, goods, animals, and freewill offerings for the temple* (Ezra 1:4). Cyrus entrusts Sheshbazzar with the temple vessels including gold and silver basins, knives, gold and silver bowls, and miscellaneous vessels (Ezra 1:7-11; cf. Ezra 5:13-16; 6:5). According to a letter from Artaxerxes, Ezra is given gold and silver from the royal court for the temple sacrificial requirements and an allowance for more funds if needed* (Ezra 7:15-20). In his letter, Artaxerxes instructs the satrapy of Beyond the River to provide Ezra with maximum amounts of silver, wheat, wine, and oil, and unlimited salt* (Ezra 7:21-23). The heads of families make a freewill offering on the temple site upon their arrival in Jerusalem including gold darics, silver minas, and priestly robes (Ezra 2:68-69//Neh 7:70-72). Morning and evening offerings are performed on the altar of burnt offering as prescribed in the law of Moses (Ezra 3:3; 9:4). The festival of Sukkoth is kept as prescribed including the proper amount of daily burnt offerings (Ezra 3:4). Before the building of the temple’s foundation, the common ritual practice includes regular burnt offerings, offerings at the new moons, offerings at all the sacred festivals, and freewill offerings (Ezra 3:5-6). Trumpets, cymbals, and singing are used at the laying of the temple’s foundation (Ezra 3:10-11). Darius instructs the satrapy of Beyond the River to support the temple with bulls, rams, and sheep for burnt offerings, with wheat, salt, wine, and oil, as the priests at Jerusalem require on a daily basis* (Ezra 6:9). Prayer is to be offered for the Persian king Darius and his children in the new temple* (Ezra 6:10). The

31 This most likely demonstrates an awareness of the tradition represented in Num 28:12-38.
priests, Levites, and returnees offer bulls, rams, lambs, and male goats at the temple dedication (Ezra 6:16-17); Ezra's company makes a similar but smaller offering upon arriving in Jerusalem (Ezra 8:35). The priests and Levites have rotational duty rosters that are written in the law of Moses (Ezra 6:18). Passover and festival of unleavened bread are celebrated at the correct time (Ezra 6:19-22). The Pesach is eaten by the returnees and by those who had separated themselves from the pollutions of the nations of the land (Ezra 6:21). Fasting, typically accompanied by prayer, is practiced by individuals though not necessarily in the temple area (Ezra 8:21, 23; 9:5; 10:6; Neh 1:4-11; 9:1). The temple could apparently be used as a place of refuge (Neh 6:10-13). Ezra, priests, Levites, and heads of families gather to study the law (Neh 8:13). The festival of Sukkoth is observed after its prescription is read in the law (Neh 8:14-18). A sealed written document containing a pledge and a list of the names of the officers, Levites, and priests is made (Neh 10:1 [9:38 Eng.]). The people, priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants, and all who separated themselves from the foreigners bind themselves under a curse and an oath to observe the law and especially concerning the regulations for intermarriage and the Sabbath (Neh 10:29-32 [vv. 28-31 Eng.]). Those making the oath agree to pay a one-third shekel tax for use in the temple service: for rows of bread, grain offerings, burnt offerings, Sabbaths, new moons, appointed festivals, sacred donations, sin offerings, and the rest of the temple work (Neh 10:33-34 [vv. 32-33 Eng.]).

32 The length and details of the celebration in Nehemiah 8 imply knowledge of the traditions in Lev 23:33-36, 39-43 while the two other Pentateuchal texts mentioning the practices at the festival of Sukkoth are not necessarily in view (see Num 29:12-38; and Deut 16:13-15).

33 Compare this amount to the half-shekel tax placed on all Israelites in the construction of the tabernacle (Exod 30:11-16; 38:25-26).
a wood offering, and its provision is established by lot (Neh 10:35 [v. 34 Eng.]). The people agree to provide the first fruits of their own children, animals, crops, wine, oil, and dough that are collected by the Levites and stored in the temple (Neh 10:36-38 [vv. 35-37 Eng.]). The thanksgiving begins in a prayer led by a Levite (Neh 11:17). A daily provision is set aside for the singers at the king’s command (Neh 11:23). At the dedication of the wall, the Levites lead with musical instruments and singing joined by the singers and the priests with their trumpets (Neh 12:27-29, 41-42). At the dedication of the wall, great sacrifices were made (Neh 12:43). During the times of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, the singers and gatekeepers received their daily portions which were distributed to the Levites and also to the Aaronides (Neh 12:47). The room in which Tobiah lived must be cleansed before it may be used as a temple storage area again (Neh 13:4-9). The tithe is reinstituted and given to the Levites (Neh 13:12). Nehemiah claims to have provided for the wood offering and first fruits at their appointed times (Neh 13:30-31).

(4) Criticism of personnel: Individuals who could not prove genealogical descent according to records are excluded from the priesthood and from partaking of the most holy food by the governor’s order (Ezra 2:59-63//Neh 7:61-65). The officers inform Ezra that some of the priests, Levites, and people of Israel had intermarried with foreign women (Ezra 9:1-2). In the past, priests were among those punished for their iniquities (Ezra 9:7; Neh 9:34). The leading priests, Levites, and people who had intermarried are to send away wives and children under Ezra’s authority at the suggestion of an individual.

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34 There is no explicit wood offering mentioned in any text in the Pentateuch, but there is a command to keep the fire on the altar of burnt offering (Lev 6:9). However, a wood offering, or a festival of the offering of wood by the Israelites, is discussed in one of the two extant versions of the Temple Scroll (11Q20 frag. 8-9 col. II, 8-18 //11Q19 XXII, 16-XXIII, 4).
who is neither a priest nor a Levite (Ezra 10:2-5, 18-44). Two Levites oppose the plan that is suggested by the assembly and implemented by Ezra (Ezra 10:12-15). The priests, including members of the family of the leading priest, who had intermarried are listed (Ezra 10:18-22). The Levites, singers, gatekeepers (Ezra 10:23-24), and rest of the Israelites (Ezra 10:25-43) who had intermarried are listed. Those who had intermarried send away their wives and children (Ezra 10:44).  

At least some of the priests are among those guilty of oppressing the people economically (Neh 5:1-12). The priest Eliashib converts a temple storage room into living quarters for his relative Tobiah who is presumably an Ammonite (Neh 13:4-5). Nehemiah removes Tobiah’s belonging from the room and has the chamber cleansed for use as a temple storage area once again (Neh 13:6b-9). One of the high priest’s grandsons had married into the line of Nehemiah’s foreign enemy Sanballat, an action that Nehemiah calls a defilement of the priesthood and the covenant of the priests and Levites (Neh 13:28-29).

(5) Criticism of rituals: The portions of the Levites had been denied in Nehemiah’s absence, so that they returned to their fields instead of performing their duties at the temple (Neh 13:10). The people engage in trade and work on the Sabbath, which Nehemiah forcibly halts (Neh 13:15-22).

(6) Role of God: God stirs up Cyrus to allow the people—including the priests, Levites, and heads of the families also stirred up by God—to return to build the temple (Ezra 1:1-5). God is responsible for the events leading to the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 9:8-9). God is implicitly involved in a variety of actions in both Ezra and

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35 Following the reading of 1 Esd 9:36; the MT is corrupt.
Nehemiah, especially in protecting the people, but these are inferences not stated in the text.

The amount of information concerning the personnel of the temple contained in Ezra and Nehemiah far exceeds the other texts surveyed above. Several groups are mentioned as being distinct from the wider designations of “priests” and “Levites”: gatekeepers, doorkeepers, singers, temple servants, and descendants of Solomon’s servants. All of these groups appear in Chronicles. The types of sacrifices, rituals for prayer, the duties of the Levites, priests, and other personnel at cultic events, and a single duty of the leading priest are described. Beyond this administrative duty, details of the responsibilities and cultic role of the leading priest are not provided, although brief genealogies for the line of leading priests are recorded (Ezra 7:1-5; Neh 12:10-11, 22).

In contrast to the lack of details for the leading priest, the roles of the priests, Levites, and the rest of the temple personnel are portrayed in a rather consistent manner. Thus, priests play trumpets and Levites play the rest of the musical instruments. Priests are ultimately responsible for the daily operation of the cult while the Levites fulfill many of the duties necessary to make the system function and Levites alone are presented as teachers or explicators of the tradition and the law to the people. One exception to the clarity of

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36 “The priest” who will accompany the Levites in collecting the tithe according to Neh 10:39 [v. 38 Eng.] is explicitly an Aaronide (not a Zadokite) and most likely refers to the leading priest. Although a high priest is mentioned in a few more instances, his duties are not described and his actions are either simply reported (rebuilding the Sheep Gate and consecrating it in Neh 3:1) or criticized (preparing a room for Tobiah in the temple storage area in Neh 13:4-9). The place of the leading priest in the festivals and in the sacrificial system is entirely lacking, with many of these actions being taken by Ezra, Nehemiah, the priests, or the Levites without the explicit notice of a leading priest being involved. Compare also the discussion in Section 4.3.

37 The priests are among those studying the law (along with the heads of the families), but are not depicted as explicitly teaching it, which is a duty associated with Levites (Neh 8:9, 13). This distinction between non-teaching priests and teaching Levites also impacts how the duty assigned to Ezra the priest as the teacher of the law is to be understood (Ezra 7:6, 10, 14, 21, 25-26; Neh 8:1-12, 13-18; see also the excursus which follows).
their distinct duties, however, is the role of both groups in the sacrificial system. When offerings are made, it is often unclear who does which part of the rituals that are being performed. Thus, the priests are not restricted to offering up the sacrifices and the Levites are neither clearly prevented from service at the altar nor are they allowed to perform only the preparatory processes for these sacrifices. In Ezra and Nehemiah, the duties and functions of the leading priest and the priests in general are mentioned, but the duties and functions of the Levites are more fully described than their counterparts in the temple cult.

In addition, the physical description of the temple is also more substantial than what is found in the other literature surveyed—relatively speaking—although the nature of the data prevents any clear assertions about its authenticity. Despite the lack of explicit continuity between the structures of the First and Second temple, there is a repeated emphasis on the continuity of the location of site itself and on the rituals performed there. Thus, the temple vessels returned by the Persian are repeatedly mentioned and the performance of priestly and of Levitical duties and the observance of

38 Contrast this view in Ezra and Nehemiah with the rigid dichotomy of duties for these two groups advocated in Ezekiel 40-48.

39 The amount of information regarding the physical structure of the Second Temple is still surprisingly meager, especially given the amount of extant literature that either originated or was supposedly edited during this period; cf. the criticisms of overstating the significance of this period by Sara Japhet, “Can the Persian Period Bear the Burden?: Reflections on the Origins of Biblical History,” in Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies (1997): Division A: The Bible and Its World (ed. R. Margolin; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1999), 35-45. That many scholars believe that the authorities in Jerusalem, that is the priestly leadership, are the ones responsible for the authorship and preservation of most of these texts only further augments the difficulty in understanding why so little information about the temple and its cult is provided in the literature of this period.

40 These vessels are stated to be the same ones used in the First Temple. The precise fate of the vessels at the hands of the vessels is, however, unclear. Second Kings 25:13-17 states that the vessels were taken to Babylon, but implies that the vessels were used, i.e. melted, for the gold and silver (cf., however, the parallel text of Jer 52:17-23 which does not reflect this implication). In contrast, 2 Chr 36:10, 18-19 states that the vessels were taken to Babylon and that the vessels were destroyed in Jerusalem. This tension in Chronicles, and between Kings and Chronicles, has no simple solution (contra Peter R. Ackroyd, “The
the festivals and of sacrificial practices are said to be in accordance with the law of
Moses and the commands of David and Solomon. Ezra and Nehemiah are concerned
about establishing continuity with the past for the present operation of the temple and its
cult—as well as for the society as a whole.\footnote{41}

Criticism of the personnel and rituals is mostly concerned with the practice of
intermarriage, Sabbath observance, and the economic oppression of the people. The
people and leadership are called to perform their obligations, but the present cultic rituals
themselves are not critiqued. However, there is implicit criticism of the temple and its
cultic organization contained in some of the narrative; e.g., the necessity of reinstituting
the priestly and Levitical rotational systems and their duties (Ezra 6:18; Neh 13:30) and
in the claim that the festival of Sukkoth had not been properly kept since the days of
Joshua son of Nun (Neh 8:17).

Finally, the relationship of Ezra the priest and Nehemiah the governor is highly
complex. Not only is the chronology of their existence in Yehud problematic, but the
actions that they undertake are not easily divisible into categories of civil and cultic
responsibility.\footnote{42} Ezra is explicitly a priest and a scribe. Thus, it is difficult to determine

\footnote{41} This concern for the larger society in Ezra and Nehemiah is evident in a number of ways; e.g.,
the issue of intermarriage, the residency in ancestral towns, the affirmation of the Hebrew language against
others of the land (Neh 13:23-24), and the obligation of the people—and not just the leadership—to
observe the law including the way in which it is interpreted and implemented in the present.

\footnote{42} On the highly controversial issue of dating the missions of Ezra and Nehemiah, see, e.g.,
Persia’s Shadow}, 110-11; Blenkinsopp, \textit{Ezra-Nehemiah}, 139-44; Cross, “Reconstruction of the Judean
which of his actions are being accomplished because of his priestly status or because of
his role as a scribe or if the two positions should be separated at all. Ezra acts as a
teacher, has authority to appoint judges, ensures the stability of the temple and its cult, is
one of the leaders in the cultic celebrations, and has a leadership role in the community.
Nehemiah also has authority over the community, appoints cultic officials, enforces cultic
regulations, is instrumental in the rebuilding of the city wall, ensures the stability of the
temple and its cult, and has a leading role in some of the cultic celebrations. Thus, these
two individuals do not depict separate spheres of influence that distinguish between civil
and cultic duties for the religious and political leadership of the community. Indeed, the
lines between cultic and civil concerns are significantly blurred in the books of Ezra and
Nehemiah.  

In conclusion, the descriptions of the temple cult in these books serve as points of
comparison for the utopian depiction of the cult in Chronicles, especially as expressed in
the details that vary among the texts. The minimal criticism of the cult found in the early

Jacob M. Myers, Ezra, Nehemiah (AB 14; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), esp. xxxvi-xxxvii; H. H.
Date of Ezra’s Arrival in Jerusalem,” ZAW 63 (1951): 53-66; and H. G. M. Williamson, Ezra, Nehemiah
(WBC 16; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1985), xxxix-xliv. I accept, generally, the arguments for dating their
missions to 458 and 445 B.C.E., respectively. Their relationship is further complicated in that Ezra does
not seem to have been the leading priest, but is only of the line of leading priests. However, a leading
priest is named (Eliashib) during the time of Nehemiah who seems to be under the authority of
Nehemiah—even to the point that when this priest takes actions that Nehemiah rejects, Nehemiah is able to
exert his will and reverse or subvert the actions of the high priest (cf. VanderKam, From Joshua to
Caiaphas, 49-53).

43 While the division of Ezra’s duties into these categories may seem arbitrary to some, it is clear
that not all scribes are priests, and thus the question of sources for Ezra’s authority should be asked.

44 This vague picture may be the result of the blending of political and religious authority in Yehud
(e.g., Weinburg’s citizen-temple community), but the question is related to more complicated ideas such as
the role of Persia, the precise nature of Ezra’s authority from the Persian government, the historicity of the
material in Ezra and Nehemiah, and assumptions about the apparently growing influence of the supposed
Zadokite high priesthood during the Second Temple period.
texts of Haggai and Zechariah 1-8 seems appropriate in the context of encouragement for rebuilding the temple. As the present conditions do not align themselves with the hopes and promises for a better future, the criticism of the cult and the necessity of God’s intervention become more pronounced in latter prophetic texts (Second Zechariah, Third Isaiah, Joel, and Malachi). The extensive vision of a new society centered around the temple in Ezekiel 40-48 suggests a radical separation between the present situation that awaits a complete transformation by the deity and a better alternative reality that must come. As will be seen, Chronicles continues this dissatisfaction with the present, but constructs its better alternative reality as a utopian model situated in Israel’s past rather than in a prophetic or eschatological future.

Finally, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah contain a great deal of information regarding the temple cult and its personnel. Chronicles seems to presuppose many of these depictions that are otherwise unique to Ezra and Nehemiah. However, it is an assumption that the more developed portrayal of the cult in Chronicles should be understood as a reflection of changing historical realities by the time of the Chronicler. In other words, a linear progression from Ezra and Nehemiah to Chronicles that reveals details about changes in Second Temple practice is not the only option for interpretation. Instead, in line with a comparison to the prophetic texts, Chronicles should be viewed as presenting a better alternative reality that is not necessarily reflective of the present. Thus, Chronicles engages in a debate with all of these texts over the appropriate operation of the cult and its relationship to the larger society in a utopian future for Israel. As will be seen, many of the details in these prophetic texts and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are either assumed or rejected by the presentation of the cultic utopia in
Chronicles. Thus, by engaging the tradition in this manner, the Chronicler critiques both other visions for the future and assertions about current practices in his utopian construction of a cultic community that is retrojected into Israel’s past.

Excursus: Ezra’s Law and Mosaic Torah

Although it certainly contributes to the depiction of the temple and its cult during the Second Temple period, Ezra’s Law is best dealt with separately given the highly-complex and controversial nature of assessing its contents, identity, and significance. Numerous questions could be posed, including: Did Ezra bring an already existent and authoritative document of regulations, or is this the “publication” of a new set of governing legislation? What is the relationship between this text and the text(s) of the Pentateuch, or better, with the “Law of Moses” (Ezra 7:6; Neh 8:1)? If there is a connection between Ezra’s Law and the Mosaic Torah, then which parts of the Pentateuch are present and in what form? What is the nature of the claim that the book of the law is the Mosaic Torah? Is this a claim for the authority to limit what can be classified as Mosaic Torah or a claim to the ability to interpret the Mosaic Torah, which is declared (or assumed) to be authoritative (Ezra 7:10; Neh 8:7-8, 13-18)? If there is an

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45 Many scholars have noted that the quotations from this Mosaic Torah and the type of actions taken in response to reading a source text that is not cited but only vaguely referenced indicate that at least sections of the component parts of the Pentateuch traditionally identified as P and as D were contained in whatever text Ezra had. While this is a correct observation, the issue of the overall contents of the Mosaic Torah is much more complex. Are all of P and D present, and if so, in what form? What about the narrative materials or J and E in particular? Was there additional material in Ezra’s “book” (רַפְּד) that was later removed, or were the contents fixed without subsequent additions or deletions being possible—i.e., must a new and separate authoritative text be written or could an existing authoritative text still be changed?
authoritative text known as the Mosaic Torah,\textsuperscript{46} what is the nature and origins of the texts that will be come to be known as “the Prophets,” which are not explicitly mentioned in tandem with the Mosaic Torah in either of the books of Ezra or Nehemiah? What is the difference between claiming that certain actions are undertaken or consistent with the Mosaic Torah as in Neh 13:1-3 and that they are consistent with Davidic or Solomonic commands (דַּבֵּרֵם) as in Neh 12:45-46? What is the difference between the “law of your God” (לְהָקִיָּהוּ יְהֹוָה) and the “law of the king” (לְהָקִיָּהוּ רְעָה) that are mentioned in Ezra 7:26 and the related issue of distinguishing between the cultic and political spheres of power? Or, do the cultic and political spheres overlap, and if so, then who or what official has the ultimate authority to legislate in cultic and political matters? What amount of influence does the Persian political system have over the contents and implementation of the law that Ezra has brought to the community in Jerusalem? What is the extent of the land or the people under Ezra’s jurisdiction, and thus under the rule of this law (Ezra 7:25)?

These questions cannot be treated in detail here, but the importance of the relationship between Ezra’s Law and the Mosaic Torah and its cultic contents will be discussed in this brief excursus.\textsuperscript{47} There is certainly a direct relationship between these two concepts, but the notion of Mosaic Torah appears to include not only Ezra’s written law but also additional traditions and regulations not contained in the extant versions of

\textsuperscript{46} It is possible that the “Mosaic Torah” is a group of texts instead of a single composition, but this is only another point that is difficult to reconcile with any certainty given the nature of the sources containing these data.

\textsuperscript{47} Any of these questions could be (and have been) the subject of a dissertation. This excursus will only briefly comment on the significance of Ezra’s Law and the Mosaic Torah. Chronicles is also concerned with these issues and especially with claims to authority, as will be seen in the subsequent sections of this chapter (4.2-4.4).
the Pentateuch. This contention, of course, assumes some relationship between Ezra’s Law and what would become known as the Pentateuch, although a one-to-one correspondence at the time of Ezra is unlikely.48

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah do reveal something of the content of this Mosaic Torah that Ezra reads and interprets as instruction for the community. This law is both a juridical and a cultic text.49 It is thus suitable for the judges and magistrates appointed by Ezra to use in legal proceedings and in the governance of the people (Ezra 7:25). However, its primary associations are explicitly with cultic matters, including: procedures for offerings on the altar (Ezra 3:2), the celebration of the festival of Sukkoth, daily burnt offerings, and other offerings at appointed times (Ezra 3:4-6; Neh 8:14-18), the divisions of the priests and Levites (Ezra 6:18), material provision for the temple (Ezra 7:21-23), stipulations for sending away the foreign wives and their children by those making the covenant (Ezra 10:3), the command to exclude Ammonites and Moabites from the assembly of God (Neh 13:1-2), a promise of restoration to the land from exile if the people will repent (Neh 1:7-9), the prohibition of intermarriage and of trade on the Sabbath (Neh 10:31-32 [vv. 30-31 Eng.]), logistical concern for the wood offering (Neh 10:35 [v. 34 Eng.]), regulations about tithing (Neh 10:36-37 [vv. 35-36 Eng.]), stipulations requiring that portions be set aside for the priests and Levites (Neh 12:44), and finally, its private study by the leadership is under the direction of Ezra (Neh 8:13) while its public reading serves as the centerpiece of the covenant renewal ceremony.

48 The textual fluidity of the Pentateuch during the majority of the Second Temple period argues against a definitive and fixed version of the Pentateuch existing at the time of Ezra.

49 These dual concerns associated with the Mosaic Torah are not restricted to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah or the Pentateuch or even to the Second Temple period, but can be found in a preexilic (or exilic) text; see the juridical sense of the legal ruling cited as Mosaic Torah in 2 Kgs 14:5-6 (//2 Chr 25:3-4)
(Neh 8:1-12, 18; 9:3; 10:29-30 [vv. 28-29 Eng.]) with an emphasis on the need for certain Levites to explain the text being read to the general populace so that they may understand it (Neh 8:7-9, 12).

From this list of the cultic content of the Mosaic Torah, the conclusion that Ezra’s Law contained at least parts of the material typically assigned by scholars to the D and P sources of the Pentateuch is affirmed. However, these cultic concerns also reflect additional material not found in the Pentateuch or that may be derived from it but are not explicitly stated therein. Thus, the claim that a ruling or law is Mosaic Torah reflects a claim of authority for such a regulation or reading of a text and does not serve as a delimiter of a particular text itself.50

This “expansive” notion of Mosaic Torah found in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah is also found in the book of Chronicles. The Chronicler also employs the concept of Mosaic Torah as part of his claim to authority.51 By claiming that many kings prior to Josiah (contra the portrayal in 2 Kings) had access to and were obedient to Mosaic Torah, the Chronicler elevates the importance of Mosaic Torah. However, this term “Mosaic Torah” should not be taken as a “single Mosaic ‘lawbook,’”52 as an indication that the Pentateuch was codified at this point and therefore could be “subverted” only by writing a new text,53 or as evidence of an oversimplified and the cultic associations of the Mosaic Torah connected with Josiah and his reforms (2 Kgs 23:25; cf. 2 Chr 34:14).

50 Compare the conclusion made by Najman, Seconding Sinai, 116; idem, “Torah of Moses,” 212.

51 See also the discussion of the Chronicler’s authority in my Excursus on Prophecy, Speeches, and Authority in Chronicles in Chapter 2.

52 Contra Chapman, “‘The Law and the Words’,” 32.

53 Contra Schniedewind, “Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture,” 179, citing Bernard Levinson, Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation, 172 as support for this idea.
understanding of “the high value placed on the Torah in the Chronicler’s community.”

The ability of the Chronicler to claim that stipulations not in the textual Pentateuch are authentically “Mosaic Torah” mitigates against this discussion of Mosaic Torah in terms of an authoritative and complete “book.” Yet, neither does the Chronicler’s use of the concept of Mosaic Torah cause the Pentateuch to expand to include his stipulations among its regulations; i.e., the Chronicler’s claim that something is Mosaic Torah does not cause a particular law or text to be added to the text of the Pentateuch. This reflects a broader understanding of what continuity with Mosaic Torah entailed in the Chronicler’s own day. He did not have to cite specific texts from the Torah to support his claim for precedence. He makes the claim, and apparently that claim is effective to support his understanding of temple practice.

For example, the Chronicler portrays the king as correctly implementing Mosaic Torah in David’s bringing the ark to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15:12-15), in Solomon’s sacrifices (2 Chr 8:13), in Joash’s collection of the temple tax (2 Chr 24:9), in offering burnt offerings in the Temple (2 Chr 23:18), in Amaziah’s correct punishment on only the sons of his father’s murderers (2 Chr 25:3-4), and in the role of the priests and Levites in the celebration of Passover by both Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Chr 30:16; 35:6, 12). This list reveals that Mosaic Torah in Chronicles functions as some sort of compilation of cultic regulation or practices that possesses a great deal of authority.

54 Contra Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles, 401.
55 This is not the Chronicler’s innovation, but is already present in the texts of Ezra and Nehemiah, which existed in some form prior to the composition of the book of Chronicles.
57 The best explanation for this occurrence of Mosaic Torah which stands outside of all the other instances where the context is clearly cultic seems to be that the Chronicler is merely retaining information
All of this indicates that Johnstone is correct in noting the “centrality of the Mosaic tradition” for the Chronicler.\(^5\) However, Johnstone is incorrect to claim that “[t]he promises of God to David have indeed been reaffirmed to his people, but now in the fundamental mode of the Law of Moses.”\(^5\) The Mosaic Torah is enlisted as a support for temple practice. The Chronicler understands the temple as the central object of his concern—even the Mosaic Torah functions only to provide continuity with the past and authority for the practices that are described. It appears to have no independent value in Chronicles apart from the temple. Mosaic Torah thus has a utilitarian quality in Chronicles. It exists to demonstrate cultic correctness, and its utilization “appears to be founded on the need to indicate an authority, a need that is characteristic of [the Chronicler’s] entire method.”\(^6\) This assessment of Mosaic Torah locates the entity firmly within the framework of the Chronicler’s utopian ideology, as an important but not primary element within the book’s larger presentation. As will be seen, Mosaic Torah is one more example of the many themes that are subservient to the utopian ideology which underlies the depiction of reality in Chronicles.

4.1.4 The Claims of Priestly Status: Levi, Aaron, and Zadok

The previous survey of the temple cult in literature from the Persian period takes special notice of the different groups of temple personnel mentioned in the various materials. These groups include: the priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, the already present in his source, apparently some version of Kings. Thus, Chronicles does not invent this attribution or non-cultic association; it is preexistent in his source and he chose not to eliminate it.


\(^6\) Ibid., 2:276.
temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon’s servants. A leading priest is also mentioned in several of the texts, although his precise role and sphere of authority is only vaguely defined. The historical development of the Israelite temple cult(s) has been much discussed in scholarship and various reconstructions have been offered.\footnote{Japhet, Ideology, 244.}


Taking their cue from the biblical texts themselves, scholars have also tended to focus on the interrelationship and claims made concerning these three in their historical reconstructions.

the priesthood—because of their actions.\textsuperscript{64} The only other acknowledgement of these “Levites” in the book of Exodus is their work in the tabernacle under the supervision of Ithamar the son of the priest Aaron (38:21). By contrast, it is Aaron and his sons who are emphasized in their selection and ordination as the rightful priests throughout the block of material in the Pentateuch typically assigned by scholars to the Priestly source or school. This unique role of the Aaronides is first articulated in the book of Exodus (28:1-29:44; 30:17-21, 30; 39:41; 40:12-15).\textsuperscript{65} The book of Leviticus explicates the priestly duties of the Aaronides but does not discuss the duties of the Levites—perhaps somewhat surprising given the book’s English title.\textsuperscript{66} This distinction between the Levites who assist in the operation and care of the tabernacle and the Aaronides who serve as the priests is continued in the book of Numbers (1:48-53; 3:1-4:49; 8:5-26; 10:8; 16:1-18:32). Thus, P uniformly presents Aaron and his descendants as the ministering priests and the descendants of Levi as their assistants. The genealogical relationship between these two groups of temple personnel in P is also of interest. The Aaronides are a subgroup located within the larger Levitical lineage (Exod 4:14; 6:16-25; Num 26:57-62; cf. Gen 46:11).


\textsuperscript{64} Following the reading of the LXX which clarifies the verbal form as a past tense in the aorist (εὐπληρώσατε). The attested form in the MT is ambiguous (וָלֵ֖מִי), being either a Piel perfect or a Qal imperative. In either case, the verse does \textit{not} clarify the precise nature of the dedication by these “sons of Levi” to YHWH.

\textsuperscript{65} Priests are also mentioned proleptically before the reception of the Torah at Mount Sinai and their identity is not specified (Exod 19:22-24).

\textsuperscript{66} The English title is derived from the LXX, which clearly reflects the tradition that Levites and priests are to be equated (see further below). The MT, however, does not necessarily make this association, as the common practice found there is to form the title from the first word of the book, סֶפֶרְלֶוִי.
The situation is different in Deuteronomy, typically assigned by scholars to the Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic source or movement. First, in contrast to his numerous appearances in the P material, Aaron is named only three times in Deuteronomy (9:20; 10:6; 32:50-51). The golden calf episode is recounted and Aaron is explicitly condemned in the first reference. The other two texts briefly mention Aaron’s death.


The third of these texts is often regarded as part of a Priestly insertion into Deuteronomy. However, I find the arguments by Weinfeld that this passage (32:48-52) and the text of Deut 34:1a, 7-9 are Deuteronomistic rewritings of P convincing (Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School, 181; cf. also Philipp Stoellger, “Deuteronomium 34 ohne Priesterschrift,” ZAW 105 [1993]: 26-51). Thus, in my view, the book of Deuteronomy has not undergone redaction by the Priestly school, but stems solely from the Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic movement and its precursors, including the two poems known as the Song of Moses and the Blessing of Moses (32:1-43; 33:1-29); for further discussion of the unity of ideology in Deuteronomy and the significance of these poems, see my article, “Deuteronomy 32 and 33 as Proto-Deuteronomistic Texts,” PEGLMBS 22 (2002): 79-98, and the literature cited there.

On the significance of the golden calf episode, see the recent assessment by Christine E. Hayes, “Golden Calf Stories: The Relationship of Exodus 32 and Deuteronomy 9-10,” in The Idea of Biblical...
which is also found in P (Num 20:22-29; 33:38-39). Second, the tribe of Levi as a whole is declared to be ministers to YHWH and his priests (Deut 10:6-9; 17:8-13; 18:1-5; 21:5; 31:9, 25-26; 33:8-11) often using the qualifying phrase “levitical priests” (יְהוָה נְצֹר בְּנֵי לֵוִי; 17:9, 18; 18:1; 24:8; 27:9). Thus, in Deuteronomy, Levites are ministering priests without being regulated to assistants of their Aaronide kin, as is the case in P.

In the literature associated with the Deuteronomistic movement, the lack of a distinction between Aaronides and Levites as two distinct classes or groups within the priesthood is continued. For example, the characteristic phrase “levitical priests” is employed (Josh 3:3; 8:33; Jer 33:18), the priesthood explicitly belongs to the tribe of Levi (Josh 18:7; Jer 33:21-22; Mal 2:4-9), a Levite is enlisted as a family priest which thereby apparently provides authenticity for their cultic rituals (Judg 17:7-18:13), the Levites perform the ritual care for the ark of the covenant (1 Sam 6:15; 2 Sam 15:24-29; 1 Kgs 8:3-4), and Jeroboam’s newly-established cult in the northern kingdom is critiqued for the appointment of non-Levitical priests as ministers (1 Kgs 12:31). While priests appear alongside their Levitical counterparts in one of these accounts (1 Kgs 8:3-4), their identity or lineage is not specified. In addition, although all individuals acting as priests or Levites in this literature are not explicitly Levites or Aaronides (e.g., Samuel in 1 Sam 1:1; Zadok in 2 Sam 8:17; and Jehoiada in 1 Kgs 11:4-12:16),70 the separation between

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70 It is worth noting at this point that the first two of these prominent individuals receive Levitical pedigrees in Chronicles but the third does not (1 Chr 5:34; 6:13, 18-23 [6:8, 28, 33-38 Eng.]; 2 Chr 22:11-24:22).

Levites as assistants and Aaronides as priests that is found so prominently in P is not attested in these traditions associated with D.\textsuperscript{71}

The dichotomy presented between the claims to priestly authority made by the traditions associated with the Priestly school and the Deuteronomistic movement is further complicated and challenged by the traditions associated with the priest Zadok. Outside of the book of Chronicles, this Zadok appears in the HB in only two contexts: as a leading priest during the reigns of David and Solomon in 2 Samuel 8-1 Kings 4 and as the ancestor of the primary personnel in the future temple described in Ezekiel 40-48. In the first textual block, Zadok appears without a clear ancestry\textsuperscript{72} as one of the two leading priests at the time of David. He becomes the sole leading priest under Solomon when the other priest, Abiathar, is banished to his ancestral town of Anathoth (1 Kgs 2:26-27). In the second unit, the “sons of Zadok” are the only ones of the descendants of Levi who may minister to YHWH (Ezek 40:46; 43:18-19; 44:15-31; 48:11-12). In these passages, the faithful descendants of Zadok are also contrasted with the rest of the Levitical line who were unfaithful to YHWH during the preexilic period (Ezek 44:10-14; 48:11-12). The Aaronides are completely absent in Ezekiel 40-48. The cultic program in Ezekiel is thus more closely related to the P traditions than to those associated with D, but with one major caveat—the leading priest of P, Aaron, has been replaced by Zadok, whose legitimacy as priest is unquestioned in Ezekiel 40-48. The replacement of Aaron with

\textsuperscript{71} This is another clear difference between the P and D traditions. In P, only Aaronides are priests and only those of the tribe of Levi may act as their assistants. In the Deuteronomic tradition, the priesthood belongs to the tribe of Levi, but the texts are not consistent in restricting all cultic functions to Levites by stating the Levitical identity of the individuals involved in such activities.

\textsuperscript{72} His father, Ahitub, is mentioned in 2 Sam 8:17, but no further information on his ancestry is known apart from the genealogy in 1 Chr 5:27-34 [6:1-8 Eng.]. The genealogy of Ezra in Ezra 7:1-5 (//1 Chr 9:11//Neh 11:11) also mentions a Zadok, but this cannot be the same individual at the time of David for chronological reasons; see Schweitzer, “High Priest in Chronicles,” 390-91.
Zadok is not the only “authority-conferring strategy” that is employed in these chapters of Ezekiel. The characteristic Deuteronomic phrase “levitical priests” that is used for the entire priesthood is also applied to the descendants of Zadok (Ezek 43:19; 44:15). Thus, the descendants of Zadok claim the only authentic authority as priests, restrict all Levites to assisting roles, and exclude via silence the Aaronides from service in the temple cult of the utopia described in Ezekiel 40-48.

Thus, in the literature of the periods preceding the Chronicler several types of claims to priestly status and authority are made. First, divine commission for the selection of the chosen individuals or groups for service as priests is asserted in texts dating from the preexilic, exilic, and postexilic periods. Second, in addition to divine approval, Aaron is appointed under the auspice of Moses himself, and the associations of the Levitical line with the temple cult are also connected with the Mosaic era. In contrast, Zadok is associated with David but only attains prominence at the time of Solomon as a result of his support of the new ruler and the unfortunate end of Abiathar (1 Kgs 1:7-8, 38-39; 2:26-27). Only in Ezekiel 40-48 is the selection of Zadok a divine legislation or a prophetic utterance. Third, faithfulness to or zeal for YHWH on the part of the chosen individuals is repeatedly asserted as is unfaithfulness by those rejected from

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73 On this concept see Najman, “Interpretation as Primordial Writing,” 381; idem, Seconding Sinai, 41.

74 In Chronicles, as will be discussed in more detail in Sections 4.2-4.4, the Levitical and priestly orders are most closely connected with the authority of David and Solomon although their Mosaic associations are not disavowed.

75 This unique feature is consistent with Levenson’s observation that these chapters of Ezekiel are “the only corpus of legislation of the HB which is not placed in the mouth of Moses” (Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40-48, 39). The divine choice of the sons of Zadok as priests is also asserted in Sir 51:12 [Hebrew only].

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service. Fourth, genealogy is important in claiming the right to act as priest, but not absolutely exclusive or primary. The authentic priesthood is clearly associated with the “descendants” of certain individuals or groups, so that genealogical descent is one factor. As noted, some individuals have no clear genealogies and, more significantly, the texts disagree on which genealogical line has the “better” or “only” claim to priestly status: must one be descended from the line of Zadok, the line of Aaron, or the line of Levi—listed here in progression from the smallest to largest units—in order to serve as a priest? In addition to which text was consulted, the answer to this question may have depended on the historical period in which it was asked. Whatever historical reconstruction of the development of these claims to priestly status is accepted by scholars, the conclusions that such claims were contested with little agreement and that they were subject to reevaluation throughout the history of Israel seem to be correct given the extant data.

A few examples: while Aaron’s actions in the golden calf episode do not exclude him from the priesthood, the zeal of the Levites gain them some form of enhanced status (Exod 32:25-29). Phinehas, Aaron’s grandson, exhibits zeal and secures the priesthood for his descendants (Num 25:6-13). According to Ezekiel, the “sons of Zadok” are faithful while the Levites are not, and the privilege of serving at the altar is gained or lost accordingly.

Historical reconstructions of the priesthood often view the genealogies of Chronicles, which provide a Levitical ancestry for both Zadok and Aaron, as a compromising step or a resolution of the issue of claims to priestly status; see, e.g., Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Bethel in the Neo-Babylonian Period,” in Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period (ed. O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 93-107, here 104; idem, “The Judaean Priesthood during the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Periods: A Hypothetical Reconstruction,” CBQ 60 (1998): 25-43, esp. 39-43; Nurmela, Levites, 175; cf. Ackroyd, Chronicler in His Age, 342. However, as will be demonstrated in Sections 4.2-4.4, Chronicles provides a more nuanced view of the internal organization of the temple cult than is often implied in such assessments.

The claim to an authentic priesthood, and high priesthood in particular, is not restricted to the preexilic, exilic, or early Second Temple periods. The priesthood is still a subject of contention in the writings arising from the time of the Maccabean Revolt and in the NT. In the former texts, the primary issue is related to the genealogical heritage of those holding the office of high priest (1 Macc 7:12-14; 10:17-21; 2 Macc 4:23-29; Josephus, Ant. 12.387; 20.233-235; see Grabbe, “Were the Pre-Maccabean High Priests ‘Zadokites’”; and Daniel K. Falk, “High Priests,” EDSS 1:361-64). In addition, there is a metaphorical use of these genealogical terms in reference to those aligned with the Teacher of Righteousness (CD III, 20-IV, 4).
4.1.5 The Role of Persia in the Support and Maintenance of the Cult: A Brief Assessment

The previous surveys of the temple cult in the literature of the Persian period clearly demonstrate the importance of the temple and its cult in the society of this era. The cult is both affirmed and criticized, but its significance for the present and future of the community remains a primary concern in these texts of various genre, origin, and date. According to all available literary and archaeological evidence, the effort to reestablish the temple and its cult in Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile originates during the Persian period. In the HB, the ability of the community and its leadership to accomplish their goal is attributed both to divine intervention and to the material, financial, and legal support of the Persian Empire. The precise nature of this imperial support and the relationship between the local administration in Yehud and the Persian court has been a subject of intense study in recent scholarship. In these studies, two

In the NT, two concerns are evident. First, drawing on a few traditions in the HB that emphasize the priestly nature of all Israel (Exod 19:5-6; Isa 61:6), a spiritual priesthood may be exercised by all of those in the Christian communities despite their ancestry (1 Pet 2:4-10; Rev 1:5b-6; 5:9-10; 20:6; cf. Rom 15:16). Second, the enigmatic tradition of a priesthood “after the order of Melchizedek” in the HB (Gen 14:18-20; Ps 110:4) is utilized to explain the high-priestly functions of Jesus despite his lack of a Zadokite, Aaronide, or Levitical pedigree (Heb 4:14-5:10; 6:19-7:28; cf. 8:1-10:22); cf. William Horbury, “The Aaronic Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” JSNT 19 (1983): 43-71. See also Maxine Grossman, “Priesthood as Authority: Interpretive Competition in First-Century Judaism and Christianity,” in The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from an International Conference at St. Andrews in 2001 (ed. J. R. Davila; STDJ 46; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 117-31, and the literature cited there; and Martha Himmelfarb, “‘A Kingdom of Priests’: The Democratization of the Priesthood in the Literature of Second Temple Judaism,” JJTP 6 (1997): 89-104.

This is especially evident in the books of Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah (see the discussion above).

issues have received special attention: (1) the apparent practices of the Persians in provision for temple projects, and (2) their involvement in the propagation and implementation of local legal codes throughout their empire in general and in the region of Yehud in particular.\(^8\)

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Much of the research into these issues is concerned with assessing the claims made in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which present the relationship between the community in Yehud and the Persian central government in positive terms. However, these texts also present the local community in some tension and conflict with the other hierarchical levels of the governmental structure that exist between the periphery and the center (e.g., the leadership of the satrapy of Beyond the River [Beyond the River] and in the province of Samaria). Thus, the biblical texts portray the community in Yehud as loyal to the Persian authorities while struggling against a “middle management” that is (often) opposed to them unnecessarily.

One of the chief thrusts of recent scholarship has been to sort out the historical probabilities from the propaganda in this material by comparing the claims in Ezra and Nehemiah to ancient records concerned with similar issues in other regions of the Persian Empire. These texts include: the Demotic Chronicle, the Udjahorresnet Inscription (AEL 3:36-41), the Aramaic “Passover Papyrus” from Elephantine (COS 3.46:116-17; TAD A4.1; ANET 491), the other Aramaic Letters in the Jedaniah Archive from Elephantine (COS 3.47-53:118-32; TAD A4.2-5, 7, 9-10; ANET 491-92), the Cyrus

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81 Persian rule is accepted throughout the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, with the only exception being the famous complaint of slavery and economic subjugation to the Persians in Neh 9:36-37.


83 On this and the other Aramaic papyri cited as TAD, see Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt (4 vols.; Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1986-1999).
Cylinder (COS 2.124:314-16; ANET 315-16), the Behistun Inscription of Darius,\textsuperscript{84} the Xanthus Trilingual Inscription,\textsuperscript{85} and various other inscriptions. However, these texts are also problematic because they reflect the propaganda of either the Persian center or the other local communities where they originated. Thus, determining the historical probability of any of the claims in these texts is highly complicated. While some scholars have positioned themselves at either end of the spectrum (completely rejecting or accepting the claims), most attempt to weigh the evidence by various criteria and argue for nuanced positions in the middle of the continuum. Thus, the tradition that the Persians allowed and even encouraged through material, financial, and legal support the building and continued maintenance of certain local shrines is most likely based in some historical reality. However, it seems that the extent of their involvement is mostly overstated in the ancient sources and in modern scholarship—particularly in the ongoing affairs of a recently established cult—and the policies toward local administrations varied from the reign of one Persian king to the next and from location to location within the empire.\textsuperscript{86}

In addition, there is little evidence to suggest that the Persian central government required all legal material to be “inspected for approval” before it could be implemented as civil law by the local administration. Instead, part of the success of the Persian authorities in maintaining a vast multi-cultural empire seems to be related to their policy


\textsuperscript{86} Compare the conclusions by Grabbe, “Law of Moses in the Ezra Tradition,” 109; and Knoppers, “Achaemenid Imperial Authorization of Torah in Yehud?,” 129-34. The assessment by Knoppers seems reasonable and balanced on this issue, and my own view is in essential agreement with his position.
that permitted local administration a great deal of autonomy as long as the taxes still flowed into the Persian treasuries and other obligations on the local level were being met. Thus, it is difficult to determine the extent of Persian influence in the law that Ezra brings to the community in Yehud and, for that matter, the relationship between this law and the Pentateuch. The legal codes in the Pentateuch seem to be understood best in the light of earlier ancient Near East parallels without recourse to practices, concepts, or phrases that are uniquely Persian in their origin and actualization. That is, little if anything in the Pentateuch requires knowledge of Persian culture, religion, and legal practice to explain the various stipulations that it contains. While the book of Ezra explicitly mentions requirements imposed on and privileges granted to the community by the Persian authorities, these concerns are expressed neither in the Pentateuch nor in the legal traditions associated with Ezra’s Law in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Therefore, the Pentateuch and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah would seem to be consistent with a degree of local autonomy for the Yehudite community without the micromanagement of the Persian central government in their affairs.

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87 See the previous Excursus on Ezra’s Law and Mosaic Torah.

88 I am not aware of any scholarly assessment that has successfully argued for the necessity of distinctly Persian characteristics in the rituals or legal stipulations of the Pentateuch. For a different view, see, e.g., the arguments presented for a Persian context to explain certain regulations in the Priestly Code by S. David Sperling, “Pants, Persians, and the Priestly Source,” in Ki Baruch Hu: Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Judaic Studies in Honor of Baruch A. Levine (ed. R. Chazan, W. W. Hallo, and L. H. Schiffman; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 373-85, esp. 377-85.

89 Compare the conclusion by Watts, “Introduction,” 3. It is difficult to understand, for example, the complaints and warnings made about serving other nations (Lev 26:3-13; Deut 28:47-68; Neh 9:36-37; 2 Chr 12:8) and proclamations of Israel’s future dominance over the nations between Egypt and the Euphrates (Gen 15:17-21; Exod 23: 31; Deut 1:6-8; 11:22-25; 28:1-14; Josh 1:4) if texts, especially ones in a “law code,” written or preserved during the Persian period were subject to the approval of the Persian authorities for all of their content. While these particular texts obviously refer to Egyptian domination or Babylonian exile, the extension to the conditions under the Persian Empire could easily be made. Instead of encouraging loyalty, this type of language would only encourage rebellion and would most likely have been suppressed or altered in some way by a hegemony that desires to maintain its position of power. Compare the undefended claim by Betlyon that texts were indeed edited by the Persians: “No uncoded
The description of the temple and its cult in the book of Chronicles should be viewed in this same context: it is unlikely that the Persians read or approved the book in any type of detailed way, and it is more likely that the portrayal in Chronicles reflects the concerns of the local community (or an individual) than those issues held to be important in the Persian central administration. Thus, the depiction of the temple cult in Chronicles is not restricted to being a reinforcement of the status quo in Yehud under the watchful eye of a Persian imperial system censuring any documents being written. Indeed, the Chronicler advocates a critical view of the present and an innovative vision for the future in his cultic utopia, as Sections 4.2-4.4 will demonstrate.

4.1.6 Political Authority, Persian Governors, and the Priesthood in Yehud: Assumptions and Evidence

This final introductory section addresses the distribution of power in Yehud during the Persian period. During the Hellenistic period, the high priest is presented as acting with at least some authority in civil matters or, perhaps better expressed, as functioning as the representative of the community in Jerusalem to other external civil leaders. However, the situation in Persian Yehud during the late sixth to middle fourth centuries does not reflect this latter development.

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90 Contra Jonker, Reflections of King Josiah in Chronicles, 87.
91 See the fuller treatment of this issue in the recent works by Rooke, Zadok’s Heirs, 125-239; and VanderKam, From Joshua to Caiaphas, 43-111.
92 See the evidence in the Letter of Aristeas; and Josephus, Ant. 11.317-319, 329-339.
93 The Jedaniah Archive from Elephantine (COS 3.46-53:116-32; TAD A4.1-5, 7, 9-10; ANET 491-92) from the late fifth century is also often used to support the view that the high priest in Jerusalem had some civil authority. However, while a letter is sent to Jehonan the high priest from the Jews in
First, the community at Jerusalem is not completely autonomous. The satrapy of Beyond the River and the province of Samaria both seem to exert some political influence over Yehud. The leadership at Jerusalem is accountable to the Persian-appointed governors over the satrapy.  

Second, at least in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, there is not an equal division between civil and cultic spheres of influence and cultic matters clearly fall under the authority of the civil leadership. Specifically, the governor Nehemiah exerts control over cultic affairs and is successful in regulating them even in the face of opposition from the leading priests. Although the priest-scribe Ezra does attempt to intervene in civil affairs (e.g., the intermarriage crisis in Ezra 9-10; and the authority to appoint judges in Ezra 7:25), it is unclear whether his authority is based on his position as priest or, more likely, as an official appointed with such authority by the Persians regardless of his priestly status. In either case, the existence of previous governors in Yehud before

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84 Yehud clearly is in the jurisdiction of this satrapy. Its complicated relationship with Samaria is debated by scholars. Also, the degree of accountability almost certainly varied over the course of the two centuries of Persian control. The evidence for this relationship exists in the forms of coins, seals, and various papyri, but is extremely difficult to assess with any certainty (see Briant, From Cyrus to Alexander, 713-16). Compare, e.g., Ackroyd, Chronicler in His Age, 98-104; Bedford, Temple Restoration, 45-46 n. 9, 160; Carter, Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period, 279-80; Dyck, Theocratic Ideology, 101-02; Hoglund, Achaemenid Imperial Administration, 69-86 (and the previous literature cited); Sean E. McEvenue, “The Political Structure in Judah from Cyrus to Nehemiah,” CBQ 43 (1981): 353-64; Stern, “Persian Empire,” 82-86; and Weinberg, Citizen-Temple Community, 135.

85 This position of leadership was typically, though not always, held by members of the Persian aristocracy and should be distinguished from governors over smaller districts or regions such as Nehemiah in Yehud; see Knoppers, “Achaemenid Imperial Authorization of Torah in Yehud?,” 131; and the literature cited there.

86 See the textual evidence with references cited in Section 4.1.3.
Nehemiah precludes the notion that the priesthood governed the populace before his arrival, as some scholars would like to maintain (Neh 5:14-15).97

Third, texts from the Persian period note a distinction between the “law of the king” and the “law of God” (Ezra 7:26) and between “matters of the king” and “matters of YHWH” with separate civil and cultic authorities over each (2 Chr 19:11). This indicates a division between civil and cultic authorities, although no criteria are provided to indicate what distinguishes one from the other. Thus, in these Persian period texts, the priesthood is not depicted as having civil authority, while the Davidic king or Persian governor certainly operates within the cultic sphere.98

In conclusion, this very brief reflection on highly-complex issues highlights the difference between evidence and assumption in scholarly reconstructions of this period. Often, assumptions have become evidence and actual evidence has been ignored. Unfortunately, as noted in the previous chapters of this dissertation, the situation has not been much different in scholarship on Chronicles: a change in assumptions produces a different reading of the text, in this case one that emphasizes innovations for the future instead of propaganda for the present.

97 Such a view is often held in conjunction with the belief that after Zerubbabel disappears (somewhat mysteriously) from the scene that Joshua the high priest assumes some, if not all, of the civil authority for the Jerusalem community. However, there is no textual evidence for this assumption either, the highly-suggestive passages in Hag 2:23 and Zech 3:1-10; 4:1-14; 6:9-14 notwithstanding. See also the list of governors and high priests in Yehud in Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, Haggai, Zechariah 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 25B; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 14.

98 See the comments on the Davidic kings and the cult throughout Chapter 3 and in Section 4.2.3; cf. the discussion of the high priest in Section 4.3.1.
4.2 The Priesthood and Sacrifice in Chronicles

This discussion of the utopian temple cult in Chronicles begins with its presentation of the priesthood and the sacrificial system. The personnel who serve as priests are clearly distinguished in their identity and duties from the other groups of cultic officials: the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, and other temple servants. Scholars have assumed that the details of these activities provided in Chronicles—and especially in the Sondergut—either reflect Second Temple practice or, to a lesser extent, reflect traditions from the First Temple period. Further, conflicting reports or variety in details in Chronicles is assumed to indicate either redactional strata or the incorporation of sources that were not edited, i.e., a sloppy redactor or a pietistic copyist. In the sections which follow, these interpretations will be challenged and another understanding will be presented that affirms the coherency of the Chronicler’s depiction of the temple cult when viewed from the perspective of utopian literary theory.

4.2.1 The Identity of the Priests

In Chronicles, the identity of the priests is not uniformly established. Almost all priests are provided with an ancestry. Others, especially some of those identified as leading priests, are not. However, in all of the instances that explicitly provide priests with some ancestry or identification, they are always of Aaronide descent within the

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99 This point has been argued convincingly in detail by Knoppers, “Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors?.”

100 Compare the criticism of these readings of the Chronicler’s methodology in Section 2.2.1.

101 See the importance of this point for the identity of the leading priests in Section 4.3.1.
larger Levitical genealogy. This relationship is one of the means of distinguishing
between the two groups: all priests are Levites, but not all Levites are priests.102

Yet, there is a further distinction among the priests within the lineage of Aaron.
The entire priesthood is traced back to Aaron’s two surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar
(1 Chr 23:13-14; 24:1-19).103 All of the descendants of Ithamar serve as priests as
indicated by their organization into eight courses for service (1 Chr 24:1-19). The
descendants of Eleazar are further divided into two groups: those descended from
Eleazar’s son Phinehas and those claiming any other association with Eleazar. The first
group descended from Phinehas constitutes the line of leading priests while the second
group operates within the wider context of the priesthood just as their cousins of
Ithamarite descent do. That is, except for those descended from Phinehas who serve as
leading priests, descent from Eleazar or Ithamar does not affect the types of duties
assigned to each group or to their status as priests.104

Chronicles thus continues the distinction already present in P between the Levites
and the descendants of Aaron who serve as priests. Although Chronicles does use the
characteristically Deuteronomic phrase “levitical priests” on one occasion (2 Chr
23:18),105 Chronicles does not affirm the proposition that all priests are Levites and all
Levites are priests as advocated by the Deuteronomic literature. The position held in

103 The distinction between Aaronide priests and other Levites is further emphasized by the
explicit location of Moses’ sons among the Levites and not the priests in 1 Chr 23:13-14.
104 Ithamar and Eleazar have distinct duties for the care of the tabernacle in the Pentateuch. In
Chronicles, no such separation of duties between the two groups is evident; see Sections 4.2.1-2.
105 Many scholars have held that the MT contains a scribal error, either originally reading “priests
and Levites” or “the divisions of the priests and Levites” as attested by the ancient versions (see Japhet, I &
II Chronicles, 835-36). If this is correct, then the distinction between the view in D and in Chronicles is
made even more evident.
Ezekiel 40-48 that only the Zadokites may serve as authentic priests is also not supported by the presentation of the priesthood in Chronicles. The Chronicler emphasizes that all priests are descended from Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron. Thus, in Chronicles, those claiming descent from Zadok are only one of several groups with claims to serve as priests.

While Chronicles affirms the claims of the Aaronides to the priesthood, it should be noted that Chronicles lacks genealogies for the priests descended from Eleazar and Ithamar. This is in contrast to the extensive Levitical genealogies and the genealogies of the leading priests. The members of the priesthood are divided into twenty-four divisions based on their ancestral houses, but lineages that connect these houses to Aaron’s sons are not included. This suggests that Chronicles was not meant to establish, without subsequent adjustments, the parameters for the personnel who operate as priests within the temple cult. For example, in the settlement list of 1 Chr 9:3-34, priests are mentioned among those who returned to the land, but only five individuals are specifically named. In contrast, their unnamed “kindred, heads of their ancestral houses” who serve as priests number 1,760 (v. 13).

Just as with the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9 discussed in Chapter 2, the open-ended nature of these priestly divisions does not provide clear criteria by which to adjudicate claims of descent from the priestly lines. Thus, while the information about the identity of the priests in Chronicles has been traditionally understood as an

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106 This list is related in some way to the similar list in Neh 11:3-24. The latter list also includes a large but different number of unnamed priests without providing genealogies for them. This is another example of the Chronicler taking his cue from his sources in developing his own utopian text.

107 In Ezra 2:59-63//Neh 7:61-65, individuals who could not prove their genealogical descent from priestly lines were excluded from the priesthood. There is no hint of a concern to maintain or preserve detailed priestly genealogies in Chronicles; cf. the remarks in 2 Chr 31:18.
affirmation of the *status quo*, the Chronicler’s identification of the priests is better understood as part of his utopian construct. Instead of reflecting an existing historical situation, the Chronicler may be advocating a means of organization that was implemented *as a result* of his composition. Japhet notes that ten of the twenty-four names in the list of courses are also the leaders of ancestral houses in Neh 12:12-21. She suggests a development from the list in Nehemiah to the stabilized form recorded in Chronicles.  

Thus, for Japhet, the Chronicler represents the end of this process rather than being one of the contributors to the ongoing process of reorganization in the operation of the temple cult. As she notes, this structural process cannot be reconstructed because of a “lack of evidence and documentation.” Thus, the scholarly *assumption* is that Chronicles reflects a point of consensus attained prior to or at the time of its composition since, according to a wide variety of texts that postdate Chronicles, the priesthood is organized in a very similar manner.

Is it not possible, even probable, that Chronicles articulates a viable option which was actualized after its *initial conception* by the Chronicler as a novel approach to some historical situation? The belief among scholars that the Chronicler was a legitimist and not an innovator has not allowed this consideration to be taken seriously. However, utopian literary theory offers another possible reading: the Chronicler’s structure critiques the present and suggests a *better alternative reality* in its place. A variety of possible scenarios that would prompt the construction of such a systematic organizational model

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109 Ibid., 429.
110 See the brief citation and discussion of these texts in n. 160 of Chapter 1.
111 As noted in Chapter 1, among other contributing reasons, this view became entrenched in scholarship as a result of Freedman’s influential article, “Chronicler’s Purpose.”
are conceivable: the temple cult was disorganized or inefficient, priests were in conflict with each other over the right to perform their duties, one group had attempted to control the process to the exclusion of others (the Zadokites and the Aaronides, or the descendants of Eleazar and the Ithamarites), or a reformation of the priesthood on a smaller scale seemed a necessary counterpart if the Chronicler’s Levitical reforms that were being presented as past reality were to be accepted and implemented by his contemporaries (see Section 4.4). Many additional scenarios could certainly be offered.

Whichever hypothetical situation is preferred, it is the change in assumption that is paramount in interpreting this aspect of the Chronicler’s work. With the meager available knowledge of the society and religion of this part of the Second Temple period, scholars have been quick to assume that Chronicles provides a window into the organization and concerns of the Jerusalem temple cult. However, rather than reflect current practice, Chronicles may contain information about desired changes in the present structure and focus of the community. Thus, utopian literary theory provides a useful corrective to scholarly presuppositions and a cautious approach to using the data in Chronicles to reconstruct Second Temple practice and belief.

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112 Ithamar is clearly affirmed as a priest and a son of Aaron in the Pentateuch (Exod 6:23; 28:1; Lev 10:12-20; Num 3:2-4; 26:60). In these instances he is always mentioned with his brother Eleazar. However, he is mentioned alone in Exod 38:21; Num 4:28, 33; 7:8. In these texts, Ithamar serves as the overseer of the Levites. In Ezra 8:2, among those who return with Ezra from Babylon is a descendent of an Ithamar—apparently this same one—who is mentioned in parallel with Phinehas and David. Thus, in source material that was likely available to the Chronicler, Ithamar has descendants who returned to the land and he himself was associated with the proper roles of the Levites in the cult. Perhaps this situation explains the Chronicler’s affinity for including Ithamar and his descendants equally among the priests (1 Chr 5:29 [6:3 Eng.]; 24:1-19), as a legendary champion of the Levites’ involvement in the cult.
4.2.2 The Duties of the Priests

Chronicles identifies those serving as authentic priests with those claiming
descent from Aaron. The manner of their service as priests is communicated in an
equally clear way, although the precise procedures involved in the performance of their
ritual duties are often vague.

In Chronicles, service in the temple is the primary concern of the duties assigned
to the priests. The first reference to a priest in Chronicles is the brief chronological note
about the service of Azariah in the temple of Solomon (1 Chr 5:36 [6:10 Eng.]).\textsuperscript{113} In the
second instance, Aaron and his sons make offerings on the two altars for the atonement of
Israel in accordance with Moses’ commands, although without any details being provided
(1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]). In the third instance, priests who are “qualified for the work of
the service of the house of God” are among those who returned to the land following the
exile (1 Chr 9:2, 10-13). Thus, the service of the priests in the temple is associated in the
opening genealogical material with two of the authoritative figures of Israel’s past,
Solomon and Moses, and is worth special notice in establishing continuity for the present
with the past.\textsuperscript{114}

These three texts establish the sphere of the priests’ responsibilities, but without
providing specific details about their duties. The first ritual action that is explicitly cited
as a priestly duty, apart from serving at the altars in a vague sense, is the preparation of
the mixed spices for use in the temple (1 Chr 9:30). This clarification appears in the
context of Levitical duties for the operation the temple cult. Japhet correctly notes that

\textsuperscript{113} Almost all scholars agree that this note is misplaced chronologically and should instead be
associated with the Azariah mentioned in 5:35 (6:9 Eng.); see Japhet, \textit{I & II Chronicles}, 150.
the duties assigned to the Levites here are ascribed to Moses in the Pentateuch without explicitly designating who will be responsible for the preparation of these various items in the future after Moses’ death, although Eleazar the son of Aaron is ultimately responsible for their care (Num 4:16). But, why should only the mixing of spices be singled out from all of the other responsibilities? The mixing of spices may refer to either one (or both) of the only two items to use spices: the anointing oil and the incense for use only in the cultic rituals (Exod 30:22-33, 34-38). Of all the items made for the Tabernacle in the Pentateuch these are also the only two to be explicitly forbidden outside of the cult. These stipulations also contain the only two times that being “cut off” ( Shibboleth) from the people is the prescribed punishment for improperly preparing any of the cultic items mentioned in Exodus. Thus, the seriousness associated with the use of spices may be responsible for assigning the task to the priests instead of to the Levites. While Chronicles may reflect Second Temple practice or simply replicate a source in this material, it is also possible that the Chronicler is suggesting an innovation in cultic practice motivated by a careful reading of the cultic legislation in Exodus that takes its warnings to heart.

The priests often appear as those serving at the altar or making sacrifices in Chronicles (e.g., 1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 16:39-40; 2 Chr 5:14; 8:14; 13:10-11; 23:18; 26:18; 29:20-24, 34-35; 31:2-3; 35:10-14), although very few details are provided as to

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114 Note that in the parallel text of Neh 11:10-14, the work of the house to be undertaken by some of the priests is mentioned in passing, but not with the emphasis apparent in 1 Chr 9:10-13.

115 Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 218; see also the discussion in Section 4.4.2.

116 The second option seems to be Japhet’s position, although she is not explicit about the reason for singling out only this particular task (I & II Chronicles, 202-05, 218).

117 Such a reading of the Pentateuchal legislation is consistent with the Chronicler’s understanding of cultic legislation in the Torah; for additional examples that support this claim, see Section 4.2.3.
how these duties were carried out. This meager information includes: priests dash the 

blood of the Pesach (2 Chr 30:15-16; 35:11); priests skin the burnt offerings (29:34-

35);\(^{118}\) and priests alone have access to the innermost parts of the temple, and are 

therefore responsible to cleanse it (2 Chr 5:7; 29:16).

In contrast to this depiction of duties that are exclusive to the priests, on several 

occasions it is either unclear who are the ones performing these sacrificial duties or the 

Davidic king is explicitly the one making the sacrifices (1 Chr 16:1-6; 21:26-30; 2 Chr 

1:6; 7:4-5, 7; 15:9-15; 24:14). Also, it is difficult to accept the conclusion that Chronicles 

champions the right of the priests to perform the sacrifices exclusively given the number 

of ambiguous or contradictory references to other individuals functioning as priests.\(^{119}\)

However, the priests are not restricted to sacrificial responsibilities in Chronicles. 

First, the priests are associated with the playing of trumpets during rituals and cultic 

celebrations (1 Chr 13:2, 8; 15:24, 28; 16:6, 39-42;\(^{120}\) 2 Chr 5:11-14; 7:6; 13:12, 14; 

15:14; 20:28; 23:12-13;\(^ {121}\) 29:26-28). The association of priests with trumpets at such 

\(^{118}\) In contrast, note that the skinning of the Pesach is performed by the Levites (2 Chr 35:11), and 

that the Levites may substitute for the priests in skinning the burnt offerings when there are not enough 

priests available to perform this duty (2 Chr 29:34-35).

\(^{119}\) Contra Boccaccini, Roots of Rabbinic Judaism, 60; Millar, Priesthood in Ancient Israel, 46, 48, 

62; and the theory of a “pro-priestly redaction” in Chronicles that presumably heightens the prestige and 

power of the priests, e.g., as articulated by Dirksen, “Development of the Text of I Chronicles 15:1-24.” 

While some specific duties are assigned to the priests in Chronicles that are not explicitly stated to be their 

responsibility in other texts, Japhet correctly concludes that the Chronicler’s “sympathy still lies with the 

Levites” (I & II Chronicles, 425) and that he does not enhance the roles or depictions of the priests.

\(^{120}\) In 1 Chr 16:39-42, David leaves Zadok and the priests at tabernacle at Gibeon with attending 

Levites to perform the cultic offerings. In v. 42, the two named Levitical leaders are said to have the 

trumpets and cymbals for music. While this could suggest that the Levitical leaders played the trumpets, 

the presence of priests at the same location may imply that it is the priests who actually play them, which 

would be consistent with the other references to trumpets in Chronicles.

\(^{121}\) The revolt against Athaliah is the only instance in Chronicles where someone other than the 

priests is explicitly blowing trumpets. In this passage, the people of the land perform this duty. The 

parallel text of 2 Kgs 11:13-14 contains this same reading. That this exceptional event occurs during the 
time of Jehoiada only adds to the numerous unique practices associated with his tenure as leading priest; 
see further discussion of Jehoiada’s anomalous depiction in Section 4.3.
times is found in the Torah, the book of Joshua, and in Ezra-Nehemiah (Exod 19:13, 16, 19; 20:18; Lev 23:23-25; 25:9; Num 10:1-10; 29:1-6; 31:6; Josh 6:1-21; Ezra 3:10; Neh 4:12, 14). Thus, this uniform presentation of the priestly trumpeters may not necessarily reflect Second Temple practice, but may be the Chronicler’s attempt to be consistent, at least in his understanding, with the Pentateuchal stipulations and other textual precedents.

Second, the priests function as teachers or liturgists. Two priests accompany the five officials and nine Levites teaching Torah at the command of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 17:7-9). Priests praise YHWH and bless the people at cultic celebrations (1 Chr 23:13; 2 Chr 30:21, 27). However, while this duty is more commonly associated with the Levites and the Davidic kings, the people themselves and foreign monarchs also perform this activity (1 Chr 16:2, 4, 7, 9, 36; 23:5; 25:3; 29:10, 13, 20; 2 Chr 2:11 [v. 12 Eng.]; 5:13; 6:4; 7:6; 8:14; 9:8; 20:19, 21, 22, 26; 29:30; 30:21, 27; 31:2, 8). Finally, the spirit of God fills Zechariah the son of the priest Jehoiada to bring a warning to the Davidic king Joash (2 Chr 24:20-22).

The duties of the priests in Chronicles are not the focus of the Chronicler’s cultic system. As with the genealogies of these priests, the Chronicler provides little

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122 The references to a trumpet sounding at Mount Sinai do not specify who is blowing them. This ambiguity may account for the proleptic presence of priests who are mentioned twice in this context before the commands to establish the priesthood occur in the subsequent chapters of Exodus.

123 However, the identity of the trumpeter at Nehemiah’s side is not made explicit.

124 Note also the use of trumpets by non-priests, Ehud and Gideon, in Judg 3:26-27; 6:34; 7:8, 16-23. The Chronicler only briefly acknowledges the period of the judges (1 Chr 17:9-10) without affirming any of the practices associated with it.

125 The scope of individuals who perform this “duty” mitigates against these terms having technical meanings or only being associated with specific ritual actions. The notion of “blessing” or “praising” cannot be regarded as a strictly ritual formula or procedure in Chronicles, despite its repeated description as a duty of the Levites.
information about their functions and duties. What information is contained in Chronicles is largely consistent with the presentation of the Aaronide priesthood in the Torah, and with the stipulations of P in particular. The priests are responsible for offering the sacrifices and for blowing the trumpets. They also appear as teachers and liturgists, though infrequently so. The depiction of the priesthood in Chronicles is thus utopian not because it expands the duties of the priests. On the contrary, the cultic utopia of Chronicles is based on the limitation of the priesthood to those areas that are assigned or most directly associated with it in the cultic legislation of the Torah. The priests have an important but restricted sphere of influence in Chronicles. Priests do not oversee Levites and they do not perform duties reserved for the Levites. In contrast, in special circumstances the Levites may temporarily function as if they were priests. Thus, in the Chronicler’s better alternative reality the priests are properly organized and operating within their appropriate sphere of influence without encroaching on the duties and roles of the Levites that are advocated throughout the book.

4.2.3 The Sacrificial System

Chronicles contains information about the sacrificial system and festival celebrations associated with the operation of the temple cult. These data can be, and have been, compared with the similar depictions in other texts, especially in the Torah and Ezekiel 40-48. Wellhausen discounted the historical value of Chronicles for the First Temple period and favored reading the details about the temple cult in Chronicles as a

126 See Section 4.4 below.
reflection of practices from the Second Temple period. Scholarship has tended to take one of two avenues in approaching this material ever since: (1) defending the position that accurate information about the First Temple period is reflected in Chronicles, and more commonly (2) using Chronicles as a source to reconstruct cultic practice from the Second Temple period. Utopian literary theory offers a third mode of interpretation: Chronicles does not reflect an existing or past historical reality; instead the book projects a better alternative reality that may yet exist in the future but does not reflect present practice. Thus, Chronicles may be used as a source to reconstruct debates about the proper operation of the temple cult, but not in reconstructing the historical practices themselves. This section presents a utopian reading of the sacrificial system and the festivals in Chronicles.

First, the sacrificial system in Chronicles includes references to offerings and rituals that are found in other literature, especially in the Pentateuchal texts assigned to the Priestly writer. However, the depictions contain both similarities and differences to other portrayals. For example, Chronicles continues, although to a much lesser extent, the emphasis in P on making atonement for the guilt (מַעֲטָלָה) of the people via sacrifice performed by the cultic personnel. However, in contrast to P, no distinction is made in Chronicles between intentional and unintentional sins. Chronicles presents all sin that incurs guilt (מַעֲטָלָה) as the result of conscious and intentional actions and flagrant

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127 Wellhausen, Prolegomena, 171-227. See the helpful and intense critique of Wellhausen’s view and presuppositions by Moshe Weinfeld, The Place of the Law in the Religion of Ancient Israel (VTSup 100; Leiden: Brill, 2004).

128 See, e.g., references to atonement in 1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 2 Chr 29:24; and the emphasis on מַעֲטָלָה in 1 Chr 2:7; 5:25; 9:1; 10:13; 2 Chr 12:2; 26:16, 18; 28:19, 22; 29:6, 19; 30:7; 33:19; 36:14. See especially Johnstone, "Guilt and Atonement."
disobedience. In this regard, Chronicles does not refer to offerings that are designed to atone for unintentional sins.

The Chronicler does mention several regular ritual observances known from P: the daily burnt offerings in the morning and evening, the offerings of incense on the altar of incense, sacrifices for the new moons, and provisions for the weekly Sabbaths (1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 9:29; 16:37-40; 23:31; 28:18; 2 Chr 1:6; 2:3 [v. 4 Eng.]; 4:6; 8:12-13; 9:3-4; 13:11; 24:14; 26:16, 19; 29:7, 18; 31:2-3). A few specific components of the cult are associated with the Sabbath that are not found in P: the rows of bread are prepared on a weekly-basis (1 Chr 9:32) and the divisions of priests and Levites evidently normally rotate on the Sabbath (2 Chr 23:4, 8). In addition, burnt offerings are not only offered on a daily basis, but also are consistently mentioned in the context of important cultic events: the transfer of the ark by David (1 Chr 16:1-2), the halting of the plague and the selection of the temple site by David (1 Chr 21:23-30), the anointing of Solomon as king (1 Chr 29:21-22), the temple dedication by Solomon (2 Chr 7:1, 7), the rededication of the temple by Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:23-24, 27-28, 31-36), the celebration of Passover by Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:15), and the celebration of Passover by Josiah (2 Chr 35:12, 14, 16). Other types of offerings are also mentioned throughout the book of Chronicles, but almost entirely in association with these special cultic observances rather than the daily routine of the cult: offerings of well-being (1 Chr 16:1-2, 21:26; 2 Chr 7:7; 29:35; 30:22; 31:2; 33:16), grain offerings (1 Chr 21:23; 23:29; 2 Chr 7:7), offerings of thanksgiving (2 Chr 29:31; 30:22; 33:16), drink offerings or libations (1 Chr 21:29; 2 Chr 29:35), and a “sin offering” (2 Chr 29:21-24).
Second, the Chronicler’s cultic system includes references to several, but not all, of the festivals known from the Pentateuch, from the material typically assigned to both P and D. Chronicles explicitly mentions the celebration of the “appointed festivals” (1 Chr 23:31; 2 Chr 2:3 [v. 4 Eng.]; 31:3). This term is used in P to describe the following cultic events: the Sabbath, the festivals of Passover and unleavened bread, the festival of first fruits and festival of weeks, the festival of trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the festival of booths or Sukkoth, and possibly also the daily burnt offerings and the sacrifices at the new moon (Lev 23:2, 4, 37, 44; Num 10:10; 15:3; 29:39). In other texts, this term is used without specifying its scope of coverage (Isa 1:14; 33:20; Ezek 36:38; 44:24; 45:17; 46:9; Hos 2:13 [v. 11 Eng.]; 9:5; 12:10 [v. 9 Eng.]; Neh 10:34 [v. 33 Eng.]). However, the contexts of the other rituals mentioned in these latter texts suggest that these passages are consistent, if not to be equated, with the range of cultic events outlined by P. The texts assigned to D do not use this particular term.

It may appear that the Chronicler’s three references to these celebrations are entirely consistent with P. However, this is not the case. The Chronicler does explicitly mention several of these cultic celebrations from P: daily burnt offerings, new moons, and the Sabbath (see the above discussion and references), the festival of Passover (2 Chr 30:1-27; 35:1-19), the festival of unleavened bread (2 Chr 8:13), the festival of weeks (2 Chr 8:13), and the festival of Sukkoth (2 Chr 8:13). The significance of 2 Chr 8:13 should not be overlooked in this regard. In this verse, Solomon celebrates the “three annual festivals” (וּשָׁנָה שֲלֹשָׁה מֵעַנֵי מוֹצָאָה מְלָכָה), weeks (וּשְׁנֵי הַשָׁבָעָה), and booths (וַיִּשְׁלָכוּ). Although the P text of Exod 23:14-17 intends the same three festivals and utilizes this same chronological phrase, the names
given by P in this instance are not the same as in 2 Chr 8:13. Rather the festivals are named as “unleavened bread” (לְחֵץ הָעֵשָׂה), “harvest, of the first fruits of your labor” (נֶפֶשׂ תַּחַת הַהֲוָא), and “ingathering” (גְּדִישׁתָּה). However, the D text of Deut 16:16 contains both the distinctive phrasing for three annual celebrations and the same names for these festivals as appear in 2 Chr 8:13. Thus, in describing the only required annual festivals, Chronicles is more consistent with the language of D than of P.\(^{129}\) But this is not all. Solomon is the only king to celebrate all three of these festivals in Chronicles (2 Chr 5:3; 8:13).\(^{130}\) While Hezekiah and Josiah both celebrate the festival of unleavened bread (2 Chr 30:13, 21; 35:17), only Solomon observes the festivals of weeks and Sukkoth. Thus, despite the lofty accolades bestowed on the Passovers performed by Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Chr 30:26; 35:18), neither ruler explicitly celebrates the other festivals and thus fail to compare yet once again to the utopian Solomon.\(^{131}\) Therefore, it should not be assumed too quickly that the term “appointed festivals” in Chronicles has the same scope as it does in P.

This position is further supported by the failure to mention both the festival of trumpets and the Day of Atonement in Chronicles. Although the priests are repeatedly associated with the practice of playing trumpets, no separate festival of trumpets as described in P is evidenced in Chronicles. The Chronicler’s failure to mention explicitly the Day of Atonement ceremony known from several P texts in the Pentateuch (Lev 16:1-34; 23:26-32; 25:9; Num 29:7-11) may be related to the emphasis on free-will and

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\(^{129}\) See also Shaver, *Torah and the Chronicler’s History Work*, 90-96.

\(^{130}\) The parallel text of 1 Kgs 9:25 states that Solomon sacrificed three times a year but does not include any further clarification of when these events took place. This silence highlights the concern to specify the three festivals and the use of terminology from D instead of P in Chronicles.
intentional sin in the book. In the Day of Atonement ritual, found only in P, all of Israel’s sins during the previous year are expiated by multiple sacrifices on the tenth day of the seventh month, occurring in the calendrical cycle of P between the festival of trumpets and the festival of Sukkoth. Also, the duties of the leading priest, largely ambiguous throughout all of the ritual texts in the HB, are explicitly described in the Leviticus passage, which both enhances the prestige of the office and affirms that it was passed down from father to son (Lev 16:32). Thus, given the Chronicler’s desires to limit the priests’ sphere of influence and to restrict the leading priest in particular, the absence of these two distinctively P traditions in Chronicles comes into focus. That is, it is not necessarily because they were not observed during the time of the Chronicler that these two festivals are absent in the book; rather, the ideology of the Chronicler may be responsible for the silence over two distinctly priestly cultic events.

Third, Chronicles presents the cultic observances in details that are consistent with the depictions neither in P nor with other portrayals by the Chronicler of the same events. The number of sacrificial animals, the types of offerings presented, and the order of the ritual actions often vary in these texts. Scholars have noted this point, with particular attention to the Passover of Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:1-27) and the Passover of Josiah (2 Chr 35:1-19). In the former text, several significant deviations from “official” practice are noted: (1) the observance of the festival in the second month instead of the prescribed first month due to the lack of sanctified priests, (2) the slaughter of the Pesach by the Levites on behalf of the people—who should have slaughtered their own animals, (3) the eating of the Pesach by those who were unclean in violation of the written

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131 See the discussion of Solomon’s utopian superiority to all the kings in Section 3.2.1.
stipulations, and (4) the extension of the festival for an additional seven days. In the latter text, different discrepancies are apparent: (1) the Levites seem to be instructed to place the ark in the temple when this has already occurred, (2) the officials provide the Pesach for the people—who should have provided their own animals, and (3) the Levites “boil with fire” (יָבֹא לְעֻפָּן) the Pesach in accordance with the ordinance—but a practice that instead contradicts two texts from the Torah (Exod 12:8-9 and Deut 16:7) by a supposed harmonization of the language found in each. Typical of much of the scholarship on these texts, Japhet concludes that the difficulties in the Hezekiah account may be the result of an authentic tradition regarding a Passover celebration at the time of Hezekiah and that those in the Josiah narrative are explained as either textual corruptions or as a result of the Chronicler’s desire for legitimization of current temple practice.

However, utopian literary theory suggests that instead of reflecting a past or present reality these narratives convey a better alternative reality that critiques the present. In the Chronicler’s cultic utopia, the cult is affirmed without criticism; indeed, it is in constant need of reform. Established on the authority of Aaron (1 Chr 6:34 [v. 49 Eng.]; 24:19) and of Moses, the organizational and procedural changes attributed to David in Chronicles dramatically alter the portrayal of the cult. David does not merely replicate what Moses had previously instituted or legislated. Instead, the cult under David is filled with innovations that are presented as being consistent with the traditions already associated with the cult despite the obvious, and often explicit, knowledge that

132 On the first point, see Sections 4.2.1-2 above; on the second point, see Section 4.3 below.
the cult has undergone multiple changes during the time of David. In the newly-constructed temple—itself an innovation presented as a continuation of the Mosaic tabernacle (1 Chr 16:37-42; 21:29; 2 Chr 1:3-5; 5:10)—Solomon implements the plans for the temple service which he had received from his father David (1 Chr 28:11-19; 2 Chr 8:14-15). Thus, Solomon stands in continuity with his father in establishing a cult that is both consistent and in tension with its predecessors. An emphasis on the continued reform of the cult to bring it into line with the Davidic-Solomonic model continues with the descriptions of the subsequent reforms by other Davidic kings. However, in none of these instances is the Davidic-Solomonic temple cult replicated without additional changes or differences also being noted.

First, the influx of Levites and priests from the northern kingdom at the time of Rehoboam (2 Chr 11:13-17; 13:9-20) changes the allocation of land mentioned in the genealogical section (1 Chr 6:39-66 [vv. 54-81 Eng.]) as well as impacting the divisions of the priests and Levites (1 Chr 23:1-24:19; 28:21). Also, the migration of additional northerners to Judah at key points in the history of the southern kingdom provides a context for covenant renewal and cultic reforms, which are accomplished in diverse manners and practices (2 Chr 15:8-19; 30:1-27).

Second, the judicial roles of the Levites and priests are only infrequently mentioned in Chronicles (1 Chr 26:29-32; 2 Chr 17:7-9; 19:4-11). Even in these texts, the details concerning their administrative organization and scope of duties are not consistent. Thus, Jehoshaphat’s reform imitates David’s original model, but not as a reinstitution without adaptation to a new historical circumstance.
Third, not only does the temple cult become repeatedly corrupt, but it ceases to function under Ahaz and must be reinstituted completely by Hezekiah (2 Chr 28:24; 29:3-11). This interruption of service parallels the extended period during the exile when the “land kept its Sabbath” and no cultic rituals were performed (2 Chr 36:19-21). In his reinstitution of the cult, Hezekiah imitates but does not replicate the proper conditions under the previous kings. Historical circumstance again is the major factor: (1) the small number of sanctified priests causes Levites to serve in their place (2 Chr 29:34), (2) the observance at an irregular time because of a lack of sanctified priests and the people’s failure even to be there (2 Chr 30:2-4), and (3) the inability of the people to cleanse themselves causes both the Levites to slaughter the Pesach in their place and the people to eat while ceremonially unclean (2 Chr 30:15-20). However, in none of these cases does God reject the sacrifice on account of the improper procedures. In a similar vein, although Josiah attempts to observe the Passover according to the written instructions of David and Solomon and the Mosaic Torah, inconsistencies nonetheless exist (see above). Despite this, according to Chronicles, Josiah’s Passover far exceeds all previous ones, including Hezekiah’s and even Solomon’s.

While the superiority of Josiah over Hezekiah in terms of attention to cultic detail has been advocated as the source of this praise,\(^\text{135}\) the context of the reign of both kings suggests that Chronicles presents a more nuanced position. While Japhet emphasizes correctly the *ad hoc* nature of Hezekiah’s celebration,\(^\text{136}\) it is precisely this feature that makes it remarkable rather than deficient. The irregularities of Hezekiah’s cultic reforms and observations do not prevent the explicit affirmation made regarding the *intention* of

\(^{135}\) Ibid., 1044-46.
the worshippers and confirmed by God’s actions. No such language is present in the account of Josiah. In addition, the narrative accounts which follow in each of these cases further illustrate the differences between Hezekiah and Josiah. The religious piety of both individuals are extolled (2 Chr 31:20-21; 35:16-20). However, Hezekiah is delivered from the Assyrian invasion by Sennacherib (2 Chr 32:1-23) and Josiah is killed by the Egyptian Pharaoh Neco (2 Chr 35:20-25). Thus, Josiah’s cultic concern does not prevent his demise.\textsuperscript{137} Chronicles does not suggest that creating a “permanent institution” with all of its procedures and personnel in the proper structure is the key to God’s blessing or to the survival of Israel.\textsuperscript{138}

Fourth, the book of Chronicles simply cannot be used to answer with any systematic detail such cultic questions as: “what are the correct procedures for celebrating Passover?,” “what happens at the festival of Sukkoth?,” or “what is the order of the daily routine in the temple cult?” Many more unanswerable inquiries could be added. Chronicles is neither a manual for cultic performance nor a retrojection of the present into the past for the sake of legitimization. Rather, the diverse presentation of the functioning temple cult in Chronicles conveys a utopian ideology: the cult must be able to undergo change while still maintaining continuity with the past in order for it to be efficacious for the present and future. The Chronicler does not advocate simply implementing the cultic organization established by David and Solomon or the legislation by Moses. Rather, as historical change occurs and new situations challenge the Second Temple community, it

\textsuperscript{136}Ibid., 1045.

\textsuperscript{137}Note the repetition of this point in 2 Chr 35:16, 20a and the tension that it creates in vv. 20b-25.

must adapt while maneuvering the complex issue of how to maintain continuity and encourage practical innovations at the same time. Thus, for the Chronicler, the temple cult is in constant need of reevaluation and improvement. When the cult ceases to adapt it is susceptible to becoming irrelevant and ineffective. The better alternative reality for the Chronicler is a temple cult that neither becomes stagnant nor blindly reinforces a status quo that cannot accept new methods or procedures in the light of new circumstances. The Chronicler’s utopian temple cult is thus a loosely-organized one, and not the product of a systematician striving to have a rigid program imposed on the community for all time.  

4.3 The Zadokites and the High Priest in Chronicles

The previous section has argued that the priesthood is not a primary concern for the Chronicler. This lack of interest in details about the priests (as opposed to the Levites) is also reflected by the Chronicler’s scant treatment of the office of leading priest and the group of priests who would claim descent from Zadok. In this section, the presentations of the leading priest and the Zadokites will be assessed. The Chronicler’s view of the leading priest is part of his utopian construction of the temple cult, one which critiques the leading priest and the Zadokites rather than supporting any claims to power and prestige that they may have been putting forth in the Second Temple period (e.g., the type of contentions found in Ezekiel 40-48).

139 The point that the Chronicler was not something of a “rigid legalist” has been recently asserted by Endres, “Theology of Worship in Chronicles,” 185-86; Graham, “Setting the Heart to Seek God,” 138; and McKenzie, 1-2 Chronicles, 55.
4.3.1 The Identity and Duties of the High Priest: Genealogical and Narrative Evidence

Before turning to the data in the book of Chronicles, Tables 2 and 3 below briefly display the occurrences of the two terms used to describe the leading priest throughout the HB, high priest (לֹּוֹדֵג נָחָש) and chief priest (שַׁר הַנַּחַש), to provide a comparative context for their particular appearances in Chronicles.

**TABLE 2**

**OCCURRENCES OF “HIGH PRIEST” IN THE HEBREW BIBLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference:</th>
<th>Priest to whom term refers:</th>
<th>Civic leader mentioned:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lev 21:10-15</td>
<td>“the priest exalted above his brothers”</td>
<td>None mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kgs 12:10 // 2 Chr 24:11 [Kgs: high priest; Chr: chief priest]</td>
<td>Jehoiada</td>
<td>king Jehoash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kgs 22:4, 8; 23:4 // 2 Chr 34:9 [Kgs: 3 times; Chr: only once]</td>
<td>Hilkiah</td>
<td>king Josiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neh 3:1, 20, 28</td>
<td>Eliashib</td>
<td>governor Nehemiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hag 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4; Zech 3:1, 8; 6:11</td>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>governor Zerubbabel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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140 This section is a revised and expanded version of my article, “High Priest in Chronicles” in *Biblica*, used with permission.
Several things are clear from the data in these charts. First, “high priest” is used only once in Chronicles, and this appearance also occurs in a synoptic text (2 Kgs 22:4). The other two times Hilkiah is referenced in this way in 2 Kings 22-23, the title is not found in Chronicles. Second, the Chronicler’s version terms Jehoiada a “chief priest” instead of a “high priest.” Third, the title “chief priest” appears 4 times in Chronicles, but only 3 times in the rest of the HB. The Chronicler thus acknowledges the existence of the office of “high priest,” but diminishes and does not enhance the title of the most significant cultic official in the Second Temple period.

141 This could also refer to Ezra himself (with the governor Nehemiah as the civic authority) as it is unclear grammatically to whom the term refers; the parallel text of 1 Esd 8:1-2 does not clarify the referent, while the term “high (or chief) priest” (ὁ ἀρχιερεύς) is applied to Ezra in 1 Esd 9:39, 40, 49. In the HB, Ezra is called “priest” and “scribe,” but never referred to as the high or chief priest in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah or elsewhere.
TABLE 4
COMPARISON CHART OF THE GENEALOGICAL LISTS
OF THE “HIGH PRIESTS”

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kohath</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amram</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezra 7:1-5; (Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas mentioned numerous times in Torah; others only in Ezra 7:1-5)</td>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eleazar</td>
<td>Eleazar (5.361-362)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eleazar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phinehas</td>
<td>Phineas (5.361; 7.110; 8.11-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phinehas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Abishua</td>
<td>Abishua (5.362) / Jesus (8.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abishua</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bukki</td>
<td>Bukki (5.362; 8.12)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bukki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uzzi</td>
<td>Ozis (5.362)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uzzi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zerahiah</td>
<td>Zerahiah, son of Bokki (8.12) [Eli (not of Eleazar’s line in 5.361-362; 6.107; 8.11-12)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zerahiah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meraioth</td>
<td>Meraioth (8.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown / Duplication from 5:37 (6:11 Eng.)</td>
<td>Amariah I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arophaios (8.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sam 8:17 (Ahitub, Zadok); 2 Samuel 15, 17, 18 (Ahimaaz); 1 Kgs 4:2 (Azariah)</td>
<td>Ahitub I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Achitob</td>
<td>Achitob (6.122; 8.12) [Achias his son (6.107)]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zadok I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sadok (7.110; 8.12,16; 10.152) [Abiathar (7.110; 8.11-12,16)]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ahimaaz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Azarias (10.152)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Azariah I</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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TABLE 4 (contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Entry</th>
<th>Genealogical Information</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unknown</strong></td>
<td><strong>Johanan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ezra 7:1-5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Azariah II</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meraioth</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ahitub</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zadok II</strong></td>
<td><strong>Zadok</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sallum</strong></td>
<td><strong>Meshallum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hilkiah</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hilkiah</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Azariah III</strong></td>
<td><strong>Azariah</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jehozadak</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ezra</strong></td>
<td><strong>Josadak</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Ezra 7:1-5** | **Azariah** |
| **Ahitub** | **Ahitub** |
| **Ahitub** | **Ahitub** |
| **Meraioth** | **Meraioth** |
| **Zadok** | **Zadok** |
| **Shallum** | **Shallum** |
| **Hilkiah** | **Hilkiah** |
| **Azariah** | **Azariah** |

Neh 12:8-11, 22: And the Levites … Joshua, Joiakim, Eliashib, Joiada, Jonathan/Johanan, Jaddua

This table, similar to those used by previous scholars addressing this genealogical material, summarizes the genealogical material from the HB and Josephus that contain information regarding the office of the high priest. A few observations should be noted. First, none of the “high-priestly lists” in the HB are so designated. The high-priestly lists are always part of other larger complexes: genealogies or settlement lists. Thus, these lists are not explicitly about the leading priests. If anything, the lists are about the tribe of Levi and its importance in Israel’s history. This includes the list of high priests in Neh 12:8-11, 22, which explicitly calls these individuals “Levites” and locates them in the

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142 See the works cited in n. 79 in Chapter 1.
Levitical line without declaring their priestly status.\(^{143}\) Second, the evidence from Antiquities strongly suggests that portions of the “high-priestly” list (its beginning and end) had attained a relative degree of stability in transmission. However, the middle of the list was more fluid and provided the opportunity for expansion, both by Josephus and the Chronicler.\(^{144}\) Third, the distinction between “high” and “chief” priest in the HB is blurred by Josephus who uses the same term, ὁ ἄρχων ἡγεμόν, for both titles.

The genealogy in 1 Chr 5:27-41 (6:1-15 Eng.) is a composite text constructed from a variety of sources. The sequence “Levi, Kohath, Amram” is taken from the Priestly source.\(^{145}\) This beginning to the genealogy supports the claim that “all priests are Levites, but all Levites are not priests.”\(^{146}\) Phinehas and his father Eleazar are mentioned in the concluding section of the genealogical material in 1 Chr 9:17-27. In this passage, Phinehas is described as being over the Levitical gatekeepers of the Korahites “in former times” (1 Chr 9:20). While this statement has no exact parallel in the Torah, Num 3:31-32 does mention that Eleazar had charge of the Kohathites who were responsible for the holy vessels of the tabernacle. In this text, the son of the leading priest has authority over the Levites; it is possible that the Chronicler here extends a hereditary function to the high-priestly office by describing Eleazar’s son Phinehas in terms consistent with his

\(^{143}\) Since it seems obvious that the Chronicler possessed substantial sections of Ezra and Nehemiah, this may indicate Nehemiah 12 (and 13) are later additions into the book of Nehemiah; see the arguments for at least two redactional strata in Ezra-Nehemiah that includes Neh 11:21-12:26 by Mark A. Throntveit, Ezra-Nehemiah (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1992), 58-61, 120-26. It is my opinion that some form of Ezra-Nehemiah existed prior to the composition of Chronicles, but that substantial additions have been made to the two books after the Chronicler wrote his history of the First Temple period.

\(^{144}\) Without recourse to this passage, Wilson has noted this same general tendency in both oral and written genealogies (Genealogy and History in the Biblical World, esp. 27-36, 162); cf. the brief discussion of this point in Section 2.1.3.


\(^{146}\) This paraphrases the arguments made by Cody, History of Old Testament Priesthood, 167.
father’s duties. Such a relationship between the high priest (actually his son, since Eleazar is still alive) and the Levitical gatekeepers is exceptional in Chronicles; the gatekeepers are never under the authority of a high priest or even another priest but are responsible to other Levites.\textsuperscript{147} However, the text from 1 Chr 9:17-27 does apparently provide evidence for a hereditary principle in effect for the high priesthood, at least in regard to the oversight of particular duties.\textsuperscript{148}

The sequence ‘Ahitub, Zadok, Ahimaaz, Azariah” is gleaned from the narrative reflected in Samuel-Kings; this then presents Zadok I as David’s Zadok, which is a temporal problem for Azariah II being the priest in the new temple under Solomon (1 Chr 5: 36 [6:10 Eng.]; cf. 1 Kgs 4:1-4). A common resolution is to emend this temple claim and to apply it to Azariah I, which although lacking textual evidence, makes sense on chronological grounds if the genealogical material is to be read in conversation with the narratives that follow.\textsuperscript{149} The selection of Amariah as the name for this additional necessary individual has apparently been taken from the duplicate sequence in the following list of “Amariah, Ahitub, Zadok.” The sequences of Aaron through Meraioth and Azariah II through Seraiah apparently have been reproduced from Ezra 7:1-5.\textsuperscript{150}

\textsuperscript{147} 1 Chr 9:17-27; 15:16-24; 23:2-32; 26:1-19; for another possible exception see 2 Chr 23:19.

\textsuperscript{148} In the Torah, the hereditary nature of this office is possibly addressed in Lev 16:32; Num 20:22-29; Deut 10:6; cf. Judg 20:27-28.

\textsuperscript{149} If this emendation is accepted, then this may explain the insertion of Amariah I, since Azariah I would then be the thirteenth generation from the exodus to the construction of the temple. Thus, twelve generations before the temple at the stereotypical forty years per generation results in 480 years, which matches the number of years claimed in 1 Kgs 6:1 (see Japhet, \textit{I & II Chronicles}, 150-51).

\textsuperscript{150} Knoppers questions the view that the Chronicler’s genealogy is “simply an elaboration” of other shorter lists (“Relationship of the Priestly Genealogies,” 111-12). The Chronicler’s methodology in constructing this genealogy is indeed complex and not “simply an elaboration” of his sources, whatever they actually were.
The sequence “Azariah, Johanan, Azariah” is difficult to assess. Why Azariah I (from 1 Kings) and Azariah II (from Ezra 7) were not considered the same individual by the Chronicler has no easy answer. It may reflect the tendency towards expansion of lists rather than contraction or assimilation in the ancient world.\footnote{The tendency towards expansion rather than contraction or assimilation can be observed in the following examples from the ancient world: the Sumerian King List, the Ugaritic King List, the Assyrian King List, the Babylonian King Lists, the Hesiodic Catalogue of Women, and the Genealogies of Hecataeus of Miletus. The Synchronistic Chronicle obviously engages in assimilation (as its name indicates), but also exhibits the same tendency toward expansion. See the discussion in Sections 2.1.1-3.} However, the fact that they were not assimilated caused a noticeable difficulty: father and son would have the same name, without the insertion of Johanan.

Only the names of Amariah I and Johanan do not appear in the source material apparently available to the Chronicler in constructing this genealogy.\footnote{I have not accepted the suggestion by Barrick that Johanan in 1 Chr 6:9-10 is Jonathan ben Abiathar from DtrH (“Genealogical Notes,” 46; citing 2 Sam 15:27, 36; 17:17-22; 1 Kgs 1:42-43). Accepting the identification of this non-Zadokite priest with Johanan would remove Jonathan three generations from his appropriate temporal location in the list, based on the chronology of Samuel-Kings.} As suggested above, Amariah may simply be part of a repetition, and the insertion of Johanan may have been simply to add a generation between the two Azariah’s. However, why select the name “Johanan” in particular?

While this question cannot be answered with certainty, the following suggestion is offered. Perhaps the choice of the name Johanan was taken from the current high priest at the time when the Chronicler was writing his history. Following VanderKam’s reconstruction of the high priesthood during the Persian period, Johanan would have attained the office sometime prior to 408 B.C.E. (as can determined from TAD A4.7) and continued to hold it “until c. 370, or perhaps even beyond.”\footnote{VanderKam, “Jewish High Priests of the Persian Period,” 90; cf. ibid., From Joshua to Caiaphas, 85-99, esp. 97-99; TAD A4.7 was previously identified as AP 30 in A. E. Cowley, Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923).} This explanation would
also be consistent with Cross’ more complex reconstruction that places Johanan III in office at this time until his son, Jaddua (III), would have become high priest.154

The final observation about the genealogical list of high priests in 1 Chr 5:27-41 (6:1-15 Eng.) is that while there are some priests named in both the genealogical list and the narrative, there are others who are mentioned only in the narrative or who cannot be equated with individuals in the list because of chronological difficulties. Zadok and Hilkiah are the only leading priests named in both the genealogy and the narrative. There are four priests—and also the only ones termed “chief priest” in Chronicles—that appear only in the narrative. They are: Jehoiada (2 Chronicles 22-24), the Azariah under Uzziah (2 Chr 26:16-21), the Azariah of the house of Zadok under Hezekiah (2 Chr 31:9-19), and the Amariah under Jehoshaphat—although it is chronologically possible that he is Amariah II from the genealogy (2 Chr 19:5-11).155 While the identity of Amariah is uncertain, it is clear that the first three chief priests have been excluded from the Zadokite lineage presented in the genealogy. Jehoiada has no ancestry.156 Uzziah’s Azariah (who is unique to Chronicles) is also without an ancestry; and Hezekiah’s Azariah is strangely “of the house of Zadok” but not to be found among his descendants in 1 Chr 5:27-41 (6:1-15 Eng.).157 Thus, the Chronicler creates two priests (the two Azariah’s) and terms

154 Cross, “Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration.” Cross, of course, believes that this Jaddua (III) is the Jaddua associated with Alexander the Great (see Josephus, Ant. 11.302-347); cf. the rejection of Cross’ reconstruction based on the information in Josephus by Lester L. Grabbe, “Josephus and the Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration,” JBL 106 (1987): 231-46, esp. 245. Assigning the date of Chronicles to this period would also be consistent with the arguments by Kalimi for dating Chronicles “not after the first quarter of the fourth century” and even for some time around 382-376 B.C.E. (“Date of the Book of Chronicles,” 366, 371).

155 Such an association is typical in scholarship; see, e.g., Knoppers, I Chronicles 1-9, 406. However, Japhet stresses that this association is “only possible” (I & II Chronicles, 150-51).

156 His ancestry is lacking in both 2 Kings 11 and in 2 Chronicles 22-24.

157 Throughout the narrative in Chronicles any notion of high-priestly succession on the basis of genealogy is only vaguely implied once by the term “the house of Zadok” (2 Chr 31:10) which is applied to
another “chief priest” (namely, Jehoiada) when the parallel text specifically calls him a “high priest.”

In this section, the data concerning the high priest in Chronicles will be assessed according to the inclusion and exclusion of names in this genealogical list of high priests. The priests that are included in both the list and the narrative will be addressed first and followed by those mentioned only in the narrative. The ambiguous case of Amariah II will be dealt with separately.

Zadok, who is never termed “high priest” or “chief priest” in the entire HB, is mentioned several times during the reign of David. Zadok is possibly first mentioned as joining David at Hebron, although this association is not clear (1 Chr 12:28). He is next singled-out in David’s command to bring up the ark to Jerusalem from the house of Obed-Edom (1 Chr 15:11-15). In this passage he is mentioned first along with Abiathar and several Levites. He is addressed by David as one of the “heads of the families of the Levites.” When the ark is finally brought to Jerusalem, Levites under Asaph are assigned to attend it while the rest of the tabernacle apparatus with its functioning sacrificial cult is left at Gibeon under the direction of Zadok (1 Chr 16:37-42).

Zadok is also explicitly mentioned in 1 Chr 24:3-4 (cf. 2 Sam 8:17) in tandem with Ahimelech when the priestly divisions are organized by the two of them and David. This method of organizing the priestly divisions is different from the organization of the

\[\text{this Azariah under Hezekiah. It is not clear that the leading priests were all of the “house of Zadok” or if this is noted in the narrative because it is exceptional. The phrase “house of” does not automatically imply hereditary succession (in this case referring to the high-priestly office) as demonstrated by a certain Jehoiada who joins David, for whom it is chronologically impossible to be the one associated with Joash, who is of “the house of Aaron” (1 Chr 12:28 [v. 27 Eng.]). Also, a certain Zadok, “a young warrior … from his own ancestral house,” joins David at the same time (1 Chr 12:29 [v. 28 Eng.]); this could be the Zadok, but there is no conclusive evidence. In Chronicles, this lack of explicit succession language is accompanied by neither the description of a father passing it to his son nor of a high priest being called “son of” anyone.}\]
Levitical divisions mentioned in 1 Chronicles 23, which David does alone. Leading priests have input in the matters of the priestly structure while they do not have authority over the Levites. The Levites are responsible to other Levites who are in turn responsible to the king rather than to any priest.\textsuperscript{158}

At the transition from David’s reign to Solomon’s in 1 Chr 29:22b-25, Zadok appears again. Zadok is anointed as priest just as Solomon is anointed as prince (ඐජජ). This is the only passage in the HB outside the Torah which refers to a priest being anointed for service.\textsuperscript{159} This elevated status of Zadok seems at odds with the fact that he fails to appear during the entire reign of Solomon (2 Chronicles 1-9), even in the building of the temple and the formal institution of its cult. Zadok may be anointed as priest, but he is never shown to function as one in the temple.\textsuperscript{160}

The only priest explicitly called “high priest” in Chronicles is Hilkiah, who is also a Zadokite (1 Chr 5:39 [6:13 Eng.]; 2 Chr 34:9). The term “high priest” appears just as it

\textsuperscript{158} Zadok’s role as “leading priest” is certainly not stressed in the organization of the temple cult nor is he the one to whom the functionaries of the temple cult are responsible; he does possess some authority in the operation of priestly duties. See especially 1 Chr 9:28-32; 15:16-24; 23:12-14, 25-32; 25:1-8; 26:22-28. Priestly duties and Levitical duties are clearly distinguished throughout the larger complex of 1 Chronicles 23-27 in terms consistent with the first occurrence of this language in 1 Chr 6:34-38 [vv. 49-53 Eng.], and the subsequent details given in 1 Chr 9:17-34.

\textsuperscript{159} While “the anointed priest” is mentioned several times in Leviticus (4:3, 5, 16; 6:22; 16:32; 21:10), the only other references to the actual anointing of priests occur in reference to Aaron and his sons at the inception of the priesthood (Exod 28:41; 29:7, 21, 29-30; 30:22-33; Lev 6:19-23; 8:1-9:24). See also, Daniel Fleming, “The Biblical Tradition of Anointing Priests,” JBL 117 (1998): 401-14, esp. 413. This anointing of Zadok should be seen as an authorizing move by Chronicles to connect Zadok with the Aaronide line in the same way that the genealogy provides his Aaronide (and Levitical) pedigree; see the claim that this association by the Chronicler is not to be read as an “acquiescence to the emergence of a new status quo” by Knoppers, “Relationship of the Priestly Genealogies,” 129. For texts outside the HB, see Sir 45:15; cf. 2 Macc 1:10; 4Q375; 4Q376 which also mention the “anointed priest.”

\textsuperscript{160} This does not include 1 Chr 16:37-42 where he is explicitly in charge of the priestly cult at Gibeon, but his duties are not described.
does in the parallel text of 2 Kgs 22:4, while its occurrences in 2 Kgs 22:8 and 23:4 are lacking in the Chronicler’s parallel account.\textsuperscript{161}

The Chronicler tends to agree with 2 Kings, which limits Hilkiah’s role in the account of Josiah’s reforms.\textsuperscript{162} In the lengthy Sondergut of the Chronicler’s Passover narrative, Hilkiah’s role and duties are not described while the duties and actions of the priests and especially the Levites are given in detail (2 Chr 35:1-19).\textsuperscript{163} Two activities not mentioned in his source are included by the Chronicler: Hilkiah is singled-out among the group sent by Josiah to the prophetess Huldah, and Hilkiah along with two other priests—all three being termed “chief officers of the house of God” (נְניֵדוּ בִּית הָאֱלֹהִים)—provide for the priestly portions at Passover (2 Chr 34:22; 35:8).

Thus, Hilkiah is under the authority of the king and has a place of prominence and responsibility distinct from ordinary priests. However, it is not explicitly stated that this prestige is specifically a result of his position as “high priest”; it could be a result of his position as “chief officer of the house of God,” which was apparently held by more than one individual at the same time according to the book of Chronicles.

At least three chief priests are mentioned in the narrative but not in the genealogical list. The Azariah under Uzziah is presented in a brief explanatory narrative, unique to Chronicles, as a defender of the priestly, but not explicitly high-priestly,

\textsuperscript{161} The text of 2 Chr 34:9 is a rewriting of the Kings passage in that commands of Josiah are now narrative descriptions of actions taken. Therefore, it is significant that in this overt rewriting Chronicles retains the title here while apparently eliminating it elsewhere from his source.

\textsuperscript{162} In 2 Kings, Hilkiah finds the book of the Torah in the temple, gives it to Shaphan, and is placed in charge of the money collected for the temple repairs. Chronicles maintains this portrayal and agrees with his source in not giving Hilkiah any role in the Passover celebration or in the covenant renewal and reading of the Torah done by Josiah.

\textsuperscript{163} This is one of the few passages in which the distinction between priests and Levites is blurred. In this case, Levites assume priestly duties; priests \textit{never} assume Levitical duties. There is a consistent distinction between priests and Levites in Chronicles; see Knoppers, “Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors?”
privilege of offering incense in 2 Chr 26:16-21. The chief priest Azariah seems to be in charge of these priests, at least as their spokesman, and to exercise authority over issues of cultic purity and privilege.

While completely absent from the detailed description of Hezekiah’s reforms, the chief priest Azariah seems responsible for the priests and the Levites in other contexts. First, Azariah responds to Hezekiah’s question addressed to the priests and Levites. This may suggest that he speaks on behalf of both groups who are responsible to him. Second, the appointments of Levites over the newly built store-chambers are made by “King Hezekiah and Azariah the chief officer of the house of God” (2 Chr 31:13). Azariah has administrative responsibilities in the cult. However, he has no authority beyond this role and is responsible to the Davidic king.

The third chief priest mentioned in Chronicles is Jehoiada. The depiction of Jehoiada, apparently a non-Zadokite, presents the largest amount of data concerning the office of leading priest (2 Chronicles 22-24). His portrayal in Chronicles is consistent in

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164 However, there may be a suggestion by the Chronicler of an infraction of high-priestly duty by supplying the cause and location of Uzziah’s leprosy, which are both missing from 2 Kgs 15:1-7. His attempt to offer incense results in leprosy on his forehead (נַפְשָׁת), the same word used in connection with the high priest’s engraved golden plate listed among his unique apparel in Exod 28:36-38. However, this connection to the high-priestly garments is not certain as the same word for "forehead" is used to refer to Goliath’s in 1 Sam 17:49.

165 While it is possible that the Azariah under Hezekiah could be the same individual as the Azariah under Uzziah, the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz would require a minimum of 32 years before Hezekiah would come to the throne (2 Chr 27:1; 28:1). If Azariah was a young man under Uzziah, then it is possible for him to still be in office at least 32 years later. However, the text provides no evidence to determine whether this individual is the same in both cases. If anything, the added clarification of his being of the house of Zadok (2 Chr 31:10), which is not mentioned with the earlier Azariah, may point to two different people.

166 As has been recognized, Hezekiah is portrayed as a new David-Solomon; see Throntveit, “Hezekiah in the Books of Chronicles”; idem, “Relationship of Hezekiah to David and Solomon in the Books of Chronicles.” The failure to mention Azariah may be explained as a parallel to Zadok’s ceremonial absence during the reigns of David and Solomon.

167 See also the discussion of Jehoiada as a utopian figure in my essay, “Exploring the Utopian Space of Chronicles.”
many ways with that in 2 Kings 11-12. There are, however, several instances of an
increased role and power being attributed to Jehoiada by the Chronicler which are not
stated explicitly or clearly in his source. Jehoiada has married into the Davidic line as
his wife is the daughter of King Jehoram. This additional information has been seen by
scholars as an attempt by the Chronicler to protect the purity of the temple since this
female Davidide lives in the house of God for six years. However, this explanation
does not account for Joash’s presence, which would also be a problem and which
Chronicles does not address. In addition, such a marriage would seem to violate the
purity regulations for the “priest exalted above his brothers” in Lev 21:10-15 which
command this priest to marry only a virgin of his own kin. Jehoiada is obviously in
violation of this command (if it even applies to him).

As in 2 Kings, not only does Jehoiada save the Davidic line from destruction, but
also his actions place him in a position temporarily superior to it. Joash is only seven

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168 Jehoiada protects the hidden Joash in the temple, leads the military coup against Athaliah,
assists the king in temple repair, and provides positive moral influence on the king.

169 In 2 Kgs 12:9-10 Jehoiada himself makes the money chest and is called “high priest.” In the
parallel of 2 Chr 23:8-11, the maker of the chest is not specified and Jehoiada is termed “chief priest.”
Both of these changes seem to diminish the role of Jehoiada.

170 For example, Nelson, “Restoration and Utopian Vision,” 135.

171 The focus of scholarship has been on the issue of temple purity almost entirely without
reference to the legislation of Lev 21:10-15 (see the passing remark on this text by Johnstone, I and 2
Chronicles, 2:121). Making Jehoshabeath into the wife of Jehoiada for issues of temple purity has been
seen in connection with the substitution of “Levites” for “guards” by the Chronicler in order to have only
Levites and priests in the inner parts of the temple. While this concern for purity may be behind the
replacement, the clarification of Levites for guards may also simply reflect the Chronicler’s understanding
that the guards of the first temple were Levites, just as they were in his own time. This would be consistent
with the replacement of “Levites” for “prophets” in 2 Chr 34:30; the general function of prophets seems to
be associated with the Levites at times by the Chronicler, although this is often taken as a retrojection of his
present situation into the First Temple period. See Schniedewind, Word of God, 186, 249; and De Vries, I
and 2 Chronicles, 408.

172 Jehoiada restores the Davidic line by ceremonially crowning, anointing and giving the king the
“covenant” (2 Chr 23:11); he also allows the line to flourish by acquiring two wives (and thus many
children) for Joash (2 Chr 24:3); he is the one who renews the covenant, appoints the levitical priests, and
stations the gatekeepers (2 Chr 23:16-21).
years old when these events occur, so Jehoiada takes these actions as an exceptional case. However, the exception proves the rule. When Joash is old enough, Jehoiada is depicted as under the king’s authority and answerable to him (2 Chr 24:4-14). Jehoiada is not presented as an equal to the king or as having political power.  

Jehoiada also is apparently in charge of cultic matters and in charge of both the Levites and the priests (2 Chr 31:9-10). Joash summons Jehoiada and seems to assume in his comments that Jehoiada is responsible for the actions, or rather inactions, of the Levites (2 Chr 24:4-6).

Jehoiada is buried in the royal tombs while Joash is not (2 Chr 24:15-16, 25-27). The fact that Chronicles allows, or even creates the idea, that a “worthy” leading priest can have a royal burial may be significant. However, this is clearly an exception, which once again proves the rule. Leading priests are not typically given royal burials, but the possibility is at least held out as an option. Could this be a retrojection of Second Temple practice by the Chronicler? Possibly, but no conclusion on this point can be definitive.

Finally, the most explicit statement made regarding Jehoiada which may reflect an actual Second Temple practice concerns the dismissal of the priests, Levites, and gatekeepers on the Sabbath (2 Chr 23:4, 8). The explanatory statement that “the priest

See, however, the role of Jehoiada in distributing the money collected to pay the temple workers and using it to refurbish the temple in Chronicles. The text of 2 Kgs 12:9-16 is vague about who does what. Chronicles clarifies this by explicitly depicting Jehoiada and the king twice side-by-side in performing these duties (2 Chr 24:12, 14). It is unclear whether this is the leading priest operating in royal matters or the king operating in cultic matters. Compare also the stipulation made that the priest, the descendant of Aaron (presumably the leading priest), is to receive the tithes collected by the Levites (Neh 10:39 [v. 38 Eng.]). This suggests some prestige associated with the office of leading priest.

This is another interesting substitution of “Levites” by the Chronicler. His source (2 Kgs 23:2) has “priests.” Clearly the Chronicler has a very specific notion of what Levitical duties should entail and takes opportunity to express it.

See the more detailed comments on this highly-significant text in my Excursus on Burial Notices as Utopian Space in Chapter 3.
Jehoiada did not dismiss the divisions” is apparently added in Chronicles to account for how the large number of priests and Levites in the temple all at once was possible. This statement may indicate that the leading priest was responsible to oversee the changing of “duty shifts.” Again, a note of exceptional action (this time one not taken) provides evidence of the rule. The leading priest of the Second Temple period may have been normally responsible for this daily activity. If so, this also indicates that the leading priest exercised authority over the Levitical divisions. However, it should be stressed again that this conclusion about the duties of the leading priest is based on an assumption that details without parallels in other texts are most likely explained as practices from the Chronicler’s own day. It is also possible that Chronicles is here assigning a cultic duty to the leading priest that is not explicit in the parallel text of 2 Kgs 11:9. If so, then the leading priest would be performing a weekly responsibility in the operation of the cult that is not found in any other text. Ironically, while this duty places the leading priest in a position of power it also restricts the leading priest to the confines of the Jerusalem temple at least on the occasion of the weekly Sabbath. Thus, while the Torah explicitly requires the “anointed priest” to be present at the cult only once a year for the Day of Atonement, Chronicles possibly portrays the leading priest as having obligations that require his weekly presence at the cult. Utopian literary theory suggests that instead of reading this detail as a heightening of the leading priest’s prestige the better alternative reality in Chronicles has a leading priest that must be present at the cult every week to perform the modest routine of changing the duty shifts.

176 Much has been made in scholarship of this extremely brief point made in the text. The Chronicler may simply be clarifying his source without depicting the present situation or it may be part of his utopian construct; see the further discussion.
That Jehoiada appears to be the leading priest who reflects most what one would expect if the Chronicler was indeed retrojecting Second Temple practice into his narrative may not be accidental. A bit of speculation: if, as suggested above, the Chronicler inserted Johanan into the genealogical list to honor the high priest of his day, then it is possible that he takes advantage of the similarity of names between Jehoiada (יהודה) and Joiada (יודה), the father of the current high priest. His sources, as in the case of the genealogy, provide an opportunity to make a connection to his present situation.

Virtually nothing whatsoever is known about Joiada outside of his placement in the high-priestly list in Neh 12:8-11, 22. It seems likely that he is the Jehoiada, son of the high priest Eliashib, whose son marries into the Sanballat family (Neh 13:28). If so, then the presentation of Jehoiada marrying into the Davidic family may be a utopian critique of the text from Nehemiah concerned with improper high-priestly marriage practices.

The final priest to be discussed is the ambiguous Amariah at the time of Jehoshaphat who may be Amariah II in 1 Chr 5:37 (6:11 Eng.). Chronicles has a much more detailed account than the narrative in 2 Kings, but the chief priest Amariah is far less important than Jehoshaphat and his reforms. Jehoshaphat institutes cultic reforms and initiates a program of teaching officials, two priests, and several Levites—but no leading priest—who travel throughout the cities of Judah with the Torah (2 Chr 17:1-9). Continuing his reforms, Jehoshaphat appoints judges in the cities of Judah (2 Chr 19:5-

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177 Following the arguments for such an identification by VanderKam, “Jewish High Priests of the Persian Period.” 70, 82-83, 90-91; ibid., From Joshua to Caiaphas, 49-53, 85-99.

178 This is consistent with Jehoshaphat’s portrayal in the spirit of David-Solomon; see Knoppers, “Reform and Regression.” This is also consistent with the failure to mention leading priests in any of the reforms by righteous kings except for Josiah (which is consistent with 2 Kings 22-23).
stating that “Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of YHWH; and Zebediah son of Ishmael, the governor (יְדֹגֵן) of the house of Judah, in all the king’s matters; and the Levites will serve you as officers” (2 Chr 19:11). The Levites are assistants in legal matters to judges who are accountable to a chief priest over cultic issues and to a governor (who is not explicitly a Davidide) over civic matters. Both of these individuals are in turn ultimately responsible to the king. This chief priest is the highest cultic authority; it is also clear that he is not involved in civil matters and that he is not independent of the Davidic king.

In conclusion, the two leading priests mentioned in both the genealogy and the narrative do not do very much and have a rather limited role in civic and cultic administration. They act either within their roles as presented by the Chronicler’s source or within the cultic sphere as a supervisor of priests. The Chronicler has not overtly enhanced the presentation of the genealogically Zadokite high priests in the narrative.

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179 The Chronicler does not specify who these judges were. However, Jehoshaphat continues to appoint judges in Jerusalem who will decide disputed cases. These higher judges are appointed from the Levites, priests, and heads of the families of Israel (2 Chr 19:8). Here Moses’ function as highest judge over disputed cases (as related in Exod 18:13-27) is allocated to multiple leaders from different social locations within the community.

That duties assigned to Moses, and only to Moses, in the Torah should be assigned to a variety of individuals is important in larger discussions of Mosaic authority in the Second Temple period and on its own terms in this passage. On the issue of Mosaic authority in the HB and the Second Temple period, see Najman, Seconding Sinai. In this particular passage, the Chronicler has an excellent opportunity to assign an explicitly Mosaic duty to the leading priest, but instead this responsibility has been “democratized” to a large extent, which is consistent with the Chronicler’s Tendenz.

180 This judicial structure is unique in Chronicles, and in the HB as a whole.

181 Zadok is anointed, but acts as the supervisor of only priestly, and not Levitical, duties. Hilkiah has more responsibility: charge of the funds for temple repair, provision of sacrificial portions for the priests under him (though not alone), and some sort of unspecified leadership role in the delegation sent by the king.

182 Zadok and Hilkiah are not responsible for the Levites in addition to the priests. The non-Zadokite chief priests, however, are responsible for the Levites as well as the priests.
The three chief priests who are not mentioned in the Zadokite genealogy of 1 Chr 5:27-41 (6:1-15 Eng.) are presented with more authority and an increased role in cultic matters. Several details from these narratives could possibly be retrojections of high-priestly responsibilities from the Second Temple period: (1) acting as spokesperson to the civic official on behalf of the cult, (2) being responsible for the actions of all the temple functionaries including the Levites, (3) serving as the leading cultic official who may at times appear to have royal prestige, and (4) overseeing the dismissal of the Levitical gatekeepers on the Sabbath. Even if these items are accepted as retrojections of Second Temple practice, they do not overtly enhance the power and authority of the leading priest into civic matters. It does, however, seem rather surprising that for all of the Chronicler’s concern over cultic matters, he is also consistently not concerned with delineating the precise nature of the office of high priest. He seems to have no interest in what the high priest does ceremonially. The duties of the high priest are only addressed where they impinge on Levitical responsibilities. This point may serve as additional support for the hypothesis that the Chronicler was a Levite, even possibly a Levitical singer.  

One priest who looks more like the expected presentation of a high priest during the Persian period, Jehoiada, is presented as an exception under extreme circumstances. Perhaps the depiction of this chief priest served as a model of how the government and the cult should function when Davidic kingship was not a viable option. Here the title “chief priest” comes into focus. In Chronicles, the office of “high priest” in the Second

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183 While a long-standing theory among scholars, such a claim can be only one option among many. What is certain is the failure of the Chronicler to exhibit the same type of concern for the priesthood that is so obvious in his presentation of the Levites.
Temple period is a continuation of a preexilic position termed “chief priest” which was not held continually by Zadokites. It seems that if the Chronicler’s audience wished to see a Second Temple high priest, they were directed to this non-Zadokite chief priest as the closest model.

The relationship between the genealogical, political, and cultic utopian matrices in Chronicles is addressed in the depiction of the leading priest. It has been suggested that the Chronicler did not hope for a restoration of the Davidic dynasty. Rather, the Persian kings have taken over this role.\textsuperscript{184} If this is correct, the judicial structure represented by the Davidic king Jehoshaphat with a chief priest over cultic matters and a non-Davidide governor over civic matters may be a parallel to the Chronicler’s actual historical situation: a Persian king with a high priest over the cult and an appointed governor over civil affairs.\textsuperscript{185} Further, this leading priest need not be a Zadokite, on the basis that in Israel’s past some of its leading priests were not explicitly of Zadokite descent. In addition to the non-Zadokite Jehoiada, this Amariah of ambiguous lineage, serves as a model for the role of Second Temple high priests by delineating the scope of their duties, but without a clear presentation of their ceremonial role in the operation of the cult. In Chronicles, the high (and chief) priest is the chief cultic official, the final authority in cultic matters, but only in cultic matters. Thus, Chronicles does not provide evidence for an independent high priest or even of one involved in the administration of civil affairs.

The leading priest in Chronicles serves a utopian function in the temple cult. The Chronicler’s better alternative reality includes a leading cultic official, in this case a priest who may or may not be of Zadokite descent, whose precise duties are only vaguely

\textsuperscript{184} See the literature cited in nn. 68-74 in Chapter 1 and the discussion in Section 3.3.
described and often in limited or restrictive terms. The cultic utopia of Chronicles acknowledges the existence of the Aaronide priesthood and of a leading priest without overly enhancing their prestige, power, or indispensability in the operation of the cult. Instead, the non-Zadokite leading priests provide a contrast to those explicitly of Zadokite descent. Utopian literary theory suggests that the portrayal of the leading priest critiques a situation in which the high priesthood either had already consolidated its power and control over the temple cult or, more likely, was attempting to do so. Thus, Chronicles does not eliminate the office of leading priest but does restrict it, and simultaneously provides a basis for both Zadokite and non-Zadokite claims to hold a cultic position that is not necessarily hereditary. The claim by some scholars that Chronicles reflects the triumph of Zadokitism in the Second Temple period must therefore be rejected.

4.3.2 Looking in the Wrong Place: Not a Zadokite Utopia

Zadokitism is equated with concern for the temple cult in some recent scholarly works cited above. Thus, in the view of these authors, all of the texts from the Second Temple period which exhibit a concern for the temple cult are viewed as deriving from...
the same broadly defined movement. Differences in details or positions among the texts reflect the continued development and refinement of the original Zadokite ideology. However, this logic cannot be sustained. *Interest in the cult does not require a Zadokite origin for the ancient authors of such works.* The Zadokites are only one group among many who would have had an investment in the temple cult in the Second Temple period. There are at least two other groups of significant size and influence during the Second Temple period that are concerned with the cult and are not equated with the Zadokites: the Levites and the Aaronides. While Ezekiel 40-48 explicitly advocates what could be termed a “Zadokite” ideology, the content of such texts as Chronicles, the Priestly source, and Ezra-Nehemiah do not. The distinction which this material makes between Levitical, priestly, and Zadokite concerns disallows a simple reduction of all cultic concerns stemming from a dominant Zadokitism that continues to be nuanced over time.

In Chronicles, the Zadokites are included among the descendants of Levi and Aaron in the genealogies. Thus, the Zadokites have a claim to cultic service as a member of the Levitical line and to specific roles restricted to priests as descendants of Aaron. However, any *exclusive* claim which they may have had to the office of leading priest is not supported by the presentation of Chronicles. The office of leading priest is often, but not always, occupied by a Zadokite in the Chronicler’s narrative. On a practical level, one that is rarely addressed in scholarship on this issue, it is impossible for *all* the descendants of Zadok to serve as the *single* leading priest at once. What do the vast majority of Zadokites actually do then as members of the temple cult? They are apparently priests, but *who are indistinguishable* from their fellow Aaronides in their

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189 This is especially the case in the problematic work of Boccaccini, *Roots of Rabbinic Judaism.*
duties. While this may be the logical conclusion, it is worth emphasizing that Chronicles is silent on the issue of Zadokites serving as priests. The division of cultic personnel in Chronicles is between priests and Levites; Zadokites are not to be found as a separate group with special rights or privileges in the book of Chronicles.

While some may argue that this silence demonstrates that the Zadokites had been successful in solidifying their status as the authentic priests, Chronicles follows the stipulations in P that explicitly present the priesthood as open to the larger groups who claim to be descended from both of Aaron’s sons, Eleazar and Ithamar—that is, all priests are not Zadokites. Thus, the Zadokites remain only a small fraction of those who would be eligible for priestly service on the basis of genealogy. In addition, one of their own may have been the leading priest, but this was not necessarily the case throughout the First and Second Temple periods nor is it the case as reflected specifically in Chronicles. While this is an argument from what is not the case, it would have been an easy task, if the Chronicler (or a later editor) was so inclined, to supply all of the leading priests in the narrative with Zadokite pedigrees and confirm any exclusive claim which the Zadokites may have been making to the office of leading priest. For example, all that would be needed is simply to include “of the house of Zadok” (a phrase which does appear in 2 Chr 31:10) or a similar phrase when describing the leading priest. Also, the near absence of the leading priest at cultic ceremonies or periods of reform and covenant renewal hardly seems an effective means of enhancing the prestige or power of this office or of those individuals serving in it.

\[190\] See the previous section for the data supporting this conclusion.
In Chronicles, the Zadokites have a secure claim to priestly service and even a claim to serving as the leading priest, but one which is by no means exclusive against the claims of others. In addition, in the *better alternative reality* of Chronicles, Zadokites are not the primary concern. They are included in the cult, but are not emphasized. They serve as *some* of the priests, those same priests who receive so little attention in the book, as argued in Section 4.2. Thus, the cultic utopia of Chronicles stands in marked contrast to the utopia depicted in Ezekiel 40-48 that affirms the unique and primary role of the Zadokites among all cultic personnel while denigrating the role of the Levites. Instead, while affirming the existence of the priesthood and the Zadokites as being a part of it, Chronicles focuses on the Levites as the locus of hope for a radically different future for the community.

4.4 *The Levites: Producing Utopia in Chronicles*

The cultic utopia portrayed in Chronicles is neither a priestly nor a Zadokite utopia. It is also not a dystopia for either group—that is, a “worse alternative reality” for these individuals or for a society that follows their leadership is not depicted in the book of Chronicles.\(^{191}\) While the priests are explicitly criticized in Chronicles, their role in the proper operation of the cult is also affirmed.\(^{192}\) However, it is their counterparts, the Levites, who serve as the primary group that provides the means for the community to attain the utopian future existence in the *better alternative reality* advocated by the Chronicler.

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\(^{191}\) In many respects, the Deuteronomistic History (or at least Samuel-Kings) is a dystopian narrative that focuses on the failures of the past that are responsible for the present (or recent) disaster and that should be avoided in the future.
4.4.1 The Identity of the Levites

In Chronicles, all those who would claim to belong to the group known as “Levites” seem to be genealogically descended from the eponymous ancestor Levi via one of his three sons: Gershom,193 Kohath, and Merari (1 Chr 5:27; 6:1 [6:1, 16 Eng.]; 23:6).194 The descendants of Gershom and Merari are briefly included (1 Chr 6:2, 4-6 [vv. 17, 19-21 Eng.]), but the focus in the initial genealogies of 1 Chr 5:27-6:15 (6:1-30 Eng.) is on the line of Kohath.195

The Kohathites include all of the Aaronide priests and the leading priests descended from Eleazar in particular. The Zadokites also receive their Aaronide and Levitical pedigree in this passage. Further, the prophetic figure of Samuel is attached to the Kohathite genealogy of 1 Chr 6:7-15 (vv. 22-30 Eng.) in contrast to his apparent Ephraimite ancestry in 1 Sam 1:1.196 It is through this Samuel that one of the leading Levitical singers, Heman, is associated with the Kohathites in 1 Chr 6:18-23 (vv. 33-38 Eng.).

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192 See the discussion above in Section 4.2.

193 The name is also spelled “Gershon” both in Chronicles and elsewhere in the HB. Japhet concludes that the Chronicler prefers the final mem and that appearance of the final nun in Chronicles is the result of a copyist familiar with the Pentateuchal tradition (I & II Chronicles, 149).

194 This is in agreement with the claims of P (see Exod 6:16-19 and Num 26:57-58).

195 Compare the high value placed on the Kohathites as distinct from the other two Levitical groups in Num 4:18-20.

196 Samuel is called a seer in 1 Chr 9:22; 26:28; 29:29; he is called a prophet in 2 Chr 35:18. According to 1 Chr 11:3, he received a word of YHWH which was fulfilled in David’s anointing. Japhet expresses the common view that since Samuel performs duties believed to be restricted to Levites (“ministering to YHWH” in 1 Sam 3:1) in his source material that the Chronicler answers “some contemporary need” to clarify that if Samuel did these Levitical tasks that he must have been a Levite (I & II Chronicles, 153-54, 155-56).
The Kohathites also include the Korahites, who serve as the vast majority of the
gatekeepers for the Tabernacle and later for the temple along with some of the Merarites
(1 Chr 6:7 [v. 22 Eng.]; 9:17-27; 26:1-19). Gatekeepers are presented without any
additional genealogical information as a group distinct from the Levites in both Ezra
(2:42, 70; 7:7; 10:24) and Nehemiah (7:1, 3, 45, 73; 10:29, 40 [vv. 28, 39 Eng.]; 11:19;
12:25, 45, 47). Their Levitical descent is made explicit only in Chronicles. In addition to
Heman the Kohathite, his two relatives, Asaph the Gershomite and Ethan the Merarite,
are explicitly of Levitical descent in Chronicles (1 Chr 6:24-32 [vv. 39-47 Eng.]), as are
their descendants, naturally, who also serve as singers and musicians (1 Chr 25:1-31).
The Levitical pedigree of the Asaphite singers is stated in the book of Nehemiah (11:15-

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197 In 1 Chr 26:1-19, four of the twenty-four divisions of the gatekeepers are associated with Hosah
the Merarite (vv. 10-11, 19). See the discussion of the duties of these gatekeepers in Section 4.4.2 below.
The service of the Korahites in the cult, or at least a strong association with it, does not seem to
have been hindered by their direct association with their eponymous ancestor Korah known from the Torah
as the Levite who tried to usurp the priesthood (Num 16:1-40; 26:9-11; 27:3; cf. the negative gloss of this
tradition in Sir 45:18 and Jude 11). The association of several psalms with the Korahites (Pss 42; 44-49;
84, 85, 87, 88) is consistent with their positive portrayal in Chronicles.

198 The complicated relationship, whether historical or literary in nature, between Ethan and
Jeduthun—who also appears as the third leader of these singers in Chronicles—will not be addressed here;
see the remarks by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 323-24, 442-43. While the “replacement” of Jeduthun by
Ethan may be attributed to a scribal error or to historical developments, the appearance of four names for
three groups of singers may be part of the utopian construction of the cult—even the names can be changed,
but the overall system remains intact. This adaptability is a central concern for the utopian portrayal of the
cult, as will be argued throughout Section 4.4.

199 Heman and Ethan appear as Levites only in Chronicles. Heman is one of the sages associated
with an Ethan the Ezrahite in 1 Kgs 4:31 and is thus apparently to be equated with the Heman the Ezrahite
in Ps 88:1 (title Eng.). Ethan the Ezrahite is mentioned only in Ps 89:1 (title Eng.) and the reference in
Kings. Nothing is known about the tribal affiliation of these Ezrahites—a designation not found in
Chronicles or elsewhere. Jeduthun also only appears as a Levite in Chronicles. This name is associated
rather obliquely with the Levites in MT Neh 11:17-19, which may be the source of the elaboration in
Chronicles; cf. the related text of 1 Chr 9:14-16. The final two phrases in LXX Neh 11:17 (2 Esd 21:17)
that would include the reference to Jeduthun are not present in the Greek text. Jeduthun also appears in Pss
39:1; 62:1; 77:1 (titles Eng.). Additionally, the first two psalms are associated with David and the last with
Asaph.
18, 22; 12:35) and once in the book of Ezra (3:10), but not in other HB texts. The other two groups of singers are explicitly Levitical only in Chronicles.

The repeated references to the divisions of the priests, Levites, singers and musicians, and gatekeepers throughout the book of Chronicles would suggest that this system was of significant concern for the Chronicler. Certain priests, Levites, singers and musicians, and gatekeepers are assigned specific tasks prior to the “official” appointment of the divisions under David’s authority in 1 Chronicles 23-26. These allocations are based on various authorities: Moses (1 Chr 6:49; 15:15; 21:29), Samuel (1 Chr 9:22), and of course David (1 Chr 6:31; 9:22; 15:1-24; 16:4-7, 37-42). In addition, although he does not create them, the leading priest Phinehas is associated with the performance of specific Levitical duties (1 Chr 9:20). In the details of the “official” appointments, only in the priestly divisions are arrangements made on the authority of anyone else besides David alone: the priestly divisions themselves are organized by David in consultation with the two leading priests Zadok and Abiathar (1 Chr 24:3), and the procedure for entering the house of God is based on the authority of Aaron (1 Chr 24:19). These alone among all of the innovations in these chapters are not attributed directly to the decision of David. Thus, all of the decisions involving the various groups associated with the Levites are not presented as being under the authority of the priests or of the leading priest in particular.

The ultimate authority for these divisions, however, is related by David in his instructions to Solomon. David mentions the divisions of the priests and Levites twice in

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200 The singers/musicians are Asaphites according to Ezra 2:41//Neh 7:44 and Ezra 3:10, but Asaph— and not any other singer— is connected only with a possible Levitical ancestry in Ezra 3:10; Neh 11:15-18, 22; 12:35. Other references to singers in these books seem to depict them as a group that is distinct from the Levites; see Ezra 2:41, 65, 70; 7:7, 24; 10:24; and Neh 7:1, 44, 67, 73; 10: 29, 40 (vv. 28, 39 Eng.); 11:23, 12:27-29, 44-47; 13:5, 10.

201 The specific duties will be discussed in Section 4.4.2.
his remarks (1 Chr 28:13, 21) and claims that his entire plan for the temple that Solomon is to construct—apparently including these very important divisions—has been written down “at the direction of YHWH” who had made all of this clear to David (1 Chr 28:11-19). Not only do the written plans have David’s authority, but also they are inspired in some way by God. The term for “plan” (תֵּכְנָה) used in vv. 11, 19 also appears in the description of God’s revelation of the plans for the tabernacle to Moses (Exod 25:9).

Besides other explicit connections between the Solomonic temple and the Mosaic tabernacle, this claim firmly anchors David’s cultic innovations with a great deal of authority.202

However, the significance of these divisions does not end with David nor with their implementation in the new temple under Solomon (2 Chr 8:14). The reigns of Rehoboam and Abijah are strengthened and validated by the presence of the priests and Levites performing their duties (2 Chr 11:13-17; 13:9-12). Yet, the duties assigned to these divisions do not remain constant. Under Jehoshaphat, changes are made to the administrative system which involves the appointment of Levites to serve as judges (2 Chr 19:8-11). This would seem to interfere with whatever cultic duties they may have been expected to perform on the basis of David’s organizational scheme. In addition, after three periods of neglect of the temple, the divisions are reestablished as part of the cultic reforms. First, Jehoiada reinstates the divisions according to David’s program (2 Chr 23:18-19). Here the leading priest attempts to establish continuity with the past instead of implementing innovations in the cultic procedures. Second, after initial reforms, Hezekiah appoints the priestly and Levitical divisions, and they were enrolled in

202 See also my Excursus on Prophecy, Speeches, and Authority in Chronicles in Chapter 2.
official records (2 Chr 31:2, 17-19). Third, at the celebration of Passover, Josiah employs the priestly and Levitical divisions in accordance with the written stipulations made centuries earlier by David and Solomon (2 Chr 35:2, 4-5, 10). In all of these various descriptions, Chronicles presents a basic plan established by David that is the source for multiple reincarnations but that could not be replicated precisely due to the different historical circumstances in which subsequent generations found themselves. However, all of these structures claim continuity with the Davidic model despite blatant innovations or adjustments. Thus, the organization of the temple cult in Chronicles is not consistent with a static picture at one point or multiple points in time. Renewal and change are inherent to the survival and efficacy of the cult, even in the rotational duty system for its personnel. As in other utopian literature, change is not excluded but is a necessary part for the continued existence of the utopia over time. The utopia that will not adapt will fail. The depiction of the divisions that can be adjusted as necessary is one significant component of the Chronicler’s cultic utopia.

Scholarship has long affirmed that these different depictions of the identity of the Levites, and especially of the singers and gatekeepers, reflect historical developments that culminate in the time of the Chronicler (or a post-Chronistic redactor in some analyses) who attempted to anchor the *status quo* in the authority of the past. That is, Chronicles retrojects the present practice or situation into the narrative past as an attempt to demonstrate continuity between the present and a supposed past. However, there is no evidence that the structures or supposed changes that are reflected in posited redactional

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203 That is, positing the existence of redactional layers does not account adequately for the differences in detail among the presentations of cultic practice and organization.

204 See the discussion of this key point in Section 1.2.
layers of the text were ever a historical reality.\textsuperscript{205} The conclusion that Chronicles reflects the final stage of development is largely based on a traditional \textit{Religionsgeschichte} interpretation following the model of Wellhausen that \textit{assumes} a linear progression from the simple to the complex, with the more complex situation in Chronicles placed at the end of the temporal spectrum.

Utopian literary theory begins from a different assumption: the depictions do not reflect the past or the present, but by an implicit critique they portray a possible future that is superior to past or present conditions. Instead of assuming that the attribution of a Levitical heritage for these groups reflects an attempt to legitimize existing conditions, a utopian reading of these data contends that the Chronicler is advancing innovations that have not yet been realized in the cult. Chronicles offers a \textit{better alternative reality} in which all of the temple functionaries—including priests, singers, musicians, gatekeepers, and other servants—are of Levitical descent and are organized in efficient rotational cycles for the performance of their duties. In this regard, just as with the priests, the duties and identity of the Levites become intertwined.

\textit{4.4.2 The Duties of the Levites}

The Levites are associated with a variety of responsibilities, duties, and privileges in the HB. As noted above, Deuteronomy presents the Levites as priests, as the guardians

\\textsuperscript{205} Japhet states that it is “difficult to say how much of these reflect actual developments … and how much are an expression of theoretical systematization” (\textit{I & II Chronicles}, 459). This difficulty is due to a lack of clear evidence apart from the depictions in Chronicles. This reservation and lack of supporting evidence nevertheless do not prevent her from asserting that “there can be no doubt that actual conditions of the Second Temple period are reflected in these data” (ibid., 458). Compare the more tempered comments by Knoppers, \textit{I Chronicles 10-29}, 620-21, 658.
and teachers of Torah, and as some of the judges in difficult matters (Deut 17:8-13). In P, the Levites serve as assistants to the priests in the role of caretakers for the cultic objects in the Tabernacle (e.g., Num 1:50-53; 8:19, 26; 18:1-7, 21-23, 31) and as its gatekeepers or guards (e.g., Num 1:53). However, in Leviticus, P does not specify what distinct role the Levites have that differentiates them from the Aaronides in the detailed descriptions of the offerings in that book. In addition, they are to receive a portion of the tithes as their compensation after distributing the appropriate amount to the priests (e.g., Num 18:21-32). Also, P assigns to the Levites several cities that are scattered throughout the other tribes, including the six cities of refuge (Lev 25:32-34; Num 35:1-34). Finally, the Levites are associated repeatedly with the ark of covenant, and especially for its transportation, in a variety of texts.

These duties associated with the Levites in texts other than Chronicles are almost entirely cultic in nature. The particular functions of teacher and judge may imply that at least some Levites engaged in scribal activity, but the terminology of “writing” associated with scribalism is not found in these passages in Deuteronomy. The Levites are explicitly responsible to read the Torah publicly at the celebration of the festival of

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206 This Deuteronomist view is reflected in Mal 2:4-9, which further states that these teaching priests who are connected with Levi serve as messengers of YHWH for the people; see Section 4.1.4.

207 However, Num 18:3-7 clearly prohibits the Levites from service at the altar and the area “behind the curtain” that is the sole responsibility of the Aaronide priests.

208 Deuteronomy, in contrast, does not acknowledge distinct “Levitical cities” nor does it assign the cities of refuge to the Levites (18:1-8; 19:1-13; cf. Exod 21:12-13). The book of Joshua, however, reflects the view of P in assigning cities throughout the land, including the cities of refuge, to the Levites (14:3-4; 20:1-21:42). See also the discussion of the Levitical cities in Section 2.2.3.

209 Num 3:31; 4:5, 15 (Kohathites); Deut 10:8; 31:9, 25 (Levites); Josh 3:3-6, 8, 13-17; 4:9-11, 16-18; 6:6, 12; 8:33 (levitical priests); 1 Sam 6:15 (Levites); 14:3, 18 (Ahijah the priest descended from Eli); 2 Sam 15:24-29 (Levites and priests); 1 Kgs 8:1-11 (priests).

210 The only exception may be their role as judges in disputed cases, which are not necessarily restricted to issues of cultic concern.
Sukkoth every seven years (Deut 31:9-11), to *interpret* the Torah in disputed cases (Deut 17:11), and to *be present* when the king writes the Torah (or has it written for him)\(^{211}\) and when he reads it “all the days of his life” (17:18-20)—presumably to give the king guidance and to ensure that this royal requirement is indeed performed. Thus, the Levites in Deuteronomy are clearly literate (i.e., they are able to read), but their aptitude and service as writers or scribes is not emphasized even though it may be implied. Each of the duties and privileges of the Levites listed in the preceding two paragraphs are also found in Chronicles, but typically with elaborations of the details. In addition, other roles or functions of the Levites not found in any other text are attributed to the Levites in Chronicles.

The depiction of the Levites as assistants to the Aaronide priests with distinct duties from their kindred in the operation of the cult is emphasized in Chronicles. The Levites were appointed for the service of the tabernacle but the Aaronides are the ones making the offerings according to the commands of Moses (1 Chr 6:33-34 [vv. 48-49 Eng.]). This distinction between priestly and Levitical roles in the sacrificial procedure is repeated in 1 Chr 23:13-14, 28-32; 2 Chr 8:14; 13:10; 29:12-16, 21-24; 30:16; 35:11. However, just as clearly, Chronicles advances the position that Levites may serve temporarily as priests under extreme circumstances.

First, because of the failure of the priests to sanctify themselves for their duties the Levites act as priests until enough Aaronide priests are available at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:34). Second, in a legal innovation under Hezekiah, the Levites slaughter the Pesach in place of those who were unclean (2 Chr 30:17-20). Third, under

\(^{211}\) The MT and LXX agree that the king is the one doing the writing despite the tradition of translating the verb causatively as reflected in the NRSV and the NJPS; cf. Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, 211.
Josiah, the Levites are allowed to prepare the Passover offerings for their fellow Levites and priests who are otherwise occupied with their own cultic obligations (2 Chr 35:11-15). In these instances, it is worth emphasizing that Levites may act as priests or may substitute for the unclean, but no one ever substitutes for the Levites—their unique duties are not performed by others in any circumstance.\footnote{212} This suggests the indispensability of the Levites among the cultic personnel. Instead of appearing as a secondary class of temple servants subservient to the Aaronide priests, these Levites demonstrate their essential role in the effectiveness of the cult for the community. According to the presentation in Chronicles, if the Levites had been unable to act outside of their “normal” obligations, then these events that brought about cultic renewal and restoration in the community would not have been possible. However, instead of viewing these anomalies as indications that the Chronicler preserved an underlying source, or tradition for which he had to apologize, or that the Chronicler was reflecting the current role of the Levites in Second Temple practice, these three examples are best understood as models for the better alternative reality that could be attained by the community if they would allow for the possibility of the Levites acting beyond their commonly accepted duties when the situation should dictate. Thus, the Chronicler’s cultic utopia is one in which the Levites are usually restricted in their cultic service to assisting the priests, but may at times be called upon to engage in duties that have been traditionally limited to the Aaronide priests.

\footnote{212 See the discussion below on duties in Chronicles that are not unique to the Levites but are performed by individuals not of Levitical descent. This distinction has not been emphasized in recent scholarship on the duties of the Levites in Chronicles.}
The responsibility of the Levites to care for and carry the ark of the covenant receives a unique clarification in Chronicles. The Chronicler continues the tradition which associates the Levites with the ark (1 Chr 6:16 [v. 31 Eng.]; 15:11-15, 26-27; 16:4-6, 37-38; 2 Chr 5:2-4; 35:3), but alone addresses the practical issue of what the Levites do once the ark has been placed in Solomon’s temple and no longer requires semi-regular transportation.213 The parallel texts of 2 Sam 6:1-11 and 1 Chr 13:1-14 state that at the time of David the ark was transported on a cart drawn by oxen, but neither passage indicates that this method was improper nor provides any reason that Uzzah should have died for his seemingly pious action. However, the Chronicler connects both of these in the claim that the improper method was indeed the reason (1 Chr 15:12-13). Thus, the Levites now performed their duty and carried the ark by its poles into the city of David (vv. 14-15, 25-29). However, once the ark has been brought to Jerusalem the Levites no longer need to serve in this way (1 Chr 23:26). Instead, they are to assist the Aaronide priests with the offerings and to care for the maintenance of the cultic apparatus (1 Chr 16:37-38; 23:28-32). The Levites carry the ark one final time into the newly-built Solomonic temple bringing it as far as they are able. The priests, who alone could enter the “most holy place,” finish the task in accordance with their unique access to this part of the sanctuary (2 Chr 5:2-10). David states and Solomon affirms, with a certain emphasis, that the mobile ark has come to its final resting place (1 Chr 28:2; 2 Chr 6:11, 41; 8:11).

213 Japhet correctly notes that the ark’s immobility is presented as “the basis for all the changes in the roles of the Levites” (I & II Chronicles, 1048); cf. Gerrie F. Snyman, “Who is Responsible for Uzzah’s Death: Rhetoric in 1 Chronicles 13,” in Rhetoric, Scripture and Theology: Essays from the 1994 Pretoria Conference (ed. S. E. Porter and T. H. Olbricht; JSNTSup 131; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 203-17, esp. 215-16.
The ark is not mentioned again in Chronicles until the problematic text of 2 Chr 35:3, in which Josiah commands the Levites to place the ark in the Solomonic temple, to carry it no longer, but to serve YHWH and the people in the celebration of Passover. Minor orthographic changes to the MT have been suggested that would adjust Josiah’s imperative into a perfect verb and alleviate this difficulty.214 If accepted, this statement becomes a notice about the ark’s current state of rest that allows the Levites to perform their duties in accordance with the innovations presented in the Davidic-Solomonic model. In a time without the ark—a reasonable assumption as no mention of its use in the temple cult during the Second Temple period is attested in any contemporary literature215—the reminder that the Levites have been assigned a vast array of responsibilities in place of their traditional role as “carriers and keepers” of the ark serves a utopian function in the depiction of the cult. In the final reform movement described in the narrative, the Chronicler emphasizes that the expanded roles of the Levites in the cult are essential to its operation. While this portrayal has been understood as a reflection of Second Temple practice, the irregular actions of the Levites in preparing the Passover on behalf of the priests, singers, and gatekeepers are not presented as the typical procedures to be followed at the festival. Instead, the narrative affirms the potential adaptability of the cultic system that depends on the Levites serving in their innovative roles rather than

214 So Japhet, in agreement with the LXX (I & II Chronicles, 1048); cf. the other speculative views cited here that retain this as a command.

attempting to restrict these individuals to older models that no longer serve a useful function in the present cultic program (i.e., the Mosaic model which emphasizes that the primary function of the Levites is to “set up and take down” the mobile sanctuary). In this regard, the Chronicler’s model stands both in continuity and tension with that of P—building on it but critiquing it at the same time.

This relationship with the stipulations of P is evident also in the presentation of the role of the Levites as caretakers of the cultic apparatus. Each of the three clans of the Levites is assigned specific responsibilities in the proper erection, packing, and transportation of the tabernacle and its various cultic objects according to Num 3:21-37 (cf. Num 10:17, 21). This text also asserts that Eleazar was the supervisor of the entire process performed by these Levites (v. 32). Further, the exclusion of any “outsider” (ץ) from the tabernacle is associated with the Aaronide priests who encamp on the tabernacle’s east side where the entrance is found. Although the term “gatekeeper” (גיא) or a similar one is not found here, this type of duty appears to be associated only with the Aaronide priests in the Torah when the concept does appear. Additional details regarding the Levitical duties are contained in Num 4:1-33, which also affirm Eleazar’s position as overseer of the entire tabernacle and some of its sacrificial elements (v. 16) and further place the two clans of Gershon and Merari under the charge of Eleazar’s brother Ithamar (vv. 28, 33). These passages in Numbers mention that the Levites are responsible for the utensils and to carry the furniture, but the primary focus of both texts is on distribution of labor for the component parts of the frame of the tabernacle’s outer fence.
In Chronicles, the duties of the Levites in the maintenance of the cultic apparatus are listed (1 Chr 9:28-32; 23:26-29): assisting the Aaronide priests, the service of house of God, cleansing the cultic area, assisting with the rows of bread for each Sabbath, the flour for the grain offering, the unleavened bread, the baked offering, the offering mixed with oil, all measurements, the oil and spices, the furniture, and counting the utensils before and after each use. Most of these responsibilities are not found in or derived from the two passages in Numbers. Except for carrying the mobile ark, the roles of the Levites in the necessary duties to transport the tabernacle are not found in Chronicles. No mention is made of the tabernacle’s frame or the movement of other cultic objects.\footnote{216}

In a major difference from Numbers, the description of the Levitical duties by the Chronicler does not distinguish between the unique responsibilities of the three clans. The Kohathites are singled-out at some points (e.g., 1 Chr 9:32), but the Gershom(n)ites and Merarites do not have separate duties. Instead, the caretakers of the cult in Chronicles are nearly uniformly addressed as “Levites” without further differentiation into clans. In another point of contrast, Phinehas the son of Eleazar is stated to have been in charge of the Levites performing these duties (1 Chr 9:20)—a point never made explicit in the Torah.

In addition, while in the Mosaic Torah it is the priests who seem to have been what could be termed “gatekeepers,” the service of gatekeepers is explicitly assigned to certain Levites and associated with the authority of David in 1 Chr 9:22 (and of Samuel); 26:1-19. In Chronicles, the Korahites of the Kohathite clan and a few of the Merarites are assigned to the weekly divisions of the gatekeepers that parallel the other divisions of

\footnote{216 The Levites are responsible for the furniture and utensils in 1 Chr 9:28-29, but their responsibility to carry them is not made explicit.}
the cultic personnel (1 Chr 9:17-27; 26:1-19). These gatekeepers serve as guardians of the cultic area and have the specific duties of night watch and of “opening” (xtpm) it for use each morning (1 Chr 9:19, 26-27). Although gatekeepers are mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah, they do not appear as Levites and their duties are not described.217 Chronicles, however, provides them with a Levitical heritage and mentions them in the performance of the duties with some frequency (1 Chr 9:17-32; 15:18, 23-24; 16:38; 23:4; 26:1-19; 2 Chr 8:14; 23:4-11, 19; 34:12-13; 35:15).

One of the duties of the gatekeepers that has received particular attention in scholarship is their service as a military (or paramilitary) force. Although only explicitly noted in connection with Jehoiada’s revolt in 2 Chronicles 23, two other possible associations of these Levites as a military force are found in Chronicles: (1) the Korahites (of whom many are gatekeepers) join David’s army at Ziklag (1 Chr 12:6), and (2) the enumeration of David’s military includes some 4,600 Levites, without specifying from which clans (1 Chr 12:27 [v. 26 Eng.]).218 Much has been made of the differences between the account of Jehoiada’s revolt as it is presented in 2 Kings 11 and 2 Chronicles 23. One of these is the identity of the guards. The individuals who are guarding both the temple and the other parts of the city in 2 Kgs 11:4-8 are not explicitly Levites and at

217 On their identity in Ezra and Nehemiah, see the brief discussion above in Section 4.4.1.

218 Scholars have cited other texts that present the Levites engaging in violence or in the context of war as evidence of a tradition that Levites were associated with military action in the Chronicler’s supposed sources; e.g., the Levites as carriers of the ark into battle in several texts; the slaughter of the idolaters by the Levites in Exod 32:25-29; the zeal of Phinehas the priest (but not the Levites!) in Num 25:6-13; and the murder of the Shechemites by Levi and Simeon as vengeance for Dinah’s rape in Gen 34:13, 25-31; 49:5-7; cf. the possible reference to the Golden Calf incident in Deut 33:9.
least some of them are called Carites. These “Carites” are known only from this passage; they are commonly believed to be the Cherethites that appear in Samuel-Kings as soldiers (2 Sam 8:18; 15:18; 20:7; 1 Kgs 1:38; 44; cf. 1 Sam 30:14). Their identity as foreigners, however, is derived only from other texts (Ezek 25:16; Zeph 2:5). The Cherethites (חֵרֶיתִים) appear in the Kethib of 2 Sam 20:32 and as Cherethites in the Qere (חריתים). On the basis of these textual connections, scholars have assumed that they were some type of foreign mercenaries hired for the protection of the royal court; see Wellhausen, Prolegomena, 197; and Curtis and Madsen, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 424-25. In this view, the Chronicler’s version removes any suggestion of foreigners in the temple, and thus preserves its holiness, by replacing them with priests and Levites.

of the Second Temple period should not be reconstructed from this text. Instead, a
different future, a better alternative reality, is the basis for the depiction in this narrative.
That is not to exclude the possibility that Levites were already functioning as
gatekeepers—or perhaps better, that the gatekeepers had claimed to be Levites—in the
operation of the Second Temple. However, it is only in Chronicles that such an
innovation in the temple cult appears. This may suggest that the status or identity of the
gatekeepers was an issue at the time of the Chronicler, but it does not logically follow
that the creation of a legitimate line of continuity with the past for the present reality is
the only option to explain this novel contention. Does this change reflect contemporary
practice or a desired shift to a new system? Utopian literary theory obviously prefers the
latter reading of these new Levitical duties.

The service of the Levitical gatekeepers as guards and as a military force should
be kept distinct from the depiction of Levitical singers and musicians as key components
in one military victory in Chronicles. The victory of Jehoshaphat over the coalition
coming against Judah contains the unique positioning of the singers in front of the army
(2 Chr 20:21). An explicit connection is made in the text between their praise and
singing and the defeat of the enemy through YHWH’s intervention (v. 22). Upon
returning to Jerusalem, celebration at the temple is undertaken with rejoicing using
musical instruments (vv. 27-28). Although similar accounts of God’s miraculous
deliverance are found in other texts, the role of the Levites in this instance is
unparalleled. Other victories include the blowing of trumpets by priests or shouting by

221 Wright, “Guarding the Gates,” 74.
222 Compare Knoppers, I Chronicles 10-29, 620-21, 658.
the people (e.g., Josh 6:16-20; Judg 7:19-22, 2 Chr 13:12-15), but Levitical singing and music are not found elsewhere. The exceptional nature of this description within Chronicles further emphasizes the utopian construct being presented in various means throughout the book. While Jerusalem’s armies have to fight their own battles, they are assisted by God, and on one rare occasion they do not even fight to gain the victory—singing and praise in music, along with their belief and faith, are enough. This incident does not establish a pattern of Levitical singers leading the Yehudite army to victory in battle, but suggests possibilities for the future should a similar situation present itself. In the Chronicler’s better alternative reality, the Levites provide a means of victory even when no other hope can be offered. It is worth repeating, however, that the Levites in this text are not some paramilitary group, but the “choir” who do not need to engage in armed conflict to be victorious.

The association of the Levites as singers or musicians in the temple cult is not unique to Chronicles. As noted previously, the Asaphites who are singers are associated with the Levites in the book of Nehemiah. However, the prominence given to this understanding of the Levites in Chronicles has encouraged a number of scholars to suggest that the Chronicler was not only a Levite, but a Levitical singer in particular.

223 The Levitical singers are also associated with the military in the statement that the officers of the army assisted David in the establishment of the divisions for the singers and musicians (1 Chr 25:1).

224 Gideon’s army of three hundred who blew trumpets is not limited explicitly to priests or to Levites. This is one of the few times that trumpets are blown in battle by non-priests.

225 Petersen claims that the description of the Levitical singers in this text is a “retrojection” of how the present practice would have been performed in the past (Late Israelite Prophecy, 77). Compare the similar view held that the depictions of the Levitical singers, and especially their association with prophecy, is a reflection of the Chronicler’s own time by Sigmund Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel’s Worship (trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas; 2 vols. in 1; BibSem 14; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992; repr. from Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962; repr. 1967), esp. 2:53-58, 79-82, 95-97, 200.
This identification may or may not be correct, but the Chronicler’s intense concern over the Levitical singers and musicians in his work certainly cannot be doubted.

The first appearance of the Levites in the book of Chronicles is their association as singers in the tabernacle by David’s authority and in Solomon’s temple (1 Chr 6:16-17 [vv. 31-32 Eng.]). This introductory statement is followed by genealogies for the three eponymous leaders of the singers: Heman the Kohathite, Asaph the Gershomite, and Ethan the Merarite (vv. 18-32 [33-47 Eng.]). These three individuals along with the rest of their kindred singers next appear in 1 Chr 15:16-28 at the successful transfer of the ark to Jerusalem. In this passage, the Levites sing, they play musical instruments including the three most commonly associated with these musicians: harps, lyres, and cymbals, and they wear fine linen. Horns and trumpets are also mentioned.

For this event, the leaders of the Levites appoint singers from their kindred, including one Levite who served as the director since he “understood” the music (ןָבִיא; v. 22). The priests have no control over these singers as it is David who appoints the divisions of the Levitical singers and musicians (1 Chr 16:4-7, 42; 23:5; 25:1-31). The direct accountability of the three eponymous Levitical singers (in this case, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun) to the king—thereby by-passing the priests or leading priest—is emphasized in the repetition of this point in 1 Chr 25:2, 6. The Levitical singers are uniquely presented as being trained for their occupation and some of them as being

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226 The wood used for making some of these instruments is stated to have been imported at the time of Solomon (2 Chr 9:11). This reference to singers using musical instruments made from imported wood is also found in the parallel text of 1 Kgs 10:12, which suggests a tradition of court singers during the First Temple period—but not necessarily of any Levitical heritage—existed independent of the portrayal in Chronicles.

227 For the issue of the complicated relationship between Ethan and Jeduthun, see the discussion above in Section 4.4.1.
“teachers” and some “students” (v. 8). None of the other Levitical or priestly groups are associated with this type of instructional system—including those who teach the Torah. After the establishment of their divisions by David, the singers appear in Chronicles at significant cultic events: the temple dedication by Solomon (2 Chr 5:12-13; 7:6), the victory over the enemy through praise under Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:19-28), the rededication of the temple under Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:25-30), the celebration of Passover under Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:21), and the celebration of Passover under Josiah (2 Chr 35:15).

The inclusion of the Levitical singers during these cultic events is not unexpected in Chronicles. The most intriguing association with these singers that is made in Chronicles—at least for numerous scholars—is the claim that their singing and playing musical instruments in the cult was prophetic in nature (1 Chr 25:1, 2, 3). In these verses, it is not grammatically clear whether the prophetic activity applies to the singers in general or only to the three leaders, although the latter seems more likely in context. The three eponymous ancestors are called “seers” (Heman in 1 Chr 25:5; Asaph in 2 Chr 29:30; and Jeduthun in 2 Chr 35:15). In addition, in 2 Chr 20:14-17, one of the Asaphite Levites—who is also apparently a singer, though this identification is not made explicit in the text—named Jahaziel has the spirit of YHWH come on him to pronounce a

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228 Solomon assigns them to their divisions as arranged by David in the new temple (2 Chr 8:14).

229 This is not the only association of singing or playing musical instruments with prophecy in the HB; see, e.g., 1 Sam 10:5. However, this passage and the references to the seers cited above are the only explicit connection between the Levites, or better the Levitical singers, and prophecy.

230 See Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 440-41; and Schniedewind, Word of God, 175.

231 The MT of 2 Chr 35:15 has the singular “seer” (חֵזֶן), but the plural (חֵזִים) is attested in the readings of other ancient versions (LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, and the Targum). If the plural is accepted here, then all three individuals would be termed “seers” instead of just Jeduthun. In either case, Heman, Asaph, and Jeduthun are all described as seers in Chronicles.
word of encouragement and instruction from God, although it is not called a prophecy.\textsuperscript{232}

In the other three instances in which the spirit “comes on” (לָהֵב מֵא) or “clothes” (לָהֵב מְלָל) individuals, one is a priest and the other two are not stated to be Levites (Zechariah is clothed in 2 Chr 24:20; Amasai, chief of the Thirty, is clothed in 1 Chr 12:19 [v. 18 Eng.]; and Azariah ben Oded has the spirit come on him in 2 Chr 15:1).\textsuperscript{233} Of these four, only Azariah’s utterance is explicitly called a prophecy (2 Chr 15:8).\textsuperscript{234}

The final reference to the Levitical singers functioning as prophets that scholars have emphasized is the apparent replacement of “the Levites” in 2 Chr 34:30 for “the prophets” in the parallel text of 2 Kgs 23:2.\textsuperscript{235} However, there are at least two arguments to be made against the view that the Chronicler simply equates the two groups. First, the association of Levites with prophets in this verse is made only on a synoptic reading of the passage in Kings. It is questionable whether the Chronicler intends his audience to have the text of Kings available to consult in order to notice this “change” or its implied significance. Second, this would be the only instance in Chronicles in which the Levites

\textsuperscript{232} The Hebrew phrase is לָהֵב מֵא and is found in other instances throughout the HB: Balaam in Num 24:2; Othniel in Judg 3:10; Jephthah in Judg 11:29; Saul’s messengers in 1 Sam 19:20; Saul in 1 Sam 19:23; and Azariah in 2 Chr 15:1. The utterances given by Saul’s messengers, Saul, and Azariah are also stated to be prophecies or an act of prophesying.

\textsuperscript{233} The spirit clothes (לָהֵב מְלָל) Amasai and Zechariah in Chronicles; neither of their utterances is called a prophecy. This same verb is used only in reference to Gideon (Judg 6:34). Another verb for clothe (לָהֵב מְלָל) is used for Samson (Judg 14:6, 19; 15:14), Saul (1 Sam 10:6; 11:6; 18:10 [here, an evil spirit from God]), and David (1 Sam 16:13). This second verb is never used in this prophetic context in Chronicles. לָהֵב מְלָל always has its other meaning (“success” or “prosper”) in Chronicles (1 Chr 22:11, 13; 29:23; 2 Chr 7:11; 13:12; 14:6 [v. 7 Eng.]; 18:11, 14; 20:20; 24:20; 26:5; 31:21; 32:30). Note that in 2 Chr 24:20 לָהֵב מְלָל is used to describe Zechariah’s empowerment and לָהֵב מְלָל in the verse means “succeed.”

\textsuperscript{234} The text is problematic; see the comments by Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 723.

\textsuperscript{235} Curtis and Madsen, Critical and Exegetical Commentary, 511-12; Jacob M. Myers, II Chronicles (AB 13; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), 208; von Rad, Geschichtebild, 114; Petersen, Late Israelite Prophecy, 85; cf. Kleinig, Lord’s Song, 156; and Van Rooy, “Prophet and Society,” 170, 176-77.
as a whole and not the singers or their leaders alone are associated with prophecy.\textsuperscript{236}

Thus, it is an overstatement to assert that the Chronicler correlates the Levitical singers, or worse the Levites as a whole, of his own time with the prophets of the past.\textsuperscript{237}

The wide variety of individuals who are associated with the terms “prophet” or “seer” or related language in Chronicles further supports the conclusion that the Chronicler does not attempt to restrict prophetic activity to the Levites or Levitical singers.\textsuperscript{238} Most scholars would not dispute this point. However, many scholars proceed to argue that what does appear in Chronicles is a distinction between “classical” prophecy and his contemporary situation that is a result of the “decline” or “cessation” of prophecy.

Thus, in Chronicles, the “classical” prophets become the authors of histories and are

\textsuperscript{236} Both of these conclusions are defended in more detail by Schniedewind, \textit{Word of God}, 184-87.

\textsuperscript{237} This is a common view among scholars; see the equation of the Levites of the Chronicler’s own time with the prophets of the past and the conclusion that the Chronicler “has never actually heard a prophet speak” by De Vries (\textit{1 and 2 Chronicles}, 408, 411). In commenting on Zechariah ben Jehoiada in 2 Chr 24:20, Mason makes the claim that the priests have become the heirs to the prophets (\textit{Preaching the Tradition}, 81). The entirety of Mason’s evidence comes from this single event. This type of overstatement demonstrates the caution that should be exercised in drawing conclusions based on a single verse or passage. Newsome correctly notes that anyone may serve as a prophet based on the various backgrounds of the individuals presented as engaging in prophetic activities in Chronicles (“Chronicler’s View of Prophecy,” 159-60).

\textsuperscript{238} \textit{Prophet and prophecy}: Nathan (1 Chr 17:1; 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29; 29:25); Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun (1 Chr 25:1, 2, 3; possibly their descendants); Ahijah (2 Chr 9:29); Shemaiah (2 Chr 12:5, 15); Iddo (2 Chr 13:22); Azariah (2 Chr 15:8); prophets of God (2 Chr 20:20; 24:19; 29:25; 36:16); Eliezer (2 Chr 20:37); Elijah (2 Chr 21:12); an unnamed prophet (2 Chr 25:15-16); Isaiah (2 Chr 26:22; 32:20, 32); Oded (2 Chr 28:9); Huldah (2 Chr 34:22); Samuel (2 Chr 35:18); Jeremiah (2 Chr 36:12). \textit{Seer}: Samuel (1 Chr 9:22; 26:28; 29:29); Gad (1 Chr 21:9; 29:29; 2 Chr 29:25); Heman (1 Chr 25:5); Iddo (2 Chr 29:29; 12:15); Hanani (2 Chr 16:7, 10; 19:2 [?]); Jehu ben Hanani (2 Chr 19:2 [?]; 20:34); Asaph (2 Chr 29:30); seers of God (2 Chr 33:18, 19 [or “Hozai”]); Jeduthun (2 Chr 35:15; or all three leaders).

Note that several individuals are termed both a prophet and a seer: Samuel, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and Iddo. Thus, the terms do not distinguish between Levitical and non-Levitical prophetic activities. Also, many of these individuals are associated with the writing of records or prophetic texts: Samuel and Gad (1 Chr 29:29); Nathan (1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29); Ahijah (2 Chr 9:29); Iddo (2 Chr 9:29; 12:15; 13:22); Shemaiah (2 Chr 12:15); Jehu ben Hanani (2 Chr 19:2 [?] and 20:34); Elijah (a letter in 2 Chr 21:12); Isaiah (2 Chr 26:22; 32:32); and seers or “Hozai” (2 Chr 33:19). Yet, with the exception of Samuel, none of these individuals is a Levitical singer or even a Levite according to Chronicles.

In addition, despite the tendency of scholars to infer it, not all historical records are associated with prophets in Chronicles; see 1 Chr 4:22, 33; 9:1; 2 Chr 16:11; 20:34 (\textit{contains some} prophetic words); 24:27; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32 (\textit{contains} a writing of Isaiah); 35:27. Even in this regard, there is no
relegated to the past. Prophecy, in this view, continues in the compositions of the Levitical singers and musicians and may be redefined as the exegesis of prophetic texts, including the histories written under prophetic inspiration (such as Samuel-Kings) by a new generation of prophetic messengers who are also Levites, and of whom the Chronicler himself was most likely a member. However, the evidence in Chronicles cannot support any of these claims.

The Chronicler’s depiction of Levitical singers as prophets is not designed to restrict prophetic activity of his time to the Levites. Prophetic activity includes Levites, Levitical singers, and non-Levites in Chronicles. Also, the writing of records and prophetic books is not restricted to Levites in Chronicles. No distinction can be drawn in Chronicles between “classical” prophets and the “prophets” of the Second Temple period, namely the Levites, in their descriptions in the book of Chronicles. There is no pattern on which to base such claims. Scholars have read the statements about the Levitical singers serving a prophetic function in the cult as if this reflected the practice of the Second Temple period.

Utopian literary theory highlights the inconsistencies found in identifying those who may serve as prophets in Chronicles. These inconsistencies do not suggest that Levites “replaced” classical prophets nor do they suggest that prophecy was a phenomenon relegated to the past. Many of the prophetic utterances in Chronicles appear pattern that can be adduced: e.g., the righteousness of a contemporary king does not determine whether the records have prophetic origins.

239 No one has argued for this position more extensively than Schniedewind; see “Chronicler as an Interpreter of Scripture”; “Prophets and Prophecy”; and Word of God. His reading of 2 Chr 36:15-16, which uses the terms messengers and prophets, is vital to his interpretation of the Chronicler as one of these messengers serving to exegete prophetic texts.

240 See, e.g., Petersen, Late Israelite Prophecy, 77; and Van Rooy, “Prophet and Society,” 176-77.
as part of the Chronicler’s *Sondergut*. It is also in these same speeches that the message of the Chronicler to his contemporary audience is most readily apparent. However, the majority of these prophetic messengers are not Levites and are never Levitical singers. This methodology does not seem overly effective if the Chronicler intended to convey an association between the prophets of the past and the Levites of the present.

Instead, the Chronicler suggests an innovation in the *perception* of the music of the Levitical singers and musicians. The prophetic voice may also be found in their compositions. This understanding of the Levitical singers as prophets is not dependent on the disappearance of the rest of the prophets. As part of the Chronicler’s cultic utopia, these Levitical singers provide a, but not the, place for the prophetic voice to be found regardless of other historical circumstances. Chronicles has often been interpreted as one reflection of a hierocratic view that disdained the prophetic and attempted to marginalize it by replacing the prophets with Levitical singers who could be controlled as part of the temple cult. However, the singers neither replace nor restrict; they expand the possible arenas in which to find prophets and prophetic activity. A utopian reading of these singers in Chronicles does not suggest any malice on the part of the Chronicler; instead, the singers enhance the cult by providing praise to God that shares in the same prophetic spirit associated with the prophets of Israel’s past. For those who may have contended that prophecy did or should cease, the Chronicler articulates a better alternative reality

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241 See my Excursus on Prophecy, Speeches, and Authority in Chronicles in Chapter 2.

242 See this view as represented by Plöger, *Theocracy and Eschatology*; Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*; and Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 6-8, 98-100.

243 For example, the cessation of prophecy is desired in Zech 13:2-6, a text definitely originating at some point during the Second Temple period.
that includes prophecy and advocates that the Levitical singers have a role to play in its implementation in the present and in the future.

But apart from this concern over prophecy, the Levitical singers serve another utopian function in the cult: the praise of YHWH is included as a regular part of the cultic celebrations, something not prescribed in the Torah. The Chronicler does not have to argue strenuously for the existence of singers in the cult, but their service as a vital part of the cult’s operation does seem to be an issue. This is another innovation in the temple cult presented by Chronicles. While scholars have tended to assume that this reflects Second Temple practice, the evidence suggests instead that the Chronicler may be attempting to expand the roles commonly associated with these singers and to affirm their participation in the rituals that were already being observed in the cult. Thus, the depictions of the Levitical singers should not be used to reconstruct the cultic liturgy of the Second Temple period. The Chronicler offers a different liturgy with different officiants instead of the depictions in other cultic texts such as P and Ezekiel 40-48, which contain nothing specific regarding singing and praise in the operation of the cult. The Chronicler’s cultic utopia is again shown to have unique features that differentiate it from other cultic programs, including other utopian models.

The various cultic responsibilities of the Levites in Chronicles are not the full extent of their duties. They serve within the cult and within the larger societal structure. Some of these other functions involve or are related to the cult, but have also been termed “secular” or “administrative” in nature by a number of scholars. However, attempting to

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244 The singers are mentioned in many other texts besides Chronicles, as noted previously.

245 For example, many of the difficulties with Kleinig’s reading of the liturgy in Chronicles are a result of his attempt to reconstruct cultic practice from these descriptions (Lord’s Song).
distinguish between the cultic sphere and “non-cultic” arena of the Levites in regard to the following set of duties is neither beneficial nor does it accurately account for the depiction of the Levitical duties in Chronicles. As much as scholars would like to see the Levites expanding their influence beyond the cult, the textual evidence does not support this conclusion.\textsuperscript{246} These remaining duties include service as: overseers of the treasuries, scribes, judges, and teachers of the Torah.

First, the treasuries of the cult are placed under the authority of the Levites by David (1 9:26; 26:20-28). These treasuries included the donations of gifts for the operation of the cult and of the booty confiscated in battle that had been dedicated to God. The cultic treasuries are also mentioned in 1 Chr 28:11-12; 29:3; 2 Chr 5:1; 8:15; 12:9; 16:2; 28:21 (implied); 36:18. The Levitical care of them is affirmed explicitly only in 1 Chr 29:8. However, while not mentioning treasuries, the Levites as well as the priests are associated with the money and gifts brought into the temple as donations for its repair (2 Chr 24:5-14; 31:4-14; 34:8-14). In the construction and operation of storehouses by Hezekiah for the portions to be distributed to the Levites and priests, two Levites are placed in charge (2 Chr 31:12). However, cultic treasuries are not the only type of treasuries mentioned in Chronicles. Royal treasuries are clearly distinguished from the cultic ones in 1 Chr 27:25; 2 Chr 12:9; 16:2; 25:24; 28:21 (implied); 32:27-28; 36:18. Of these texts, only the reference to royal treasuries established by David in 1 Chr

\textsuperscript{246} The argument that Chronicles reflects a Levitical “grab for power” outside of the cultic sphere and into new areas of secular administration has been articulated by various scholars. It has been recently asserted again by Labahn, “Antitheocratic Tendencies,” esp. 121-23, 130-35. Contrast, for example, the cautious view taken by Schams regarding the scribal activity of the Levites in particular and the inability to distinguish adequately between the cultic and secular spheres (“1 and 2 Chronicles,” 71).
27:25 lacks a parallel or similar statement in Kings.\textsuperscript{247} None of the references to royal treasuries in Chronicles makes any mention of Levitical responsibility for their care.\textsuperscript{248} Thus, the Levites are explicitly responsible for the cultic treasuries while the identity of the individuals who are in charge of the royal treasuries is never made explicit. In the Second Temple period there may have been no “royal” treasuries in Yehud.\textsuperscript{249} However, two texts in the book of Nehemiah assert the existence of cultic treasuries or storehouses in Jerusalem at two separate points in time during this period (Neh 7:70; 13:13). In the latter, Nehemiah appoints one priest, one scribe, and one Levite with two assistants over these facilities used for the distribution of portions to the temple personnel.

Also, in Chronicles, the priests or leading priest is connected with the money brought into the treasuries (see the roles of Jehoiada, Azariah, and Hilkiah in the three passages cited above), but the oversight of the treasuries and storehouses themselves is assigned to the Levites independently of the priesthood in Chronicles. Is this a reflection of Second Temple practice, or an innovation in the administration of the cultic finances advocated by the Chronicler? This cultic duty that is not sacrificial in nature—a priestly responsibility, if it were—would easily be associated with the types of duties that the Levites perform in the routine maintenance of the cult and provision for its personnel in a variety of texts in Chronicles. Thus, without additional evidence to support the claims of the Levites alone to have this duty, this Levitical responsibility to oversee the cultic

\textsuperscript{247} The parallel texts are, respectively: 1 Kgs 14:26; 15:18; 2 Kgs 14:14; 16:8 (explicit, not implied); 20:13 (different context, but existence made clear); 24:13.

\textsuperscript{248} The list of David’s stewards who have the care of his treasuries among other things does not suggest that any of these individuals were Levites.

\textsuperscript{249} This is an important point. The Levites are not depicted as being in charge of the “secular” treasuries in the past. If the Chronicler wished to expand their influence, this would be one means of doing so. Their past duties in non-cultic arenas that no longer exist could easily be extrapolated to other non-cultic duties that do exist in the present, which they could oversee by implication.
treasuries as expressed in Chronicles should be interpreted as a utopian element similar to those previously discussed.

Second, the responsibility for these treasuries may suggest that the Levites had some writing ability or, at the very least, that they were able to count and apportion significant quantities of various items to the appropriate recipients. Thus, it is not surprising to find Levites associated with scribal activities or stated to be scribes in Chronicles. However, the number of instances in which such a connection is made is relatively small. In fact, only two individual Levites are said to have written anything or to be a scribe. The first is a certain Shemaiah, a Levite and a scribe, who records the list of priestly divisions (1 Chr 29:6), but the identity of the one or ones who recorded the other lists of the various Levitical divisions is not mentioned. The second individual is Samuel the prophet/seer who records the events of David’s reign, although his Levitical pedigree is known only from a previous passage (1 Chr 29:29; and 6:13, 18-23 [vv. 28, 33-38 Eng.]; respectively). In addition, a group of Levites served as scribes at the time of Josiah without specifying what types of things they recorded or wrote (2 Chr 34:13). Thus, some Levites served as scribes, but the precise nature of their responsibilities or the subject matter which they dealt with is unclear in Chronicles.

Other possible associations between scribal activities and Levites have been suggested: their service as judges (1 Chr 26:29-32; 2 Chr 19:8-11); their service as teachers of the Torah (2 Chr 17:7-9; 35:3; cf. the “teaching priest” of 2 Chr 15:3); the “teacher” and “pupil” instructional model of the Levitical singers and musicians (1 Chr

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250 As noted above, prophets are also writers in Chronicles, but none of these individuals is a Levite except for Samuel. This further emphasizes the point that not all writers were Levites.
and the enrollments of the Levites and priests in genealogies (2 Chr 31:12-19).

However, none of these texts explicitly claims that the Levites were scribes nor mentions them writing anything. In fact, none of the references in Chronicles to genealogies states who were the ones recording such information as the written genealogical records. This silence is also true for the few references to enrollments in genealogies in other books in the HB (Neh 7:5, 64; Ezek 13:9)—with the notable exception of Numbers. In this P text, the various genealogical enrollments are performed by several combinations of people: Moses alone (Num 3:16, 42; 4:49), Moses and Aaron (1:3, 19; 3:39; 4:37, 41, 45; 26:64), Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the people (1:44; 4:34, 46), and Moses and Eleazar (26:63). Thus, in Numbers, the task is neither assigned to nor restricted to the Levites, but involves the leading priest and civil leaders.

Chronicles acknowledges that a single Levite may be a scribe or that a group of Levitical scribes may exist, but it does not make an effort to associate all scribal activities with the Levites. Instead, Chronicles includes references to scribes who do not have Levitical heritages: the scribes associated with the tribe of Judah (1 Chr 2:55), and the uncle of David who served as a counselor and a scribe (1 Chr 27:32). In the presentation of Chronicles, the scant amount of information about the scribal activities of the Levites and the obvious affirmation that not all scribes are Levites requires the conclusion that it is unnecessary to postulate scribalism in the structured instruction of music and singing. One only needs to think of the significant number of musicians who “play by ear” or sing in choirs without ever learning how to read one note of music.

Each reference to genealogical records in Chronicles is silent about who wrote them down (1 Chr 5:1, 17; 7:5, 7, 9, 40; 9:1, 22; 23:11, 24; 2 Chr 31:15-19). Only for the recording of the priestly divisions is someone named, who is a Levite and a scribe, as noted above (1 Chr 24:6).
the Chronicler was not attempting to use scribalism to separate the Levites from the priests and to consolidate political power for these now independent Levites. As with the previous Levitical duties, their status as scribes should be viewed as part of the Chronicler’s utopian motif. Not all scribes are Levites, but Levites may be scribes. Perhaps the Chronicler is making the case that Levites should be scribes too. That is, these few examples depict Levites as scribes within the cultic system and even as the composers of court records (i.e., Samuel). However, there is no effort to present large groups of scribes who diligently record, copy, or compose documents of any particular types of subject matter. Rather, the Chronicler affirms that Levites may be and even should be among those working as scribes. Nothing can be concluded from these depictions about whether Chronicles reflects a present condition in which Levites served as scribes, to what extent they did, or in what types of matters they performed their service. The entire depiction of Levites as scribes in Chronicles could reflect a better alternative reality constructed by the Chronicler in which Levites do serve as scribes regardless of their present employment in such capacity. Perhaps it is the novelty of this suggestion by the Chronicler (Levites could be scribes) that accounts for the rarity of its appearance in Chronicles in comparison to other cultic innovations that are mentioned with greater frequency.

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253 Contra Labahn, “Antitheocratic Tendencies,” esp. 123-35. Also, the recording of the priestly divisions by the Levite-scribe occurs in the presence of the two leading priests and other priests—among the large number of people stated to be there (1 Chr 24:6). This hardly seems to suggest the independence of this Levite-scribe from the priests. Schams correctly concludes that the evidence in Chronicles suggests that the Levites were neither the only scribes in the Chronicler’s time nor were all scribes Levites (“1 and 2 Chronicles,” 69). However, she has also assumed that this depiction in Chronicles reflects some social reality during the Second Temple period (ibid.).

254 Schams makes a similar disclaimer at the end of her analysis (“1 and 2 Chronicles,” 71), although she had expressed previously her preference for seeing some reflection of the present situation in the Chronicler’s portrayal (p. 69).
Third, Levites are among those who serve as judges in Chronicles. Levites are appointed as judges by David in 1 Chr 26:29-32 and by Jehoshaphat in 2 Chr 19:8-11. As noted in Section 3.2.3, these two administrative systems are similar, but not identical. In David’s system, Izharite Levites are appointed as judges for “outside work” (1 Chr 26:29). David also appoints two groups of Hebronites as judges over different geographic regions of his kingdom. Those related to Hashabiah are placed in charge of the Cisjordan and those related to Jerijah are over the Transjordan. Both groups are responsible for two distinct categories of issues: the work of YHWH and the service of the king (v. 30), also expressed as the matters of God and the matters of the king (v. 32). The identification of these Hebronites as Levites is not explicit in this text in Chronicles, but other textual evidence from Chronicles and the Torah would suggest that they should be considered so. The name Jerijah is also highly suggestive, but not conclusive, that these individuals were Levites. If these two groups of Hebronites are Levites, as seems

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255 This odd phrase also appears in Neh 11:6. In both cases, the meaning is unclear. Work not directly related to the temple or outside its precincts has been suggested; see the NJPS translation.

256 Hebron is most famously associated with the tribe of Judah in one of two contexts: (1) the city conquered by Caleb, and thus its location within Judah (Josh 14:13-14; 15:13; 20:7; 21:11; Judg 1:10, 20; 1 Chr 2:42-43; 6:40 [v. 55]); and (2) its function as David’s first capital city (2 Sam 2:11-4, 11; 3:2-5; 5:1-5, 13; 1 Kgs 2:11; 1 Chr 3:4; 11:1-3; 29:29). Hebron is also one of the sons of Kohath the Levite who had descendants serving in the cult (Exod 6:18; Num 3:19, 27; 26:58; 1 Chr 6:1, 3 [vv. 2, 18 Eng.]; 23:12, 19, [24:23]; 26:23). The descendents of a prominent Levite named Hebron, who may or may not be this same individual, are listed among those Levites and priests who assisted in the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15:4-10). The city of Hebron as a Levitical city is explicitly associated with the Kohathites in 1 Chr 6:39-41 (vv. 54-56).

257 The name Jerijah ( Jerijah) is only found in 1 Chr 26:31. However, a Jerijahu ( Jerijahu) is mentioned in 1 Chr 23:19; 24:23. In all three passages—the only appearances of this name—the individual is associated with the Hebronites. These Hebronites are clearly Levites in the final two references. Japhet asserts without qualification that both groups of Hebronites should be understood as Levites (I & II Chronicles, 454).
most likely, then this text places Levites of the Kohathite clan in positions as judges over the entire Davidic kingdom in both cultic and civil affairs.\(^{258}\)

In Jehoshaphat’s system, judges are appointed throughout the cities of Judah (2 Chr 19:5). The identity of these judges is not specified, however.\(^{259}\) The relationship between this group of judges and the group of judges who are appointed over disputed cases and are located in Jerusalem is much debated. The identity of the second “higher court” should not be associated with the judicial administration in the rest of the land as no evidence would suggest that judges formed a homogeneous group at any point in Israel’s history. While the identity of the first group must remain unknown, the second group consists of an unspecified number of Levites, priests, and leaders of the families of Israel (2 Chr 19:8). Thus, both cultic and civil authorities are involved. Further details about this arrangement include the division of subject matter for such cases into the matters of YHWH and the matters of the king, each with an individual supervisor. Over the cultic affairs is the leading priest and over the royal (possibly civil) affairs is the governor of Judah. The Levites serve both groups as some form of assistants (2 Chr 19:11). Several points are worth emphasizing: (1) the distinction between these two spheres seems to only apply at the level of the central court in Jerusalem and not to the lower courts; (2) the parameters of what type of issues fall into each category is not distinguished; (3) the Levites are not in charge of either the lower courts or the central

\(^{258}\) Note that David appoints some 6,000 Levites of unspecified descent to the vague positions of officers and judges according to 1 Chr 23:4.

\(^{259}\) Note that Solomon assembled judges whose ancestry is unknown in 2 Chr 1:2. Their identification with the Levitical judges appointed by David in 1 Chr 23:4 or 26:29-32 may be assumed, but this would only be an assumption based on the book’s narrative progression. The same would be true of the unidentified judges appointed by Jehoshaphat throughout the cities of Judah (2 Chr 19:5).
court for disputed cases; and (4) the ancestry of the governor is not clearly connected to
any specific tribe or family in Israel.

The position of the Levites in each of these versions of the Israelite judicial
system is significant. In David’s system, the Levites are completely in charge; in
Jehoshaphat’s system, they are under the authority of the leading priest and governor and
comprise only part of a cultic and civil court. The inconsistency is best explained as part
of the utopian portrayal of the Levites. Either structure would be better than the
present—whatever it may have been! The Chronicler offers two possible means of a
functional judicial system, either of which could be implemented, although the one under
Jehoshaphat could possibly have been more directly applicable to the Chronicler’s own
time. Note that even the number of judges is not defined, which would allow for a great
deal of flexibility in adapting the system over time. The Chronicler is not reflecting the
situation of his present, but offering a better alternative reality in its place. This reality,
whichever program is followed, includes Levites, but not even necessarily to the
exclusion of others, and their precise position within the hierarchy can be negotiated.

Fourth, Levites are among those who teach the Torah in Chronicles. Three texts
are relevant to this Levitical duty: 2 Chr 15:3; 17:7-9; 35:3. In the first text, the people
were “without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law” at some
point in their past. As a result, Israel was in distress. Eventually, the people did repent
and they were delivered by God from their enemies (2 Chr 15:3-6). Such a time is most

260 Retrojection of the Chronicler’s present into the past has long been asserted for the situation
under Jehoshaphat, beginning with Wellhausen (Prolegomena, 191). It is a wonder that the description of
Levites in charge of everything under the authority of David was not the passage deemed to reflect the
Chronicler’s present! The division between cultic and “secular” affairs along with the prominence of the
leading priest are some of the reasons that scholars have tended to suspect the Chronicler’s present is being
readily associated with the premonarchic period of the judges. Tuell proffers that all three of these elements come together for the first time during the reign of David. If this is correct, it may suggest that the organization of the cultic personnel into divisions allowed for some of them to function as teachers of the Torah. However, nothing in the chapters describing those divisions indicates that the personnel engaged in such actions. The only possible exception might be the establishment of the Levitical judges (2 Chr 26:29-32), but there is no hint that these Levites (who are not priests) provided the people with instruction in Torah. Thus, the precise nature of this claim in Chronicles must remain nebulous, although its association of teaching the Torah with the priests is explicit.

The first clear reference to instruction in Torah being undertaken appears during the reign of Jehoshaphat prior to his judicial reforms (2 Chr 17:7-9). In this brief passage that has also received much scholarly attention, Jehoshaphat sends five officials, nine Levites, and two priests throughout the cities of Judah with the book of the Torah of YHWH to teach the people. Implicitly as a result, Jehoshaphat prospers and lives in peace (2 Chr 17:10-13). This combination of cultic personnel and civil leaders parallels the composition of the central court in Jehoshaphat’s judicial reform (2 Chr 19:8). Finally, the Levites alone are stated to be teachers for all Israel in 2 Chr 35:3. The portrayed under the authority of Jehoshaphat. Japhet has noted, however, that the Second Temple period is not the only era to witness such distinctions (I & II Chronicles, 773-74).

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261 As can be deduced from the traditions contained in the book of Judges; see Japhet, I & II Chronicles, 719.

262 Tuell, First and Second Chronicles, 169.

263 Note, however, that Ezek 44:23-24 explicitly connects the concepts of teaching and judging with the responsibilities of the Zadokite priests.
subject of their instruction is not stated; it may be limited to the Torah or may be more extensive so as to include judicial rulings such as those of the central court as well.\textsuperscript{264}

These texts affirm that the Levites serve as teachers. However, they are not alone in this regard, and the scope of their subject matter seems to include the book of the Torah but may be more extensive. Thus, Chronicles does not advocate that the instruction of the people in Torah is the restricted purview of the Levites. Instead, consistent with the traditions of the priest serving as a teacher,\textsuperscript{265} the Levites also share in this responsibility, especially since the priests are primarily sacrificial officiants—a point made repeatedly throughout Chronicles. As part of this utopian depiction of the cult, the Levites serve among those who teach the people Torah. No details are provided as to how, where, when, or with what types of materials this is accomplished. Such practical concerns should remain flexible. The return to a condition “without a teaching priest”—\textit{perhaps} a utopian critique of the contemporary priests who are not fulfilling their responsibility in this regard—however is not an option for the Chronicler’s present or future. The Chronicler’s \textit{better alternative reality} requires the instruction of the people in Torah, regardless of the source of such vital spiritual training.

A final comment on one aspect of spirituality that is associated with the Levites in Chronicles concludes this description of the Levitical duties. As noted previously, “seeking God” is one of the primary expressions of spirituality in Chronicles. Much of this “seeking” takes place within the cult, either through sacrifices or through the music

\textsuperscript{264} However, this should not been taken to mean that Chronicles distinguishes between this written Torah and some form of Oral Torah, or traditions of interpretation, that is developing around it. Also, the contents of the “book of the Torah of YHWH” cannot be determined.

\textsuperscript{265} See, e.g., priests in Lev 10:10-11; 2 Kgs 17:27-28; Ezek 44:23-24; Mal 2:4-9; levitical priests in Deut 24:8; and Levi in Deut 33:8-10.
and singing of the Levites. However, it also occurs through the vehicle of prayer. This method of “seeking God” may take place either within or outside of the cult.

 Nine examples of prayer in non-cultic settings are found in Chronicles: (1) The first mention of any positive religious act, cultic or otherwise, in Chronicles is the prayer for divine assistance and protection offered by Jabez (1 Chr 4:9-10); (2) The Gadites pray while battling their enemies (1 Chr 5:19-22); (3) David inquires of God before successfully engaging the Philistines in battle (1 Chr 14:9-12); (4) In David’s prayer to God following the declaration by Nathan that God will build a house for David, he calls on the deity to act in accordance with his promise (1 Chr 17:16-27); (5) As the angel is preparing to strike the inhabitants of Jerusalem, David pleads with God to end the plague against the people (1 Chr 21:16-17); (6) Asa cries out to YHWH for deliverance from the attacking Ethiopians (2 Chr 14:10 [v. 9 Eng.]); (7) Hezekiah and Isaiah pray for deliverance in response to the threats made by Sennacherib (2 Chr 32:20); (8) Hezekiah prays to God when he had become extremely sick (2 Chr 32:24); and (9) Manasseh prays in humility to God while in his exile (2 Chr 33:12-13).

 Six examples of prayer offered in cultic settings are found in Chronicles: (1) The psalm of praise associated with the Asaphite singers concludes with an appeal for God’s intervention (1 Chr 16:35); (2) At the consecration of the gifts donated for the temple at


267 Although not specific, Er’s wickedness in the sight of YHWH and the transgression by Achar (i.e., Achan in Josh 7:1-26) are the only two references to anything spiritual or religious that precedes the prayer offered by the mysterious Jabez in 1 Chr 4:9-10.
the end of his life, David prays to God to assist the people in their spiritual direction and to enable Solomon to be obedient and successful (1 Chr 29:18-19);[268] (3) At the tabernacle in Gibeon at the beginning of his reign, Solomon requests wisdom from God to rule (2 Chr 1:3-10); (4) At the dedication of the temple, Solomon offers a lengthy prayer that emphasizes the promises made to David, the forgiveness of the people’s sins, the eventual return of the people from captivity, and the temple as a locus for prayer for both Israelites and foreigners (2 Chr 6:12-42); (5) During a period of fasting in the temple, Jehoshaphat prays to God for deliverance from the coalition of forces coming to attack Judah (2 Chr 20:5-12); and (6) During the celebration of Passover, Hezekiah prays that God will pardon those who were seeking God and yet ate the Pesach improperly (2 Chr 30:18-20).

These data demonstrate that according to Chronicles prayer is appropriate in both cultic and non-cultic contexts. This is consistent with the depiction of prayer in the HB, but this understanding of prayer in Chronicles is significant in that the Chronicler does not restrict prayer to the cultic sphere. Also, while the king is repeatedly presented as the individual offering the prayer, others do so as well: the individual Jabez, the Gadites, the Asaphite singers, the prophet Isaiah, and the Israelites and foreigners have the opportunity to do so. In addition, Chronicles does not explicitly present the priests, the leading priest, or other Levites as offering prayers to God either as individuals or in public liturgies. Even if all the references to Levitical singers and singing throughout Chronicles were included because scholars believe that their service in the cultic liturgy would have presumably included prayer, this would only add to the number of references.

[268] Knoppers notes that by ending David’s reign with a prayer, the Chronicler effectively communicates “central concerns to his audience” (1 Chronicles 10-29, 966).
for the singers and not suggest anything about the involvement of other cultic personnel in such possible prayers.

Just as all of the kings who “seek God” serve as models for the Israelites to do the same, so the repeated depictions of the kings praying suggest that this is a practice to be imitated as well. The notion that prayer may be performed by anyone is reinforced by depicting those who are not kings or personnel in the temple cult doing so. In this regard, prayer serves a utopian function in Chronicles. It may be done as part of the cultic celebration or in response to an immediate need without necessitating the presence of the one praying in the temple itself for the prayer to be effective. The effectiveness of prayer offered apart from the cult is a point made repeatedly in Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the temple (2 Chr 6:21-42). Also, cultic personnel are neither required to lead it nor to regulate it. Significantly, all of the prayers offered in Chronicles are answered by God with results that are viewed positively by the one praying. In Chronicles, circumstances always change as a result of prayer. In addition to offering a better alternative reality in the form of cultic innovations, the Chronicler suggests that prayer is a means to change the present—a truly utopian activity.

4.4.3 Locating the “Good Place”: A Levitical Utopia

The Chronicler’s interest in and even preference for the Levites in his work has been observed and asserted by numerous scholars. However, this elevation of the Levites has been viewed most typically as a reflection of their status during the Chronicler’s own time. In this view, the Chronicler writes to provide this group with a legitimate claim for

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269 The parallel text of 1 Kgs 8:26-53 also makes this same point repeatedly.
the duties which they are *currently* performing in the cult and in the larger community. Some scholars have noted that it is difficult to determine which descriptions of the Levites are reflections of the present and which ones are part of the Chronicler’s vision for the future. However, this insight almost always occurs in passing remarks—often in footnotes—that serve as a type of disclaimer before the scholars proceed to connect these portrayals with some situation or development in the cult or larger society during the Second Temple period. Utopian literary theory interprets these data as part of the Chronicler’s vision for a different future and emphasizes the *probability* that these innovations serve as critiques of the present and of the *status quo*. As such, the Levitical duties outlined previously are understood as part of a *better alternative reality* that envisions their performance in the future as a vital component of the temple cult regardless of the roles of the Levites in the current cultic system.

The Levites, more than any other group in Chronicles, are the focus of the Chronicler’s utopianism. Other groups, such as the priests and the kings, are depicted in utopian terms, but they serve only to support the primary concern that Chronicles manifests for the utopian portrayal of the Levites. These temple personnel are not restricted to the roles of “second-class” assistants to the more significant priests. Their responsibilities are not limited to the less glamorous, mundane, or demeaning tasks that are necessary for the practical operation of the temple cult. However, the Levites are neither made completely independent of the priesthood in their cultic and “secular” duties, nor are they presented as replacing the priests, nor are they even presented as the highest authority in cultic affairs. The Levites are presented as engaging in a variety of activities in the cult that are not found or only hinted at in other texts. In these instances,
Chronicles asserts the *indispensability* of the Levites for the successful operation of the cult. And yet, not all of these innovations in their duties are assigned strictly to the Levites alone. Many of these tasks and vocations are shared by other members of the community, both priests and Israelites not serving as cultic personnel. Thus, Chronicles does not attempt to claim *exclusive* rights for the Levites in all of these cases. Rather, Chronicles argues that the Levites *should be* a part, even a significant part, of the operation of the cult and aspects of the larger administration of the community that are being performed by others in the present.

The Levites are the focus of the Chronicler’s utopian vision for the community. The monarchy is an institution of the past that has served its purpose. 270 The priests are necessary for the operation of the cult but have limited areas of service, and they have a history of failure in their duties and piety. 271 The Levites, in contrast, are dependable, versatile, and will continue to exist as a vibrant group in the community’s future. Their incorporation into new areas of responsibility within the cult enhances the ability of the community to “seek God” and to be taught “the good way” in which to live (2 Chr 6:27). The conditions of the present *will* be improved as the Levites are allowed to serve in a wide variety and number of functions, according to the Chronicler’s argument. The *better alternative reality* of the Chronicler’s cultic utopia will be realized in the community as a result of these expanded roles for the Levites. 272

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270 This is not to discount that idea that God *could* use the monarchy again, but the Chronicler does not advocate this position and seems to have left its future usefulness as a *possible* option while stressing the point that it is *unnecessary* for the future of the community; see Chapter 3.

271 The Levites are criticized once in Chronicles. They do not act quickly, but do subsequently perform their duties (2 Chr 24: 4-11).

272 Some scholars have used the theologically-charged term “realized eschatology” to denote this feature of Chronicles; see Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy*, 56; and Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 1:16; idem, “Justification by Faith Revisited,” 301-02. However, it is perhaps best to avoid it altogether, as it
However, Chronicles does not construct a detailed blueprint for the precise nature of these roles and their impact on the operation of the cult. Much of the information still remains vague or even contradictory. Sometimes two or three different descriptions of possible scenarios are presented. Instead of assuming that this is the result of multiple redactional layers or evidence of historical development within the text, a utopian reading of the data emphasizes the *adaptability* of the system over time to new circumstances.\(^{273}\)

The Chronicler is providing options, not a rigid system to be implemented once and for all. These various structures also demonstrate that organizational structures *may and do* change over time. Innovation and continuity are not mutually exclusive.

The cultic utopia of Chronicles is *not* a perfect system that operates smoothly and remains the same indefinitely. The cultic utopia of Chronicles is a *better alternative reality* that operates in continuity with the cultic regulations found in the tradition while adapting them to new situations. The procedures of the cultic celebrations may also vary in their order or details without jeopardizing their efficacy. The cultic utopia incorporates additional individuals as personnel and assigns them a variety of meaningful tasks. It also affirms the inclusion of foreigners and the unclean in the festivals, if their hearts are “seeking God” (see, e.g., 2 Chr 30:1-20). In all of these cases, it is the Levites who ensure through their actions and interpretations that the innovations are still performed so as to maintain continuity with the traditions. The cultic utopia of Chronicles is not ethereal or an escapist fantasy, but this *better alternative reality* may come into existence in the future, if the parameters that are outlined in Chronicles are accepted and initially

\(^{273}\) would be a mistake to import the connotations of this language used in NT scholarship to the Chronicler’s work; cf. the discussion of eschatology in Section 1.1.4.2 and the comments in Section 1.2.1.
implemented. If this should happen, it will largely be the result of the actions undertaken by the Levites and the validation of their new roles by the community.

273 Compare the assertion by Ackroyd that “the Chronicler is hesitant about the precise nature of the future” (Chronicler in His Age, 309).
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

“The book of Chronicles, the epitome of the old dispensation, is of such quality and importance that if anyone wishes to claim knowledge of the Scriptures apart from it, he should laugh at himself” (Jerome, *Epist.* 53.8). Jerome’s laudatory claim, however, does not reflect the common view taken by either Jewish or Christian interpreters throughout the centuries. With the exception of its importance during the nineteenth century and the attention it has received in the last four decades, Chronicles has existed at the margins of reading and research in both the Jewish and Christian traditions. In a context of renewed interest in an often-neglected book, this dissertation contributes to the variety of interpretative approaches being employed by an increasing number of scholars.

Drawing on the insights of Roland Boer for reading Chronicles as utopian literature, this dissertation expands both the methodology that he utilized and the parameters of the material discussed. Bringing additional studies on utopian literary theory from a spectrum of those working in the field, the methodological approach suggested by Boer is augmented, developed, and refined. Also, as the entire book of Chronicles has been the subject of this analysis, the scope of this project is broader than many recent studies on Chronicles, which have focused on isolated themes, individuals, or discrete sections in the book. Three of the themes that scholars have isolated as being
of central concern in Chronicles have served as the basis for discussion: genealogy, politics, and the temple cult. Each of these motifs has been interpreted using the methodology of utopian literary theory.

In Chapter 1, two main sections provide the foundation for this analysis. In the first, the state of the field for scholarship on Chronicles is outlined. This includes the present consensus, or lack thereof, on issues such as authorship, date, and genre. The current views of the three motifs to be addressed in detail in the following three chapters are briefly summarized. It is argued, that the atomization of the book, especially as a result of redaction criticism, and interpretation of these and other motifs and of selected portions of the book without adequate attention to the coherence of the book as a whole, have contributed to many of the conflicting readings of Chronicles. As a corrective to these approaches, this dissertation provides a coherent reading of Chronicles by addressing an underlying ideological matrix which serves as the foundation for all three of its major concerns, namely, utopianism.

A theoretical model for assessing the utopianism of Chronicles is delineated in the second section of Chapter 1. An introduction to and explanation of utopian literary theory, as articulated and utilized by scholars in the fields of utopian literature, science fiction, and Classics, constitute the majority of this section. An excursus is included on the usefulness of spatial theory, another methodology of recent origin, that assists in clarifying depictions of “utopian space” in this literature which enhances the scope and explanatory power of this interpretative approach.

Utopian literary theory is a recent development in literary criticism. This approach to reading utopias and utopian literature emphasizes the role of social critique
and the rejection of the *status quo* in the construction of a *better alternative reality* contained in the depiction of a utopian society. Whereas utopian literature has been interpreted traditionally as a blueprint for socio-political organization and as an attempt by the elite of a society to legitimize their control and position of power within it, this view has now been abandoned by most utopian theorists. Instead, utopian literature is inherently innovative and challenges current conditions by articulating a *better alternative reality* than what exists in the present. The utopia may be located temporally in the past, present, or future. Spatially, the utopia may exist as a remote community or as the author’s own society in another time, but the content of the utopia always stands in contrast to the author’s present. Thus, historical reconstruction of the author’s society on the basis of a utopian text is extremely problematic. While the debates and issues of importance from that historical moment may be readily assessable, utopian literature conveys information about the present through descriptions of practices and relationships that are most often presented as the inverse, converse, or logical development of present conditions rather than the circumstances themselves.

Utopian literary theory also maintains that utopias are not immutable entities. Rather, careful readings of utopian literature reveal that change and adaptability are necessary components for the survival of the utopian society. Thus, utopias provide parameters and patterns to be emulated by those attempting to implement a *better alternative reality*. These models usually contain contradictions and provide means for continued historical development to occur within the utopia. Therefore, in utopian literature, the details of the utopia that seem to be in tension with one another or impossible to actualize are not understood to be the result of multiple redactional layers,
the precise preservation of source material without harmonization, or the work of deficient authors or editors.

This chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the utopian ideology contained in Chronicles and the applicability of this methodology to the critical study of Chronicles. It is suggested that Chronicles shares much with the perspective of such texts as Ezekiel 40-48 and the *Temple Scroll*, which both present a future utopian society centered around a new temple. Chronicles also creates a utopian society centered around a temple, but presents it as a past reality that should be the basis for comparison to the present. Chronicles does not call for a new temple to replace the present one. Instead, the practices of the current temple need to be brought into line with those of the utopian past; in addition, those ideological values integral to the survival of the community in its history must be embraced and incorporated by the community of the author’s own time.

In Chapter 2, the methodology of utopian literary theory is applied to an assessment of the identity of Israel throughout the book and especially in the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9. The first of two main sections provides comparative data on the structures, functions, and purposes of genealogies from the ancient Near East and the Hellenistic world. This survey concludes that the Hellenistic material provides more profitable points of comparison to Chronicles than the data from the ancient Near East. Also of particular importance is the suggestion that the extensive genealogies that commence the book of Chronicles should be viewed to function as a “virtual preface” (using the terminology of Lucian) for the historiographic work although these chapters are obviously not in the form of a “separable preface.”
These comparative data indicate that one of the major functions of genealogies in antiquity was to articulate issues of identity. The construction of the identity of Israel in Chronicles, especially in the first nine chapters, is examined using utopian literary theory in the second main section of Chapter 2. The position taken by scholars regarding the use of source material by the Chronicler in the genealogies dictates to a substantial degree the various perspectives taken on the relationship between the textual depiction of the past and the present conditions of the Chronicler’s own time. Thus, the Chronicler’s use of sources receives special attention. Also, the effectiveness of the Chronicler’s message and its implied acceptance by his audience is conveyed in a variety of ways. An excursus on three of these vehicles—prophecy, speeches, and authority—supports the contention that Chronicles attempts to convince its readership that a different future, a better alternative reality, is not only desirable but also is probable.

In this second section, selected examples of the Chronicler’s utopian construction of Israel’s identity are addressed in detail: the missing genealogies of Dan and Zebulun, the short genealogy of Naphtali, and the assimilation of individuals and families to the privileged lines of Judah and Levi. The treatment of this information in Chronicles is compared with the Chronicler’s well-attested “all Israel” ideology. The identity of Israel in Chronicles is fluid and subject to constant reinterpretation, extending beyond the “twelve tribes,” those attached to them, those who returned from exile, those residing in the land, and those who lived at one particular (ideal) point in the hallowed past. In this regard, the identity of Israel serves a utopian function in the book. From this analysis and an examination of issues related to foreigners in the expression of universalism and particularism in Chronicles, it becomes evident that exclusivistic and restrictive
definitions of Israel are being critiqued and that the value of genealogical lineages as boundary markers is called into question by the utopian genealogies and identity of Israel in Chronicles.

This second chapter also contains two key critiques of modern scholarship on Chronicles that continue into the subsequent two chapters. First, the common assumption that Chronicles reflects a particular historical situation in its presentation of the past——whether preexilic, postexilic, or a combination thereof—is replaced by a different presupposition: the depiction of society in Chronicles is utopian in nature, and reflects a desired reality that is related to the present but distinct from it. By changing the assumption, the perception that Chronicles was composed to legitimize present conditions in the Second Temple period (i.e., the present is retrojected into the past) must be qualified as only one possibility of interpretation. Instead, utopian literary theory asserts that Chronicles offers a vision for a different future presented as if it were past reality. As a result, Chronicles ought not to be used to reconstruction practices or relationships during the Second Temple period, since its elaborate systems and social arrangements may have little, if any, direct correspondence to current circumstances. That is, Chronicles portrays a possible future by retrojecting it into the past.

Second, the “Davidism” that many scholars have proposed as a primary concern for the Chronicler is questioned—a point introduced in the context of the Judahite genealogies and further developed in Chapter 3. In this view, the line of David figures prominently in the genealogies of Judah. However, this is only partially correct. On the basis of form, it is the line of Solomon that should be more properly understood in such terms. The argument that a “Solomonism” is present throughout Chronicles and further
advances the Chronicler’s utopianism in his text commences with the initial appearance of Solomon in this genealogical preface to the following narrative.

In Chapter 3, the political dimension of the Chronicler’s work is interpreted using utopian literary theory in three main sections. The first contains a survey of the comparative data regarding depictions of utopias in literature from the Hellenistic world, other parts of the Hebrew Bible, and the Second Temple period. The section concerning these various models for the construction of a utopia concludes with an excursus on the paradigmatic portrayal by St. Thomas More in his two-volume masterpiece, *Utopia*.

The second section of Chapter 3 discusses the significance of the Davidic monarchy in Chronicles and addresses the contribution of each of the rulers to the utopian (and dystopian) ideology of the Chronicler. The Davidic monarch is not the primary concern of the Chronicler; instead, the organization and renewal of the temple cult dominate the political utopia in Chronicles. The religious fidelity and spirituality (e.g., “seeking YHWH”) demonstrated by the monarchy and by the people provide a utopian example to the community, even in their ultimate failures and complicity in the actualization of a dystopian experience of exile. Solomon’s utopian superiority to his father David underscores the Chronicler’s obsession with the cult and somewhat ambiguous attitude toward the future of the Davidic monarchy in his own time. Subsequent rulers are presented as either attempting to actualize the Solomonic utopia or causing a dystopian series of events to occur. None of the rulers, including Hezekiah and Josiah, achieves the re-institution of utopia, but they nevertheless affirm the possibility of a future better alternative reality while always striving toward the Solomonic ideal.
An excursus on the death and burial notices of the monarchs reveals that these remarks serve as utopian critiques of the reigns of each monarch. The “utopian space” created by the various descriptions cannot be formulated into any pattern of good kings and evil kings being appropriately compensated in quality or location of death or burials. This conclusion thus rejects a common view that the Chronicler presents a rigid view of retribution even in death. On the contrary, it is suggested that by these comments the Chronicler critiques contemporary claims to privilege or power on the basis of burial location in the Second Temple period. As “utopian space,” the relative location of a certain family’s tombs to the supposed Davidic graves, for example, cannot be enlisted as evidence for social or political rights to authority. Thus, even in death, the Davidic monarchs function to reinforce the utopian ideology of the Chronicler.

The third section of Chapter 3 examines three concerns for the Chronicler in his depiction of a utopia: the restoration of the Davidic monarchy, the perception of the exile, and the continued existence of the Jerusalem community under the control of the Persian Empire. The monarchy is not viewed as necessary for the existence of utopia, as its significance has been reapplied to the temple and to the Persian rulers in the Chronicler’s present (or immediate past). Thus, the Chronicler does not advocate the restoration of the dynasty, but considers the temple to be the source of his utopian hope. However, the Chronicler also is careful not to exclude the possibility of its restoration, should God so act, but does argue that political independence under a Davidide is not necessary. The exile is also reinterpreted in Chronicles in the service of his utopian vision. The exile serves as a spatial-temporal line of demarcation that separates the past from the present and that prevents the simple replication of the past to actualize utopia. Yet, the exile did
not destroy Israel or its utopian destiny. Continuity with the past while allowing for historical change and adaptability remains not only a possibility but also the ideological foundation of the Chronicler’s utopia. The future will be consistent with the past but will not be a mirror or reinstitution of it. The Chronicler’s utopia is not a blueprint to be implemented once, but a dynamic model filled with opportunities and possibilities that may take a variety of forms while still being regarded as maintaining continuity with the utopian society of the past.

In Chapter 4, the Chronicler’s vision for a better alternative reality manifested in the detailed description of the temple cult is addressed in three of its four sections. In the introductory section, a survey of the depictions of the temple cult in literature from the postexilic period provides comparative data. Included in this discussion are Haggai, Zechariah, Third Isaiah, Joel, Malachi, Ezekiel 40-48, and Ezra-Nehemiah. These texts both affirm and criticize the cult and its personnel. The detailed future temple society of Ezekiel 40-48 is particularly instructive for assessing the utopian nature of the temple cult in Chronicles.

This initial section also includes a discussion of claims to priestly status, the role of Persia in supporting temple cults, the complicated evidence and assumptions regarding the political power of the Yehudite temple and its personnel during this period, and an excursus on Ezra’s Law and the Mosaic Torah. From all of these data, the conclusion that the Chronicler assumes the conditions of this period but does not systematically reproduce them in his composition seems correct. Rather, in its cultic utopia Chronicles presents a better alternative reality that does not simply reflect the present situation. The
comparative data further strengthens the probability of this assessment of the cult in Chronicles.

The second main section of Chapter 4 addresses the utopian depiction of the priesthood and sacrifice in Chronicles. The identity of the priests and their duties are deemed to limit their roles and spheres of influence while acknowledging their place within the proper functioning of the cultic system. This critique is further developed in the Chronicler’s presentation of the sacrificial system, especially when viewed in contrast to the cult as it is depicted in D, P, and Ezekiel 40-48. Thus, the cultic utopia of Chronicles includes Aaronide priests, but does not seek to expand their control or prestige within the cult and society. In the same way, the third section addresses the position of the Zadokites and the leading priest in Chronicles. This extended discussion concludes that the Chronicler does not construct a Zadokite utopia, but does affirm the claims of the Zadokites to belonging to the priesthood, though not controlling it, and to holding the office of leading priest, though not exclusively, in the past.

The fourth section of Chapter 4 contends that the focus of the Chronicler’s cultic utopia is the Levites. While scholars have tended to assume that Chronicles reflects the ascendancy of the Levites to new positions within the cult and larger society, utopian literary theory contends that these innovations should not be too quickly viewed as a reflection of historical reality. Instead, the Chronicler’s elevation of the Levites is thoroughly utopian, offering a better alternative reality to the present organization and distribution of duties in the cult. The identity and duties of the Levites serve as a utopian critique of the temple personnel by emphasizing the faithfulness of the Levites and their unique ability to perform not only the extensive duties required in the “service of the
house of God,” but also to act as priests should it be necessary. The priests, whether Aaronides or Zadokites, are not afforded such flexibility, and both groups are explicitly among those responsible for the dystopias of the past. The Levites, on the other hand, are criticized only once (and without lasting consequences) and appear as the major focus of the Chronicler’s hope for a future utopia.

In conclusion, this project interprets Chronicles from the innovative perspective of utopian literary theory as a utopian work that critiques present society and its status quo by presenting a better alternative reality. Thus, in contrast to many recent scholarly assessments, this analysis contends that Chronicles does not reflect the historical situation of a particular time during the Second Temple period in its portrayal of the past, but rather conveys hope for a different future. Also, this dissertation argues that utopianism is an underlying ideological matrix that contributes to the coherence of the book of Chronicles as a whole. Redaction criticism is considered unnecessary to explain the variegated content of Chronicles. Such inconsistencies in depictions and possible options for socio-politico-religious models are characteristic of utopian literature, including the book of Chronicles.

This dissertation concludes that Chronicles should be interpreted as a utopian history. The assumption by scholars that the society of the Chronicler’s own time is reflected in the book is challenged. Instead, the vision of hope for a better alternative reality in the future contained throughout the book is examined through the lens of utopian literary theory. In this view, the complicated relationship between continuity and innovation in Chronicles receives clarification and a probable explanation for its unique expression.
The potential for addressing additional motifs and selected passages in Chronicles from this perspective is definitely present for future research on Chronicles. For example, the utopian function of prophecy in Chronicles is worthy of its own separate analysis. Also, utopian literary theory should be applied to the depictions of other tribes in the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9, and a more detailed assessment of the utopian portrayals of rituals and liturgies in the sacrificial system described in Chronicles would be profitable.

In addition, this methodology of utopian literary theory illuminates the various ancient utopian texts surveyed in this dissertation. Thus, the relevant passages in the HB, NT, and other Second Temple literature would benefit from a detailed examination employing this same interpretative lens. As these other texts are assessed using this innovative methodology, this presentation of utopianism in Chronicles may need to be nuanced. However, this initial reading of utopia in Chronicles has demonstrated the usefulness of this methodological approach for critical investigations of the Chronicler’s unique historiographic work.
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