NOTES

(book) 2 Chronicles
[Introductory material to 2 Chronicles is contained in the Introduction to 1 Chronicles.]


(ro) 1.1 Chronicles omits the reference to Solomon’s marriage to Pharaoh’s daughter in 1 Kings 3. Established himself may include building projects, raising an army, and making reforms. Perhaps there is also an allusion to Solomon’s mastering of the troubles that accompany his rise to power in 1 Kings 2.5 - 46. Made him exceedingly great. Cf. Josh 3.7; 4.14; 1 Chr 29.25.

(ro) 1.2 - 3 In 1 Kings 3.4 Solomon goes to Gibeon alone; his first act as king in Chronicles is to lead a national pilgrimage to the bronze altar at Gibeon. Assemblies of all Israel in Chronicles always deal with the temple.

(ro) 1.4 Cf. the Chronicler’s version of the ark narrative in 1 Chr 13.1 - 16.1.

(ro) 1.5 Bezalel. See Ex 31.2 - 11; 1 Chr 2.20; cf. Ex 38.1 - 2. It. The RSV translates “the LORD.” The Hebrew pronoun is ambiguous. For the tabernacle at Gibeon, see 1 Chr 16.39 and 21.29.

(ro) 1.6 The tent of meeting makes Gibeon a legitimate place of sacrifice (Lev 17.8 - 9).

(ro) 1.7 1 Kings 3.5 adds “in a dream” after Solomon, but see the criticism of dreams in Jer 23.25 - 28.

(ro) 1.8 Chronicles omits the notice of Solomon’s not knowing how to go out or come in from 1 Kings 3.7, but see 1 Chr 22.5; 29.1, where David admits Solomon’s youth and inexperience.

(ro) 1.9 Fulfilled. Cf. the promise of numerous offspring made to Jacob in Gen 28.14.

(ro) 1.10 In Chronicles wisdom is the ability to build the temple. In 1 Kings Solomon’s wisdom is shown in his judging between two prostitutes (3.16 - 28), his administrative magnificence (4.1 - 5.8), and his knowledge of nature (5.9 - 14), all omitted from Chronicles.

(ro) 1.13 Chronicles omits the sacrifices performed by Solomon on his return to Jerusalem in 1 Kings 3.15 since in the view of Chronicles the only legitimate sacrificial site at this time is Gibeon.

(np) 1.14 - 17 Cf. 1 Kings 10.26 - 29. Chronicles moves this account of Solomon’s riches and commercial activity from the end of Solomon’s reign to a point between the revelation at Gibeon and the beginning of the temple building. At this position it fulfills v. 12 and implies that these resources were dedicated to constructing the temple.

(ro) 1.15 Gold, not present in the Hebrew of 1 Kings 10.27. Shephelah, low hills in western Palestine, separating the coastal plain from the central mountain ridge.

(ro) 1.16 Kue, Cilicia, on the southeast coast of Asia Minor.

(ro) 1.17 Hittites, people living roughly in what is now modern Turkey. Solomon is a kind of arms merchant.

(np) 2.1 - 18 Cf. 1 Kings 5.1 - 8; 7.13 - 14; 5.9 - 18.

(ro) 2.1 Palace. Cf. 2.12; 7.11; 8.1; 9.11. Chronicles omits details about its construction that are reported in 1 Kings 7.1 - 12.

(ro) 2.3 - 10 A letter of Solomon to Hiram. According to 1 Kings 5.1 Hiram (note the slight spelling difference) initiates the correspondence with Solomon.
2.4 Chronicles makes the obligation to sacrifice a major reason for building the temple.

2.6a The inability of any temple to contain God is borrowed from Solomon’s speech at the dedication of the temple (6.18).

2.7 The artisan is not mentioned until 1 Kings 7.13–14 in the parallel account, where he is skilled only in bronze work. The wider talents in Chronicles stem from a comparison of Huram-abi (v. 13) with Oholiab, who worked on the tabernacle (cf. Ex 31.1–11; 35.30–35).

2.8 The identity of algum is not certain, but 9.10–11 indicates that it was imported from Ophir.

2.10 A cor was slightly more than 6 bushels. A bath was 6 gallons or 22 liters. The enormous amounts of grain, wine, and oil fit a pattern of Tyrian dependence on Israel for foodstuffs (Ezek 17.17). In 1 Kings 5.11 these are annual payments.

2.11–16 Huram’s reply.

2.11–12 Huram expresses piety toward the LORD and mentions the LORD’s endorsement of Solomon’s kingship and his gift of wisdom to him.

2.13 Huram-abi is a counterpart to Bezalel and Oholiab from the wilderness period (see note on 2.7). The element abi in his name, not attested in 1 Kings 7.13, may be a play on the last part of the name Oholiab.

2.14 Danite. According to 1 Kings 7.14, Hiram is the son of a widow from Naphtali. The wilderness artisan Oholiab, however, was from the tribe of Dan (Ex 31.6; 35.34). His skills correspond to those requested by Solomon in v. 7. Both Dan and Naphtali are descendants of Bilhah, the concubine of Jacob. My lord, a term of respect, used by Huram for both David and Solomon (cf. v. 15).

2.16 Joppa, an important harbor city in antiquity, today a suburb of Tel Aviv. The logs could have been carried on ships or towed as rafts. Cf. 1 Kings 5.9; Ezra 3.7.

2.17 The land of Israel. Cf. 1 Chr 22.2; 2 Chr 30.25; 34.7. Census. Cf. 1 Chr 21; 22.2. Chronicles insists that no Israelite, but only resident aliens, had to do forced labor. Cf. 2 Chr 8.7–10. According to 1 Kings 5.13–18, omitted by Chronicles, Solomon sends thirty thousand workers to Lebanon, in three monthly shifts.

2.18 Three thousand six hundred. 1 Kings 5.16 has three thousand three hundred, but see the Septuagint of 1 Kings.

3.1–17 Cf. 1 Kings 6.1–7.21. The account of the building of the temple is shorter in Chronicles than in 1 Kings, but the Chronicler edits that earlier account to emphasize the parallels between the temple and the tabernacle.

3.1 Mount Moriah. The Temple Mount is identified with the place where Abraham attempted to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22.2, 14). This site is also the place where David saw an angel with a drawn sword at the time of his census and built an altar (1 Chr 21.1–22.1).

3.2 959 B.C.E. In 1 Kings 6.1 the temple building begins on the four hundred eightieth anniversary of the exodus. Chronicles generally deemphasizes the exodus.

3.3 The short cubit was 17.4 inches and the long cubit 20.4 inches. It is not clear which of these was considered the old standard. According to the short cubit, the temple measures 87 by 29 feet; according to the long cubit 102 by 34 feet. The height is not given.

3.4 According to 1 Kings 6.3 the vestibule measures 20 by 10 cubits. One hundred twenty. Elsewhere the temple is 30 cubits high. The verse has been damaged in transmission.

3.5 Nave. The largest room in the temple, where most of the ritual activity takes place. Within it were an incense altar, ten golden lampstands, and the table for the bread of the Presence.
3.6 Parvaim, an unknown site.

3.8 Six hundred talents, 22.5 tons. David is said to have contributed 100,000 talents of gold (1 Chr 22.14).

3.9 Fifty shekels, 20 ounces, which is too much for one nail, too little for all the nails.

3.10 Cherubim, winged sphinxes, whose backs formed a throne for the invisible LORD.

3.14 Solomon’s temple had doors separating the Most Holy Place from the rest of the building (1 Kings 6.31 - 32). The curtain may be a projection onto Solomon’s temple from the Second Temple, with influence also from the tabernacle account (Ex 26.31 - 33; cf. Mt 27.51). Chronicles omits at this point an equivalent to 1 Kings 6.29 - 7.14. 1 Kings 7.1 - 12 deals with the king’s palace (cf. 2 Chr 2.1).

3.15 - 17 The pillars, lacking in the Second Temple, are symbolic and decorative, not structural. Their height in Chronicles is nearly double that in Kings (18 cubits; 1 Kings 7.15). The Chronicler apparently includes in his calculations the circumference (12 cubits; 1 Kings 7.15) and the height of the capital (5 cubits; 1 Kings 7.16).

3.17 Jachin in Hebrew means “he establishes.” Boaz, meaning unknown (also the name of David’s great-grandfather; Ruth 4.17, 21 - 22). Some scholars interpret these names as the first words in dynastic oracles.

4.1 - 5.1 Cf. 1 Kings 7.23 - 51.

4.1 This account of the bronze altar was omitted accidentally in the present text of 1 Kings because this verse and the following verse start the same way: he made. For a description of the altar from the exilic period, see Ezek 43.13 - 17.

4.2 - 5 According to Chronicles the molten sea serves the purposes of purification (cf. Ex 30.18 - 21). In the temple of Solomon, it may have symbolized the cosmic sea dragon.

4.2 The circumference should be 31.4 cubits. Either thirty is an approximation, or the measurement was calculated from a different place on the rim (inside versus outside).

4.4 The twelve animals supporting the sea face outward and look toward each of the four compass points. The number twelve implies the twelve tribes of Israel (cf. Num 2; Ezek 48.30 - 35).

4.5 Three thousand baths. 1 Kings 7.26 reads “two thousand baths,” a calculation based on a hemispherical rather than a cylindrical shape. A bath was approximately 6 gallons or 22 liters.

4.6 There are ten basins in Solomon’s temple, according to the Chronicler, while the tabernacle only had one. Similarly, the tabernacle had but one lampstand and one table, not ten as in Chronicles (vv. 7 - 8). An elaborate description of the basins and their stands in 1 Kings 7.27 - 38 is omitted in Chronicles.

4.7 Golden lampstands, perhaps symbolizing the presence of God.

4.8 In the tabernacle, a single table was used for the bread of the Presence. The function of the ten tables in Chronicles is not clear, though the lampstands may have been placed on them.

4.9 Court of the priests, called the inner court in 1 Kings 6.36; 7.12.

4.10 - 22 A close parallel to 1 Kings 7.39 - 50 that is perhaps a later addition. These verses ascribe production of various materials to Huram while the rest of chs. 3-4 gives credit for that to Solomon. The mention of inner doors (v. 22) contradicts the Chronicler’s idea that a curtain closed off the Most Holy Place (3.14).

4.11 Huram-abi from Tyre (2.13) makes other miscellaneous furnishings.

4.16 Chronicles does not tell us where Solomon discovered the great quantities of bronze. Recent archaeology demonstrates that the copper from Timna and the valley of Elah was not mined in Solomon’s time.
Solomon makes molds for his bronze castings in the clay of the Jordan River. Succoth and Zeredah (better “Zarethan,” following 1 Kings 7.46), cities just east of the Jordan River.

Dedicated. Cf. 1 Chr 18.1 - 13; 26.25 - 27; 29.1 - 5. Solomon stores the silver, gold, and temple vessels in the treasuries (1 Chr 28.12). There may be a pun in Hebrew on the name “Solomon” and the verb was finished.

Cf. 1 Kings 8.1 - 11. In Chronicles the whole nation of Israel participates in major cultic events, but in this case the idea is already present in 1 Kings.

Festival that is in the seventh month, Tabernacles (Booths).

The Chronicler has the Levites carry the ark (cf. 1 Chr 15.2, 11 - 15) and supports them wherever possible. In 1 Kings 8.3 the priests carry the ark.

While the ark has already been brought to Jerusalem by David (1 Chr 15 - 16), the tent of meeting (the tabernacle) is now brought from Gibeon (2 Chr 1.3) and presumably stored in the temple. Priests and the Levites, better “the Levitical priests.”

The priests alone could enter the Most Holy Place. Cf. Num 4.5 - 20; Ezek 44.10 - 14.

Holy place. The NRSV emends, following the Septuagint and 1 Kings 8.8; the Hebrew reads “the ark.” To this day, taken over from 1 Kings 8.8. The ark no longer existed at the time Chronicles was written.

Two tablets. According to a later tradition attested by Heb 9.4, a jar of manna and Aaron’s rod were also in the ark (cf. Ex 16.32 - 34; Num 17.10 - 11). Horeb, the preferred word for Sinai in Deuteronomy - 2 Kings (see 1 Kings 8.9).

Almost all of these verses are an addition by the Chronicler.

The levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun. Cf. 1 Chr 16.37 - 41.

For he is good . . . forever, a couplet frequently used in Chronicles (1 Chr 16.34, 41; 2 Chr 7.3, 6; 20.21).

The temple is filled with the cloud of the glory of the LORD, just as the tabernacle had been at its dedication (Ex 40.34 - 38). The marks of a theophany are seen by the priests. A second theophany, approving the temple, appears in 7.1 - 3, where it is visible to all the people.

Solomon builds a permanent house for the LORD, whose glory had once appeared at Sinai (Ex 20.21) and more frequently at the tabernacle.

Though Chronicles follows 1 Kings very closely in ch. 6, the words my name might be there . . . and I chose no one are missing in 1 Kings 8.16 through a copyist’s mistake. Solomon is portrayed celebrating the divine choice of Jerusalem and of his father David.

Chronicles does not cite here David’s bloodshed as the reason for banning him from temple building (cf. 1 Chr 22.8 - 9; 28.3).

Solomon is a double fulfillment of the promise: he succeeds his father as king and he builds the temple.

Instead of with the people of Israel, 1 Kings 8.21 reads: “with our ancestors when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.” Chronicles stresses the contemporary validity of the covenant more than its antiquity, and it omits a reference to the exodus. (See also the note on 6.41 - 42; an equivalent for 1 Kings 8.51, 53 is omitted.) The exodus is mentioned in 2 Chr 6.5.

Cf. 1 Kings 8.22 - 53. Chronicles follows the text of Kings closely in this passage, except that it replaces most of 1 Kings 8.50 - 53 with its own conclusion in vv. 41 - 42.
6.13 This verse is missing in 1 Kings because of scribal error. Note how both v. 12 and v. 13 end with *spread out his hands*.

6.14 - 17 Solomon prays that God would fulfill the dynastic promise, just as he had fulfilled his promise to David about the temple.

6.16 *Walk in my law.* 1 Kings 8.25 reads “walk before me.” The expression in Chronicles is more concrete and may refer to the Pentateuch. David’s obedience in Chronicles contrasts with the record of his many sins in 2 Samuel.

6.18 - 21 The prayer struggles with ideas about God’s presence. While heaven is God’s *dwelling place*, not earth among mortals, his *name* has been set in the earthly temple. Solomon hopes that his own prayer and that of the people will induce God to hear and forgive.

6.22 - 23 These verses about oath-taking procedures, even though taken from 1 Kings 8.31 - 32, express well the Chronicler’s theory of divine retribution.

6.24 - 35 Solomon urges God to respond to calamities like drought, famine, sickness, and especially military defeat by hearing the people when they repent (or *turn*; vv. 24, 26) and by forgiving them.

6.36 - 40 The focus is on the plight of Israel in exile and the belief in the effectiveness of prayer from exile reflects the main concern of the prayer in 1 Kings 8. The Chronicler also affirms elsewhere that prayers from exile are effective (33.10 - 13).

6.40 *To prayer from this place,* an addition to the text of 1 Kings, expressing the theological concern of the Chronicler’s own day.

6.41 - 42 The conclusion of the prayer is made up of a quotation from Ps 132.8 - 10, 1. Thus, the Chronicler builds his hope on words ascribed to David, rather than those ascribed to Moses in the period of the exodus, as in 1 Kings 8.51, 53.

6.41 *Resting place,* the temple. *Ark of your might.* The ark symbolized the presence of God in military battles. *Salvation.* Ps 132.9 reads “righteousness.” *In your goodness,* an addition in Chronicles.

6.42 *Steadfast love for your servant David.* Ps 132, by way of contrast, reminds God of David’s hardships and the efforts he had expended for God. Chronicles asks God to keep his promises to the anointed king, indicating that the author expects something from these old promises even after the rebuilding of the temple, perhaps even some form of a messianic hope. Isa 55.3 democratizes the “steadfast, sure love for David” by saying it now applies to all Israel.

7.1 - 10 Cf. 1 Kings 8.54 - 66.

7.1 *Fire* from heaven authenticates the first sacrifices at the new temple, as fire did at the first sacrifices in the wilderness (Lev 9.23 - 24) and at David’s presentation of burnt offerings (1 Chr 21.26). Cf. also Judg 6.20 - 22; 1 Kings 18.

7.2 A cloud theophany also occurs in 5.13.

7.3 See note on 5.13. Chronicles omits Solomon’s blessing of the people in 1 Kings 8.54 - 61.

7.5 The large number of sacrifices is probably a hyperbole to emphasize the importance of the occasion. Cf. the similar, large figures at ceremonies in the time of Hezekiah (29.32 - 36) and Josiah (35.7 - 9). Such sacrifices were to be eaten by the people during the fifteen-day celebration to follow.

7.8 As is fitting for such a momentous event, *all Israel* celebrates the dedication of the temple. The wide geographic area represented by the participants, from *Lebo-hamath*, the traditional northern border of Israel, to the *Wadi of Egypt*, the traditional southern border, recalls the pan-Israelite celebration when David prepared to bring the ark to Jerusalem (1 Chr 13).
The dedication lasts from the eighth to the fourteenth day of the seventh month, followed by the Feast of Tabernacles from the fifteenth to the twenty-second day of the month, with dismissal on the twenty-third day. Hezekiah also is said to have held his great Passover for two weeks (30.23).

The Chronicler adds a reference to Solomon as part of his equal treatment for the two kings of the United Kingdom (cf. 1 Kings 8.66).

Since the building of the king’s palace (the king’s house) took thirteen years, according to 1 Kings 7.1, the second theophany occurs much later than its position in 2 Chronicles would suggest.

In the night, a reference to the theophany at Gibeon (1.7 - 13).

This material, not contained in 1 Kings, affirms that God will respond to the petitions of ch. 6.

Humble repentance will force God to hear, forgive, and heal. Throughout the rest of 2 Chronicles this principle of immediate retribution is illustrated through the history of the Southern Kingdom.

Made covenant with, more specific and intense than in 1 Kings 9.5 ("promised"). You shall never lack a successor to rule over Israel, another indication of the low-key messianic hope of the Chronicler.

God’s address to the people, announcing the consequences of idolatry.

You includes Solomon, contemporary Israelites, and future generations of Israelites. The Chronicler omits the reference to David’s sons in 1 Kings 9.6. The evil behavior of the people would force God to banish all of them from the land.

A similar question and answer format dealing with the causes of the desolations of exile appears in Deut 29.24 - 25.

Cf. 1 Kings 9.10 - 28. The Chronicler, as here with Solomon, often discloses his approval of a king by recording his many building projects.

The parallel text in 1 Kings 9.11 reports that Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities, apparently in payment for help with his various building projects or because he needed money for something else. The Chronicler may have been embarrassed that Solomon disposed of some of the land of Israel or that he was in debt. As a result, the Chronicler changes the text to make the cities pass from Huram (a variant spelling of Hiram) to Solomon.

Solomon’s military successes, otherwise unreported, also show his life under blessing, though elsewhere in Chronicles he is called a man of peace (1 Chr 22.9).

Hamath-zobah, an unknown city, perhaps a scribal error. David strikes down Hadadezer of Zobah, toward Hamath, according to 1 Chr 18.3.

Tadmor, a caravan city (Palmyra) located 140 miles northeast of Damascus. 1 Kings 9.18 reads “Tamar” (a small site in southern Judah; cf. Ezek 47.19; 48.28). Hamath, modern Hama, a city located between Damascus and Aleppo on the main overland route to Mesopotamia.

Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon, twin cities in Ephraim that guarded a major pass on the road from the coast, by way of the valley of Aijalon, to the hill country and Jerusalem.

Baalath, an unidentified city in Judah.

The nations in v. 7 are the traditional inhabitants of the land before the arrival of Israel. Only the descendants of these nations, not the Israelites themselves, are conscripted into forced labor according to the Chronicler.
Solomon moves his wife who was also the daughter of Pharaoh out of Jerusalem because of the sanctifying presence of the ark in the capital city. Chronicles does not include the other references from Kings to this marriage (1 Kings 3.1; 7.8; 9.16; 11.1).

Only the priests are allowed to go beyond the vestibule.

These verses, added by the Chronicler, demonstrate Solomon’s conformity to the law of Moses (cf. Num 28 - 29). His appointment of the Levites follows the precedent of David, his father. Cf. 1 Chr 23 - 27.

Ezion-geber and Eloth were ports on the northeast end of the Gulf of Aqaba. A joint sailing venture with Huram embarks from there and brings back with it four hundred fifty talents (more than fifteen tons) of gold. Ophir, an unknown and presumably distant city. It took three years to get there (9.21).

Cf. 1 Kings 10.1 - 13. The queen of Sheba admires the wealth and wisdom of Solomon. Chronicles begins its account of Solomon with an account of Solomon’s relationship with the king of Tyre (2.1 - 16). The queen’s trip probably involved commercial interests since the trade routes to Tyre would pass through Israel.

Sheba, modern Yemen, some fourteen hundred miles from Jerusalem. The Sabeans prospered because of trade in myrrh, frankincense, gold, and precious stones.

The NRSV emendation (see text note q) is correct; the difference between burnt offerings and ascent involves a yod, the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet.

His [God’s] throne. 1 Kings 10.9 reads “the throne of Israel.” In Chronicles, the throne and kingdom are God’s (1 Chr 17.14; 28.5; 29.23; 2 Chr 13.8). God’s rule would continue forever, even if there were no human king, as at the time when Chronicles was written. Huram affirms that God’s love for Israel led him to place Solomon on the throne (2.11).

One hundred twenty talents, 9,000 pounds.

Chronicler goes beyond 1 Kings 10.11 by making Solomon an equal partner in Huram’s gold trade. Algum wood. 1 Kings 10.11 reads “almug wood”; it is perhaps red sandalwood.

Cf. 1 Kings 10.14 - 29. This idealized picture of the wealth of the United Monarchy may imply that a united Israel in the future might prosper similarly.

Six hundred sixty-six talents, about 50,000 pounds.

These shields will later be taken by King Shishak of Egypt (12.9 - 11).

House of the Forest of Lebanon. Cf. 1 Kings 7.1 - 12.

A footstool of gold. 1 Kings 10.19 reads “the top of the throne was rounded in the back.” The Chronicler may have found the text of Kings theologically offensive.

Tarshish, probably a site in Spain, or a designation for any distant place. Peacocks. The alternate baboons is preferred by many.

Solomon’s strength in horses is already mentioned at the beginning of his reign (1.14 - 17; 1 Kings 10.26 - 29).

Chronicles adds this description of the wide extent of the kingdom to provide a positive conclusion to the reign of Solomon. The words are taken from 1 Kings 4.21.

Cf. 1 Kings 11.41 - 43. Chronicles omits 1 Kings 11.1 - 40, which tells of Solomon’s foreign wives, the Lord’s decision to give most of the kingdom to one of the king’s servants, and rebellions in Edom and Aram and by Jeroboam, the first king of the Northern Kingdom.
Chronicles ascribes the Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kings 11.41) to a series of prophetic authors: *Nathan* (1 Chr 17), *Ahijah* (1 Kings 11 - 15), and *Iddo* (2 Chr 12.15; 13.22). There is no indication that the Chronicler used any other source than 1 Kings in producing the account of Solomon. Chronicles also cites three prophets in the final summary of David (1 Chr 29.29).

Cf. 1 Kings 12.1 - 20. The Northern tribes protest against Solomon’s oppressive rule, rebel against Rehoboam, and set up the rival Northern Kingdom. They remain part of Israel, according to the Chronicler, but they need to repent of forsaking God.

Forty-one miles north of Jerusalem, Shechem was important in the patriarchal period (Abraham, Jacob) and was the site of Joshua’s farewell address (Josh 24). The choice of the traditional city of Shechem as the site for Rehoboam’s coronation may imply resistance to the Davidic dynasty and its capital at Jerusalem. *All Israel* in Chronicles refers to all of the tribes. In 1 Kings only the Northern tribes are meant.

Jeroboam is not mentioned previously in Chronicles, except for 2 Chr 9.29. Chronicles seems to assume knowledge of 1 Kings 11.26 - 40. Jeroboam rebels against Solomon and flees to Egypt. Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam after he had been designated king of the ten Northern tribes by Ahijah, a prophet from Shiloh.

The hard service and heavy yoke probably include taxes and forced labor. Cf. the mention of the taskmaster over forced labor (v. 18) with the denial that Solomon really utilizes the such forced labor within Israel (2.17 - 18; 8.7 - 10). The elders counsel moderation and conciliation; Rehoboam’s own generation urges a hard-line approach. Rehoboam is already forty-one years old although v. 8 makes him seem like an impetuous youth.

My little finger, lit. “my little one,” a euphemism for the penis. By using this coarse comparison Rehoboam promises a far harsher rule than his father.

Scorpions, an allusion to the fatal bite of the scorpion or, perhaps, to a type of scourge.

Turn of affairs. The same Hebrew root used here to refer to God’s control of events is also found in 1 Chr 10.14 in speaking of God’s handing the kingdom from Saul to David. Ahijah’s word about the division of the kingdom (1 Kings 11.29 - 39) is not contained in 2 Chronicles.

This thing is from me. The Lord takes responsibility in this verse for the division of the kingdom.

Cf. 1 Kings 12.21 - 24. The prophet Shemaiah successfully warns Rehoboam not to fight against the North, and this results in a temporary truce.

One hundred eighty thousand. The number of troops is much larger than the size of ancient armies, but Chronicles has even bigger figures elsewhere (580,000 at the time of Asa, 2 Chr 14.8; 307,500 at the time of Uzziah, 2 Chr 26.10).

All Israel in Judah and Benjamin. 1 Kings 12.23 reads “all the house of Judah and Benjamin.” In Chronicles both North and South may be called Israel (for the North, see 2 Chr 10.16).

Against your kindred. 1 Kings 12.24 reads “against your kindred the people of Israel.” Note that the Northerners in Chronicles are still deemed kindred (brothers). This thing is from me. The Lord takes responsibility in this verse for the division of the kingdom.
According to this paragraph, which is unique to Chronicles, Rehoboam erected fortresses at fifteen strategic sites to protect his kingdom from the west, south, and east. A lack of fortresses in the north may imply that he intended to expand his territory in that direction. The western border is pulled back somewhat, perhaps indicating that the territory defended reflects the effects of Shishak’s invasion. According to archaeology, Beth-zur (v. 7) was destroyed at the time of Rehoboam, and Lachish (v. 9) was not yet fortified. The list may, therefore, come from a later king. Theologically, Rehoboam’s building project shows he was under divine favor.

Gath, possibly Moresheth-gath (Tell Judeideh).

The priests and Levites, banned from liturgical service by Jeroboam, rally to Rehoboam. Laity join in this movement (cf. v. 16).

Goat-demons. Cf. Lev 17.7. Originally pedestals for Yahweh, the statues of calves are interpreted in the books of Kings and in Chronicles as idolatrous images.

Seek the LORD, a favorite phrase in Chronicles for faithfulness.

Three years of obedience are followed by apostasy (12.1) and the invasion of Shishak (12.2). Rehoboam’s positive behavior in his first years as king is compared to royal conduct during the reigns of David and Solomon (cf. 7.10). The end of Solomon’s reign according to 1 Kings had been highly flawed.

Mahalath, second cousin to Rehoboam. Her paternal grandfather is David (as is Rehoboam’s), and her maternal grandfather is David’s brother Eliab. Her parents are first cousins.

Maacah, granddaughter of David’s rebellious son Absalom (2 Sam 13 - 18). She is descended from Uriel and his wife Tamar, the daughter of Absalom (cf. 2 Chr 13.2). In 1 Kings 15.10 she is the wife of Abijah. Abijah succeeds Rehoboam on the throne even though he is not the eldest son (cf. v. 22).

Rehoboam’s numerous wives and concubines are far fewer than those of his father, Solomon (1 Kings 11.17; but these wives of Solomon are not mentioned in Chronicles). Rehoboam’s wives serve as signs of God’s blessing.

Abandoned is one of the chief terms for disobedience in Chronicles; see v. 5. Specific misdeeds of Judah are listed in 1 Kings 14.22 - 24. The law of the LORD. The Pentateuch probably had canonical status by the time of the Chronicler.

Unfaithful, another common term (see note on 12.1) for disobedience in Chronicles, without parallel in 1 Kings 14.25. Shishak (Shoshenq I, ca. 945 - 924 B.C.E.) was founder of the twenty-second (Libyan) dynasty in Egypt. His own account of this battle, recorded on the walls of the Amun-Re temple at Karnak, lists more than 150 towns that were conquered in Palestine.

Libyans, people from the North African coast, just west of Egypt. Sukkiim, a group of Libyan forces from the western desert. Ethiopians. Ethiopia in biblical times was the region between the first and second cataracts of the Nile, south of Aswan, and was not identical with modern Ethiopia.

Fortified cities. Cf. 11.6 - 10. Aijalon occurs in 11.10 and in Shishak’s list. According to Shishak’s account, his major attack was on the Negeb region in the south and on Israel in the north. At least part of his forces moved toward Gibeon, where Shishak may have received the submission and tribute of Rehoboam. This would explain why the city was spared, according to the Bible, and account for the lack of any reference to Jerusalem in Shishak’s account. Thereafter, Shishak turned north and invaded Israel.

The speech by Shemaiah (cf. 11.2) does not occur in 1 Kings.
Exact retribution is described in this verse. For the word abandon, see 1 Chr 28.9; 2 Chr 15.2; 24.20 (where the term is translated “forsaken”).

The government’s repentance takes the form of its leaders humbling themselves (cf. 2 Chr 7.14; 12.7, 12) and confessing the righteousness of the LORD.

The LORD’S acceptance of their repentance fulfills the promise in the divine oracle delivered to Solomon in 7.14 and explains why Jerusalem escapes the full brunt of Shishak’s attack.

Service to a foreign king would be more burdensome than service to the LORD.

King Shishak . . . Jerusalem. The first half of this verse repeats the last part of v. 2.

Judah’s diminished circumstances lead Rehoboam to replace the shields of gold with shields of bronze.

Conditions were good in Judah, better “in Judah there was some good.” Positive retribution explains in part the sparing of Rehoboam from more serious attack.


The summary of Rehoboam’s reign appears after the Shishak invasion in Chronicles, instead of before it as in Kings.

In Jerusalem. 1 Kings 14.21 reads “in Judah.” Naamah the Ammonite. Note the foreign origin of Rehoboam’s mother, who is mentioned twice in 1 Kings (14.21, 31).

The effects of Rehoboam’s evil are illustrated in this chapter. To seek is the opposite of to abandon (v. 1).

Chronicles changes the “Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah” from 1 Kings 14.29 into prophetic sources written by Shemaiah and Iddo. Genealogy, unclear, perhaps a reference to another source.

Cf. 1 Kings 15.1 - 8. Abijah in Chronicles wins a victory against the Northern Kingdom and preaches to his enemy; in 1 Kings 15.3 - 6 Abijam (note spelling) continues the sins of his ancestors and survives only because of God’s loyalty to David.

Micaiah, Uriel. Abijah has a different mother and grandfather in 1 Kings 15.2, Maacah and Abishalom, respectively. The source for the information about constant warfare is 1 Kings 15.7. Cf. 1 Kings 15.6, which reports war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

The size of the armies is enormous (cf. 2 Sam 24.9). God helps Abijah and Judah to victory despite their being outnumbered two to one.

The speech of Abijah was composed by the Chronicler and reflects his theology.

Mount Zemaraim. Cf. Josh 18.22. The territory of Benjamin served as a kind of buffer between the North and the South.

Covenant of salt, an everlasting covenant. Cf. Lev 2.13; Num 18.19. The covenant with David is everlasting.

Jeroboam is criticized for rebellion and for associating with the wrong crowd; Rehoboam’s fault is attributed to his youth. With the pious Abijah on the throne, there is no reason for the North to rebel.

The sin of the Northern Kingdom is balanced by the faithfulness of the Southern Kingdom. The North resists God’s kingdom as manifested in the Davidic dynasty (1 Chr 17.14), worships the golden calves as gods (2 Chr 11.15), drives out the Aaronide priests and Levites, and makes priests out of all who step forward with a gift in their hand (cf. 11.14 - 15). Abijah confesses the faith of his people in the LORD (cf. v. 18) and
states that the South has not abandoned him (while the North has; 12.1). The legitimate Aaronide priests and the Levites carry out the appropriate sacrifices each day.

{ro} 13.12 With God on the side of Judah and the priests ready to blow their trumpets to initiate holy war, the situation of the North is hopeless.

{ro} 13.13 - 20 A battle report.

{ro} 13.13 Judah is outnumbered and trapped between two wings of Israel’s army.

{ro} 13.14 - 15 Trumpet blasts and battle cries induce God to intervene in the battle.

{ro} 13.16 - 17 Judah’s role is to pursue a fleeing enemy. The casualties are caused by divine intervention; the action of the Judahite army seems incidental to the war itself. *Five hundred thousand.* In all of World War II the United States had about 400,000 fatal casualties.

{ro} 13.19 Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephron. Abijah expands his territory toward the north by taking these cities of Benjamin (Josh 18.21 - 24).

{ro} 13.20 The verse implies that Jeroboam outlived Abijah (cf. 1 Kings 15.9). According to 1 Kings 14.20, Jeroboam seems to have died peacefully.

{ro} 13.21 Abijah’s many wives and children indicate divine favor. Cf. 11.22. Note how Abijah also grew strong.

{ro} 13.22 Story, lit. “the midrash.” See the *visions* of Iddo in 9.29 and his *records* in 12.15. In 1 Kings 15.7 the sources are given as the “Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah.” Chronicles turns this into a prophetic record.

{ro} 14.1 Rest, a characteristic feature of pious reigns (cf. vv. 5 - 6; 1 Chr 22.9). *Ten years,* proper retribution for the pious king Asa; but 1 Kings 15.16 speaks of continual warfare between Baasha and Asa.

{np} 14.2 - 8 Cf. 1 Kings 15.11. The Chronicler omits 1 Kings 15.12 and does not return to the Kings text until 2 Chr 15.16 (1 Kings 15.13).

{ro} 14.3 The *high places* are not removed by the king according to a later summary (15.17; 1 Kings 15.14). Asa’s actions in these verses correspond to the directives of Deut 7.5; 12.3; 16.21 - 22 and make him a reformer somewhat like Hezekiah and Josiah.

{ro} 14.4 Seek. The same term for faithfulness occurs nine times in the three chapters dealing with Asa.

{ro} 14.5 Incense altars or shrines; the meaning of the word in Hebrew is uncertain.

{ro} 14.6 - 7 Asa’s obedience brings peace and provides the wherewithal to build. Divine protection, however, would seem to obviate the need for additional fortified cities.

{ro} 14.7 *We have sought him.* Many emend the text correctly to read “He has sought us.”

{ro} 14.8 The army of 580,000 shows the divine favor that rests upon Asa. The army, which lacks horses and chariots, is roughly half the size of Zerah’s.

{np} 14.9 - 15 Asa shows complete reliance upon the LORD.

{ro} 14.9 Zerah, otherwise unknown. The *Ethiopia,* unclear since it is unlikely that Zerah actually came from Cush/Nubia. *A million men.* The number dramatizes the danger posed by Zerah and the fact that the Lord helps the weak Southern Kingdom (v. 11). *Three hundred chariots,* a more realistic number, or a small number because Zerah and the Ethiopians were seminomadic (note the camels and the tent dwellings in v. 15). Mareshah, a city near Lachish, fortified by Rehoboam (11.8).

{ro} 14.10 Zephathah, otherwise unknown.
The Lord answers Asa’s prayer just as Solomon had requested in his own prayer (6.34 - 35).

**Gerar, Tell Abu Hureira** (cf. Gen 20.1 - 2; 26.1), a city about thirty miles southwest of Mareshah. The divine army completely destroys the million-person Ethiopian army. All Judah has to do is collect the booty.

The fear instilled by the Lord makes Israel’s victory over neighboring cities easy (cf. Ex 23.28; Deut 7.20, 23; Josh 24.12).

Livestock is taken even from the civilian herdsmen.

**Azariah son of Oded**

The maxims in this verse seem to be based on the victory over Zerah (cf. 14.4, 7). The Lord has been with Asa because of his early reforms (14.3 - 5) and because of his faith (14.11).

This verse seems to describe the period of the judges, when there was no priest to give authoritative direction (law).

Cf. 1 Kings 15.13 - 15.

The spirit of God connotes prophetic inspiration and authority (cf. 20.14).

Azariah urges Asa to complete his work of reform. Readers of Chronicles are to expect the same kind of deliverance that their ancestors experienced in the past (v. 4). The Chronicler cites Jer 31.16 (“There is a reward for your work”) and Zeph 3.16 (“Do not let your hands grow weak”) in order to make his message compelling for his own generation.

Since the reform includes portions of Ephraim from the Northern Kingdom, Asa apparently engages in combat against the North before his thirty-sixth year (16.1). Altar of the Lord, used for burnt offerings.

**Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon**. The association of the Southern tribe Simeon with the Northern tribes Ephraim and Manasseh is unexplained. Perhaps circumstances have forced elements of Simeon to move north (cf. 1 Chr 4.28 – 33; 2 Chr 34.6). Asa and other Southern kings (Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah) attempt to include the North within their control and to bring about recognition of the ritual life centered at the Jerusalem temple. The Chronicler cites these examples in support of his own desire to incorporate all Israel into the cult of the Jerusalem temple.

Third month, at or near the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost. Fifteenth year. The covenant celebration may take place in the same year as the victory over Zerah.

Booty, from the battle against Zerah (14.13 - 15).

The covenant partners are the king and the people.

Worship of other gods is a capital crime according to Deut 13.6 - 10; 17.2 - 7.


- 18 Dependent on 1 Kings 15.13 - 15.

The authority of the position of queen mother is also seen in the careers of Bathsheba (1 Kings 1.15 - 21), Jezebel from the Northern Kingdom (1 Kings 17.21; 31 - 34), and Athaliah (1 Kings 11.1 - 3). Asherah, a Canaanite goddess, the wife of El, or the consort of Baal. Jezebel was also an advocate for Asherah (1 Kings 18.19). Wadi Kidron, a valley between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives. Hezekiah (2 Chr 29.16; 30.14) and Josiah (2 Kings 23.4 - 6) also destroy cult objects there.

High places . . . out of Israel. Out of Israel is added by the Chronicler. Israel is here a designation for the Northern Kingdom.
No more war until the thirty-fifth year is in tension with 1 Kings 15.16, which describes continuous warfare between Asa and Baasha. More is not contained in the Hebrew text. The Chronicler apparently does not consider the conflicts of 14.9 - 15; 15.8 to be full warfare. Some scholars believe that the thirty-fifth year should be calculated as dating from the division of the United Monarchy. If so, the thirty-fifth year of v. 19 and the fifteenth year of v. 10 would fall in the same year.

According to 1 Kings 16.6, 8 Baasha dies in Asa’s twenty-sixth year. The date in this verse (the thirty-sixth year of Asa) may be calculated historically from the division of the monarchy, making it only the sixteenth year of Asa’s reign. The Chronicler dates Baasha’s attack to the thirty-sixth year of Asa, making the vast majority of his reign positive. Baasha, the third king of the Northern Kingdom. Ramah, a town five miles north of Jerusalem. Baasha is trying to prevent people from deserting to the South (cf. v. 9).

Ben-hadad, lit. “son of Hadad” in Hebrew, the name of two or more Aramean kings. Aram, the ancient name for Syria.

Asa bribes Ben-hadad to open a second, northern front against Baasha.

The three cities lay in the northernmost part of Naphtali.

When Baasha retreats from Ramah, Asa uses the materials left behind to fortify two neighboring cities.

This prophetic account is added by the Chronicler to express his own theological view of the faithless alliance with Ben-hadad.

Hanani later rebukes Jehoshaphat (19.2). Asa would have defeated Aram if he had remained faithful, and he is indicted for lack of faith as evidenced in his foreign alliance (cf. 14.11).

Asa’s reliance on the Lord in the past led to the defeat of Zerah, the Ethiopians, and the Libyans (14.9 - 15).

A quotation from Zech 4.10. God will protect those who are loyal.

Stocks. Asa’s treatment of Hanani resembles Pashhur’s treatment of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 20.2 - 3). In prison is not in the Hebrew text. Asa’s anger over the prophetic oracle leads to violence against other people as well.

The Chronicler adds and Israel to his source reference, perhaps to indicate that Judah is part of the larger people of Israel.

A year after his treaty with Ben-hadad, Asa becomes sick with a foot disease, demonstrating the immediate effect of negative retribution (cf. 12.2; 24.23). Even then he does not demonstrate faith but seeks the help of (has faith in) doctors.

Chronicles adds additional details to the death and burial account of Asa (spices, a great fire in his honor) that underscore the positive evaluation of his life. Through his first thirty-five years he won great victories and led the nation in reform; in his last six years he showed lack of faith and he practiced cruelty.

The Chronicler’s assessment of Jehoshaphat is positive in chs. 17 and 20, but the chapters in between criticize him for two foreign alliances. Only the first half verse in ch. 17 is dependent on 1 Kings (15.24b); the rest is from the Chronicler.

The king’s military strength indicates divine favor.

Earlier ways of his father, the ways of Asa, who is described as faithful for his first thirty-five years. (The Hebrew text mistakenly identifies this ancestor with David.) Jehoshaphat did not seek the Baals,
but sought the God of his father. Fidelity to God and his commandments is contrasted generically with the conduct of the Northern Kingdom (the ways of Israel).

(ro) 17.5 Because of his faith and pious works, tribute and honor are paid to Jehoshaphat by the whole kingdom of Judah.

(ro) 17.6 High places. Cf. 20.33. Sacred poles, dedicated to the goddess Asherah. Jehoshaphat is a reforming king as evidenced by his removal of the offensive items.

(ro) 17.7 Third year. The Chronicler may have believed that Jehoshaphat was a coregent with Asa during his final two years of illness. Within a year after assuming sole power he sends out a sixteen-person teaching commission.

(ro) 17.8 Tob-adonijah may be a mistaken duplication of the two previous names. The list of Levites probably antedates the Chronicler. Note the prominence of the laity and the listing of Levites before priests. It is not clear whether the mission of this group is related to the judicial reform in 19.4 - 11.

(ro) 17.9 For the Chronicler, the book of the law is the Pentateuch. At Jehoshaphat’s time, when the Pentateuch had not yet been completed, this book may have been some kind of royal law code.

(ro) 17.10 - 11 Fear induced by God prevents surrounding nations from attacking Judah and induces Philistines and Arabs to pay lavish tribute.

(ro) 17.13 - 19 While Jehoshaphat has troops throughout Judah (vv. 2, 19), he also has an extraordinarily large army in Jerusalem: 1,160,000. The size of this army serves to indicate Jehoshaphat’s high standing before God. None of the five leaders is known from other sources. An epithet of Amasiah, a volunteer for the service of the LORD (v. 16), gives an air of verisimilitude to the whole list.

(np) 18.1 - 19.3 Cf. 1 Kings 22.1 - 40. This is the only time in Chronicles that a lengthy text from 1 or 2 Kings dealing with a Northern king is included. Chronicles omits the bloody details of Ahab’s death (1 Kings 22.35 - 38) and Ahab’s final regnal formula (1 Kings 22.39 - 40). The Chronicler makes significant changes at the beginning and end of this pericope; the rest is largely unchanged from 1 Kings 22.

(ro) 18.1 Now, better “although.” The information about Jehoshaphat’s riches in 17.5 should have removed the need for an alliance. Jehoshaphat’s son Jehoram marries Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab.

(ro) 18.2 The context in Chronicles makes Jehoshaphat’s trip to Samaria part of the marriage agreement, with Ahab preparing a banquet of sheep and cattle. Ahab plays the role of tempter; he induced, or “seduced,” Jehoshaphat into going with him. Ramoth-gilead, a city in the territory of Gad, some twenty-five miles east of the Jordan River.

(ro) 18.4 - 11 The four hundred court prophets assure the two kings that God supports the upcoming battle. At Jehoshaphat’s request, Ahab agrees to send for Micaiah son of Imlah, a prophet known for his unfavorable messages. A prophet named Zedekiah performs a symbolic act, in which he compares the army to a goring bull, to encourage the kings to attack the Arameans.

(ro) 18.12 - 22 After an initial and presumably insincere positive oracle, Micaiah says that Israel will in fact be scattered like sheep without a shepherd. Micaiah reports his attendance at a meeting of the divine council, where a spirit offered to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets so that Ahab would go out and fall at Ramoth-gilead. With God’s encouragement, this lying spirit induces all the court prophets to urge Ahab toward disaster.

(ro) 18.23 - 27 After a confrontation with Zedekiah, Micaiah is imprisoned by Ahab until he returns safely from battle. Micaiah charges that if Ahab were to return safely, this would prove that the LORD had not sent Micaiah.

(ro) 18.28 - 34 The Arameans at first mistake Jehoshaphat for Ahab, but the LORD deflects the pursuers; a chance shot later wounds the real king of Israel. At the end of the day he dies.
Although the LORD helped him is not in the Hebrew text of Kings, these words are attested in one of the ancient Greek recensions of the Bible, the Lucianic recension, and were probably in the Hebrew text known by the Chronicler. They are not a theological addition by the Chronicler. God drew them away from him. In this addition by the Chronicler, the words drew them away use the same verb as induce (seduce) in v. 2.

An addition by the Chronicler. Having ignored the warning of the prophet Micaiah (18.27), Jehoshaphat is met by a prophet of his own kingdom, Jehu, the son of Hanani (who prophesies against Baasha in 1 Kings 16.1, 7).

The wicked, namely, Ahab. Love, a reference to Jehoshaphat’s marriage alliance. The campaign of Jehoshaphat against Ramoth-gilead represents the kind of unholy alliance with the North that the Chronicler bitterly opposes.

Jehoshaphat’s destruction of the sacred poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah (17.6) and his seeking God mitigate the judgment against him.

This reform and the exemplary behavior of Jehoshaphat in a subsequent military crisis (2 Chr 20), both without parallel in Kings, illustrate the “good” found in Jehoshaphat (19.3) that helps him escape divine wrath.

Again presupposes the earlier teaching mission in 17.7 - 9.

By appointing judges, delegating judicial authority to officials appointed by himself throughout the kingdom, Jehoshaphat extends his own jurisdiction and restricts the influence of the local courts. Fortified cities. In some respects the account in Chronicles seems to be typologically older than the laws in Deuteronomy. In Deut 16.18 - 20, the lawgiver says that judges are to be set up in all towns and not just in the fortified cities.

The Lord’s own sense of integrity and justice is to give form to the behavior of the local judges (Deut 10.17 - 18; 16.19).

Jehoshaphat establishes a central court in Jerusalem to deal with cases referred to it from local courts. These cases could be resolved by the establishment of precedents or the formulation of new law. They had their seat at Jerusalem. This translation results from a changed vocalization of the Hebrew text; “[To decide the disputed cases] of the inhabitants of Jerusalem” (Septuagint, Vulgate); “They returned to Jerusalem” (Hebrew). The NRSV’s alternative seems to be the least likely of the three.

Amariah, probably the third high priest after Solomon had built the temple (1 Chr 6.11). Matters of the LORD, sacral law; the king’s matters, civil law. This differentiation of duties may not have arisen until the Persian period (beginning in 539 B.C.E.).

The conduct of this war is mostly liturgical, and little can be established about the historical circumstances.

Meunites, a people named after the town of Maon, eight and a half miles south of Hebron. Later in the chapter the enemies are identified as Ammonites, Moabites, and the people of Mount Seir or Edom.

Hazazon-tamar, a town between En-gedi and Bethlehem. En-gedi, a site on the west shore of the Dead Sea.

Though terrified, Jehoshaphat does the right thing: he seeks the LORD and proclaims a fast.

A prayer of national lament by Jehoshaphat.

Jehoshaphat appeals to Solomon’s prayer (6.28, 34) at the dedication of the temple and to the Lord’s promise to answer it (7.12 - 14).

Mount Seir is not mentioned in v. 2, but see vv. 22 - 23.
Ammon, Moab, and Edom should be grateful for having been spared when Israel entered the land (Deut 2.1 - 22), but instead they now try to take the land away from Israel.

Perplexed by the invading horde, Jehoshaphat indicates his strong trust in God.

Jahaziel, a Levitical singer (descendant of Asaph) who functions as a prophet and promises Israel a victory in holy war (cf. 1 Chr 25.1 - 8; 2 Chr 29.25; 35.15).

The speech of Jahaziel answers Jehoshaphat’s lament and resembles the speech of a priest before a battle (Deut 20.2 - 4).

Ascent of Ziz, between Tekoa, a town in the highlands of Judah, and En-gedi (see note on 20.2). Wilderness of Jeruel, unidentified.

Despite the fact that Jehoshaphat has more than a million troops in Jerusalem alone (17.14 - 18), the people are reminded that they are not to fight, but to watch the victory of the LORD.

In his exhortation, Jehoshaphat seems to refer to Isaiah (“If you do not stand firm in faith, you shall not stand at all,” Isa 7.9), to Jahaziel, who had just assured them of victory, and to Jahaziel’s fellow Levites who are Kohathites, more specifically Korahites. It is probable that the temple singers of the Chronicler’s day claimed prophetic authority.

The appointment of (prophetic) singers is the trigger that causes the LORD to set the invading nations against one another, leading to their total destruction.

The magnitude of the victory is reflected in the overwhelming amount of booty that is taken.

The Hebrew for “blessed” has the same consonants as the word Beracah. This verse is an etymological etiology.

Jehoshaphat is rewarded with rest.

Cf. 1 Kings 22.41 - 45.

While the Chronicler repeats the notice from 1 Kings 22.43 that the high places are not removed, he omits a sentence from 1 Kings that says the people keep worshiping at those high places. In 2 Chr 17.6 the Chronicler states that Jehoshaphat has in fact removed the high places.

The source reference from 1 Kings is ascribed the prophetic authority of Jehu son of Hanani.

Cf. 1 Kings 22.48 - 49. According to 1 Kings, Jehoshaphat makes ships to go to Ophir, but they never sail since they are destroyed at Ezion-geber. When King Ahaziah subsequently requests Jehoshaphat to allow the servants of the Northern Kingdom to go with him, Jehoshaphat refuses. In Chronicles, Jehoshaphat first makes a pact with the wicked Ahaziah, with the result that they join in building ships at Ezion-geber. The prophet Eliezer then intervenes and condemns Jehoshaphat for this alliance. As a result the LORD destroys the ships.

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Cf. 1 Kings 22.50; 2 Kings 8.16 - 19.

These verses, which are not contained in Kings, indicate that the new king has six brothers. All the sons receive rich gifts from Jehoshaphat, but Jehoram, as the firstborn, becomes king after his father. By assigning them fortified cities the king scatters them throughout his realm.

Judah. The Hebrew reads Israel. The latter, as the more difficult reading, is preferred.

Solomon too eliminated rivals at the beginning of his reign (1 Kings 2). In view of the confusion in v. 2, Israel here may refer to the Southern Kingdom.
Jehoram’s conduct is like that of the kings of the Northern Kingdom, particularly the dynasty of Ahab. Both Kings and Chronicles note that the reason for this misbehavior was that the daughter of Ahab was his wife. Later, she will be identified as Athaliah.

Two things keep Jehoram and the dynasty from destruction in spite of the negative qualities of the king: the covenant the LORD made with David and the lamp (better “dominion”) the LORD promised him forever. The term covenant is added by Chronicles, and the house of David replaces “Judah” from 2 Kings 8.19.

Edom’s successful revolt continues with only momentary exceptions until the end of the Southern Kingdom. David had conquered Edom, but it had rebelled already under Solomon (1 Kings 11.14 - 22). Perhaps Asa or Jehoshaphat regained control, but under Jehoram the breach becomes decisive.

Libnah, a city on the western, or Philistine, border of Judah. Since Edom was south to southeast from Judah, Jehoram is faced with conflict on two fronts. This revolt is God’s retribution for the king’s unfaithfulness.

Jehoram restores the high places that Asa and Jehoshaphat had torn down.

Chronicles supplies a letter from the Northern prophet Elijah, Ahab’s constant critic, in which Jehoram, Ahab’s son-in-law and king in Jerusalem, is charged with following the kings of the North (v. 11) and with killing his own brothers (v. 4). Elijah announces a plague for the people and a dreadful illness for the king himself. Illness also brings immediate retribution for Asa (16.12 - 14) and Uzziah (26.16 - 21).

God’s agents of retribution are the Philistines and the Arabs, who deprive the king of wives and children, the normal signs of blessing.

The identity of the disease cannot be determined. Colitis and dysentery have been suggested. At the end of two years, better “two days” (before his death). Came out, perhaps prolapsed. In contrast with Asa (16.14), there are no great ceremonial fires at his funeral. Jehoram is the first Davidic king whom the Chronicler judges in a totally negative way.


Chronicles abbreviates the account from Kings and focuses on the Southern Kingdom.

Jehoram, who has killed all his brothers, loses his own sons to foreign troops because of divine retribution (cf. 21.16 - 17). Ahaziah cannot be forty-two years old since his father is said to have died at forty (21.20). 2 Kings 8.26 sets his age at twenty-two. Granddaughter, in the Hebrew “daughter” (cf. 21.6).

Athaliah and other members of the Northern royal family mislead Ahaziah (cf. 21.6).

Ahab’s son Jehoram (the brother of Athaliah) is wounded at Ramoth-gilead, a city of the tribe of Gad, on the border between Aram (Syria) and the Northern Kingdom, Israel. Hazael had murdered Ben-hadad and then succeeded him (2 Kings 8.15).

Jezreel, summer palace of the kings of Israel.

The first half of v. 7, not taken from 2 Kings, articulates the Chronicler’s doctrine of retribution. The Chronicler criticizes each of the Judean kings contemporary with Ahab and his successors for making alliances with their Northern counterparts.

The lengthy Elijah narrative from 1 Kings 17 - 19; 2 Kings 1 - 2 is omitted in Chronicles.

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After a bloody coup, Jehu son of Nimshi rules Israel for twenty-eight years. The Chronicler omits the introduction to his reign from 2 Kings 9.1 - 20. Anointed. See 2 Kings 9.6 where a prophet sent by Elisha anoints Jehu.

According to 2 Kings 10.12 - 14, the princes of Judah are killed after the death of King Ahaziah. In 2 Kings 9.27 - 28 Ahaziah is wounded near Ibleam and dies after fleeing to Megiddo. He is buried in Jerusalem. Ahaziah’s burial away from Jerusalem in 2 Chr 22.9 may express the Chronicler’s negative evaluation of him. He is the grandson . . . kingdom is not in 2 Kings. Because Ahaziah is the grandson of Jehoshaphat, it is not appropriate to leave him unburied.

According to 2 Kings 11.1 - 3. Athaliah’s seizure of power here differs little from the account in 2 Kings. Note that Jehoshabeath (in Kings “Jehosheba”) is the wife of the priest Jehoiada, who plays a prominent role in the revolution against Athaliah (v. 11). Jehoshabeath is the half sister of Ahaziah. Neither Kings nor Chronicles regards Athaliah as legitimate and so both omit the standard royal introductory and concluding notices.

Compact, in the Hebrew “covenant.” Cf. vv. 3, 16. Chronicles adds the names of the commanders of the hundreds to materials inherited from 2 Kings.

Chronicles gives a role in the revolution to the Levites and the family heads of Israel instead of restricting the revolutionaries, with 2 Kings, to the captains of the hundreds, the Carites, and the royal household. The clergy may have been unhappy with Athaliah’s fostering of Baalism (23.17). The participation of the family heads of Israel indicates that all Israel backs the revolution.

The whole assembly makes a covenant according to Chronicles; in 2 Kings the covenant was only with the military commanders. King, an addition, referring to Joash. Jehoiada, according to Chronicles, based the installation of Joash on the promise to David.

It is difficult to identify precisely which people are stationed where. Staging the revolution at the change of shifts is a brilliant strategy.

Gate of the Foundation. 2 Kings 11.6 reads “gate Sur.”

The addition of the first half of this verse by the Chronicler makes it clear that laypeople do not intrude on forbidden areas of the temple.

Levites. The identity of the king’s guards is not given in 2 Kings.

The Levites and all Judah. 2 Kings 11.9 reads “The captains.” For the priest Jehoiada did not dismiss the divisions. Thus they stayed in the temple area to help with the revolution.

All the people. 2 Kings 11.11 reads “the guards.”

Cf. 2 Kings 11.13 - 20.

And praising the king, an addition in Chronicles.

And the singers . . . celebration, an addition in Chronicles, underlining the writer’s interest in music.

Jehoiada’s own son will later die in the temple (24.21).

Horse Gate. Ironically, Athaliah’s mother Jezebel was trampled by horses (2 Kings 9.33).

Jehoiada, the people, and the king are the covenant partners; in 2 Kings 11.17 the covenant partners are the LORD, the king, and the people.
Chronicles specifies that the guards mentioned in 2 Kings were Levitical priests organized by David. Cf. 1 Chr 15 - 16, 23 - 27; 2 Chr 29.25 - 30. The Levitical priests offer the sacrifices required in the Pentateuch.

The Chronicler adds a reference to gatekeepers, who were to keep out all who were unclean.

*The captains, the nobles, the governors . . . all the people*, a list demonstrating the wide support for Joash. *Upper gate.* 2 Kings 11.19 reads “the gate of the guards.” They set the king. In 2 Kings the king himself takes his seat.

Quiet. Cf. 1 Chr 4.40; 22.9; 2 Chr 14.1 (13.23 in the Hebrew); 14.1, 6; 20.30. 2 Kings 11.20 notes that Athaliah was killed at the king’s house.

According to 2 Kings 12.2 Joash did what was right all his days, but Chronicles records a change in Joash’s life after the death of Jehoiada. The notice in 2 Kings 12.3 (v. 4 in the Hebrew) that Joash did not remove the high places is omitted since it would not conform to the Chronicler’s depiction of the first part of Joash’s reign.

Wives and children are signs of God’s blessing for the pious Joash.

Joash requests that the priests and Levites raise a special collection, but the Levites react slowly, possibly because this collection would divert funds from their own income. The Levites play no role in 2 Kings 12.

Joash prods Jehoiada to get the Levites to collect the tax said to have been inaugurated by Moses for the building of the tabernacle (Ex 30.12 - 16; 38.25 - 26).

Chronicles provides specifics on what was wrong with the temple; 2 Kings 12.6 speaks vaguely of the need for repairs.

*Chest.* A collection box was a common feature in ancient Near Eastern temples. *Outside the gate* reflects Second Temple practice, when laity had no access to the inner court. In 2 Kings 12.9 the chest is placed beside the altar.

The joyous generosity of the people repeats the joy of the wilderness community over the tabernacle (Ex 36.4 - 7) and provides an example for the Chronicler’s audience (cf. 1 Chr 29.9).

Funds are used for various types of temple paraphernalia, as in the construction of the tabernacle (Ex 25; 31.1 - 10); in 2 Kings 12.13 - 14 this is explicitly prohibited.

The Chronicler adds a description of Joash’s apostasy after the death of Jehoiada.

Jehoiada’s extremely long life testifies symbolically to his fidelity.

Jehoiada the priest is given a grave among the kings while Joash himself is not (24.25).

Joash heeds the bad advice of officials who worship poles and idols dedicated to the goddess Asherah and refuses the admonition of prophets. Note the immediate retribution for their abandoning of the temple.

Jehoiada’s son Zechariah threatens retribution in words reminiscent of Moses (Num 14.41).

The officials and the king agree to the murder of Zechariah (cf. Mt 23.35; Lk 11.50 - 51) and kill him in the temple where Jehoiada made Joash king and where efforts have been taken by Jehoiada to avoid violence in the temple (cf. 2 Chr 23.14).

Zechariah calls for divine retribution.

24.23 An invasion by Aram (Syria) brings the divine retribution earned by the officials. According to 2 Kings 12.7 - 18 Joash bought off Hazael.

24.24 The small Aramean army was empowered by the LORD to defeat a far more numerous Judean army that had committed the fatal sin of abandoning God. Chronicles stresses elsewhere that a small Judean army could defeat a larger enemy army.

24.25 Joash’s servants murder him because he has participated in the murder of Zechariah. 2 Kings provides no rationale for this murder. Joash is denied royal burial by the Chronicler in spite of evidence to the contrary in 2 Kings 12.21.

24.26 The chief conspirators are children of an Ammonite woman and a Moabite woman. While the names of the conspirators come from 2 Kings 12.21, the ethnic designations come from the Chronicler.

24.27 Commentary on the Book of the Kings. Cf. 2 Chr 13.22.


25.2 As with Joash, the first half of Amaziah’s reign is judged favorably. With a true heart. 2 Kings 14.3 reads “like his ancestor David.” 2 Kings also indicates that Amaziah behaves like Joash and that the high places are not removed (cf. 2 Chr 24.2; 26.4; 27.2). Amaziah’s performance is half-hearted from the beginning.

25.4 Amaziah’s reason for not killing the children of his father’s murderers is based on Deut 24.16.

25.5 - 16 Cf. 2 Kings 14.7.

25.5 Three hundred thousand. Asa mustered 580,000 and Jehoshaphat 1,160,000.

25.6 One hundred talents of silver, roughly one ounce of silver for every man.

25.8 The oracle of the anonymous man of God is supplied by the Chronicler and shows his usual opposition to an alliance with the North (cf. 13.4 - 12; 19.1 - 13).

25.9 God’s help would more than make up for the loss of one-fourth of his army.

25.11 This verse is based on 2 Kings 14.7. Valley of Salt, near the southern end of the Dead Sea (cf. 2 Sam 8.13; 1 Chr 18.12). Seir, a mountainous region southeast of Judah.

25.12 Sela, Hebrew, “rock, precipice.” The exact location is contested.

25.13 Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom. Another city may have originally been mentioned here. Beth-horon, a city in Ephraim near Benjamin.

25.14 In antiquity the gods of defeated nations were sometimes said to abandon their own nation and side with the victor.

25.15 - 16 Amaziah opposes a second, anonymous prophet, who repeats the inevitability of divine retribution. The king does not listen to divine counsel and follows human counsel (v. 17), to his own harm.

25.17 - 24 Cf. 2 Kings 14.8 - 16.

25.18 In this fable, the arrogance of the thistle in proposing a marriage alliance with a cedar is punished by a wild animal.

25.19 Joash castigates Amaziah for his arrogance after the defeat of Edom and warns him to avoid a military confrontation.

25.20 The Chronicler adds his theological interpretation. Amaziah’s stubbornness is really God’s doing (cf. 10.15; 22.7) to punish him for the idolatry of v. 14.
25.21 Faced one another. Note the pun with v. 17: “Let us look one another in the face.” Beth-shemesh, a town sixteen miles southwest of Jerusalem.

25.23 Ephraim gate, in the northern wall of Jerusalem. Corner gate, in the northwestern corner of the city.

25.24 And Obed-edom with them, better “in the care of Obed-edom”; this is only in Chronicles. David has put this Levitical family in charge of the temple treasuries (1 Chr 13.13 - 14; 26.4 - 8, 15).


25.25 Despite his defeat by Joash, Amaziah outlives him by fifteen years.


25.28 David, following the Septuagint and 2 Kings 14.20; in the Hebrew “Judah.” Jerusalem is called the city of Judah in the Babylonian Chronicle, a cuneiform historiographic source of the eighth century B.C.E.

26.1 - 15 Cf. 2 Kings 14.21 - 15.4. Vv. 5 - 15, which identify the signs of blessings in Uzziah’s reign, are unique to Chronicles. In 2 Kings, which gives a brief account of his very long reign, he is usually called Azariah.

26.2 Eloth, alternate spelling for Elath, a port city on the northeast arm of the Red Sea, that revolted during the reign of Jehoram (21.8 - 10).

26.4 The Chronicler qualifies his positive assessment of Uzziah in vv. 16 - 21. An early good period is followed by infidelity, just as with the reign of Amaziah.

26.5 Zechariah, an unknown adviser, during whose days the king’s piety leads to success. Cf. Joash and Zechariah in 2 Chr 24. God made him prosper refers to foreign relationships.

26.6 Gath, a Philistine city on the coastal plain. Jabneh, a city in northwest Judah identical to Jabneel and Jamnia; Ashdod, another Philistine city near the coast.

26.7 Gur-baal. Emend to “Gur and against.” Gur is east of Beer-sheba. Meunites, see note on 20.1. Uzziah’s expansion is all in a southerly direction; Jeroboam II is too strong in the North.

26.9 - 10 Royal building activities are a sign of blessing; numerous archaeological remains have been related to Uzziah. Shephelah, low hills in western Palestine. Plain, perhaps the plain of Sharon. The hills, the hill country of Judah.

26.11 - 13 Large armies are another sign of God’s blessing (cf. 1 Chr 12.23 - 40; 2 Chr 12.3; 13.3, 17; 14.9; 17.12 - 19; 25.5 - 6.

26.15 Machines, not catapults, but defensive structures that protected the soldiers.

26.16 - 23 Cf. 2 Kings 15.5 - 7. Vv. 16 - 21 are found only in Chronicles.

26.16 Grew proud. Uzziah’s sinful pride (cf. 12.1) leads to negative consequences in the second half of his reign. Incense offerings are to be conducted only by priests (Ex 30.1 - 10; Num 16.40; 18.1 - 7).

26.17 Azariah, an otherwise unknown priest.

26.20 Because of his illness, Uzziah serves in a coregency with his son Jotham. God effects immediate retribution.

26.22 Isaiah. The account of Uzziah is traced to prophetic authorship (cf. 1 Chr 29.29; 2 Chr 9.29; 12.15; 32.32). The book of Isaiah refers to Uzziah in 1.1; 6.1; 7.1. 2 Kings 15.6 reads “Are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?”
26.23 His grave is near, but not in, the royal cemetery. A later, Hasmonean ossuary text reads: “Herein are the bones of Uzziah, king of Judah. Do not open.” The separate burial of the king may have led to the discovery and reburial of his bones in the first century B.C.E.

27.1 - 9 Cf. 2 Kings 15.32 - 38. Unlike his three predecessors, Jotham is given a totally positive judgment.

27.2 Chronicles adds a note that Jotham did not invade the temple because of the tradition included in 2 Chr 26.16 - 20 concerning Uzziah’s improper use of incense. Corrupt practices, a paraphrase of information in 2 Kings about making sacrifices and burning incense at the high places.

27.3 In Chronicles pious kings usually carry out building projects. Ophel, a ridge extending south of Jerusalem that was fortified by David. See note on 33.14. Jotham’s work on the temple gate and on towers echoes the activities of Uzziah.

27.5 The tribute from the Ammonites demonstrates that divine favor rests with Jotham. One hundred talents, 7,500 pounds. Ten thousand cors, somewhere between 65,000 and 140,000 bushels.

27.6 A clear statement of the doctrine of retribution.

27.7 Chronicles omits the reference to Rezin and Pekah during the reign of Jotham from 2 Kings 15.37 and associates their attack with the next king, Ahaz (2 Chr 28.5 - 8).


28.2 Cast images for the Baals. Ahaz commits the same sin as Jeroboam, first king of the Northern Kingdom (13.8).

28.3 Valley of the son of Hinnom, a wadi south of Jerusalem where child sacrifice was practiced (33.6; Jer 7.31 - 32).

28.5 The king of Aram (Syria) is identified in 2 Kings as Rezin. He was allied with Pekah of the Northern Kingdom against Judah in what is known as the Syro-Ephraimitic war. Here the two enemies of Judah attack independently. According to Chronicles, the wicked king Ahaz suffers retribution through both opposing countries.

28.6 One hundred twenty thousand. The exaggerated number of casualties—and in one day!—shows the penalty for abandoning the LORD (cf. 13.9 - 12).

28.7 Next in authority. Cf. Esth 10.3.

28.8 Two hundred thousand captives plus the fatalities in v. 6 would have depopulated Judah.

28.9 - 10 Oded, otherwise unknown. This prophet concedes the wickedness of Judah but accuses the Northern army of excesses (cf. Isa 10.5 - 19), the killing of some in anger and the enslaving of the rest (Lev 25.39 - 55). Note that the LORD (Yahweh) is still considered as the God of the North.

28.11 Citizens of the two kingdoms are kindred (lit. “brothers”).

28.12 The decisive action by certain chiefs may mean that the Northern monarchy is already a thing of the past.

28.13 The four chiefs also admonish the army not to add guilt from the present incident to their existing guilt (cf. 13.4 - 12).

28.14 Remarkably, the army repents.
Those mentioned by name in v. 12 (or “men nominated for this duty” as translated by the New English Bible) outfit the captives from the booty that had been taken and return them to Judean authorities at Jericho.

Cf. 2 Kings 16.6 - 9. In 2 Kings Ahaz appeals to the Assyrian king for relief from the Northern invaders. Since the Chronicler had already reported that the North had repented and restored their captives, he identifies the cause of Ahaz’s plea as pressure from other neighboring countries, the Edomites and Philistines. This additional material is historically plausible.

Ahaz should have asked God rather than a foreign king for help (cf. 26.7, 15).

The Philistines capture a number of cities between themselves and Judah. Gimzo, a town north of Gezer.

The Philistine attack metes out appropriate retribution to Ahaz.

Tilgath-pilneser, spelled Tiglath-pilesar [III] in 2 Kings 16.7 (but see 1 Chr 5.6). The Assyrian king attacks the South instead of coming to its aid. According to 2 Kings 16.9 the Assyrian king listens to Ahaz and provides him relief by attacking Damascus and killing Rezin. In 733 B.C.E. Tiglath-pilesar reorganized the Northern Kingdom into three Assyrian provinces.

In this added verse, Chronicles attributes Judah’s defeat to the fact that Ahaz wrongly paid tribute to the Assyrians.

Cf. 2 Kings 16.10 - 20.

Ahaz compounds his guilt by worshiping the Aramean gods. According to 2 Kings 16.10 - 13 Ahaz copied an Aramean altar and worshiped the LORD with it.

By closing the Jerusalem temple and thus distancing himself from it, Ahaz acts in a way similar to Jeroboam. In 2 Kings 16.12 - 14, Ahaz makes special offerings to the temple, but in 2 Kings 16.17 - 18 the king plunders the temple in order to pay tribute.

Like Uzziah, Ahaz is buried in Jerusalem but not with the other kings (cf. 2 Kings 16.20; 2 Chr 21.20; 24.25; 26.23).

Cf. 2 Kings 18.1 - 3. The opening paragraph for Hezekiah is virtually identical with the material in 2 Kings, except that the Chronicler, as usual, omits the synchronism with the Northern king. The Chronicler gives great attention to Hezekiah’s reform (chs. 29 - 31), but less attention than in 2 Kings to the Assyrian invasion (ch. 32), the delegation from Babylon (32.31), and the king’s illness (32.24 - 26). Unity returns to all Israel under Hezekiah, who is a second David (see 29.2) and especially a second Solomon.

Like Solomon, Hezekiah is concerned with the temple right from the start of his reign—in the first year in the first month (cf. chs. 1 - 2). The actions urged by Hezekiah would reverse those of his father, Ahaz (28.24 - 25; 29.19).

Levites is used in a broad sense that includes both priests and Levites.

This description of circumstances at the time of Hezekiah quotes Jer 29.18, which announces the exile that took place more than a century after Hezekiah.

The temple cleansing renews the covenant and sets an example for the postexilic audience.

There are two Levites from each of the families of Kohath, Merari, and Gershon, two from the family of Elizaphan (descended from Kohath), and two from each division of the singers: Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun.

By the words of the LORD. Hezekiah’s reform is given divine sanction.
As prohibited items are removed from the temple, priests and Levites are active in places appropriate to them (cf. 5.4 - 11). Kidron, just east of the city, is also the place for destroying polluted vessels under Asa (15.16) and Josiah (2 Kings 23.4, 6, 12). The purification rites end two days after the normal beginning of Passover.

The bulls, rams, and lambs are for the burnt offering and the goats for the sin offering. The sin offering benefited the royal house (kingdom), the temple and its personnel (sanctuary), and the whole nation (Judah).

They, the king and his officials (cf. v. 20).

Through laying on of hands, the one making the offering identifies with the victim in the sin offering.

All Israel. The king’s offering is explicitly inclusive (cf. v. 21).

The Levites accompany the sacrifices with music. Their role may reflect worship practices from the Chronicler’s own time, but their musical performance also echoes their activity at the dedication of the temple (7.6). The restoration of the temple makes Hezekiah a second Solomon.

David and the prophets are credited with authorizing the Levitical activity.

The people join their leaders in bringing sacrifices and so reinaugurate regular worship practices (v. 35; cf. 8.16). Their enthusiasm harks back to popular enthusiasm for the sanctuary at the time of Moses and during the reigns of David and Solomon.

Burnt offerings, expressions of self-giving.

Consecrated offerings. Only parts of these offerings are burned; the rest are consumed by the ones making the offering.

While the priests are not required by the law to skin the animals (Lev 1), this verse criticizes them for their delay and offers praise for the Levites who helped them until they had sanctified themselves.

Suddenly. The purification of the temple happens within three weeks in Hezekiah’s first year.

In the Chronicler’s reckoning, the North is already in exile when Hezekiah begins to rule. One of Hezekiah’s first acts is to attempt to unite all Israel around the temple in Jerusalem. Such unification is the main agenda for the author of Chronicles in his postexilic setting. This Passover takes place at the central sanctuary (Deut 16; 2 Kings 23.21 - 23) and not in the Israelite homes (Ex 12.1 - 20).

Second month. Individuals who became unclean through contact with a corpse or who had been on a trip could delay the celebration of Passover one month (Num 9.9 - 11). Hezekiah extends this exception to the priests who had not sanctified themselves and the people who had not assembled (v. 3).

Beer-sheba to Dan, the south to north description of the land, characteristic of Chronicles (cf. 1 Chr 21.2). The author uses a wide variety of terms to identify the North. See vv. 11, 12, 18.

Israel, Jacob (cf. 1 Chr 16.13, 17). The Chronicler demands repentance as the prerequisite for restoration.

An excellent statement of the doctrine of retribution.

The Northerners show reluctance (cf. 36.16), perhaps reflecting their attitude toward the Jerusalem temple in the Chronicler’s time, but Hezekiah, nevertheless, works for their incorporation in the celebration (vv. 18 - 20).

The agricultural festival of unleavened bread was originally celebrated separately from Passover (Ex 23.14 - 17; 34.18 - 23). The large attendance at the Passover is frequently mentioned in this account.
Eating of the Passover meal is preceded by reform of inappropriate installations in Jerusalem. Ahaz had built altars to alien deities (28.24).

Regulation of the cultic roles of priests and Levites is based on the Pentateuch in general. The Levites make great efforts to make the Northerners feel welcome.

Hezekiah prays for the people who set their hearts to seek God, even if they have violated ritual regulations in the process. Their intentions and Hezekiah’s prayer bring healing. The steps in this incident follow the procedures laid out in the Lord’s response to Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the temple (7.14).

The people decide to celebrate for a second week, just as the celebration at the temple dedication lasted a fortnight (7.9).

The king and his officials generously provide animals for sacrifice, and the priests are finally ready in sufficient numbers to sacrifice them (cf. 29.34; 30.3).

Note the all-inclusive makeup of those who celebrate Passover.

Hezekiah is a kind of second Solomon, who unites the people in sacrificial worship.

Solomon too prayed that his prayer and that of the people would be heard in heaven (6.21).

The Passover results in wholesale reform, including areas of the Northern Kingdom. Sacred poles, named after or dedicated to the goddess Asherah. The destruction of the high places, pillars, and sacred poles is taken from Kings, but Chronicles omits the account of Nehushtan (2 Kings 18.4).

Hezekiah organizes the cultic personnel, as did Solomon (8.14). The priests sacrifice and the Levites are gatekeepers and singers.

Hezekiah provides animals for sacrifices, as had many kings before him. Persian kings do the same for postexilic Judah (Ezra 6.9; 7.21 - 23).

The king restores the financial support system for the priests and Levites, which may have been disrupted by Ahaz. The dedication to the study of the law reflects the Chronicler’s own time. Since Malachi complains that people are avoiding payments (Mal 3.8 - 10), the Chronicler may be dealing with a contemporary issue.

The people’s generosity reflects that of the king.

The people contribute from the third month (Pentecost) through the seventh month (Tabernacles).

The chief priest affirms the doctrine of retribution: the people’s generosity has led to general prosperity. The people had also contributed generously to the tabernacle (Ex 36.2 - 7) and to the temple (1 Chr 29.6 - 9). Azariah, perhaps the grandson of the priest mentioned in 26.17.

Two leading Levites and ten assistants, appointed by Hezekiah, are in charge of the temple storage chambers, where contributions to the clergy are kept.

Kore, keeper of the east gate (1 Chr 9.11), and six assistants are in charge of distributing the contributions to the Levites’ kindred living in outlying areas (1 Chr 6.54 - 60).

Three years old and upwards, after weaning (cf. v. 18).

The priests are enrolled by their families, the Levites according to their duties. Twenty years old, thirty in 1 Chr 23.3, twenty-five in Num 8.24.

Fields of common land, farmland belonging to the priestly cities.
After this summary paragraph, the Chronicler follows the text of 2 Kings more closely. 

Prospered. Cf. Solomon in 7.11.

Cf. 2 Kings 18.13 - 37. The material in Kings is often divided into three sources: 18.13 - 16 (A); 18.17 - 19.9a, 36 - 37 (B1); 19.9b - 35 (B2), with B1 being parallel to B2. Chronicles omits references to the stripping of the temple, Hezekiah’s trust in foreign alliances, and references to Isaiah as recipient of an oracle. In Chronicles Hezekiah is unafraid and directly receives divine messages.

Acts of faithfulness, Hezekiah’s reform and Passover. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, whose third campaign took him to Judah in 701 B.C.E.

Hezekiah concealed the water supply and dug a famous tunnel, which can be visited in Jerusalem today.

Built up . . . another wall. Rebuilding the wall was a sign of rebellion against Sennacherib; in Chronicles building projects show that a king is divinely favored. Millo, terraces.

Hezekiah’s speech urges trust in God and reflects standard holy war theology. In 2 Kings 18.19 - 25, Sennacherib’s officer accuses Hezekiah of trusting in Egypt.

Lachish. See note on 25.27.

The message of Sennacherib is meant to terrify the people and to alienate them from Hezekiah.

The Assyrian misinterprets the reform of Hezekiah as if his destruction of high places and altars were a destruction of the LORD’S own sanctuaries.

Since no god of any other nation has been able to stop Sennacherib, the Assyrian suggests that the LORD also could not provide help.

 Cf. Ps 2.2: [The nations speak] “against the LORD and his anointed.”

The language of Judah, Hebrew. The standard language of diplomacy was Aramaic.

In the Chronicler’s view, all other gods but Yahweh are impotent idols.

In 2 Kings 19.1 - 4; Isa 37.1 - 4, Hezekiah requests Isaiah to pray. In Chronicles they pray together.

The LORD answers Hezekiah’s prayer (cf. 7.13 - 15) by completely destroying Sennacherib’s army. Sennacherib was in fact killed by his son some twenty years later.


The acclaim of the nations demonstrates how favored Hezekiah is in God’s eyes.

Cf. 2 Kings 20.1 - 11 (Isa 38.1 - 22). In this abbreviated account, Hezekiah is healed in answer to prayer (cf. 7.14). His subsequent pride leads to divine wrath. When he and the citizens of Jerusalem humble themselves (cf. 7.14; 12.1 - 12; 30.11), the effects of the divine anger are delayed to a later reign.

Sign. Cf. 2 Kings 20.8 - 11, where the shadow retreats ten intervals.

Cf. 2 Kings 20.12, 20 - 21.

These verses are added by the Chronicler. Hezekiah’s wealth and building projects demonstrate that divine favor is upon him.

The incident with the Babylonian envoys is interpreted merely as a divine test. In 2 Kings 20.12 - 19 Hezekiah proudly shows the envoys all his treasures and receives from Isaiah a stern rebuke. Sign . . . in the land. Cf. v. 24.
The source from which Chronicles draws is given prophetic authority (cf. 1 Chr 29.29; 2 Chr 9.29).

The location of Hezekiah’s grave, added by the Chronicler, gives him special honor.

While Manasseh is as wicked in Chronicles as in Kings, Chronicles reports that toward the end of his life Manasseh repents and becomes a religious reformer.

In view of his extensive wickedness, Manasseh’s long reign seems to contradict the doctrine of retribution.

Beginning with Manasseh and continuing until the end of the monarchy, Chronicles omits the name of the queen mother.

Fifty-five. In view of his extensive wickedness, Manasseh’s long reign seems to contradict the doctrine of retribution.

In Kings this verse suggests that exile for the nation is inevitable; in Chronicles it leads to the exile of the king himself.

Sacred poles, dedicated to the goddess Asherah. Chronicles omits the comparison with Ahab found in 2 Kings 21.3. In Chronicles Ahaz, not Manasseh, is the most wicked of the Judean kings. Host of heaven, probably an old Canaanite cult and not Assyrian astral worship.

Manasseh practices child sacrifice in a valley south of Jerusalem (the valley of the son of Hinnom) that later became known as Gehenna, a name for hell or everlasting damnation (Mt 5.22, 29 - 30). On soothsaying and similar activities, see Deut 18.9 - 13.

Manasseh’s wickedness is the culmination of Southern apostasy and necessitates the nation’s exile despite the goodness of Josiah (2 Kings 21.11 - 16). In Chronicles, retribution happens in one’s own generation.

The exile of Manasseh to Babylon requites him for his misdeeds but is not reported in Kings. Assyrian documents refer to Manasseh as a loyal vassal. It is not clear why the exile took place in Babylon rather than in Assyria.

In captivity Manasseh repents and prays, and the Lord hears his prayer (cf. 7.14) and restores him to Jerusalem, thus confirming the doctrine of retribution. A prayer attributed to Manasseh is contained in the Apocrypha.

Building projects and powerful armies are signs of Manasseh’s forgiven and favored status. Ophel, see note on 27.3.

According to 2 Kings 23.14 Josiah still has to remove from the temple altars erected by Manasseh.

The Chronicler concedes that the reform is not completely successful.

Seers. Cf. v. 10.

Records of the seers. Again the Chronicler’s sources are ascribed prophetic authority.

Chronicles omits from 2 Kings 21.18 a reference to “the garden of Uzza” (cf. 2 Kings 21.26, according to which Amon is also buried in this garden). Since Uzza was an Arabian astral god, this notice would not conform to the Chronicler’s idea of a repentant Manasseh.

The verse adjusts the summary of Amon’s reign to fit the Chronicler’s version of Manasseh’s reign.

The people of the land, variously identified as free landowners, citizens, the population of provincial towns, a proletariat of common people, or a national council of elders.

Cf. 2 Kings 22.1 - 2; 23.4 - 20.
Josiah is the best of all Judean kings in following the example of David, although in Chronicles many of his activities merely repeat those of Hezekiah, who is identified as the real innovator.

According to Chronicles, Josiah begins seeking God at the age of sixteen and begins his reforming activities at twenty. Note the similar early activities of Hezekiah (29.3). Kings places his main reform in his eighteenth year, after the discovery of the law book, when he was twenty-six. A careful reading of Kings, however, shows that reforming activities (e.g., the temple repair) begin earlier. The few parallels with 2 Kings in 2 Chr 34.3 - 7 deal with Josiah’s reforms in his eighteenth year. Chronicles antedates the purification of the temple to the reign of Manasseh (33.15 - 16).

The text implies that Josiah kills the priests of Baal (cf. 2 Kings 10; 23.17).

Because Assyria’s power is rapidly deteriorating, Josiah’s reform, as in Kings, extends into the Northern Kingdom. Josiah’s territory in Chronicles nearly equals that of David and Solomon—from Simeon to Naphtali.

Cf. 2 Kings 22.3 - 13.

The names Maaseiah and Joah are added by the Chronicler, or they may have been accidentally lost from 2 Kings.

The Chronicler identifies the Levites as the collectors of the temple contribution and includes both Northern and Southern tribes among the contributors.

Kings of Judah, perhaps Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon.

The Chronicler places Levites, including the Levitical singers, as supervisors and in other offices during the reform.

Hilkiah’s discovery of the law book is a reward for Josiah’s generosity and faithfulness to the temple. Modern scholars identify the law book as some form of Deuteronomy; the Chronicler may take it to be the whole Pentateuch.

2 Kings 22.8 notes that Shaphan reads the book. The Chronicler may think it unlikely that the Pentateuch was read twice by Shaphan in one day (cf. 2 Chr 34.18).

Those who are left in Israel. The Chronicler’s interest in all Israel leads him to add a reference to the remnant of the Northern Kingdom.

Cf. 2 Kings 22.14 - 20.

Huldah, a Jerusalemite prophetess. Second Quarter, a part of the city added by Hezekiah.

Curses. Cf. Deut 27.9 - 26; 28.15 - 68.

Josiah’s repentance leads to his deliverance.

In peace implies a natural death even though Josiah died of wounds suffered in battle (35.23 - 24). Huldah predicts that Josiah will not himself experience the destruction of Jerusalem.

Cf. 2 Kings 23.1 - 3.

Levites. 2 Kings 23.2 reads “prophets.”

In 2 Kings the covenant is followed by the destruction of inappropriate worship sites. In Chronicles these sites were destroyed before the finding of the law book. The covenant leads in Chronicles to the celebration of Passover after a summary of Hezekiah’s reforms throughout the land of Israel (v. 33).

Cf. 2 Kings 23.21 - 23. Chronicles greatly expands the report of Josiah’s Passover and gives prominence to the Levites.
In Jerusalem, following the precedent of Hezekiah. Fourteenth day of the first month. Josiah’s Passover is held at the normal time (Ex 12.6; Lev 23.5; Num 9.3; cf. 2 Chr 30.2 - 3).

Taught all Israel. Cf. 17.7 - 9. According to the Chronicler, the ark had actually been deposited in the temple at the time of Solomon (2 Chr 5) and the Levites had been given alternate duties since the time of David (1 Chr 16.4).

The Chronicler links David and Solomon as kings who established the duties of the Levites. See 1 Chr 23 - 27. Other parallels between David and Solomon are given in 2 Chr 7.10; 11.17.

The generosity of the king and his officials could serve as an example to the Chronicler’s audience. The bulls are not part of the Passover ritual but may be associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The number of animals contributed is 41,400 (cf. 2 Chr 30.24, where 19,000 animals were given at Hezekiah’s Passover). The population of Judah is about 300,000, not counting participants from the North.

Because of the large numbers at the centralized Passover, the Levites kill and skin the lambs, while the priests manipulate the blood.

They roasted . . . fire, lit. “They boiled the Passover lamb with fire.” According to Ex 12.8 - 9 the Passover lamb is to be roasted; according to Deut 16.7 it is to be boiled.

The people of Israel who were present. Josiah’s Passover includes people from the North and the South.

A Passover like this has not been held since Samuel. 2 Kings 23.22 compares Josiah’s celebration to the Passover held by the judges, with the issue being centralization of worship by Josiah. Since centralization has already occurred with Hezekiah according to Chronicles, the innovation with Josiah may be the prominent role of the Levites (cf. vv. 3 - 6). This verse also stresses the significance of an all-Israel celebration.

Neco, king of Egypt 610 - 595 B.C.E. Carchemish, a city sixty miles northeast of Aleppo.

Since Neco claims he has been sent by God, anyone opposing him would be opposing God. He desires safe passage through Judah.

Josiah persists in his battle plans and disobeys the word of God as revealed through Neco. Hence the death of this otherwise exemplary king corresponds with the doctrine of retribution. According to 1 Esd 1.26, Jeremiah had authenticated the message from Neco. Disguised himself, a detail not mentioned in 2 Kings (cf. Ahab in 1 Kings 22.30). Megiddo, a town located on an important pass in the Carmel range.

The Chronicler observes that the archers wounded the king, who begs his attendants to take him from the battle.

Transported in a second chariot, Josiah dies in Jerusalem. In 2 Kings 23.29 - 30 Josiah dies at Megiddo.

Jeremiah expresses public sorrow, and he is joined by other singers. The Laments, a work otherwise unknown; not the biblical book of Lamentations.

The Chronicler notes that the deeds of Josiah were in accord with what is written in the law of the LORD, that is, the Pentateuch. Chronicles places the summary of Josiah’s reign after the account of his death, not before it as in Kings.

Cf. 2 Kings 23.30b - 34.
The people of the land. Cf. 33.25.

The tribute is 7500 pounds of silver and 75 pounds of gold.

Josiah is succeeded by three sons (Jehoahaz, Eliakim, and Zedekiah) and one grandson (Jehoiachin). Eliakim/Jehoiakim is actually older than Jehoahaz, but we do not know why he is not the first to succeed his father (cf. 1 Chr 3.15). Each of the last four kings winds up in exile and each pays tribute.

Nebuchadnezzar ruled Babylon from 605 to 562 B.C.E. Jehoiakim’s death is reported in 2 Kings 24.6; 2 Chronicles reports his (temporary or possibly his threatened) exile.

On the temple vessels, see 1 Chr 28.14 - 17; 2 Chr 4.19 - 22; 36.18; Ezra 1.7 - 11).

A child king for three months, Jehoiachin spends thirty-seven years in a Babylonian prison (2 Kings 25.27 - 30). According to 2 Kings 24.8, he is eighteen when he becomes king.

Brother, perhaps a relative. 2 Kings 24.17 reads “uncle.” Cf. also 1 Chr 3.15 - 16.

Chronicles condemns Zedekiah by citing his disobedience toward the prophet Jeremiah (cf. Jer 37.2).

Zedekiah breaks an oath by rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar.

The author charges the leading priests and the people with being unfaithful, a favorite word for sin in Chronicles.

Exile results from persistent despising of the prophets (cf. Jer 26.5; 29.19). No remedy. Cf. 2 Chr 7.14, where God promises to heal the people.

Chaldeans, the peoples who ruled Mesopotamia during the Neo-Babylonian period.

Jeremiah. Cf. Jer 25.11 - 12; 29.10. The Chronicler views Palestine as empty during the exilic period, but free to enjoy the sabbaths it had missed (perhaps since the beginning of the monarchy) and to get ready for the exiles who would return (Lev 26.34 - 35). Seventy years. The actual length of the exile was about fifty years.

Cyrus ruled Babylonia from about 539 to 530 B.C.E.