The Figure of Solomon in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Tradition

King, Sage and Architect

Edited by

Joseph Verheyden
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THE RISE OF SOLOMON IN THE ANCIENT ISRAELITE HISTORIOGRAPHY

Isaac Kalimi

1. Introduction

This study investigates the succession of Solomon to King David's throne according to two ancient Israelite historical writings. The first and earlier account is found in what is named in modern scholarship, since the work of Leonhard Rost in 1926, "David's Throne Succession Narrative" (or the "Court History")—a source that was incorporated within the large complex of the Deuteronomistic history, particularly in Samuel–Kings.¹ The second and later account is found in the Chronistic history, that is, the book of Chronicles.

¹ Usually it is considered that the account includes 2 Sam 9–20 + 1 Kgs 1–2; see the survey by Rofé 2009, 23–30. For a different opinion, however, see Kalimi 2010, 567 note 5. For a critical survey of various approaches on "Succession Narrative," see Ishida 1999, 102–107. Ishida shows that, in fact, there is "no effective method for controlling these anarchic postulations" (p. 104). Timo Veijola (1975) proposed to distinguish a threefold redaction of the text in 1 Kgs 1–2, written in the time of the exile (for what purpose?). Thilo A. Rudnig (2006), for his part, suggested that the very small basic version of the story from Solomon's time (10th century B.C.E.) went through more than thirteen redactions and saw several "additions," comprehensive re-workings, and numerous very late glosses. This whole process took place particularly in the Persian and Hellenistic periods, until the 3rd century B.C.E. (Fortunately, there are several fragments of Samuel–Kings among the Dead Sea Scrolls—usually dated to ca. mid 3rd century B.C.E.—what probably caused Rudnig to stop where he stops; otherwise, who knows until when these "continuous redactions" would have been extended). This kind of ad absurdum "scholarship" touches the unbearable. One might wonder if there is any other example of such a superfluous literary process in (ancient or non-ancient) world literature? How it is possible that one of the earliest and most beautiful and superb historical works of the ancient Israelites could have been composed through such a process? Is there any anachronism from the Persian or Hellenistic periods in the story under review? Is there any late linguistic element (e.g., Late Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, Persian or Greek words, syntax, and so forth) in the story? Why when it comes to Israelite literary legacy, some scholars (for other similar approaches, see Ishida 1999, and below note 4) choose to act in such unscholarly and irresponsible ways? In contrast, it is worth mentioning that there are some similarities between the biblical Succession Narrative and some ancient Near Eastern royal historical writings (see in detail, Ishida 1999, 107–136; however see also below note 41). For an additional critical review of Rudnig’s book, see Dietrich 2012, 267–272.
The first two chapters of Kings are very closely related and neither of them can stand by itself;² in fact, Solomon's succession was finalized with the fulfillment of what is called “David's testament” and the removal of his potential rivals (1 Kgs 2:1–46a); this matter in Kings and its counter account in Chronicles will be scrutinized as well.³

The present study follows the well-established and widely accepted view in historical-biblical scholarship that the books of Samuel–Kings were composed some time earlier than the book of Chronicles and that the major Vorlage of the Chronicler for the parallel texts in his book was Samuel–Kings.⁴

2. The Rise of Solomon

2.1 The Deuteronomistic History

2.1.1 The Last Days of David: Personal and Political Crisis

The opening literary unit in Kings (1 Kgs 1:1–4) serves as an exposition to the central story that immediately follows, which is the succession of Solomon to the throne and “David's testament” and its fulfillment (respectively 1 Kgs 1:5–53; 2:1–46a).⁵ In this unit the narrator notifies his potential audience of the factual setting behind the story that he is going to narrate,

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² See also DeVries 1985, 29: “there is nothing in chapter 3 to serve as chapter 2’s continuation.” The reason for having 3 Kingdoms begin at MT 1 Kgs 2:12 in LXXLuc clearly hangs together with the wish to end 2 Kingdoms with the death of David and create a new beginning for the reign of Solomon. In contrast, MT Kings starts with the events that led to Solomon’s kingship, including his co-regency with his father.

³ The relationship between MT 1 Kgs and LXX 3 Kingdoms is beyond the scope of this study. On this issue, see van Keulen 2005.

⁴ A. Graeme Auld has presented a somewhat too simplistic approach that attempts to demolish this consensus regarding the core source of Chronicles and the preferred historical status of (Samuel–) Kings over Chronicles; see Auld 1994. Based on Auld’s thesis, Raymond F. Person has recently argued that “the Deuteronomistic history and the book of Chronicles are Persian-period historiographies produced by two competing scribal guilds, the Deuteronomistic school and the Chronistic school, but that these historiographies are nevertheless based on the same broader tradition, including a common exilic source” (Person 2010, 163). However, this approach, which ignores the results of two centuries of diachronic research, has been sharply criticized from different viewpoints by a number of scholars and is actually completely rejected. See in detail Kalimi 2012, 498–517.

⁵ The exposition does not serve 2:13–25 only, as assumed by some scholars; see, for example, Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 71; Noth 1968, 13–14; Würthwein 1977, 10.
and thus enables them to evaluate the story on their own. It is told that the physical and spiritual conditions of King David were very unfortunate. The king was around his seventieth—very old indeed for that time; in fact he would have been the oldest king of Judah ever. He was sick and weak, confined to his bed and isolated from the world. Although David was covered with several blankets (בגדים), he was unable to keep his body warm.

6 Seemingly, the narrator was an eyewitness to the story he tells. He has a deep knowledge of the details and of the situation as a whole. Nonetheless, unawareness of the literary function of 1 Kgs 1:1–4 caused some scholars to offer baseless suggestions regarding the literary unity of the story. For example, Noth separated 1 Kgs 1:1 from 1b–4 and considered the latter as an original part of the story in 2:13–25, where Adonijah requests to have Abishag as a wife. Zalewski assumed that 1 Kgs 1:1–4 does not relate to the following story in 1 Kgs 1:5–8. See, respectively, Noth 1968, 13–14, and Zalewski 1981, 44.

7 2 Sam 5:4–5 and 1 Kgs 2:11 report that David became king when he was 30 years old and reigned 40 years. Thus, he was around 70 years old when he died (cf. Josephus, Jewish Antiquities 7.389; David Kimchi on 1 Kgs 11; Würtzwein 1977, 9). Accordingly, the story under review took place shortly before David’s death. Yet, “40” is found sometimes in biblical literature as a typological number (e.g., Gen 7:12; 8:6; Exod 24:18; Judg 5:31; 8:28; 13:1; 1 Kgs 19:8; Jonah 3:4; Ps 95:30). However, occasionally it can also be an accurate historical reference. After all, one should be allowed to use this and other typological numbers (e.g., 3, 7, 10, 12) as reliable historical information as well.

8 Note that David in his 70s is defined by the narrator as, “King David was old and advanced in years” (1 Kgs 11a); Barzillai who was in his 80s is said to be “a very old man, eighty years old” (2 Sam 19:33 [ET: 32]).

9 See the table of the ages of the kings of Judah by Ishida 1977, 153–154.

10 The word בגדים in this context does not simply mean “clothes” (Kleider), as it is translated by many scholars (e.g., King James Version, Revised Standard Version, The New English Bible; Luther Bibel), but rather “blankets” (Decken) used as a bed cover.

11 Several assumptions have been made regarding David’s illness. For example, the Babylonian Talmud, Berachoth 62b, gave an ethical explanation: David was punished for his misbehavior by cutting the edge of Saul’s garment (1 Sam 24:5): “Rabbi Jose ben Rabbi Hanina said: Whoever treats garments contemptuously will in the end derive no benefit from them; for it says, ‘Now King David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with blankets, but he could get no heat.’” This interpretation is adopted by the medieval Jewish exegesis Rashdi and David Kimchi in their commentaries on 1 Kgs 11. They also cite a Midrash in which their opinion is “closer” to the simple meaning of Scripture. The latter relates David’s cold body to the story in 2 Sam 24:17 (1 Chr 21:16): when David saw the angel with the sword in his hand, he feared and his blood got cold. Kimchi also adds that the many wars that David waged caused him to get old and weak earlier than normal, “and the old person the older he gets so his blood got colder and colder during the time.” Josephus (Jewish Antiquities 7.343) also gave a physical reason: David's old age caused his illness. Nonetheless, some modern physicians go beyond this and attempt to diagnose the exact medical problem that caused David’s sickness. Liubov (Louba) Ben-Noun of the Soroka University Medical Center of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Beer Sheva, Israel), is of the opinion that 1 Kgs 11 indicates that David was afflicted with hypothermia. “Among various diseases, the most likely to cause immobility and subsequent hypothermia are dementia, senile osteoporosis, hyperparathyroidism, or malignancy. Among these diseases, malignancy is the most acceptable” (see Ben-Noun 2002, 364). In another article (2004), Ben-Noun concludes, “Evaluation of the passages referring to King

7.343) advised him to have “a young virgin” who will nurse him and sleep with him in order to keep his body warm (1:2). However, unlike David’s former self, he was not aroused even by the most beautiful young virgin in Israel—Abishag the Shunammite. The detailed description of the king’s condition and Abishag’s beauty and task (1:1–4b) ends with a brief anticlimactic expression: ידעת לא יועה (“but the king did not know her [sexually],” 1:4c). Thus, of the double task for which Abishag was brought to the king: ירהו בל כלט海峡בת חכימך (“let her be his attendant, care-taker, let her lie in your bosom”), she fulfilled only the first and less important one, ירהו בל לט海峡ת חכימה (“she became the king’s attendant and nursed him”). The major purpose for bringing Abishag—בחיקך ושכבה—could not be fulfilled, because the king had become so weak. There were a sufficient number of servants who could serve/nurse the king, but apparently no one was in a position to intimately warm his body.

The poor physical and spiritual condition of David is also reflected in the central story. It is told that the king’s bedroom was converted into a chamber where he met not only his beloved wife, Bathsheba (1:15–16.28–31), but also his religious, military, and civil officials (1:22–23.32.47). Moreover, David indicates that he was afflicted by some mental disorder, and among the many possibilities, major depression, dysthymia and minor depression are the most likely. Of these diagnoses, major depression seems the most acceptable (p. 467). However, the word עבדיו in this context does not mean “his slaves” or “gentlemen of the bedchamber” (so, for instance, Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 71), who definitely were not capable of advising anything to the king.

It is a good example of what the author meant in his definition of the king’s absolute power: “And he will take your daughters to be . . .” in fact, whatever he wants! (1 Sam 8:13).

The Syriac (Peshitta) and Arabic translators identify “Abishag the Shunammite” with the “Shulamite” mentioned in the Song of Songs 7:1 (ET: 6:13), and write “Abishag the Shulamite.” However, the word “Shunammite” indicates Abishag’s hometown Shunem, which is located in the territory of Issachar in the eastern plain of Jezreel (Josh 19:18, see also 1 Sam 28:4; 2 Kgs 4:8). Similarly, “the great lady from Shunem” (2 Kgs 4:8) was called “the Shunammite” (4:2.25.36). For the survey of earlier discussions on this name, see Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 81–82; Mulder 1998, 35–36.

For the biblical term ידע “to know (a woman),” cf. Gen 4:1; 24:16; 38:26.

Cf. 1 Kgs 13:3. It seems that that ḥasheret is not an “unnecessary repetition” of 12–4, and therefore also it is not a later expansion as suggested by some commentators; see, for example, Klostermann 1887, 264; Gressmann 1921, 188. Rather, it is a brief retrospective recalling of David’s situation that was detailed earlier; cf. Würthwein 1977, 14; DeVries 1985, 11. Unacceptable, in my opinion, is the interpretation of David Kimchi (which was preferred by Cogan 2000, 159–160), that this verse tells us how “Bathsheba entered the chamber, even though the king was intimately in bed with Abishag, and no one was allowed to enter without permission, except her, for she was his wife.” Nathan enters the same chamber as “she is still talking with the king” (1:33), and he is immediately followed by Zadok and Benaiah (1:32). It is quite inconceivable that these officials entered the chamber, “though the king was intimately in bed with Abishag.”

Contra T. Veijola and E. Würthwein, there is no reason to consider 1 Kgs 1:46–48 as a late addition; see Würthwein 1977, 8 (and there reference to Veijola).
when Bathsheba entered the bedroom, David approaches her distantly, as if she were a stranger, as he approached the woman of Tekoa (2 Sam 14:5). He addresses her straightforwardly: “What do you want?” (לך מה, 1 Kgs 1:16b). One may contrast this with the reaction of King Ahasuerus to Esther: “when the king saw Esther . . . Then said the king to her: ‘What do you wish Queen Esther and what is your request? It shall be given to you even to the half of the kingdom!’ ” (Esth 5:2–3).

In any sense of the word, therefore, David was not himself. He could not function even according to the basic royal protocol and was incapable of investing any reasonable thought about his successor who would lead the kingdom in the future. A close reading of Samuel–Kings shows the following:

1. The political situation was not clear: there were good reasons to assume that one of David’s sons would inherit the throne and be king over Judah (/ the southern tribes), but would he also reign over Israel (/ the northern tribes)? With the latter, David had a special covenant “before the Lord” to reign over them (2 Sam 5:1–3). It was, as Albrecht Alt noted, a “personal union between the neighbor kingdoms;” the two kingdoms stood under the rule of one and the same king and this was accepted by both. Note, after the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam became king over the southern tribes (1 Kgs 11:43; 12:17). In order also to be able to reign over the northern tribes, he went to Shechem to receive their approval. However, because the new king refused to accept the tribes’ conditions the negotiations ended unsuccessfully and caused the United Kingdom to be divided (1 Kgs 12:1–16).

18 There is no reason to translate לך מה in 2 Sam 14:5 as “What aileth thee?” and in 1 Kgs 1:16b as “What wouldst thou?” (so the King James Version). Similarly also in the Revised Standard Version: in 2 Sam 14:5 as “What do you desire?” and in 1 Kgs 1:16b as “What is your trouble?” See also Luther Bibel: in 2 Sam 14:5 “Was hast du?” and in 1 Kgs 1:16b: “Was willst du?” Klostermann (1887, 191, 264) translates “was fehlt dir?” in 2 Sam 14:5, but in 1 Kgs 1:16b: “was ist dir?” Obviously, these translators were not aware of the fact that the same idiom occurs in both verses.


20 “Personalunion zwischen Nachbarreichen” (see Alt 1964, vol. 2, 45–47).

21 Another example of personal union, from the beginning of the 8th century B.C.E., is the case of Zkr king of Hamat and La’ash—two political entities that agreed to be ruled by one king, just as David and Solomon were king of Israel and Judah (2 Sam 5:5; 1 Kgs 1:35); see Noth 1971, vol. 2, 136. There are further examples from different times in Europe: the personal union of England and Scotland in 1603 when King James VI of Scotland accessed to the throne of England and combined England and Scotland under the Scottish Crown. Well-known is the Austro-Hungarian personal union in 1867 under Franz Joseph I of the Habsburg dynasty, who became “Emperor of Austria and Apostolic King of Hungary;” see Steed 1969, 28–39 esp. 32.
2. David did not train nor appoint any of his sons to be his successor, king over Judah and Israel (1 Kgs 1:20). Now that he had grown old, sick, weak and isolated, he did not or could not say anything in this regard. Moreover, because of the relative novelty of the kingdom in Israel, there most likely was not even a recognized procedure of royal succession.

3. A look at the ancient Israelite dynastic succession narratives shows that, as a rule, the successor to the throne was the first-born son or the eldest surviving son of the king. However, if the king was still alive, his was the final decision as to who would be his successor (1:20.27b).

4. After the death of Amnon, Chileab and Absalom (2 Sam 3:3; 13:1–30; 18:9–15), Adonijah became the eldest surviving son of David (1 Kgs 1:6c) and therefore the legitimate crown-prince and potential successor to the throne. This emerges not only from Adonijah’s assertion to Bathsheba, but also from Solomon’s own words to her. Adonijah said to Bathsheba, “You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign” (1 Kgs 2:15a). Solomon said to his mother, “And why do you ask Abishag the Shunemmite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also; for he is my elder brother” (2:22).

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22 See, for instance, 2 Chr 21:3 (an “addition”): “And their father gave them many gifts of silver and of gold and of precious things, with fortified cities in Judah; but the kingdom he gave to Jehoram; because he was the first-born.” Although this information appears only in Chronicles, there is no reason to doubt its historical reliability. The custom of inheriting the throne by the first-born son is well known also from other ancient Near Eastern cultures. Compare 2 Chr 21:3a with 2 Chr 11:18–23 and see the discussion below, note 24.

23 See below, and Ishida 1977, 152, 154–155.

24 For this issue, see de Vaux 1961, 100–102. Rehoboam chose Abijah as his successor despite the fact that his eldest son was Jeush (2 Chr 11:18–23 esp. verse 22, an “addition”). There is no reasonable argument to doubt the historicity of this information in Chronicles. As already stated by Kittel, “Sie scheinen aus einer alten Quelle zu stammen” (1902, 126). In any case, there is no way to know if this text is based on the Chronicler’s Vorlage as was assumed by Benzinger 1901, 97. In principle, the story in Chronicles is not exceptional. Similarly, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, did not choose his eldest son as heir to the throne, but the youngest one—Esarhaddon (Aššur-aḥ-iddina), the son of his beloved Queen Naqṣ’a (= “The Pure One,” so the name in Aramaic; in Assyrian it was rendered as Zakūtum); see Lewy 1952, 271–272. In 672 B.C.E., Esarhaddon made his younger son, Ashurbanipal (668–627 B.C.E.) ruler of the Assyrian Empire, while his first-born son, Shamash-shum-ukin, became ruler of Babylonia; see Weidner and Parpola 1970, no. 1293–13 (the text is on p. 102, its translation on p. 103).

25 We do not have any information on the second son of David, Chileab. He probably died at a young age. In 1 Chr 3:2 he was named “Daniel” (see Kalimi 2005a, 99–107 esp. 107).
5. Adonijah attempted to gain attention, while stressing his noble status. He surrounded himself with a ceremonial trap and bodyguard: “a chariot and horsemen and fifty out-runners” (1 Kgs 1:5b). This act in itself is harmless. By doing so, Adonijah acted similarly to his late elder brother, Absalom (2 Sam 15:1), who also was not rebuked by his father for such an action; there was nothing wrong with it. Furthermore, Adonijah lobbied with all his brothers (except Solomon), with the high officials of the kingdom, particularly Joab, the chief commander of the army, and with the well-regarded priest Abiathar, and gained their support (1 Kgs 1:9). Again, by acting so Adonijah did not conduct any illegal deed—he did not rebel against his father as did Absalom (2 Sam 15:2–18:17). The narrator stresses this point by stating: “Adonijah the son of Haggith is exalting himself, saying, I will be king” (חָגִית בֶּן אָדונִיָּה אֶמֶלֶךְ אַמְלָךְ). Adonijah’s declaration refers to the future, to the time after the death of his father, David. He did not say: “I am a king,” in his father’s lifetime, as did Absalom: “Absalom is king at Hebron!” (בֵּית הָבוֹן אָבֹלֶם מֵלֶךְ, 2 Sam 15:10). It seems that the narrator mentions Absalom here (1 Kgs 1:5–6) as a contrast with Adonijah; despite some ceremonial (1:5b) and physical (1:6b) similarities between the brothers, the latter did not rebel against his father as did the former (2 Sam 15:7–12). Moreover, there is no indication in the Succession Narrative that Adonijah was announced a king at the banquet.

26 See also 1 Sam 8:31, and compare to הבּרֵכֶים (“the out-runners”) in 1 Sam 22:17; 1 Kgs 14:27–28 and 2 Kgs 10:25; 11:4; 6:11; see also verse 19: הבּרֵכֶים (“the gate of the out-runners”). Interestingly, Elijah honored the king of Israel and “ran before Ahab” (1 Kgs 18:46). Bar-rakab, the son of Panamu, king of Sam'al, testifies (730 b.c.e.): “I have been running at the wheel of my lord, the king of Assyria (= Tiglath-pileser III)” (see Pritchard 1969, 655a). As correctly noted by Cogan (2000, 157), “running by or in front of the king’s chariot signified honor and obeisance to one’s overlord.”

27 In 2 Sam 15:1 the set is: המְבַרֵכָּה עוֹסֵס (cf. 1 Kgs 5:6; 10:28–29), while in 1 Kgs 15:1 it is הבּרֵכֶים (cf. 1 Kgs 9:19; 10:26). Both sets appear also in Solomon’s reign story. In fact, they are synonymous and refer to the same items (see, e.g., Exod 14:3.17–18; 23:25; 28; 15:4; 19; Ezek 26:7). Thus, there is no need to “correct” the text of 1 Kgs 15 according to the text in 2 Sam 15:1, as suggested by Klostermann 1887, 263, and accepted by Benzerger 1899, 2–3. For the same reason, it is very improbable to deduce from the set in 1 Kgs 15 that the “Solomonistic historiographer” wanted to “mislead the reader with the false idea that Adonijah not only followed in the footsteps of Absalom but also had made the decisive step toward a rebellion by gathering a military force,” as suggested Ishida 1999, 115–116 esp. 116; and see also Cogan 2000, 157.

28 Compare, respectively, with 2 Sam 14:25 and 151.

29 Contra Ishida 1999, 117 who assumes that “the portrayal of Adonijah in 1 Kgs 1:5–6 was made from the consistently inimical viewpoint of the party opposing Adonijah.”
in Ein Rogel (1 Kgs 1:9–10). Most likely it was an assembly of Adonijah’s close supporters and all the officials of Judah (מחזיקי יהודהgende år, 1:9c), in order to represent commonality among them and to show solidarity to the crown-prince. Under these circumstances and with the massive support of his brothers, the officials of the kingdom—including the key figures and the people, Adonijah had no reason to rebel. Rather, he was waiting for David, whose days were numbered, to pass away and serenely to inherit the throne.

6. The relationship of Absalom with his father was complicated after he murdered his brother Amnon (2 Sam 13:24–39). Even after his return from Geshur, the relationship was explosive, and in fact David did not want to see him (2 Sam 14:24). He had good reason to worry about his candidacy as his father’s successor, and therefore he became an usurper to the throne (2 Sam 15). In contrast, as much as we know from the sources, Adonijah did not have any conflict with his father. Accordingly he should not be worried that his father would reject him as a future successor, and had no reason to rebel against David.

7. The easy collapse of Adonijah’s party (1 Kgs 1:49) “shows that they had made no preparation for revolt and were taken by surprise by the court intrigue of Solomon’s factions. Otherwise, they would have offered armed resistance to David and Solomon.”

8. According to 1 Kgs 2:5–6 David accused Joab of killing Abner, the son of Ner, and Amasa, the son of Jether. However, he did not accuse Joab of supporting the “rebellious” action of Adonijah, that is, announcing him as king in the life of his father and without his knowledge.

9. Abiathar was not accused in “David’s testament” as one who supported rebellion. Rather, his loyalty to David was highlighted even by Solomon: “I will not at this time put you to death, because you bore the ark (ארון) of the Lord God before David my father, and because you shared in all the affliction of my father” (2:26).

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30 Contra Zalewski 1981, 45, 46, and there references to other scholars who held a similar opinion.

31 Note, that the narrator calls the people invited to the banquet of Adonijah (‘the guests,’ 1 Kgs 1:44.49). The same term appears also in 2 Sam 15:11, in the description of Absalom. However, while in the case of Absalom the קראים had no idea whatsoever that he is going to rebel against his father (הלאים ולא ידע לפני הדבר), in the case of Adonijah everything was clear: he had already stated “I will be king!”


33 Probably the word aron is a corruption of efod; see in detail Klostermann 1887, 271; Gray 1970, 108–109.
10. If Joab and Abiathar had collaborated with Adonijah against King David, how could they have continued to hold their high positions under the co-regency of David and Solomon?\textsuperscript{34}

Nathan served as a court prophet for David,\textsuperscript{35} and held favor with him. Most likely, he was thought to have favor with his successor as well.\textsuperscript{36} However, for some reason he was unable to gain favor with Adonijah. It is unknown what exactly caused the tension between the two (and between their supporters).\textsuperscript{37} In any case, Nathan was not among the personalities who participated in Adonijah’s banquet (1 Kgs 1:8–10, 26). Thus he conspired against Adonijah while actively supporting Solomon.\textsuperscript{38}

2.1.2 Conspiration in the Court: Nathan and Bathsheba Facing David
In the Deuteronomistic history Nathan is portrayed as a wise man, both in his methods of delivering God’s words to David (2 Sam 7; 12) and when advising Bathsheba (1 Kgs 1) how to create an opportunity for placing her son Solomon on David’s throne.\textsuperscript{39} He takes advantage of the physical and mental conditions of David and manipulates him. He takes advantage of

\textsuperscript{34} Ishida 1999, 118.
\textsuperscript{35} Interestingly, the other court prophet of David—Gad (1 Sam 22:5; 2 Sam 24:11–19; 1 Chr 21:9; 29:29; 2 Chr 29:25)—is not mentioned in the Succession Narrative.
\textsuperscript{36} See in detail, below 2.1.2, “Conspiracy in the Court: Nathan and Bathsheba Facing David.”
\textsuperscript{37} The suggestion of some scholars (e.g., Ahlström 1961, 113–127) that it was a conflict between the party of Yahwism (represented by Abiathar, as the head of Adonijah’s supporters) and the Jebusite-Canaanite religion (represented by Zadok, as the head of Solomon’s supporters) is in fact baseless. The speculation around the Jebusite origin of Zadok is likewise “mountains which hang on a hair;” see also Ishida 1999, 111–112.
\textsuperscript{38} Nonetheless, Nathan was not a “sponsor” of Solomon and therefore he took his side (so Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 75). Giving a second name (Jedidiah) to the infant Solomon does not verify this assumption. It rather conveys a message of hope that the second child born to David and Bathsheba will live: he was born legitimately for his parents and even has the divine blessing; see in detail, Kalimi, ‘The Love of God and Royal Apology’, forthcoming.
\textsuperscript{39} Wolfgang Oswald denies any existence of historical Nathan in the 10th century B.C.E. Rather, in his opinion, Nathan as described in 2 Sam 7; 12 and 1 Kgs 1 is an fictive literary figure that was created in the 7th and 6th centuries B.C.E.; see Oswald 2008. However, Oswald’s thesis depends on very thin literary-historical lines, and arise series of acute problems as correctly pointed out by Dietrich 2012, 277. Indeed, the detailed and accurate information in 1 Kgs 1–2 about the two parties struggling to succeed David’s throne, and that about Bathsheba, Abishag, Joab, Benaiah, Zadok and Shimei stem from ancient informative source(s) rather than they were invented by someone in the late Judahite monarchical time (by whom and for what purpose? and why particularly at that time?).

the passive personality of Bathsheba and uses her as a tool,40 in order to
make David reject his eldest living son—Adonijah—from the throne, and
to choose—Solomon—his younger son, the one of Bathsheba.41 A close
examination of 1 Kgs 1:5–10 yields the following:

1. Nathan’s question to Bathsheba, “Have you not heard that Adonijah
the son of Haggith has become king, and our lord David does not know
it?” (1:11), is inaccurate. Adonijah did not declare himself a king (see
above). Accordingly, both the claim of Nathan (1:11, 13, 24–25) and that
of Bathsheba, which is based on Nathan’s (1:18), are false. This is part of
a conspiracy, taking advantage of David’s miserable condition.

2. Nathan alerts Bathsheba that in case Adonijah would be king, her life
and that of Solomon would be at risk (1:12, see also 1:21). But such an
assumption is baseless. Why should Adonijah kill her and his own half-
brother?42 He did not invite Solomon to his banquet, perhaps because
he did not consider the young teenager important enough or because
of the scandals that lead to his very existence (2 Sam 11–12). It does not
necessarily imply that he would slay him anyway.

3. Nathan and Bathsheba introduce Joab and Abiathar as supporters of
the “rebellious” son Adonijah. By doing so they try to horrify the old,
weak and sick David, who was experiencing the devastating rebellion
of Absalom. They conspire to make him feel that he is in a very danger-
ous situation and that immediate action must be taken (1:19).

40 Bathsheba is presented in the biblical stories as one who has no “personality,” but is
a passive figure: David calls her and sleeps with her, though she was married to Uriah the
Hittite (2 Sam 11:3–4), she stays silent. Following the murder of her husband, she mourns
for him (i.e., she performed the appropriate mourning rituals). But when David “sent for
her and brought her into his house” and she became his wife, we do not hear her own
thoughts on this matter, though “what David had done was wrong…” (2 Sam 12:26–27).
Nathan initiated her visit to David and she simply co-operates with him (1 Kgs 1:11–14).
Her reaction to Adonijah’s request to have Abishag as a wife, and her appeal to Solomon
to fulfill it, which was in fact making a claim on the kingdom (1 Kgs 2:23–25; cf. Gen 35:22;
2 Sam 12:8; 16:21–22), is just more evidence of her naive and easily manipulated
personality. Of course, one could claim that it is the narrator of the throne succession story who
did describe her as a not very insightful person. However, the accumulative cases lead to con-
clude that most likely she was a passive and naïve personality, one who was easily and
usually manipulated by others.

41 This is not an exceptional courtyard intrigue episode. There are several analogies for
this in ancient and modern world history; see the examples collected by Montgomery and
Gehman 1951, 74–75. See also above, notes 1 and 24.

42 Contra Gray 1970, 96, who claims that “Adonijah…himself was probably prepared
to mete out to his rival (= Solomon, I.K.) had he been successful.”
4. Nathan advises Bathsheba to manipulate the old and sickly David whose memory was no longer reliable, by saying “Did you not, my lord, O king, swear to your maidservant, saying, ‘Assuredly Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne’?” (1:13 see also 1:17). The claim to make Solomon a king is based on David’s oath/promise. But such a promise had not been mentioned in any place. If indeed David ever made such an important promise to Bathsheba, there would certainly have been left a trace in the stories of David in the book of Samuel. It would be known at least to David’s nephew and longtime loyal chief commander, Joab (who kept David’s secret regarding Uriah), and to his friend and priest, Abiathar. The fact that David did not make such a promise to Bathsheba is confirmed also from Bathsheba’s words: “But you, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him” (1:20). These words contradict her saying in verse 1:17 regarding the promise that David made to her. If David already promised her that Solomon will reign after him, why does no one in Israel know about it?

5. Nathan presents his talking to Bathsheba as “an advice” (ועז, 1:12a). He adds that he will help and support her: “While you still talking there with the king, I also will come in after you, and confirm your words” (דבריך את ומלאתי; 1:14). If there were such a promise, why should he “advise” her to say so and not simply remind her of the promise that she got from the king? And why was there a need for Nathan’s confirmation of it? Nathan should say something like: “go and remind the king…,” rather than “go and say to the king….” Furthermore, in meeting with David, Nathan does not mention any promise that the king made to Bathsheba (1:23–27).

In addition, the overt behavior of Bathsheba and Nathan in front of David is unusual. Nathan’s behavior is totally different from that in 2 Sam 12 where he stood in front of David and pointed out, “You (= David) are the (evil) man!” (2 Sam 12:7a). Here, however, when he enters David’s

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43 See Ehrlich 1900, repr. 1969, 264.
44 Some scholars do not question the “advice” of Nathan and assume David’s promise to Bathsheba actually occurred; so, for example, Kaufmann 1966, 180–184 (Hebrew); Robinson 1972, 28 (“It is described as a solemn oath, though we might think it to have been the kind of thing that a king would say to his favourite wife”); Bright 1981, 210; Zalewski 1981, 46–57. Some of these scholars deny David’s weak spiritual condition at the end of his life and believe that the promise of David to Bathsheba was given privately, even “strictly confidentially;” therefore nobody knew about it. Kaufmann (1966, 182–184) and Zalewski (1981, esp. 54–55) even attempted to “rehabilitate” the broken dignity of Nathan.
chamber, “he bowed before the king with his face to the ground” (1 Kgs 1:23b). As already stated by Arnold B. Ehrlich, “the prophet who stood in front of the king and talked justice and truth in the name of the Lord is not similar to the prophet who talked to his king and praised his son…”45 Indeed, Martin Noth correctly notices: “Nathan appears in the story as a conspirator who understands it very well, to move in the circles of the royal court and to arrange everything in the way to achieve his desired goal.”46 Yehezkel Kaufmann’s suggestion that in 2 Sam 12 Nathan appeared in front of David as God’s messenger, while in 1 Kgs 1 he acted privately as one of the king’s officials,47 does not eliminate the conflicted personalities of Nathan. Also the behavior of Bathsheba, who “bowed and prostrated herself before to the king” (1:16), reflects a flattering relationship between the two.

All in all, Nathan and Bathsheba succeed in making the old and sick David believe that he had solemnly promised to Bathsheba that her son would be king. They heighten the awareness of the dying king, and he reacted immediately in favor of Solomon (1:28–35). Finally, the flattering words of the officer of the mercenary guard, who also was not invited to Adonijah’s banquet (1:26) and most likely desired to replace the chief commander Joab, complete the conspiracy: “And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada reacted to the king, and said, Amen; so say the Lord God of my lord the king too. As the Lord has been with my lord the king, so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David” (1:36–37, cf. 1:47). Thus, Solomon did not succeed to the throne by force and bloodshed, but nor did he in a just and right way. He was not even elected by the people or chosen by the king or God. Solomon became a king because of powerful party intrigues in the palace courtyard, taking advantage of David’s condition.48

After Solomon’s accession we do not hear anymore of or about Nathan. Apparently he continued to keep his position as the court prophet. Also,

45 Compare Ehrlich 1900, 265.
46 “Nathan aber erscheint in der Erzählung als ein Intrigant, der es sehr gut versteht, sich in Kreise des königlichen Hofes zu bewegen und alles so zu arrangieren, dass das von ihm erstrebte Ziel erreicht wird;” see Noth 1968, 40.
48 As such, the story could probably be publicized at the end of or after Solomon’s reign. Contra Ishida (1999, 110), who assumes that there is no anti-Solomonic criticism in the Succession Narrative and that in this story “Solomon plays the role of a legitimate successor to the throne, while David and Adonijah play the roles of an incompetent predecessor and an unworthy rival prince.” It seems that Ishida imposes here the ancient Near Eastern feature of apologetic royal stories on the biblical Succession Narrative.
his sons were given principle positions by Solomon: “Azariah son of Nathan was over the governors (of the districts; ידיעת הארץ; 49 and Zabud (LXX: Ζαχουρ or Zαχουρ; Peshitta: Zbwr)50 son of Nathan was an official, the king’s friend (= adviser);51 והמלך רעה חכם (1 Kgs 4:5). Moreover, those who supported Nathan and Solomon replaced the high positions of those that supported Adonijah: Zadok replaced Abiathar, and Benaijah replaced Joab (1 Kgs 2:35). It seems therefore that the intrigue and conspiracy in the Succession Narrative was above all a power struggle: the chief conspirator (Nathan) supported the young son of Bathsheba in order to guarantee his own current position and obtain high positions for his sons. Zadok and Benaijah joined him in order to achieve better and higher positions for themselves. Bathsheba wished her son to become a king, and herself the “Queen-Mother” (הגבירה; 1 Kgs 2:19, see also 15:13 [// 2 Chr 15:16]; 2 Kgs 10:13; 2 Kgs 24:15 [“king’s mother”] // Jer 29:2 [gebira]; Jer 13:18).53

2.2 The Chronistic History

The Chronicler excludes the story of Nathan’s engagement with Bathsheba against the rightful successor, Adonijah (1 Kgs 1:11–53). In order completely to cover Nathan’s tracks he also omits the list of Solomon’s administrative officials (1 Kgs 4). According to the Chronicler, Nathan was not actively involved in the election and coronation of Solomon. His role is limited to

49 It seems that in the Northern Kingdom the parallel term for ידיעת הארץ was נטיבות; see Mettinger 1971, 124.

50 The variations of the name stem from the interchange of the Hebrew letters כ/ב and ר/ד that are graphically similar. On this phenomenon in the Hebrew language and biblical manuscripts and translations, see Sperber 1939, 153–249 esp. 167 (§21) and 168 (§23).

51 The word חכם does not appear in the most important manuscripts of the Septuagint. Usually, it is assumed to be a late gloss (e.g., de Vaux 1961, 128). Presumably, חכם in the context under review means perhaps an “official” or “civil servant,” rather than the common meaning, “priest.” It was added in the margin of the text to explain the uncommon title והמלך, which was not clear anymore to the readers. Cf. Benzinger 1899, 18. Another possible—but less likely—explanation: a glossator identified the second name “Nathan” with “Nathan” son of David who was חכם (2 Sam 5:14). Accordingly, he added the word חכם here as well.

52 Cf. Ehrlich 1900, 276; contra Würthwein 1977, 40, who doubts that Azariah and Zabud were brothers and both were sons of Nathan the prophet. The Chronicler mentions only one of Nathan’s sons, “Zabud the son of Nathan” (1 Chr 2:36), without his official title “priest and the king’s friend.” Probably, because the priesthood has been given to Aaron and his sons, and Nathan did not belong to that clan. Nathan himself was mentioned several times in 1 Chr 17, and in 29:29.

53 On the “Queen-Mother” in the Hebrew Bible and ancient Near Eastern cultures, see Marsman 2003, 345–370.
what is said about his prophecy in 1 Chr 17 (// 2 Sam 7). The Chronicler did not want to present God’s messenger in a negative way. He clearly also did not want to show that the builder of the Temple gained the throne as a result of court intrigues and manipulations.

Because the Chronicler omitted the main story (1 Kgs 1:11–53), he also left out the setting (or the exposition) of that story (1:1–4). The omission of 1 Kgs 1:1–4 also fits well with the principle of reward and punishment that guides Chronistic history: because being healthy or sick is considered as a reward or a punishment, the description of David as sick, weak and bedridden, might be interpreted as a punishment for his transgression(s). The Chronicler desired to avoid such an impression. He describes David as an aged man (1 Chr 23:1), but one who is still healthy, energetic and very active. David makes a census of the Levites and organizes them in divisions (1 Chr 23:1–32); he organizes the priests in divisions (1 Chr 24:1–19), as well as the singers (1 Chr 25:1–31), gatekeepers, and others (1 Chr 26:1–32). David assembles the people in Jerusalem, stands on his feet and delivers a long and impressive speech. He prays, appoints Solomon as a king, and celebrates the occasion with all Israel (1 Chr 28–29). The setting as described in Kings is replaced in Chronicles by one that pictures the many activities of the aged David and the peaceful and smooth coronation of Solomon by his father, brothers, kingdom’s officials, and all Israel. The Chronicler that omitted all the negative stories about David (e.g., 2 Sam 11–12) and presented him as a role model for all the kings to come (e.g., 2 Chr 11:17 [an “addition”; 2 Chr 7:10 // 1 Kgs 8:66], now described him as a righteous person who spent his last days without any physical, mental and political problems. David was not sick and weak in his last years, because he did not sin. Contrarily, he was healthy and active as a result of doing right in the sight of the Lord.

The Chronicler also presents a new narrative, “the correct one,” instead of the one in 1 Kgs 1:5–53 that he omits. According to his understanding of several earlier texts, what really happened was the fulfillment of the divine plan. The decision about who would be the next king over Israel was not only David’s (1 Kgs 1:20.27.43). Rather, it was, first and foremost, God’s

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54 On this issue see for example, regarding the sickness of King Asa of Judah, 2 Chr 16:7–12 (cf. with 1 Kgs 15:12); 2 Chr 21:8–19; 26:16–21; 32:24–26; Exod 15:26; Deut 7:15 (in case of keeping the Lord’s law); 28:27,35 (in case of not keeping the Lord’s law).
55 Already the Talmudic and medieval Sages considered David’s sickness and weakness as a punishment for his earlier misbehavior; see above note 11.
56 This in a clear contrast to the short blessing to the Lord that he states from his bed according to 1 Kgs 1:47b–48.
decision, because the throne belongs to Him.57 Solomon was chosen to reign over Israel by God himself, and David simply followed divine commandment, rather than the last minute decision that the circumstances forced him to make (1 Kgs 1:32–35).

Where did the Chronicler get his inspiration for his narrative? Clearly, it cannot have been based on 1 Kgs 1, because there Nathan intrigues and speaks privately rather than in God’s name or prophetic authority. Most likely the Chronicler found some base in such texts that intended to legitimize Solomon’s succession:

1. Divine attention towards Solomon is expressed most strongly in 2 Sam 12:24–25: “she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon; and the Lord loved him. (therefore) He sent word through Nathan the prophet that for the sake of the Lord (= Solomon) should be given the name Yedidyah.”58

2. There is also David’s approval in 1 Kgs 1:48: “Blessed be the Lord, the King of Israel, who today has granted one of my offspring to sit on my throne and permitted me to witness it.”

3. Later on, even Solomon’s rival, Adonijah, states: “I should reign; but the kingdom is turned about, and has become my brother’s (= Solomon’s); for it was his from the Lord” (1 Kgs 2:15b).

4. Solomon’s reaction to Adonijah includes the assertion: “as the Lord lives, who has established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has set up a house (i.e., a family, dynasty) for me, as he promised” (1 Kgs 2:24).60

5. In Gibeon, Solomon replies to God: “And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king instead of David my father” (1 Kgs 3:7a). The Chronicler not only takes over this information (2 Chr 1:8b), but also strengthens the king’s statement by adding: “for You (= God) have

57 See 1 Chr 17:14; 29:11; 2 Chr 13:8, and below in the text.
59 For the idiom ‘אשיש יעשא לי בית (= who set up a house for me,)’ cf. Exod 1:21; 2 Sam 7:11, and see Paul 2005.
60 In this verse the words: יהוה אשר בביתי ושם אהב את אשר נשאה לי בית (“the Lord who has established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has made me a house [i.e., dynasty], as he promised”) are referring to Nathan’s prophecy to David in 2 Sam 7:11b-12: ליהוה אשר בביתי ושם אהב את אשר נשאה לי בית (“Also the Lord tells you that he will make you a house... I will set up your seed after you, who shall issue from your bowels, and I will establish his kingdom”). This sentence, therefore, was composed by the Deuteronomistic historian and attributed to Solomon. This historian attempts to show the fulfillment of God’s words by his prophet; see also below, note 105.
made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude” (יהוה מלךني על עם ויבערו הארץ; 2 Chr 1:9b).

6. The author/editor of Kings has the Queen of Sheba say: “May the Lord your God who chooses you be blessed, to place you on the throne of Israel. Because the Lord loves Israel forever, He appoints you king…” (ויתנהו ישראל בכל מלך אלהים, 1 Kgs 10:9–10 // 2 Chr 9:8).

7. The Chronicler used passages from Ezra-Nehemiah in several places.61 Probably he noticed Nehemiah’s statement regarding Solomon’s accession to the throne: “and God made him king over all Israel” (ונתןו, Neh 13:26).

According to this line of thought and through the interpretation of these passages, the Chronicler pictured Solomon as a divinely chosen king. He states this very clearly and straightforwardly, and prepares his audience for it already in his description of David’s reign:

(a) The Chronicler presents the young king as one who was named “Solomon” by God even before he was born (1 Chr 22:5–11, an “addition”).62 Solomon’s relationship with God is defined metaphorically by the adoption formula.63 He was appointed to be a king and to build the Temple before he was born: “The word of the Lord came to me (= David), saying… a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies around; for his name shall be Solomon… He shall build a house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.” The motif of being divinely appointed for a position while still in the mother’s womb is known from prophetic literature (Jer 1:4–5 and Isa 49:1)—from where the Chronicler probably took the notion—, as well as from ancient Near Eastern royal inscriptions.64

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61 See Kalimi 2005a, 8–9, 129–130, 141, 320–322; idem 2005b, 90–92.
62 For more details on this issue see Kalimi 2013.
63 For the adoption formula “he shall be my son and I will be his father,” see the detail discussion and bibliographical references in Cooke 1961, 202–225; and Kalimi 2005a, 264–265.
64 For example, Aššur-reš-iši I, king of Assyria (1132–1115 B.C.E.), declared to be one “whom the great gods, Anu, Enlil, and Ea, truly chose (lit. requested, when he was still) inside his mother” (see Chicago Assyrian Dictionary, vol. 1 [A], part I, p. 146a, no. 2); Esarhaddon, king of Assyria (681–669 B.C.E.): “The great gods designated (me) king of the upper and lower lands… (already) in the womb of my mother who bore me… for rule of all the lands…” (Borger 1967, 115, §82:7–10; Luckenbill 1927, vol. 2, 223, §571); Assurba-
(b) The Chronicler repeats this notion once again in 1 Chr 28 (an “addition”). He has David give a speech, describing Solomon as God’s chosen king, and he does it by using the literary numerical pattern of “three–four (or “three + one”),” mentioning Solomon in the fourth and final place (28:4–5).\(^{65}\)

1. For He selected Judah as monarch,\(^{66}\)
2. and in the house of Judah, my ancestral house,
3. from my father’s sons, he wanted to install me as king over all Israel.
4. And of all my sons—for the Lord has given me many sons—he selected my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.\(^{67}\)

Once more, the Chronicler continues and asserts: “And He (= God) said to me (= David), Solomon, your son, shall build my house and my courts; for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father” (1 Chr 28:6–7). In the latter verse (as well as in 1 Chr 22:10) the Chronicler relates the assertions that he attributes to David with Nathan’s prophecy in 1 Chr 17:11–13 (// 2 Sam 7:12–14), and shows them to be a fulfillment of that prophetical promise:

> And it shall come to pass, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will rise up your offspring (lit., seed) after you, who shall be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house (= Temple) and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. . .

\(^{65}\) See in detail, Kalimi 2005a, 365; idem 2013.

\(^{66}\) In fact, Judah is also mentioned in the fourth place among Jacob’s sons: after the first three sons—Reuben, Simeon, and Levi—had been rejected because of their wicked acts, Judah took the favorable position (Gen 49:3–12; and see also ibid., 34; 35:22).

\(^{67}\) A similar literary structure appears already in the case of the election of Saul in 1 Sam 10:20–21. However, in the latter the structure is 2–3 (Benjamin, Mitri, Saul) rather than 3–4.
(c) The author of Chronicles also stresses the actual fulfillment of the divine promises:

Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. And all the officials, and the mighty men, and likewise all the sons of King David, submitted themselves to Solomon the king. And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel. (1 Chr 29:23–25; an “addition”)

Thus, the Chronicler clearly turns Solomon into a divinely chosen king, as were Saul and David who had preceded him. In contrast to 1 Kgs 1–2, and perhaps in order to cover up the story of Solomon’s scandalous access to the throne, the Chronicler presents the new king as a fully legitimate one: he was chosen by the Lord and king David. The succession was completely harmonious. All heavenly and earthly forces combined together to make it a successful occasion: God himself called his name Solomon and appointed him—already in his mother’s womb—to be a king over Israel and to build his Temple. This notion was adopted and supported by David as well as all Israel, all the kingdom’s officials, mighty men, and all the sons of David (David), including Adonijah and those who supported him (1 Kgs 19:19.25). Presenting Solomon as a divinely chosen king, automatically puts into question the plausibility of the account in the book of Kings. Who could oppose one who was chosen by the Lord himself, by David and his sons and officials, and all of Israel? Accordingly, the Chronicler omits the story of Kings altogether.

3. The Coronation of Solomon

3.1 The Coronation Ceremony: Kings versus Chronicles

The author of the Succession Narrative in Kings lively recounts the coronation of Solomon. Under the above mentioned circumstances in David’s palace yard, the rush coronation of Solomon was undertaken not by the king’s top-rate officials, the chief commander of the army (Joab) and the

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68 See 1 Sam 9:6–10:31; 15:1.10.35 (Saul); 1 Sam 16:1–13; 2 Sam 7:8 // 1 Chr 7:17; Ps 89:4 (David). In fact, the motif of divine chosen of a king was common also in other ancient Near Eastern cultures. See above note 64.

69 Adonijah is mentioned just once in the genealogical list of the Davidic dynasty; 1 Chr 3:2 // 2 Sam 3:4.

70 Cf. Kalimi 2009b, esp. 188 note 55.
priest (Abiathar) who supported Adonijah (1:7; 2:22.28), but by relatively lower-rate officials, Zadok the priest, Benaiah the officer of the mercenarys, and the prophet Nathan (1:32, cf. 8, 10, 38, 44).

The story goes as follows: Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet take Solomon on a royal mule—David’s own,⁷¹ and ride down to Gihon. For safety purposes, Benaiah and his mercenaries accompany them, in case of a possible unexpected disturbance from Adonijah’s supporters or anyone else. In Gihon, Nathan and Zadok anoint Solomon king over Israel,⁷² with the oil preserved in a horn that was kept in the Tent.⁷³ The people blow trumpets and shout “(long) life to King Solomon!,”⁷⁴ play flutes, raise their voices, and rejoice.⁷⁵ Solomon is to return and sit on David’s throne and reign as a co-regent, but with the intention to succeed him (1 Kgs 1:46; 2:12a).⁷⁶ These core features of the story are repeated three times: once in David’s order to coronate Solomon (1:32–35); once in the fulfillment of the order (1:38–40); and a third time in the report of Jonathan son of Abiathar to Adonijah and Joab (1:44–48).⁷⁷

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⁷¹ For the mention that the king had a special mule/horse, see also Esth 6:8b and 6:9–11, that speaks about a specific horse—“the horse” (הסוס).
⁷² In ancient Israel, the king was anointed by a priest and/or prophet. Thus, the prophet and priest Samuel anointed Saul (1 Sam 10:1) and David (16:13); the prophet Ahiah the Shilonite anointed Jeroboam son of Nebat (1 Kgs 11:29–31); the disciple of the prophet Elisha anointed Jehu as king of Israel (2 Kgs 9:1–14); Jehoiada the high priest anointed Joash (2 Kgs 11:12–14).
⁷³ “The Tent” is the one that was erected by David for the Ark (2 Sam 6:17); it is mentioned also later on in 1 Kgs 2:28; 8:4 (// 2 Chr 5:5).
⁷⁴ Compare 1 Sam 10:24 (Saul); 2 Sam 16:16 (Hushai the Gethite to Absalom), 1 Kgs 1:25 (Adonijah); 2 Kgs 11:12 (Joash).
⁷⁵ On this issue, see Kalimi 2010, esp. 567.
⁷⁶ Presumably, the coronation took place according to a set protocol. Indeed, at least some elements of Solomon’s coronation appear also in the description of the coronation of Joash of Judah (2 Kgs 11:12–14): Jehoiada the high priest, accompanied with the commanders of army units, carries Joash to the Temple and places the crown on the head of Joash, presents him with a copy of the covenant, and anoints him as a king. The people clap and shout, “long live the king!” The people were playing trumpets and rejoicing. For a more detailed comparison of the stories, see de Vaux 1961, 102–107.
⁷⁷ Such repetition of a story is common in biblical as well as Ugaritic literature. For example, the story about Rebecca’s meeting with the servant of Abraham is repeated four times (Gen 24:2–14.17–21.42–44.45–46); similarly the dreams of Pharaoh (Gen 41:1–7.17–24); the description of the Tabernacle is repeated twice: once when God orders Moses (Exod 25:1–31:11) and once when Moses fulfills it (Exod 35:4–39.43). The inauguration offers of the Israelite chiefs is repeated twelve times (Num 7:12–83). The list of the things that the son of Daniel will do to him is repeated four times in the Acts of Daniel; see Cassuto 1965, 34–36 (Hebrew). In the late first century c.e., Flavius Josephus probably was not familiar anymore with this feature of biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature. Therefore, he omitted the detailed repetitions and just wrote “she (= Bathsheba) recounted to him (= David) all that the prophet had suggested…” (Jewish Antiquities 7:350), “When he
A different picture emerges from the book of Chronicles: 1 Chr 23:1 recounts in general that “when David was old and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel,” without detailing when, where, and how it happened. In 1 Chr 29:20–25 the Chronicler responds to these issues meticulously: “And they ate and drank before the Lord on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king a second time (שנית) and anointed him to the Lord to be a king (לנגיד).”

The eating and drinking is mentioned only in Chronicles, but most likely it was also part of the celebration according to Kings. The author was interested in stressing Solomon’s anointment and the rejoicing of the people that expresses their happiness on the occasion. For the Chronicler the important thing is that Solomon was God’s chosen anointed king; other details of the coronation ceremony could be left out as superfluous. Apparently he was not aware of the protocol involved with the coronation of a king in the monarchic period. Chronicles shares with Kings only the cardinal features, that is, the anointment of Solomon and his coronation, which ends with Solomon’s sitting on the throne. Yet he does note the many sacrifices that were performed for the Lord on that important occasion (1 Chr 29:21), which appears also in Kings. For the Chronicler and his Temple community the pious action of sacrifice has a special importance.

3.2 Were There Two Coronations?

Only two kings are said to have been anointed as king more than once:

(a) 1 Sam 9:27–10:1 narrates that the prophet Samuel anointed Saul privately (10:1). Later, he introduced Saul as a chosen king before the people who were assembled in Mitzpa, and the people affirmed loudly, “Long life to the King!” (10:17–24). However, there were some people who were not impressed by Saul’s leadership ability (10:27). Therefore, following Saul’s (Jonathan) told them all about Solomon and the decision of King David...” (ibid., 7:360). See Thackeray and Marcus 1934, 548–549, 552–555.

78 On the word שנית ("a second time"), see the discussion below.

79 The term נגיד means here “king,” as it appears in the following verse (29:23), and as it correctly was translated in Septuagint (βασιλέα); see also 1 Chr 11:2 and compare Ps 76:33, where נגיד occurs as a synonym to מלך; 1 Sam 9:16; 10:1; 13:14; 25:30; 2 Sam 6:21; 1 Kgs 1:35; 2 Kgs 20:5; Ezek 28:1–19.

80 Note the chiastic structure that the Chronicler creates at the first part of the verse: ליוהו עלות ויעלו זבחים ליוהו / ויזבחו ליוהו ("they performed for the Lord sacrifices / and they offered burnt offerings for the Lord"). This literary form is very common in the Chronicistic writing; see Kalimi 2005a, 215–231 (compare also pp. 232–274).
victory of the Ammonites, Samuel assembled the people in Gilgal, and there all the people “announced him a king” (11:14–15).

(b) 1 Sam 16:1–13 recounts that the prophet Samuel anointed David privately. Following the death of Saul, David was anointed two more times—on Judah (2 Sam 2:4a), and two years later on the northern tribes of Israel (2 Sam 5:1–3). Both times the anointment took place in Hebron.

Were there two coronations of Solomon as well? Based on the Masoretic Text of 1 Chr 29:22, “And they made Solomon the son of David king a second time” some ancient, medieval and modern scholars are of the opinion that this was indeed the case. Josephus Flavius, for instance, describes that the first coronation of Solomon took place in front of the people of Jerusalem, as detailed in 1 Kgs 1 (Jewish Antiquities 7:354–358). Later, Josephus follows the description in 1 Chr 29:20–25 and describes “the second coronation,” which was in front of the officials of all the Israelite tribes: “And throughout the whole day the king feasted with all people, and they anointed Solomon with oil a second time and proclaimed him king . . .” (Jewish Antiquities 7:382). The same view was held by some medieval Jewish exegetes, such as Pseudo-Rashi and David Kimchi, in their commentaries on 1 Chr 29:22. At the end of the 19th century, a comparable opinion was stated by William E. Barnes: “The first time is described in 1 Kgs 1:39 (Solomon was hastily anointed in order to assert his claim to the throne against his brother Adonijah).” Nearly 83 years later, Hugh G.M. Williamson noted: “the Chronicler was writing here with 1 Kgs 1 in mind . . .” However, it is doubtful that the Chronicler, who negated Kings’ story about the succession of Solomon, and invested much literary effort to reconstruct a different story, would have hinted to Kings. Saul Zalewski explained the necessity of two coronations as follows: the first one was a private, “quick coronation” which is mentioned in 1 Chr 23:1; the second was public, with great celebration, which is detailed in 1 Chr 29:20–25. Nonetheless, there is no hint of two coronations of Solomon in early biblical historiography. It is hard to imagine that Solomon was crowned twice and that the Deuteronomistic historian simply omitted one. Why should he omit any of them or specifically the second one? On the other hand, why should the Chronicler invent an extra coronation

82 Barnes 1899, 140.
83 Williamson 1982, 187. Williamson does not refer to Josephus, the commentaries ascribed to Rashi, Kimchi, or Barnes. The latter also did not refer to those earlier scholars. For this phenomenon in biblical scholarship, see Kalimi 2009, 6–7.
for Solomon? As the case is presented in Chronicles, there is no reason to assume two enthronements of Solomon. In fact, the word שנִית does not appear in Septuagint (B—Vaticanus) and Peshīṭta. Presumably, the word is a gloss. The glossator wished to harmonize 1 Chr 28–29 (especially 28:1–10; 29:20–25) with 1 Chr 23:1, which states that David has made Solomon king over Israel. This reasonable explanation, which is based on the textual variants of Chronicles, has been suggested by several scholars in the past centuries.85 I would like to strengthen this explanation from a literary viewpoint: 1 Chr 23:1 is a general assertion, for which the particular details appear in 1 Chr 28–29. Such literary device of ‘general—particular’ is common in the Chronicler’s historical writing.86

3.3 Siting on “the Throne of the Lord”

The Deuteronomistic historian asserts that Solomon sat upon “the throne of his father David” (1 Kgs 2:12a, cf. 1:46). The Chronicler, however, presents a unique notion: Solomon did not sit upon an earthly throne, but rather upon “the throne of the Lord as king (למלך) instead of David his father…” (1 Chr 29:23).87 This was actually the fulfillment of the divine will, as stated by David: “He chose Solomon to sit on the throne of the Lord over Israel” (1 Chr 28:5). This notion appears once again—for the third time—in the words that the Chronicler ascribes to the Queen of Sheba: “Blessed be the Lord your God who has… to place you (= Solomon) on His throne as his king” (2 Chr 9:8, instead of the earlier parallel text in 1 Kgs 10:9: “to place you on the throne of Israel”). How should this be understood?

Several times in his work, the Chronicler says that the throne belongs to the Lord. In 1 Chr 17:14 he writes: “in My (= the Lord’s) house and My kingdom,” instead of: “your (= David’s) house and kingdom,” as in the parallel text in 2 Sam 7:16.88 According to 1 Chr 29:11 (an “addition”), David states in his prayer “for You (= the Lord) is the kingdom.” Yet, because the kingdom and the throne belong to the Lord, He puts on it whomever

85 See, for example, Kittel 1902, 104; Curtis and Madsen 1910, 307; Galling 1954, 77; Dirksen 2005, 352; Klein 2006, 530, 541.
87 Attempting to avoid personification of the Lord, the Greek translator “corrected” the text and wrote as in 1 Kgs 2:12a: “and Solomon sat upon the throne of his father David.”
88 Thus the Chronicler moved the focus from the house and kingdom of David to the house and kingdom of the Lord, because in his time the kingdom of David did not exist anymore, but the house of the Lord (= the Second Temple) and his kingdom are there forever. The Chronicler did not interpret 2 Sam 7:16 as something that would be fulfilled in the future.
He chooses. In this case, He chose Solomon to sit on it. Indeed, 2 Chr 13:8 (an “addition”) considers the kingdom of Judah as “the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of David’s descendants” (מלכות יהוה ביד בני דוד). Now it is clear: if Judah is “the kingdom of the Lord,” the throne of that kingdom is “throne of the Lord.” Thus, the earthly king—Solomon—is the representative of the heavenly king—the Lord—on earth. He connects between the Lord and his people, Israel, and represents the latter in front of the former. In Chronicles, therefore, theocracy and monarchy are interconnected. This idea is not unique for Chronicles. It is well-known already from pre-Chronistic “biblical” writings (e.g., Judg 8:22–23; 1 Sam 8:4–22; Hos 3:5; Ezek 20:33 and 37:22–25; Isa 41:21; 43:15; 44:6; 52:7; Ps 98:6), and the Chronicler most likely was aware of this. He just expressed the old concept in bold statements. Since the motif of the Lord’s kingship appears in various early and late scriptures, the general opinion in biblical scholarship as stated, for instance, by C.R. North, that “the doctrine of kingship of Yahweh, in any pronounced form, was a comparatively late development,”89 is very questionable.

4. Solomon’s Establishment: The Concluding Words

After the description of the elimination and removal of Solomon’s rivals (1 Kgs 2:3–46a: Adonijah in vv. 13–25, Abiathar in vv. 26–27, Joab in vv. 28–35, and Shimei in vv. 36–46a), the Deuteronomistic historian concludes the succession narrative as follows: “and the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon” (והמלכה נקוה בניו שלמה; 1 Kgs 2:46b). Similar words (probably from the same hand) appear also after the end of David’s kingship and the rise of Solomon in 1 Kgs 2:42: “And Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established” (שלמה ישב ושילמה מאד ומלכתו וכן), Thus, the account in 1 Kgs 2:3–46a is framed by an inclusio; which opens with the words והמלכה נקוה בניו שלמה (1 Kgs 2:12b) and it ends similarly with והמלכה נקוה בניו שלמה (1 Kgs 2:46b).90

89 See North 1932, esp. 28; see also Wilda 1959, 32; Poulssen 1967, 167–182 esp. 170, 172.
90 For the use of inclusio in biblical literature in general and in the book of Chronicles in particular, see Kalimi 2005a, 295–324. In any case, 2:46b is not a Wiederaufnahme, as Cogan (2000, 180) suggests. Rather, it is the second wing of an inclusio that—as he correctly states—“brackets the stories of the king’s political rivals.” For the definition of Wiederaufnahme ("resumptive repetition"), see Kalimi 2005a, 275–276 (and several examples on pp. 276–289).
Accordingly, the decision of August Klostermann to end the section with 1 Kgs 3:2 is arbitrary and unacceptable.91

The parallel conclusion in the Chronicistic history is much stronger. Here the closing words to Solomon’s succession come immediately after the peaceful coronation: “The Lord exalted Solomon highly (את יהוה ויגדל שלמה) in the sights of all Israel, and bestowed upon him royal majesty such as no king in Israel had before him” (1 Chr 29:25).92 Solomon is firmly established as king, and this is in fact the fulfillment of a divine blessing (cf. 2 Chr 1:12b). They are more meaningful than the people’s blessing in 1 Kgs 1:37–47. Nonetheless, in contrast to the opinion of some medieval and modern scholars,93 the words under review do not allude to Solomon’s struggle with Adonijah, Joab and the rest, an issue the Chronicler did not wish to relate in his work.

5. “David’s Testament”

5.1 The Deuteronomistic History

David’s deathbed command to Solomon, usually called “David’s Testament” (1 Kgs 2:1–9), contains two essential elements: (a) The one, political in nature (2:5–9), states David’s requests to punish Joab, the son of Zerioth (2:5–6), and Shimei, the son of Gera (2:8–9), for the evil deeds they had committed many years ago, and to reward the sons of Barzillai the Giladite for their father’s kindness towards David at the time he escaped from Absalom (2:7). (b) The other, religious in nature (2:2–4), refers to Solomon’s future spiritual behavior in order to guarantee the Lord’s benefits. Let us turn to these elements:

(a) The political element of the Testament has two sides: a historical and a literary. From the literary viewpoint, it functions as a paradigm showing

91 See Klostermann 1887, 269.
92 The opening verse in 2 Chr 1:1, עדיו על מלכותו יהוה אלהינו שלמה,ヴェイデラウフナハメ (Wiederaufnahme) with 1 Chr 29:25,吳נגל גדהו את שלמה מלח, because of the intervening words of 1 Chr 29:26–28 (which is based on 1 Kgs 2:11–12a); see in detail Kalimi 2005a, 285–287. Indeed, as David expressed in his prayer, it is in the power of the Lord to exalt and give strength to all” (1 Chr 29:12; the Chronicler referred to these words in 2 Chr 1:1 in chiastic order).
93 See, for example, Gersonides (Rabbi Levi ben Gershon) in his commentary on the verse; Myers 1965, 5; Zalewski 1981, 229.
that loyalty and kindness towards the king will be rewarded (as in the case of Barzillai, 2 Sam 19:32–40); and, vice versa, that hostile behavior (as in the case of Shimei, 2 Sam 16:5–13; 19:19–24) and committing evil (as did Joab by killing Abner and Amasa, against David’s will, 2 Sam 3:26–30; 20:8–9) will be punished. From the historical point of view, it seems rather implausible that the last thoughts and words of the aged, weak and sick David on his deathbed (1 Kgs 1:1–4) were to seek revenge on his nephew and life-long loyal chief commander, Joab, for deeds he had committed many years ago. The same is true for the powerless Shimei who had cursed him some years ago when David fled from Absalom, but who no longer endangered the kingdom. Furthermore, the “testament” regarding Shimei puts David in an awful light: after he had forgiven him and sworn in God’s name that he would not kill him, he now looks for revenge that will be carried out by his son Solomon. Such a desire for vengeance appears to be contrary to David’s nature. David is described in the book of Samuel as a merciful rather than a vengeful person. He spares Saul’s life a few times (1 Sam 24:4–20; 26:3–25), despite the repeated efforts of the latter to kill him (1 Sam 17:10–11.17–29; 19:1–24:3; 26:1–2). He tries to protect his son Absalom (2 Sam 18:5,12,29,32; 19:1), although the latter murdered his son Amnon, revolted against him, and slept with his concubines (2 Sam 13:23–39; 15:7–17:29). Moreover, the motivation would be a clear transgression of the fundamental Israelites’ ethical principle laid down in Lev 19:17–18: “You shall not hate your brother in your heart... You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your fellow/neighbor as yourself” (see also Prov 24:29; cf. 20:22). Also, it is doubtful whether the thoughts of dying David were with Barzillai’s sons rather than with his own children and close family, as in the case of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen 24:1–9; 27:1–28:5; 49).

94 Interestingly, the killing of Absalom by Joab (2 Sam 18:9–15), which was against the clear order of David (18:5,32; 19:1–5), is not mentioned here. Obviously, in the case of Absalom one cannot say that Joab killed a righteous and good man, as were Abner and Amasa (2:32). After all, Absalom murdered his brother and rebelled against his father.

95 The murder of Abner son of Ner took place 38 years earlier, just before the unification of the northern and southern kingdoms (2 Sam 2:23–39). The murder of Amasa son of Yether happened after the failure of Absalom’s rebellion (2 Sam 20:8–10). In both cases Joab wished to protect his top position as the chief commander of the army.

96 Contra Gray (1970, 98–99), who is convinced that “David might well have given Solomon the charge to eliminate Shimei.”
Except for the historiographer’s summary of David’s kingship (1 Kgs 2:10–12),97 the following paragraph (2:13–46a)98 deals with Solomon’s struggle with his rival Adonijah and his supporters. It recounts a series of executions (of Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei) and the removal of Abiathar from the Jerusalem priesthood, as ordered by Solomon. The “testament”, therefore, is not an apology for things that had happened long ago, but rather aims at the current political situation: it explains and legitimates—at least in regard to Joab and Shimei—Solomon’s use of force to maintain power and achieve complete control over the kingdom. In fact, the narrator points out this political aspect when noting: “for Joab had supported Adonijah although he had not supported Absalom” (2:28). Solomon himself, however, links the execution of Joab to events of the past (2:31–33) as stated in David’s “testament” (2:5–6), as if to say that he fulfilled his father’s “testament” (see also regarding Shimei, 2:44 and cf. 2:8–9).

It seems that David’s “testament,” although is an integral part of the Succession Narrative,99 cannot be traced back to David. Rather, it was composed as a “cover-up story” in Solomon’s palace, soon after the death of David, and ascribed to David. It attempts to legitimize Solomon’s actions to solidify his kingship through the execution of his rivals and to represent him as one who just fulfilled his father’s testament. In addition, the narrative illustrates that Solomon’s opponents “had behaved in a manner that led to their own doom.”100 Otherwise, the slaying would have been considered unnecessary and would have cast a dark shadow on the beginning of Solomon’s reign.101

97 In fact, this summary is very similar to the one in 2 Sam 5:4–5. The two summaries form an inclusio to David’s kingship over Israel and Judah. Despite some differences between the summaries, most likely they are from one and the same editor—the Deuteronomist—who wished to construct the history of David as a king over Israel and Judah as a unit which starts and ends similarly. Contra DeVries (1985, 30), who is not aware of the literary device in the text and, therefore, attributes the summaries in Kings to “different redactors.”

98 As already mentioned above (§4), 1 Kgs 2:12b and 2:46b form an inclusio around 2:13–46a.

99 Cf. Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 89; Gray 1970, 15–16; contra Mulder (1998, 86) who notes: “the section of vvs. 1b–9 has been added to the story from another source.”

100 Cogan 2000, 180.

101 Contra Benzinger 1899, 8, who argues “für späten Ursprung.” Montgomery and Gehman (1951, 88) correctly question the fictional nature of this part of the testament, which was composed in later time by the Deuteronomist, as some scholars claim: “But why a much later age (Deuteronomistic) should have invented the story to save Solomon’s virtue by throwing the odium upon David is unintelligible in view of the latter’s canonization.” However, according to my view, this part of the testament was written at Solomon’s court. See also below in the text. Moreover, if we assume that what I call “the political element”
In order to balance this element of vengeance in the “testament” and make it sound as reliable as possible, a positive feature has been included as well—the rewarding of Barzillai’s sons. That is to say, David remembered not only the wicked men but also the kind ones. Nevertheless, there is no clue in the sources as to whether or not Solomon kept to this part of the “testament.”

Yet, Adonijah, who was sentenced to death for his “minor” request that was not a naive one, was not included in David’s “testament.” Knowing the great love of David for his children, he could not be presented as the one who had ordered the elimination of his son Adonijah (who, in fact, had not rebelled against him). Even in the case of Absalom, who murdered Amnon, rebelled against his father, and slept with his concubines, David attempted to save him: “Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom” (2 Sam 18:35, cf. 12). And when he was killed by Joab (2 Sam 18:14–15), it is said that David mourned him bitterly (2 Sam 19:1–2.5). On the other hand, the way David is said in the “testament” to have dealt with Joab and Shimei would sound reliable in the cultural and religious context of Solomon’s time.

The expulsion of Abiathar from the Jerusalem priesthood is justified by Solomon as follows: “‘Go to Anathoth, to your estate; for you deserve death (why?). But I will not at this time put you to death, because you bore the ark of the Lord God before David my father, and because you shared in all the affliction of my father.’ So Solomon expelled Abiathar from being priest to the Lord” (2:26–27a). The Deuteronomistic historian, who desired to show the fulfillment of God’s word (as he did in 1 Kgs 2:24 regarding the fulfillment of Nathan’s prophecy to David in 2 Sam 7:11b–12, and in many

of the testament is from Solomon’s time, the critics of these scholars cannot refer to it. Because, as Montgomery and Gehman show in the next pages (89–90), according to the standards of that time, David instructed Solomon appropriately on the responsibilities of the king ‘to remove the blood-guilt [see 1 Kgs 2:31, I.K.], according to the ancient principle of ‘life for life’ (Ex[od] 21:24), a principle that David had followed in visiting upon Saul’s grandchildren his murder of the Gibeonites (2 Sam. 21)” (p. 89). Regarding Shimei, “the curse against ‘a prince’ was high crime; cf. [1 Kgs] 21:9ff.; Ex[od] 22:27” (p. 90). Therefore, the way David is said to deal with Joab and Shimei would sound reliable (see below in the text).

Contra Gray (1970, 102), who is of an opinion that “the provision for the sons of Barzillai may well have been made by David.” Montgomery and Gehman’s (1951, 90) citations from biblical and extra-biblical sources regarding the importance of eating at the king’s table “as a method of pensioning,” still do not mean that the verse “has been made by David.”

See the behavior of David after the death of Abner and his complaint regarding the sons of Zeruiah in 2 Sam 3:31–39; and also, above, note 95.
other places), adds here: “fulfill the word of the Lord, which he spoke concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh” (1 Kgs 2:27b), that is, the prophecies at 1 Sam 2:35–36; 3:12–13. Thus the “stability of the Davidic dynasty is purchased at the price of blood and tears.”

(b) The religious element of the “testament” regarding Solomon’s future religious behavior (1 Kgs 2:2–4), is, without a doubt, a composition from the hand of the Deuteronomistic historian:

(1) It contains several expressions that are characteristic of Deuteronomistic phraseology. Thus, 2:2a: אֶנָּכָּנוּ הָלַךְ בִּלְבָדָם עַל הָאָרֶץ “I am going in the way of all the earth,” is almost identical with Josh 23:14a. Similarly, 2:2b: והגדת כל הדת אלישיה “be strong and show yourself a (courage of) man,” is comparable with Josh 1:6.9.18; 1 Sam 4:9a (cf. also Deut 31:23). Verse 2:3: אַתָּה מַשֵּׁרְתָּ יְהוָה אֶלֶךָ לְבָדָד לֹא אָשֶׁר שָׁמְרוֹן מַעֲשֵׂיָתֵי מִשְׁפָּטֵי מִשְׁפְּטֶיךָ “Keep the mandate of the Lord your God, following his ways, keeping his statutes, his commandments, and his laws, and his testimonies,” is a variant of the stereotypical expression in Deut 4:6; 7:12; 11:16; 12:23; 23:24; 24:8; 26:16; 28:13; 29:8; cf. Josh 22:3.5. For the idiom “as written in the Torah of Moses,” cf. Josh 1:8; 2 Kgs 22:8a. The phrase in 2:4b:

ארץ כל בדיחה_pb_לאיש והית את בדיחה_pb_לאין בדיחה(pb)_ליכול כל柬埔ך Eine בדיחה(pb)_לאין בדיחה(pb)_ליכול כל昝({_c

(2) That this part of the “testament” comes from the Deuteronomistic historian is clear also from the conditional sentence at 1 Kgs 2:4b: “If your

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104 See above note 60.
105 In fact this phenomenon is common in the Deuteronomistic history. For further examples, see 1 Kgs 12:35 (fulfillment of the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite); 2 Kgs 10:11, 17 (fulfillment of the prophecy of Elijah on House of Ahab); Josh 6:26 in comparison with 2 Kgs 16:34 concerning the building of Jericho; 1 Kgs 13:1–2, 29–32 with 2 Kgs 23:16–18 concerning the prophecy of the prophet from Juda on the destruction of the temple at Beith El. This method of vaticinium ex eventu ("prophecy post event") is known also from an inscription of Assurbanipal; see Tadmor 1983, esp. 50–51.
106 Mulder 1998, 86.
107 Against Benzinger 1899, 8, who argues that 1 Kgs 2:2–4 is "surely post-deuteronomistic." If we have Deuteronomistic language and idioms in these verses (see below), why should they be considered as post-Deuteronomistic, and not simply “Deuteronomistic”? Nonetheless, that these verses come from the Deuteronomistic historian is generally accepted; see for instance, Gray 1970, 99–100.
off-springs notice their way to walk before me… then no one of your line shall be cut off from the throne of Israel.” As one who wrote/edited in the exilic period (ca. 550 B.C.E.) and knew about the fall of the Davidic kingdom, he conditioned the existence of the dynasty with keeping the Lord’s commandments. In contrast, in Nathan’s prophecy, which was most probably composed in the Solomonic period, the existence of the Davidic dynasty is absolute, unconditioned: “But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before me;[109] your throne shall be established forever” (2 Sam 7:15–16).

Most likely, for the Deuteronomistic historian it was improper that David’s “testament” included only secular—political—messages, and lacked religious ones. Therefore, he attempted to soften the harsh “testament” (that he probably found in the Succession Narrative which was included in “the book of events/acts of Solomon,” 1 Kgs 11:41) by adding to David’s words a religious value as well. In fact, the phenomenon of a later historian composing a speech (as well as prayer or letter) and attributing it to an earlier leader, particularly before his ultimate death, is well known from various places in the Deuteronomistic and Chronistic histories, and is attested also in Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman historiography.[110]

5.2 The Chronistic History

Most likely, the Chronicler’s Vorlage contained a complete version of David’s “testament,” as it appears in 1 Kgs 2:1–9. He definitely did not distinguish between the early and late phases of the passage. Nonetheless, Chronicles remains silent about the execution of Joab and Shimei, the removal of Abiathar from the priesthood, or the kindness toward Barzillai’s sons. On the one hand, the idea that David ended his life in vengeance, as presented in Kings, was considered by the Chronicler as improbable and unacceptable. On the other hand, Solomon is said to have

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[108] See Ishida 1999, 137–150: “The narrative of Nathan’s prophecy is a composition to give an interpretation of the course of history concerning the establishment of Solomon’s kingship linking with the building of Jerusalem Temple from Solomonic point of view, although, on the surface, David was the person to whom the prophecy was delivered” (p. 149).

[109] In לפני “before you,” является a dittography of כ from the first letter of the next word: כסא “your throne.”

[110] See, for example, Deut 31:24–32:47 (in fact, the entire Deuteronomy was considered as one long speech of Moses before his death); Josh 23 and 24:1–28; 1 Sam 12; see also Judg 21:1–5, and 2 Kgs 17:7–23; 1 Chr 22:7–19; 28:2–29:20; 2 Chr 13:4–12. See Kalimi 2009b, 179–192.
been chosen king by the Lord, with the support of David, of all the sons of David—including Adonijah (and his supporters), as well as of all the king’s officials, the mighty men, and all Israel. Thus, for the Chronicler Solomon had no rivals to kill or take revenge on: he did not execute anyone, and surely not as his first royal act. Since the Chronicler omits the story of 1 Kgs 1 from his work, he also omits what follows in 1 Kgs 2 (except for the main content of 1 Kgs 2:2–4; see below). Moreover, regardless of whether David indeed ordered the “testament” or not, including 1 Kgs 2 would undo the Chronicler’s concept of Solomon having been chosen as the Temple builder because he is a man of rest/peace (מנוחה איש) without any blood stain: 1 Chr 22:7–10 and 28:3 say that God told David, “You are not to build a house for my name, because you are a warrior and have shed blood.”

The second chapter of 1 Kgs indicates clearly that Solomon shed blood (regardless whether it was justified or not), even upon the sacred altar in the Tent of the Lord (1 Kgs 2:28–34). This would contradict the Chronicler’s principle concept of who was allowed to be the Temple builder (Solomon) and who was not (David); thus he would have omitted these texts. Nevertheless, the Chronicler retains the religious and spiritual commands of David to his son to keep God’s law. In fact, the wording in 1 Chr 22:10–13 (cf. 1 Chr 28:9–10.20) reflects that of 1 Kgs 2:2–4:

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111 On this issue see also Dirksen 1996, 51–56.

112 Obviously, Joab—as well as Adonijah (1 Kgs 1:50–53)—looked for political asylum by escaping to the holy tent and holding the horns of the altar. However, while there is no evidence that Adonijah had murdered anyone, the case of Joab involved a blood-guilt, although it took place in the distant past (1 Kgs 2:5–6; 31–33). Yet, most likely the case of Adonijah does not relate to criminal law in Exod 21:12–14: “He who strikes a man, so that he dies, shall be surely put to death . . . if a man comes willfully upon his neighbor, to slay him treacherously; you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.” In contrast, maybe the case of Joab has some linkage with that law. For other opinions in biblical scholarship regarding the relation between these cases and Exod 21:14, see the detailed survey by Burnside 2010, 418–431. Nevertheless, Solomon’s killing of Joab in the Tent of the Lord is in contrast to the act of Jehoiada the high priest who was ordered not to kill the wicked Queen Athaliah in the House of the Lord, where she had sought asylum (2 Kgs 11:15–16 // 2 Chr 23:14–15). On the other hand, King Joash of Judah ordered to stone the high priest and prophet Zechariah in the Temple courtyard (2 Chr 24:20–22, an “addition”).

113 For this reason the Chronicler uses an uncommon, even vague, phrase to refer to Solomon’s siege of Hamath-Zobah: יוליה שלמה המה זבאת אולה שלמה ועליהו (And Solomon went to Hamath-Zobah, and prevailed against it; 2 Chr 8:3—an “addition” to 1 Kgs 9:18). The historicity of this action attributed to Solomon is very doubtful. In the early biblical historical books Hamath and Zobah are two separate places (2 Sam 8:3 [/ 1 Chr 18:3]; 1 Kgs 8:65 [/ 2 Chr 7:8]). Probably in the Persian period Zobah included the province of Hamath; cf. Rudolph 1955, 219 (and their references to W.F. Albright and M. Noth).

114 Although the natural continuation of 1 Chr 22:11 (“Now my son, may the Lord be with you so that you will succeed and will build the house of the Lord . . .”) seems to be
Be you strong therefore, and show yourself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Torah of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do, and wherever you turn yourself… If your children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail you, said He, a man on the throne of Israel and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever… Only may the Lord give you wisdom and understanding, than when he gives you charge concerning Israel that you may keep the Torah of the Lord your God. Then shall you prosper, if you take heed to fulfill the statutes and judgments which the Lord commanded Moses for Israel; be strong, and of good courage; do not fear, nor be dismayed.

All in all, there is David's “testament” also in Chronicles, and there is something of David's “testament” in 1 Kings that reflects in Chronicles. Here the “testament” to Solomon (1 Chr 22:5–19) is mentioned prior to the enthronement of Solomon (1 Chr 23:1; 29:20–24). This version of the “testament” contains positive and constructive features only: (a) spiritual

verse 14 (“And behold, in my affliction I have prepared for the house of the Lord…”), there is no need to consider vv. 12–13 as a late addition. The Chronicler himself could add these verses as a post scriptum. After all, Solomon's wisdom and his building of the Temple are linked together in Deuteronomistic history as well as in the Chronicistic history; see, for instance, 1 Kgs 5:9–32 esp. verses 9–19 and 26–28; 2 Chr 2:2–11. Moreover, the Chronicler repeats the content and the wording of v. 13b in 1 Chr 28:20a. Contra Mosis 1973, 90–91; Dörrfuss 1994, 155–159. For some other syntax and content problems in these verses and their possible interpretation, see Dirksen 2005, 267–268.

115 Compare Josh 1:8. According to the Chronicler the capability of keeping God's laws is a blessing for itself, and is comparable to God's blessing of wisdom and ruling; see Rudolph 1955, 150 note 1. Moreover; in his prayer David asks the Lord to help his people and his son Solomon to keep the Lord commandments (1 Chr 29:18–19).

116 Compare Deut 17:18–19.
and religious commands, guidance and encouragement of the aged father to his young son; and (b) a request to build the desired Temple to the Lord (1 Chr 22:2–19; 28:10–29:9). Accordingly, David handed to Solomon all the Temple’s personnel divisions that he had prepared (divisions of priests, Levites, gatekeepers, and singers), the architectural plans, as well as the enormous amount of material that he had gathered for that task in order to assist his young son to carry out the plan: “Now, my son, the Lord be with you; and prosper you, and build the house of the Lord your God, as he has said of you” (1 Chr 22:11). And once again, in more detail, in 1 Chr 28:10–19: “Take notice now; for the Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong, and do it. Then David gave to Solomon his son the plans of the vestibule, and of its houses, and of its treasuries, and of its upper chambers... All this (he said) is put in writing by the hand of the Lord who instructed me, all the works of this plan.”117

6. The Fulfillment of David’s “Testament”: The First Actions of King Solomon

The Deuteronomist and the Chronist both attempt to present Solomon as one who completely fulfilled his father’s “testament” as his first act as a king. In Kings this consists of executing his major opponents or removing them from power (1 Kgs 2:13–46). Following these actions, which were meant to protect his reign from inside, Solomon strengthened relations with an important external power, Egypt: he engaged in a political marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh and brought her to the City of David (1 Kgs 3:1–2).118 After these actions Solomon visited the holy place in Gibeon, sacrificed to God, and sought for divine revelation (1 Kgs 3:3–15). In fact, only four years after he had succeeded to the throne, he started to build the Temple (1 Kgs 6:37–38).

According to Chronicles, however, Solomon first visited Gibeon, sacrificing to God and seeking his revelation (2 Chr 1:1–13). Indeed, since “the Lord exalted Solomon highly in the sights of all Israel and bestowed upon him royal majesty such as no king (including David) in Israel had before him” (1 Chr 29:25, see also 29:23–24), there was no need to strengthen ties

117 Compare Exod 25:9, 40; 26:30 regarding the Tabernacle.

118 Certainly, the Pharaoh under review was from the 21st Dynasty. Yet, it is debated whether he should be identified with Psusennes II or Siamun; see the survey of opinions by Särkiö 1994, 16–17.
inside or outside of the kingdom. Thus, the Chronicler omits the passage regarding Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter at this point, but mentions it briefly at a later stage in Solomon's reign (2 Chr 8:11a // 1 Kgs 9:24a).¹¹⁹

Following his visit to Gibeon, Solomon expresses his will to build the Temple (and only after that to build his palace, 2 Chr 1:18). The project is presented as the fulfillment of Nathan's prophecy (1 Chr 17:11–12 // 2 Sam 7:12–13) and David's testament.¹²⁰ Consequently, the Chronicler omits 1 Kgs 6:37–38 which reports that Solomon started to build the Temple only after four years. Solomon did not waste any time, not even to pronounce judgment between the two harlots (1 Kgs 3:16–28). The Chronicler omits this episode (although it could enhance the reputation of the king as a wise man) as well as Solomon's list of officials and the passage about his wealth (1 Kgs 4:1–5:14). Instead, he recounts that following the sacrifice in Gibeon without delay Solomon organized the worker groups in the kingdom (2 Chr 2:1), and contacted King Hiram of Tyre in order to obtain professional crafts, woods and other material from Lebanon to build the Temple (2 Chr 2:2–15). Furthermore, according to the Chronicler Solomon was the one who initiated the contact between the two kingdoms by sending a diplomatic delegation to Hiram (2 Chr 2:2–15).¹²¹ This is contrary to what was stated in 1 Kgs 5:15–28, where it is Hiram who contacts Solomon and the latter only

¹¹⁹ In fact, the Chronicler minimizes this issue and reduces its importance as much as possible: from the five times that the daughter of Pharaoh is mentioned in Kings (1 Kgs 3:12; 7:8b; 9:16, 24; 11:1), he refers to her only once (2 Chr 8:11). Moreover, although the Chronicler omits the report regarding the house that Solomon built for Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kgs 7:8b, which appears in 1 Kgs 7:1–12—a paragraph which he completely omitted for reasons that I discuss elsewhere), he explains why Solomon built a separate house/palace for Pharaoh's daughter: “for he said my wife shall not dwell in the house of David, king of Israel, for the places where the ark of the Lord has come are holy” (2 Chr 8:21b). Obviously, this explanation does not favor Pharaoh's daughter.

¹²⁰ According to 2 Sam 7 David expressed his wish to build a Temple to God, but the task was postponed and left to his descendant. There is no clue in Samuel-Kings that David prepared any material for the building of the Temple or requested Solomon to build it. The Chronicler incorporates 2 Sam 7 in his account (1 Chr 17). However, he also elaborates in detail the last issues (1 Chr 22; 28; 29:20–21). After all, Solomon was the first king of the Davidic dynasty and there was a real need to prepare him for his important tasks.

¹²¹ Perhaps the Chronicler attempts to justify the request for help from the foreign king to build a Temple to God by adding (to the text from 1 Kgs 5:19–20) a new paragraph in 2 Chr 2:4–8 (with an inclusio: “And the house which I build is great… the house which I build is great,” 2:4a and 8b). See also the commentary ascribed to Rashi on 2:4; Japhet 1977, 402–403 (Hebrew). However, already David talks about the great size and quality of the planned Temple: “the house to be built for the Lord must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and an object of praise for all the lands” (1 Chr 22:5). So, Solomon only continues to express his father’s vision of the Temple.
reacts to Hiram’s delegation to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the successful diplomatic and trade relationship between Solomon and Hiram resulted in the building of the Temple in Jerusalem (2 Chr 3:1–5:1 // 1 Kgs 6:1–7:51) in fulfillment of Nathan’s prophecy and David’s “testament.”

7. Conclusion

A careful examination of the succession story in Kings demonstrates that Solomon was not the legitimate heir to the throne: Adonijah was the elder and next in the direct royal line to inherit his father’s throne, and he was supported by most of David’s sons and his top officials as well as the officials of Judah. Solomon rose to the kingship as a result of power-struggles and intrigues in the palace during the last days of the sick and weak David who was manipulated by Nathan and Bathsheba. His establishment on the throne was guaranteed after the bloody exclusion of his potential rivals and challengers, which was justified as a fulfillment of “David’s testament” (1 Kgs 2:1–9). These descriptions are conventional court stories that have a number of parallels in the ancient Near Eastern and in other dynastic histories. Solomon’s marriage with Pharaoh’s daughter was politically oriented in order to strengthen his position from the outside. Only after these actions Solomon visited Gibeon to sacrifice and obtain a divine revelation. He started to build the Temple four years after his throne succession (1 Kgs 6:37–38).

In the Chronicler’s history, however, all the elements that cast a negative light on David, Nathan, Bathsheba, and Solomon (2 Sam 11–12; 1 Kgs 1–2) are omitted. Based on data found in various earlier “biblical” texts, the Chronicler creates a clearly different story stating that Solomon was the rightful ruler and Temple-builder: he was chosen not only by David, but first and foremost by the Lord, already in his mother’s womb (1 Chr 22:7–10). All Solomon’s brothers and the officials of the kingdom supported his access to the throne. Solomon’s kingship symbolizes the union of theocracy and monarchy: he is the representative of God on earth, as well as the king of the people and their representative in front of God. He fulfilled his father’s “testament” by maintaining the Lord’s commandments and by building the Temple as his first priority. While David was stained with

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blood (regardless of blame or innocence), Solomon was pure and clean, without any stain and sin.

As a historian writing in the first quarter of the 4th century B.C.E., when the province of Yehud was under Persian control, the Chronicler looked back longingly to the founders of the Israelite/Judahite monarchy. He creates a new portrait of (David and) Solomon, the kind of portrait he wished to have rather than the historical one. He presents both kings idealistically, in such a way that they are worthy for every Jew to imitate (cf. 2 Chr 11:17b). Furthermore, the Chronicler and his community that assembled around Zerrubabel's Temple (which was erected on the same location as Solomon's Temple and considered as its substitute) found a particular interest in the Temple-builder, Solomon. For him, the Solomonic Temple opens a new era in Jewish history and religion. Consequently, he concluded that Solomon himself has a unique place among all of David's sons and among the “four” sons of Bathsheba (1 Chr 3:5, an “addition”). He was chosen to be a king of Israel and the first Temple-builder, even before he was born. Thus, Solomon became a symbol of glory and religious happiness remembered over many generations: “And there was great joy in Jerusalem; for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem” (2 Chr 30:26, an “addition”).

The two accounts of the rise of Solomon are completely different in narrative style, historical background, historical reliability, and implications. For all the variations of the religious and political events, the fundamental difference between these two portraits is to be found in the goal each historian had set for himself in depicting Solomon.

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