

SOURCE TEXTS AND BIBLICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY:  
AN EXAMINATION OF EPIGRAPHIC AND LITERARY SOURCES IN 1 & 2 KINGS

by

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(Under the Direction of Richard Elliott Friedman)

ABSTRACT

It has long been recognized that the author of Kings made use of a number of historical sources in the composition of his history. This study is an examination of the general use of epigraphic and literary sources in ancient Near Eastern historiography, with a special focus on the Books of 1 & 2 Kings.

INDEX WORDS: Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Kings, History, Sources, Historiography

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## DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my parents, Anne and Kevin Poe. Without their support none of this would have been possible.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN HISTORIOGRAPHY

#### Introduction

Beginning with Wellhausen and the advent of the Documentary Hypothesis as the prime mover within biblical source criticism, much attention has been paid to the existence and characteristics of narrative sources threading through the Pentateuch. Source criticism has become dominated by the study of the unique narratives found in the Torah. The primary focus, then, has been placed upon a specific type of narrative source located within the Pentateuch. Much less attention has been paid to the sources used in ancient Israelite history, most notably within the former prophets. While such study does fall into the general methodological category of “source criticism,” it is necessary to distinguish between this type of source criticism and the more widely known and recognized type. The most popular form of source criticism is the identification and examination of the four (or more) main narrative sources in the Torah. Its most accepted formulation is the Documentary Hypothesis, which separates the Torah into the J, E, P, and D sources. The source criticism in use here, however, is an attempt to discover the historical primary documents that may have been used by ancient Israelite historians. The examination will proceed in three stages.

There are a number of sources that are explicitly mentioned in the biblical text but have not been, and most likely never will be, found extant. Any examination of the uses of primary source material in ancient Israelite historiography must necessarily begin with a discussion of the sources known to have been used by ancient historians. These sources are often mentioned as proof of an account’s veracity (“...is it not also written in the



Book of X and Y?”), or as further resources for the ambitious reader. Examples include, but are not limited to, *The Acts of Solomon* (1 Kings 11:41), the *Book of Jashar* (Joshua 12:13), *The Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah* (1 Kings 14:19), *The Book of the Wars of the Lord* (Numbers 21:13), and the *Book of the Prophet Iddo* (2 Chronicles 13:22). These sources will be examined with regard to the context and nature of their citation. Wherever possible, a hypothetical reconstruction of the source will be presented. This should shed a great deal of light on the nature of the sources used by ancient Israelite historians and the historians’ methods in using these sources.

Next, the examination will turn to passages that either appear to be word-for-word restatements of earlier sources or that seem to be clearly dependent upon other source material. A set of criteria will be presented for distinguishing between a historian’s original composition and a source-dependent narrative. Whenever there appears to be good evidence for the use of background material or primary source documents, we will attempt to discover the nature of the source document. Is the author using archival data? Is he utilizing royal inscriptions, or perhaps even earlier historical records? If it is at all possible, we will present a theoretical description of these hypothetical sources.

Having thus established a set of criteria within which to view the sources and methods used by ancient Israelite historians, the examination will turn to the Book of Kings. This historical work will be given as a sort of test study so that the established results may be tried in the study of a lengthy work of ancient history. Kings will be analyzed in light of both explicit and implicit primary source material; this material will then be studied in order that it might provide witness to the essentials of perspective and method held by the ancient Israelite historian.

The sources available to ancient Near Eastern and ancient Israelite historians may be effectively classified as either epigraphic sources or literary sources. Epigraphic sources are primarily limited to royal inscriptions commemorating military victories, building dedications, and royal successions. All three have been found in abundance throughout the ancient Near East, but three particular inscriptions should be mentioned: the Mesha Stela, the Siloam Tunnel inscription, and the Bet-David inscription, also known as the Tel Dan inscription. The former explicitly mentions Israel and supports the biblical account. The latter also reinforce the biblical account and were both found within the borders of ancient Israel.

### Epigraphic Sources

There exist three primary types of royal inscriptions. These types are, as listed by Parker, accounts of military campaigns, accounts of building activities, and references to royal succession.<sup>1</sup> All three are widely attested throughout the ancient Near East as well as within ancient Israel and would therefore have provided excellent source material for an inquiring historian. A brief examination of a few of the best known examples of each type will illustrate how each might have been used in the writing process.

There is undeniable evidence that dedicatory inscriptions were often commissioned by Near Eastern kings upon the completion of a building project.<sup>2</sup> Whether the project was intended to honor a god, honor the king, or simply help the monarch's subjects, a dedicatory inscription would ensure that the general populace was

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<sup>1</sup> Simon B. Parker, "Did the Authors of the Book of Kings Make Use of Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 50 (2000): 366-371.

<sup>2</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 336.

aware of the king's projects and, by means of induction, that they were also aware of the king's power. Notable among the many ancient Near Eastern building inscriptions is the Siloam inscription. The inscription is six lines long, composed in archaic Hebrew, and general scholarly consensus dates<sup>3</sup> the inscription to the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE.<sup>4</sup> The inscription was made inside the tunnel itself and describes the construction of an underground tunnel to convey water from the Gihon spring into the City of David and into the Pool of Siloam. The text details the construction of the tunnel, which was begun at both ends, and the (nearly miraculous!) occasion of the two work crews meeting each other in the middle.<sup>5</sup>

Although the Siloam Tunnel inscription is not a typical example of a dedicatory inscription, it is still relevant to our examination.<sup>6</sup> The construction of the tunnel conforms to the biblical account of Hezekiah's efforts to protect Jerusalem against a Babylonian siege. The story is told in 2 Kings 20,<sup>7</sup> which mentions the construction of the tunnel as one of the many deeds of Hezekiah written in the Book of the Chronicles of

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<sup>3</sup> Although there is some debate concerning the exact date of the inscription. For more, see Stig Noren, "The Age of the Siloam Inscription and Hezekiah's Tunnel," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 37-48, as well as John Rogerson and Philip R. Davies, "Was the Siloam Tunnel Built by Hezekiah?" *The Biblical Archaeologist* 59 (1996): 138-149. See further the refutations by Hendel, Hackett, Cross, and McCarter.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Coote, "Siloam Inscription," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 23.

<sup>5</sup> The fact that the two crews met was an incredible feat, as the tunnel follows a lengthy, serpentine course underground.

<sup>6</sup> It was not commissioned by the monarchy, nor was it erected in a public place.

<sup>7</sup> See the discussion below.

the Kings of Judah.<sup>8</sup> Typically, a dedicatory inscription would be located in a public place and would include a description of the king's efforts to help his people and honor his deity. The Siloam inscription has neither of these basic characteristics. Nevertheless, it is a dedicatory inscription, confirming the historical record set out in the Kings, constructed during the time of Kings. This inscription, placed in an inconspicuous location, was obviously not intended as a public testament to the king's might.<sup>9</sup> It does not mention the king who requested the construction, the military campaign that necessitated its construction, or the engineer who completed its construction. The positive conclusion that can be taken from this is that if a lowly engineer can commission a multi-line inscription simply to privately commemorate the completion of a sizable tunnel, it is extremely likely that there were many other lengthy public dedicatory inscriptions, commissioned by the king himself, to commemorate important building projects.<sup>10</sup> These inscriptions would have provided valuable information for the author of Kings.

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<sup>8</sup> See below for a discussion of the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah.

<sup>9</sup> Stig Noren, "The Age of the Siloam Inscription and Hezekiah's Tunnel," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 37-38.

<sup>10</sup> This possibility was recognized immediately after the discovery of the inscription: "One of the chief lessons taught us by the Siloam Inscription, is that similar inscriptions still exist in Palestine if they are looked for in the right place. Not only in Jerusalem, but in the south of Judah, ancient Jewish monuments still lie buried waiting for the spade to uncover them." H. B. Waterman, "The Siloam Inscription," *The Hebrew Student* 1 (1882): 52-53. There are a number of theories as to why we have not discovered any of these inscriptions in the past century, the most convincing of which is that the majority of ancient Israelite inscriptions were composed of an inscription in plaster placed on a stone monument. The best example we have of this method is the Deir Alla inscription, which dates to the late bronze age.

One of the simplest and most basic tools in any royal public relations toolbox was the victory inscription. An impressive inscription, erected following any military battle, regardless of the outcome, would serve as a visible reminder of the power of the king. Such an inscription would tell of the king's magnificent victory, in which he thoroughly defeated the enemy with the help of a beneficent deity. These boastful inscriptions were nearly always vastly exaggerated tales of military might<sup>11</sup>, and there are multiple instances of victory inscriptions having been erected by both sides following the military engagement.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, these inscriptions often corroborate the biblical text, and provide historians, both ancient and present, with a testament to the military campaign, often providing specific numbers of chariots, soldiers, and horsemen in the battle.<sup>13</sup>

Although ancient Near Eastern victory stelae are better known than building inscriptions,

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<sup>11</sup> The first mention of Israel is in the Merneptah Stela, a victory inscription commissioned by the Pharaoh Merneptah around 1210 BCE. In this inscription, Merneptah claims that: "Israel is laid waste, its seed is no more." Obviously, this was an overstatement. See William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001): 42. See also: Michael G. Hasel, "Israel in the Merneptah Stela," *The Bulletin for the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 45-61.

<sup>12</sup> One relevant example of this would be the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib during the reign of King Hezekiah. Following his invasion of Judah and siege of Jerusalem, Sennacherib erected a magnificent prism stela, in which he described the siege, stating that he "...shut up Hezekiah the Judahite...like a caged bird," clearly intending to depict his venture as a success. The biblical text, however, claims that an angel of the LORD killed a great number of the Assyrians during the night, causing the besieging army to leave before taking Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:35). For more, see Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987): 93-95, and Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 247-251.

<sup>13</sup> For example the Kurkh Monolith, erected by Shalmaneser III, King of Assyria, in which Shalmaneser details the military forces of each of the twelve kings who were allied against him.

it would appear that the act of construction is fundamental to the erection of any stela. As Na'aman notes, "Even stela erected in the battlefield describe the hewing and engraving of the inscription as a substitute for the building element."<sup>14</sup>

One of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Mesha Inscription, also known as the Moabite Stone. The stela was discovered in 1868 by a Protestant missionary traveling in Transjordan.<sup>15</sup> F. A. Klein, a German working for the Church Missionary Society, did the majority of his mission work in Jerusalem and the surrounding environs.<sup>16</sup> During a trip across the Jordan, a local Bedouin offered to show an inscribed stone to him, noting that no European had ever laid eyes on it. Recognizing its potential importance, Klein reported evidence of the stone to the German consul in Jerusalem.<sup>17</sup> Negotiations on behalf of both the Germans and the French to purchase the stone stalled, however, and the stone was eventually destroyed as a byproduct of intertribal Bedouin feuding.<sup>18</sup> Although the Bedouins broke the stone apart by heating it

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<sup>14</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 336.

<sup>15</sup> Andrew Dearman, "Mesha Stela," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 708.

<sup>16</sup> M. Patrick Graham, "The Discovery and Reconstruction of the Mesha Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman (New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1992): 51.

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Dearman, "Mesha Stela," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 709. See also M. Patrick Graham, "The Discovery and Reconstruction of the Mesha Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman (New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1992): 52.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 65-66.

until it was brittle, soaking it in water, and then hacking it to pieces, scholars were able to recover many of the fragments and thereby reconstruct the inscription.<sup>19</sup>

The inscription is important for our study for a number of reasons. It is the longest royal inscription found in ancient Israel from the Iron Age.<sup>20</sup> The historical information contained in the inscription may both reinforce and cast doubt on the biblical account, and its historical accuracy has come under not a little debate.<sup>21</sup> The relevance of the stone to our discussion, however, is clear. It is similar to many other royal dedicatory inscriptions, telling of the divine favor of Chemosh, the principal Moabite deity, who allowed Moab to successfully rebel against Israel. The inscription was composed around the time of the death of King Ahab in 853,<sup>22</sup> which is described in graphic detail in 1 Kings 22. The information given in the stela, including details of the military campaign,<sup>23</sup> chronological data,<sup>24</sup> and descriptions of subsequent public works projects,<sup>25</sup> provide evidence to the type of information that would have been present in any

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<sup>19</sup> The remains of the stone are now found in the Louvre in Paris. See M. Patrick Graham, "The Discovery and Reconstruction of the Mesha Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman (New York: Doubleday Publishers, 1992): 70-72.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Dearman, "Mesha Stela," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 708.

<sup>21</sup> For a recent debate, see Michael G. Hasel, "Israel in the Merneptah Stela," *The Bulletin for the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 45-61.

<sup>22</sup> Andrew Dearman, "Mesha Stela," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 708.

<sup>23</sup> Mesha Inscription, lines 11-19.

<sup>24</sup> Lines 2 and 8.

<sup>25</sup> Lines 20-27.

dedicatory inscription from the period. There is ample data that would be extremely useful to any inquiring historian. Further, it would appear that the stela was erected at a high place dedicated to the Moabite high god Chemosh<sup>26</sup>, which suggests that similar inscriptions could have been found within the temple precinct in Jerusalem.

The final inscription pertinent to our discussion is the Tel Dan inscription. The inscription, written in Aramaic and discovered in 1993, has inspired a heated debate amongst biblical scholars.<sup>27</sup> The importance of the inscription cannot be overstated. Not only does the stela confirm the existence of the Israelite state in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, it also provides evidence with which to compare the biblical account. Halpern states it most eloquently when he says that the stela,

[I]nvites us to sophisticate our historical paradigms not by jettisoning uncritically our historical literature, but by questioning its accuracy on this or that point; its completeness; and its familiarity with archives, foreign sources, domestic annals, display inscriptions, and monuments, which would not typically record incursions into the country.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Line 3.

<sup>27</sup> J.A Emerton, "Two Issues in the Interpretation of the Tel Dan Stela," *Vetus Testamentum* 50 (2000): 27. For a brief summary of the debate, with pointed focus on the ideological differences between different scholars' opinions of the discovery, see William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001): 127-130.

<sup>28</sup> Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 63.



Although the text is fragmentary, there is enough remaining to safely view the Tel Dan stela as a military inscription celebrating victory over the ancient Israelites.<sup>29</sup> Seen within its chronological context, the stela's reference to a "King of Israel,"<sup>30</sup> is most likely a reference to Joram.<sup>31</sup> The stela also refers to the "House of David," signifying the Davidic dynasty.<sup>32</sup> There are admittedly a number of problems with the accurate dating of the inscription. The original inscription was broken into pieces, and the pieces were then used in the construction of a city gate that was destroyed in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE.<sup>33</sup> It is most likely the stela was erected by Ben-Hadad II, during the latter half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup> What we have, then, is a military inscription erected by a triumphal king upon his conquest of a neighboring country's military outpost. The stela was then broken and

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<sup>29</sup> For a reconstruction and translation of the text, see J.A. Emerton, "Two Issues in the Interpretation of the Tel Dan Stela," *Vetus Testamentum* 50 (2000): 27-37, or Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 64.

<sup>30</sup> Line 8.

<sup>31</sup> William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001): 129.

<sup>32</sup> Line 9.

<sup>33</sup> Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 68-69.

<sup>34</sup> Dever claims that the inscription can be "...confidently dated...to the reign of Joram of Judah, who ruled ca. 847-842," William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001): 128. For a thorough analysis, see Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 68-74.

incorporated into the fort's gate structure during the reconstruction following Israel's retaking of the site.<sup>35</sup>

This stela was erected by an enemy of ancient Israel, on a site that originally belonged to Israel.<sup>36</sup> It is obviously propaganda – an attempt on the part of Ben-Hadad to inspire his military forces in the face of looming military disaster.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, the inscription was preserved in part after the destruction of the fort at Dan, and was then used as a building block during the reconstruction. What can be seen from this stela is much more than the ability and inclination of warring kings to erect publicly visible monuments for propaganda purposes.<sup>38</sup> The inscription provides a window into ancient history, and more importantly, into the mind of the Deuteronomistic historian, the author/editor of Kings. As Halpern rightly notes, the many decades of Israelite military struggles with Damascus find no detailed report in the Book of Kings. The Deuteronomist is focused on the big picture. The focus is on the epic tale of the destruction of Israel and Judah. Although the historian provides a thorough narrative of the kingdoms' destruction, he fails to

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<sup>35</sup> Most likely during the reign of Joash (802-786) or Jeroboam II (786-746). See Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 75.

<sup>36</sup> J.A. Emerton, "Two Issues in the Interpretation of the Tel Dan Stela," *Vetus Testamentum* 50 (2000): 27.

<sup>37</sup> Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 75.

<sup>38</sup> Van Seters, *In Search of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press): 60-67.

...document the minor vicissitudes of domination, rebellion, reimposition of authority, and shifting alliance-seeking that characterized the political authorities in question. The author of Kings, so fixed on assessing moral-theological blame on the predecessors of Josiah, expresses no interest in the external valences of their decision making.<sup>39</sup>

The Tel Dan inscription not only provides further evidence as to what to expect from an inscription from the period but also allows us to further understand the priorities and motivations of the author/editor of Kings.

### Literary Sources

In addition to epigraphic sources, there were also a number of literary sources available to an ancient historian. The enterprising historian, especially if he were a member of the elite or the royal circle, likely had a variety of different literary sources at his disposal. In many ways that the historian would have made use of the available literary sources is a much safer bet than that he would have used epigraphic sources. The primary reason for this is that there are a number of literary sources that are explicitly mentioned in the text of the former prophets but that are not found extant in any form.<sup>40</sup> We will begin with an examination of two that are not found in the Book of Kings, the Book of Jashar and the Book of the Wars of the Lord, and then move later into an

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<sup>39</sup> Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 74.

<sup>40</sup> But they are found within the text. For a complete list of these sources, see Appendix A.

examination of literary histories that are explicitly cited and implicitly seen in the Book of Kings.<sup>41</sup>

The Book of Jashar is cited twice in the Deuteronomistic History, in Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18-27.<sup>42</sup> The first is Joshua's command to the sun and moon, while the second is David's lament for Saul and Jonathan. Based on these two references alone, it does not appear that the Book of Jashar contained specific historical details, such as chronological information and the like. The two sections in question are both archaic poetry, although the subject of the poems are, presumably, historical events. The Book of Jashar may have been a work of archaic poems, compiled together and kept in the royal library.<sup>43</sup> Despite the fact that the Book of Jashar's contents may be more aptly described as poetry or literature than as history, it is important to note the citation of the book as a source for the historian. Indeed, the historian may have used the poetic imagery in his composition of a historic narrative. A poetic figure of speech in the Book of Jashar claiming that Joshua's defeat of the Amorites was so thorough that it seemed as if the sun stood still in the sky becomes, in the hands of the historian, a story in which Joshua

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<sup>41</sup> The inclusion of prophetic stories in the Book of Kings is important but beyond the scope of this paper. The focus here is on documented forms of historical records, not on orally transmitted folklore and legends.

<sup>42</sup> It has been suggested that the Book of Jashar is also cited in 1 Kings 8:12 within Solomon's prayer during the dedication of the temple. The work referenced there is the "Book of the Song", and it is possible that a metathesis of the *shin* and *yodh* in the Hebrew text resulted in the confusing reference. A poetic doublet of this type would be a theoretical fit in the Book of Jashar. See Duane Christensen, "Book of Jashar," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 646, as well as see Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 281.

<sup>43</sup> See the brief discussion in Robert G. Boling and G. Ernest Wright, *The Anchor Bible Joshua* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982): 285-288.

commands the sun to stand still, and it does. There is certainly a precedent for the “historicization” of a poetic account.<sup>44</sup> It is important to note that a resourceful historian might make recourse to an anthology of epic poetry or national songs<sup>45</sup> about Israelite heroes, and use these poems as a foundation for the composition of his history.

The Book of the Wars of the Lord is mentioned in Numbers 21:14. The Book of the Wars of the Lord is mentioned immediately after a geographical clarification specifying the location of Arnon along the border between Moab and the Amorites. After this clarification, the author refers to the Book of the Wars of the Lord, in which it is written, “Waheb in Suphah and the wadis. The Arnon and the slopes of the wadis that extend to the seat of Ar and lie along the border of Moab” (Numbers 21:14-15). There is very little information in the text, which makes it nearly impossible to speculate on the nature of the Book of the Wars of the Lord or to postulate what a hypothetical reconstruction of the book might look like. Nevertheless, there are multiple theories regarding the nature of this source. Some scholars would suggest that the Book of the Wars of the Lord is a compilation of songs and poems commemorating military victories.<sup>46</sup> The basis for this theory must be the presence of other mentioned sources that are likely also compilations of songs and poems, such as the Book of Jashar. A second theory is that the Book of the Wars of the Lord is a record of historic military

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<sup>44</sup> For an example, see the examination of Judges 4 and 5 in Baruch Halpern, *The First Historians* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992): 76-100.

<sup>45</sup> Duane Christensen, “Book of Jashar,” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 647.

<sup>46</sup> Robert G. Boling and G. Ernest Wright, *The Anchor Bible Joshua* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982): 285-288.

conflicts.<sup>47</sup> This seems more likely given that the scant amount of material we have available from the source is not written in poetry and is much more likely to be geographic details of an ancient military battle. Regardless, the composition is cited by the author of the book of Numbers. It must have been, then, a well-known composition that played a role in the historian's narrative. It is therefore another important piece of evidence in our quest to understand ancient Israelite historiography.

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<sup>47</sup> Duane Christensen, "Book of Jashar," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 647.

## CHAPTER TWO

## THE USE OF SOURCES IN THE BOOK OF KINGS

The Deuteronomist

Much ink has been spilt over the “Deuteronomist,” that mysterious historian whose work is now known as the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings.<sup>48</sup> Although a lengthy examination of the Deuteronomic history is far beyond the scope of this paper, it is nevertheless important to understand the basic issues surrounding the Deuteronomist and the composition of the Deuteronomic history.<sup>49</sup> Once these issues are understood, we will be able to see the method and motive behind Deuteronomistic historiography.

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<sup>48</sup> For entire books on the subject, see Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), Raymond F. Person, *The Deuteronomic School* (Boston: Leiden, 2002), and Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). Also see the straightforward analysis in Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987): 117-135, the examination in Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973): 274-287, and the discussion in Mordechai Cogan, *Anchor Bible 1 Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 96-100.

<sup>49</sup> The idea that the books of Deuteronomy through Kings are in fact one single composition with one author was suggested by Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981). The division of the history into two parts with separate authors, Dtr<sup>1</sup> and Dtr<sup>2</sup>, was posited by Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973). Further division of the two editions has been suggested convincingly, but examination of these hypothetical substrata does not impact the thesis of this paper. See Mordechai Cogan, *Anchor Bible 1 Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 94-98.

The Deuteronomist's composition<sup>50</sup> begins with the Book of Deuteronomy and ends in the Book of Kings.<sup>51</sup> Much of his history was composed with the aid of outside sources, many of which are explicitly cited in the text.<sup>52</sup> Although these sources are referenced and used as resources by the historian, the Deuteronomistic History is by no means a flawless account of Israelite history.<sup>53</sup> Ideological considerations play an important role in Deuteronomic historiography.<sup>54</sup> There is special emphasis on the Davidic covenant<sup>55</sup>, idolatry, centralization at the Jerusalem temple, and the laws of the *torah*.<sup>56</sup> The Deuteronomist had a number of very specific points to make, and the history was selected and narrated in order to make those points as well as possible. This is not to say, however, that the historian simply created history out of whole cloth,

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<sup>50</sup> Specifically Dtr<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> To be more specific, Dtr<sup>1</sup> ends during the narrative of King Josiah's reign in 2 Kings 22-23.

<sup>52</sup> Such as the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah, discussed below.

<sup>53</sup> For a discussion of the appropriate approach to the information contained in ancient historical documents, see Baruch Halpern, "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations," *The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 296 (1994): 68-74.

<sup>54</sup> Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973): 252.

<sup>55</sup> See Baruch Halpern, "Chronicles' Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 44.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987): 135. Also see Mordechai Cogan, *Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 96.



creating an original composition with no factual background.<sup>57</sup> This is not a work of “pious fraud.”<sup>58</sup> The history we see before us is clearly a united work<sup>59</sup>, but the different sections of the work do indeed seem to be individual parts. There is no recognizable flow, or indisputable and obvious coherence (especially to the non specialist) to the composition<sup>60</sup>, which was what lead to the creation of multiple biblical books from the single composition.<sup>61</sup> The breaks and starts within the work, however, may be explained by the fact that

Dtr. clearly did not intend to create something original and of a piece but was at pains to select, compile, arrange and interpret existing traditional material, which was already in written form, on the history of his people...he consciously committed himself to using the material available to him.<sup>62</sup>

The Deuteronomist made use of the sources available to him, both literary and epigraphic. The information from these sources was manipulated, however, in order to adhere to the historian’s conception of Israelite history. The historian’s judgments may

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<sup>57</sup> There may have been insertions into the history, or important information that was omitted in order to more clearly convey the historian’s message.

<sup>58</sup> Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987): 134.

<sup>59</sup> Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981): 4-11.

<sup>60</sup> For more, see the discussion in Mordechai Cogan, *Anchor Bible 1 Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 94-96.

<sup>61</sup> The division of the book of Kings, for example, into 1 & 2 Kings was due to scroll length, not lack of internal textual coherence. The division of the entire work into the books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel, on the other hand, was due to a lack of internal textual coherence.

<sup>62</sup> Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981): 77.

be seen both in the stories told about a specific king, and in the historian's opening formula stating whether or not the king did what was pleasing before YHWH.<sup>63</sup> The author even inserted lengthy passages of original composition in order to smooth the flow of his history and reinforce his views.<sup>64</sup> The historian, therefore, composed his work with authentic historical data from a number of primary documents, but he did, however, manipulate these sources to create a purposeful, ideologically colored history culminating in the reign of Josiah<sup>65</sup> first, and later in the destruction and exile of Jerusalem.<sup>66</sup>

### The Use of Sources in Kings

The Book of Kings is a far-ranging, multi-faceted work of ancient historiography. It has a story to tell, and a specific perspective from which to tell it in order to shape the epic history of ancient Israel into an ideological masterpiece. The Book of Kings is remarkable among the other books of the former prophets in that it clearly and repeatedly makes use of extra-biblical sources. These sources, both epigraphic and literary, were pieced together by the historian, who then inserted original composition to smooth the flow of his historical tour de force. The narrative portions lifted from the primary source documents were cobbled together quite roughly, allowing the modern scholar to, after a bit of examination, see quite clearly the different pieces of material that were stitched

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<sup>63</sup> 1 Kings 14:22, 15:11, 2 Kings 16:2-3, among others.

<sup>64</sup> Such as speeches in 1 Kings 2:2-4, 8:14-61; divine addresses in 1 Kings 9:2-9, 2 Kings 21:10-15; and third person summaries, as in 2 Kings 17:7-23. Mordechai Cogan, *Anchor Bible 1 Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 96-97.

<sup>65</sup> 2 Kings 22.

<sup>66</sup> 2 Kings 25.

together so conspicuously.<sup>67</sup> It is clear that when we begin to unravel these sources, we must be able to recognize not only the material based on earlier sources but also the new material composed by the historian. It must also be recognized that ancient historiography accepted many things that would be unacceptable in any modern work of history. Contradictions are preserved, with no attempt at reconciliation.<sup>68</sup> The most useful approach to ancient historiography is that presented by Cogan: the author of Kings is holding a conversation with his sources, preserving their voices while also presenting his own opinions as the mouthpiece for a theologically motivated history of Israel.<sup>69</sup> The work of any historian, ancient or modern, is judged on the nature of the author's sources and his methods in using them during his composition. We must identify and appraise those sources before rendering our verdict.

The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah are technically two separate sources but in the interest of convenience will often be referred to here as one source: The Books of the Chronicles. All told, the work is mentioned 33 times in the Books of Kings<sup>70</sup>, 15 times in reference to Judah and 18 times in reference to Israel.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> The methods used to discern the stitches will be discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>68</sup> Such as whether or not Solomon used conscripted labor. He did, according to 1 Kings 4, 5:27-28, 29-32. He did not according to 1 Kings 9:22. See Baruch Halpern, "Chronicles' Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 53. There are also a number of easily seen contradictions in the prophetic material found in 1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 9. See Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 95.

<sup>69</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 95.

<sup>70</sup> It is also mentioned three times in 2 Chronicles 16:11, 27:7, and 32:32.

<sup>71</sup> For a complete list of the citations, see Appendix B.

This was obviously an important source for the author of Kings, who refers to it numerous times and in many different situations. In order to understand the use of the Books of the Chronicles in the historian's work, it is necessary to understand the nature of the source itself, its content, its composition, and its purpose. There are two primary theories regarding the nature of the Books of the Chronicles. The first is that they were official court annals intended to provide records for the major events of the king's reign.<sup>72</sup> The second is that they were books of literature providing an unofficial record of events for the general populace.<sup>73</sup>

An examination of the contexts in which reference is made to the Books of the Chronicles shows that they were most likely narrative works that provided records for monarchies in both kingdoms.<sup>74</sup> It would appear that they included material about military ventures<sup>75</sup>, public works, conspiracies against the monarchy, cultic deeds, royal illnesses, and foreign relations.<sup>76</sup> It is also likely that the works contained chronological data, the dates of royal accession, length of reigns, and so forth. The details given in the references to the Books of the Chronicles make it unlikely that they were official,

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<sup>72</sup> Menahem Haran, "The Books of the Chronicles 'of the Kings of Judah' and 'of the Kings of Israel': What Sort of Books Were They," *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 156.

<sup>73</sup> Sigmund Mowinckel, "Israelite Historiography," *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 2 (1963): 7, 12, 17. See also Menahem Haran, "The Books of the Chronicles," *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 157.

<sup>74</sup> Duane Christensen, "Book of the Chronicles of the Kings (Israel/Judah)," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 991-992.

<sup>75</sup> For verse lists, see Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 90 and Menahem Haran, "The Books of the Chronicles," *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 157.

<sup>76</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 90.

authorized documents, as some have suggested.<sup>77</sup> The more likely explanation does indeed seem to be that they were pseudo-annals – historical works based on actual data, but composed for, and accessible by, the general public.<sup>78</sup>

The last mention of the “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel” is in regard to Pekah (2 Kings 15:31), the next-to-last king of Israel. It is highly unlikely that the work would have been composed during the chaotic period of upheaval immediately prior to the fall of Israel to Assyria in 722 BCE.<sup>79</sup> It therefore stands to reason that the work was an ongoing composition during the existence of the Northern Kingdom, and was completed sometime after the fall of Israel. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see merit in the suggestion that the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel was simply part of one literary work, a “synchronistic history of the Kings of Israel and Judah,” that was mainly composed after the fall of Samaria and finished after the fall of Jerusalem.<sup>80</sup> It is far more likely that the two works were composed independently, in their respective kingdoms, and were then combined, or at least stored together, in Jerusalem after the fall

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<sup>77</sup> See J.A. Montgomery, “Archival Data in Kings,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 53 (1934): 47.

<sup>78</sup> Menahem Haran, “The Books of the Chronicles,” *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 157-158. See also Sigmund Mowinckel, “Israelite Historiography,” *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 2 (1963): 17-21 and See J.A. Montgomery, “Archival Data in Kings,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 53 (1934): 47-52.

<sup>79</sup> The last decade of Israel’s existence included a royal assassination (2 Kings 15:25), a war against both Judah and Assyria (2 Kings 17), and the destruction of the kingdom after Hoshea’s feeble attempt to lead an Egyptian-backed rebellion (2 Kings 17:5).

<sup>80</sup> Sigmund Mowinckel, “Israelite Historiography,” *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 2 (1963): 18.

of Samaria. There is certainly precedent for the combining of literary works from different kingdoms.<sup>81</sup>

There are also multiple theories concerning the historian's references to the Books of the Chronicles. The first problem to be addressed is the author's intended audience. If the author of Kings was composing a popular history, then it would have been recited to the public at a large gathering, rather than disseminated in written form. The author would not then be inviting his audience to read the source and double-check his facts. The common people would not have had access to any sort of temple chronicle or royal annal, and even if they did, most would not be sufficiently literate to investigate the source.<sup>82</sup> If this is the case, then we may assume that the Books of the Chronicles were well known works written with the help of firsthand source material, and that by citing them the historian was adding credence to his account.<sup>83</sup> There is another possibility – that the author of Kings was composing a history for scribes and members of the elite class. If this were the case, then the historian's references to the Books of the Chronicles were intended simply to reinforce his account.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Such as the combination of J and E in the Pentateuch, from the Southern and Northern Kingdoms, respectively. See Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987).

<sup>82</sup> Some scholars suggest that if the Books of the Chronicles were not official annals, it would be more likely that the author of Kings was indeed suggesting that his audience investigate his listed sources. This is highly unlikely. See Menahem Haran, "The Books of the Chronicles," *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 157.

<sup>83</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 90.

<sup>84</sup> Duane Christensen, "Book of the Chronicles of the Kings (Israel/Judah)," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 991.

In fact, the manner in which the references are composed would suggest that the references are just that: “suggestions of authenticity” that could be “readily checked if a question arose.”<sup>85</sup> The references to the Books are all in a standard formula, “And are not the deeds of King \_\_\_\_\_, and all that he did written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel/Judah?”<sup>86</sup> The lack of more detail in these references, as well as the many issues surrounding the historian’s access to these documents, provides evidence that the historian may not have been composing with the Books of the Chronicles at hand. It is certainly also possible that the references to this source are simply finishing touches in a standard ancient history writing formula.<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, the use of the Books of the Chronicles in the historian’s composition would help to explain some idiosyncratic phrases that appear to be lifted from official annals.<sup>88</sup> In conclusion, it is no more difficult to postulate a royal chronicle undertaken at the behest of the monarchy, containing important historical information that was accessible to the educated elite.

In addition to the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah, the author of Kings also mentions the Book of the Chronicles of Solomon<sup>89</sup>, containing not

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<sup>85</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 91.

<sup>86</sup> See 2 Kings 24:5 for example.

<sup>87</sup> Menahem Haran, “The Books of the Chronicles,” *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 164.

<sup>88</sup> J.A. Montgomery, “Archival Data in Kings,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 53 (1934): 47-52, and Duane Christensen, “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings (Israel/Judah),” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 991.

<sup>89</sup> 1 Kings 11:41.

only all of the king's acts<sup>90</sup>, but also his wisdom.<sup>91</sup> In contrast to the book of King's descriptions of other monarchs, the narratives of Solomon's reign contain many details and documents not found in the descriptions of any other king. Kings includes passages about Solomon's wisdom and affluence.<sup>92</sup> In addition to the more logical administrative documents (1 Kings 4:2-6, 7-19) and inventories (7:41-45), Kings includes stories about his exploits (3:16-27), a section from a poem (8:12-13), and a legend about him (10:1-13).<sup>93</sup> This work is mentioned only once, as part of the closing formula summarizing the reign of a monarch – the same context in which we see the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

The Book of the Chronicles of Solomon likely contained material similar to that found in the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah but must have also contained other legendary, as opposed to historical, information about the wise ruler.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Pfeiffer, Robert H. *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941): 383.

<sup>91</sup> The possibility that this work is a lengthy history used extensively by both the author of Kings and the author of the Book of Chronicles, see Baruch Halpern, "Chronicles' Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 53, and the discussion below.

<sup>92</sup> 1 Kings 3:5-14, 5:9-14, 10:14-25. See Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 92.

<sup>93</sup> All of this material may have been found in the Book of the Chronicles of Solomon. See J. Liver, "The Book of the Acts of Solomon," *Biblica* 48 (1967): 75-76. Also see Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 92, 343.

<sup>94</sup> Based primarily on the text's inclusion of "wisdom" among the things described in the Book of the Chronicles of Solomon. Although the inclusion does not at first glance appear to suggest that the work is significantly different from those discussed above, the variance in such a repetitive standard formula would likely signify an important



These stories may have increased the monarch's renown as reported in the wisdom literature surrounding King Solomon, leading to his reputation as the wisest man to ever have lived.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to the explicitly mentioned sources used by the author of Kings, there are also other sources that, although they are not mentioned by name, may be easily seen in the historian's composition. The extensive sections of prophetic *legenda*<sup>96</sup>, including the fascinating stories of Elijah and Elisha<sup>97</sup>, were likely based on orally transmitted traditions and histories, but these do not concern us here. More germane to our discussion is the historian's probable use of temple records. It has been widely suggested that the historian made use of temple records.<sup>98</sup> There are countless references to the Jerusalem temple, and some sort of temple record would be the only likely source for many of the specific details mentioned in Kings.

The Book of Kings details the preparation for and construction of the temple (1 Kings 5-6). It describes at great length the temple's furnishings (1 Kings 7:13-51) and temple innovations (2 Kings 16:10-16) and renovations (2 Kings 12:5-7). Also mentioned are the number of times the temple's funds were raided by the monarchy in order to pay vassal tributes (1 Kings 14:25, 15:18) and the cultic reforms of Josiah (2

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difference between the Book of the Chronicles of Solomon and the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

<sup>95</sup> See Proverbs 25:1. Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 92.

<sup>96</sup> See 1 Kings 13, for example.

<sup>97</sup> 1 Kings 17:1-19:21, 2 Kings 1:1-8:29.

<sup>98</sup> See Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981): 75-80.

Kings 23:4-14) and Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4). It is clear that the temple played an important role in the ideology of the Deuteronomist.<sup>99</sup> Specific use of priestly terms may be attributed to dedicatory inscriptions<sup>100</sup>, and it may certainly be possible that the author of Kings never lifted unaltered excerpts from the temple's records<sup>101</sup>, but the keeping of such records in temples and cultic centers was widely practiced throughout the ancient Near East.<sup>102</sup> A temple history, containing basic chronological data, temple inventories, and bookkeeping notes on the temple treasures<sup>103</sup>, would have supplied the historian with important framework details around which the historical narrative could be composed.

Another unnamed source that can be plausibly seen in Kings is a list of the Judean queen mothers. For the Judean kings, the historian lists not only the length of their reign and age at accession but also the name of the king's mother. This information would be extremely important in both Israel and Judah, considering the prominent role the queen mother played in both religion and politics.<sup>104</sup> It is possible that the information would be

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<sup>99</sup> Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press): 274-285.

<sup>100</sup> See below on 2 Kings 12:4-17.

<sup>101</sup> A great deal of the material included in the history concerning temple innovations and renovations is pro-monarchy, or at least places the responsibility for cultic practice and temple maintenance solidly with the monarchs, and not with the priests.

<sup>102</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 94.

<sup>103</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the references to the royal treasury in the Book of Kings, see Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 95.

<sup>104</sup> For an example of a queen mother influencing the country's religion and politics, one need look no further than the infamous Jezebel, who controlled her weak husband Ahab

more important in Judah, especially following the political machinations and rule of Queen Athaliah.<sup>105</sup> Further, it would appear that the role of queen mother was a de facto position within the government. This hypothesis is derived primarily from the fact that Kings Asa had his mother Maacah removed from being queen mother.<sup>106</sup> The title of queen mother must have entailed some type of government position, and although it was automatically bestowed upon the king's mother, it was by no means a guaranteed right.<sup>107</sup> Anything more than this is pure speculation, and the role of the queen mother is not as important here as the fact that the queen mother is mentioned at all. If this material were not to be found in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah<sup>108</sup>, then it must have been found in an official list in the royal annals, and this list was in turn used by the historian in the composition of Kings.

No discussion of the sources the author of Kings drew upon would be complete without mentioning Halpern's thesis<sup>109</sup> that underlying the books of Kings and

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(1 Kings 21:25), murdered the priests of YHWH (1 Kings 18:4), and controlled national politics through her sons Ahaziah (2 Kings 3) and Jehoram (2 Kings 8).

<sup>105</sup> 2 Kings 8.

<sup>106</sup> 1 Kings 15:13. She was removed for encouraging idolatry and financing the prophets of non-Yahwistic cults.

<sup>107</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 397-398.

<sup>108</sup> See above for a discussion of the book.

<sup>109</sup> Baruch Halpern, "Chronicles' Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 35-54.

Chronicles is a single historical source.<sup>110</sup> Halpern's perceptive examination of the two works concludes that they both drew upon a historical source whose composition dates to the reign of Hezekiah.<sup>111</sup> This pro-Solomonic source underlies both 1 Kings 3-10 and 1 Chronicles 1-9.<sup>112</sup> Halpern draws upon a great deal of lexical, historical, and thematic evidence to support his conclusion that this work, a precursor to the later Deuteronomistic history, was used infrequently in Kings and often in Chronicles.<sup>113</sup> Although the argument is thoroughly convincing for the Book of Chronicles, which is admittedly the focus of the article, it does seem to fall short in its hypotheses for the Book of Kings. The author of Kings explicitly cites many of his sources. Therefore, if there was an extensive historical work produced during the reign of Hezekiah, it should be one of the explicitly cited works discussed above. It is entirely possible that there was a source for the history of Judah that was composed during the reign of King Hezekiah. The evidence cited by Halpern, including thematic, lexical, and historical data, does indeed point to

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<sup>110</sup> Similar to Halpern's hypothesis of a grand history underlying much of Kings and Chronicles would be Friedman's theory of an extended work that contains the material commonly attributed to J in the Pentateuch, as well as sections of Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, the majority of 2 Samuel, and the first two chapters of Kings. This source is referred to as *In the Day* and contains a history of Israel from the beginning of history to the establishment of Solomon's rule. See Richard Elliott Friedman, "Solomon and the Great Histories," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period*, ed. Andrew Vaughn and Ann Killebrew (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003): 171-180. For further evidence, see Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Hidden Book in the Bible* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998).

<sup>111</sup> Baruch Halpern, "Chronicles' Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 48.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. 47.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid. 52.

this.<sup>114</sup> It is also likely, however, that the author of Kings made use of a number of pro-Solomonic sources, and that the author of Chronicles then made use of the material presented in the Book of Kings in the composition of his own history. Halpern himself recognizes that there must have been in existence “a complex of literature antedating Hezekiah.”<sup>115</sup> It is difficult to suggest, when so many of these works are named in the history, that there was yet another extensive historical account underlying the Book of Kings that also contains the entirety of the historical narrative from Joshua through Kings.<sup>116</sup>

### Identifying Source-Dependent Narrative

Having established the prevalence of historical sources, both epigraphic and literary, it then becomes necessary to be able to distinguish the historian’s own original composition from source-based historiography. We must be able to determine the historian’s views of his sources, how he used them in his work, how he manipulated them to create his history. Further, we must be able to identify the historian’s original composition. What did the historian add to the material available in order to create the appropriate plot line and flow in order to convey a specific ideological perspective?<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Richard Elliott Friedman, “Solomon and the Great Histories,” in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period*, ed. Andrew Vaughn and Ann Killebrew (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003): 177.

<sup>115</sup> Baruch Halpern, “Chronicles’ Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source,” in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 54.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. 53. It is extremely likely, however, that Halpern is correct in his suggestion of an “extensive historiographic tradition” underlying the book.

<sup>117</sup> For an insightful discussion of the “narrative tensions” around which the historian creates his history, see Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOTS

First, how may we identify works composed with the aid of epigraphic sources? One of the primary characteristics of a text composed with the aid of a royal inscription would be a reference to an act of construction. Many inscriptions would be dedicatory inscriptions celebrating the completion of a building or public works project like the Siloam Tunnel.<sup>118</sup> Even inscriptions erected as a commemoration of a military victory often include a description of the construction of the stela itself.<sup>119</sup> Further, the more faithful the historian is to his epigraphic source, the more likely there will be “unusual vocabulary or irregular expressions”<sup>120</sup> that do not fit well within the Deuteronomistic history.

There are two primary ways to identify material that makes use of literary sources. The first and most obvious would be if the work explicitly cites the source. As noted above, the Book of Kings refers the reader to three separate sources many times throughout the work.<sup>121</sup> The second method is to search for material that expresses a

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Press, 1981), and Baruch Halpern, “Chronicles’ Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source,” in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 51-52.

<sup>118</sup> Nadav Na’aman, “Royal Inscriptions,” *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 336.

<sup>119</sup> One example of this would be the Mesha Inscription, lines 3 and 4.

<sup>120</sup> Nadav Na’aman, “Royal Inscriptions,” *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 336. See also Simon B. Parker, “Did the Authors of the Book of Kings Make Use of Royal Inscriptions,” *Vetus Testamentum* 50 (2000): 359. Parker notes that a distinction must be made between *textual* and *linguistic* difficulties. Nevertheless, it is clear that the issues at hand deal with the relationships between texts and not with the issue of textual transmission, therefore the presence of irregular words and expressions may be seen as a textual issue rather than a linguistic one.

<sup>121</sup> The Books of the Chronicles of Israel and Judah, and the Book of the Chronicles of Solomon.

theological or ideological perspective at odds with those recognized to be consistent with the Deuteronomistic historian. As discussed above, the Deuteronomistic historian has a number of focal points around which he composes the history.<sup>122</sup> Material that runs counter to the historian's views is likely to have originated in an earlier source document. It should now be clear that the historian was composing in conversation with his sources. The sources are allowed to speak for themselves, and their voices are then arranged by the artful historic composer in order to create his intended melody. Material that sounds slightly off-key may have an underlying source document.

The final technique that may be used in order to discover independent threads within the final work is known as *Wiederaufnahme*.<sup>123</sup> This technique used lexical evidence found within the text to identify editorial additions within the overall composition. The author of the history, when inserting source-based material into his work, would employ certain tactics to smooth the transition to and from the insertion.<sup>124</sup> *Wiederaufnahme*<sup>125</sup> is the “verbatim or nearly verbatim repetition of a word-cluster,

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<sup>122</sup> Including the Davidic Covenant, centralization of worship, and faithfulness to YHWH.

<sup>123</sup> Shemaryahu Talmon, “Polemics and Apology in Biblical Historiography – 2 Kings 17:24-41,” in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 58.

<sup>124</sup> Also known as epanalepsis, or resumptive repetition. Despite the fancy German title, this technique is in fact quite simple and has been in use since the medieval period, when biblical scholars like Rashi and Nachmanides used it in their investigations of the biblical text. Shemaryahu Talmon, “Polemics and Apology in Biblical Historiography – 2 Kings 17:24-41,” in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 58-59.

<sup>125</sup> See the analysis of Marc Brettler, “Ideology, History, and Theology in 2 Kings XVII 7-23,” *Vetus Testamentum* 39 (1989): 268-282.

varying in range, at the two intersections at which an independent segment was wedged into a comprehensive textual framework.”<sup>126</sup> Essentially, the redactor/author attempts to conceal the evidence of his text assembling process. In so doing, he repeats a phrase or series both immediately before and immediately after the insertion. Recognition of this type of “resumptive repetition” is a telling clue that there has been some editorial tampering, and that the text found in between the repeated word clusters is based on earlier source material. This technique, along with other methods<sup>127</sup> to isolate and examine the lexical evidence, assists the modern scholar attempting to illuminate the sources and methods of the ancient historian.

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<sup>126</sup> Shemaryahu Talmon, “Polemics and Apology in Biblical Historiography – 2 Kings 17:24-41,” in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 58.

<sup>127</sup> Recently, statistical evidence has played an important role in the attempts of modern scholars to understand the biblical text. For recent examples, see Baruch Halpern, “Chronicles’ Thematic Structure – Indications of an Earlier Source,” in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 35-54, and Ziony Zevit, “Converging Lines of Evidence Bearing on the Date of P,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 94 (1982): 502-509.



### CHAPTER THREE

The author of the Book of Kings had a wide variety of historical sources available to him, including both epigraphic and literary documents. These sources were used by the author, who supplemented and manipulated the historical data with a variety of original compositions in order to create a narrative matching his theological conceptualization of the history of the monarchic period. Having examined the nature of the sources available<sup>128</sup>, the use of these sources in ancient Israelite historiography, and the modern methods of identifying these sources<sup>129</sup>, we may now turn to the text itself. Due to the length of this work, it would be impossible to attempt to identify and isolate every section of primary source material and original composition. The passages discussed here will serve to demonstrate the issues involved in this type of examination, as they provide specific case studies for the analysis of the sources and methods of the ancient historian.

#### 1 Kings 6:1-38

In chapter six, the author of Kings describes Solomon's construction of the temple. The dimensions of the temple are listed in 6:1-10, and the temple's interior is described in 6:14-36. The chapter concludes with a note about the length of the project in 6:37-38.<sup>130</sup> There is debate concerning whether or not this section was inspired by a

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<sup>128</sup> See Chapter One.

<sup>129</sup> See Chapter Two.

<sup>130</sup> Conspicuously absent are 6:11-13, which describe YHWH's appearance to Solomon, as well as a reiteration of the Davidic Covenant. These verses were not in the original composition, and the addition is not found in the LXX. See also John Van Seters, *In Search of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983: 309).

votive or building inscription. Hurowitz produces a litany of Near Eastern parallels,<sup>131</sup> particularly Phoenician inscriptions, that would suggest that the author of this text, “...intentionally begins the building descriptions with words sounding like those of authentic...inscriptions.” And that, “It is not impossible that he even had before him some sort of building inscription...from the temple itself...and that he has integrated its language into his own narrative.”<sup>132</sup> Scholars who believe the description of the temple found in chapter six is from an authentic Solomonic document hold that the specificity and accuracy of the description necessitate some sort of source material, if not observation of the temple itself. There is enough detail in the description to rule out the possibility that the passage is simply an author’s recollection<sup>133</sup>, as suggested by Van Seters.<sup>134</sup> Nevertheless, it would be impossible to build the temple based on the details given, which would seem to go against the theory that the text has an underlying “oral tradition of instructions to the various craftsmen.”<sup>135</sup> Therefore, it does not seem prudent to dismiss the possibility of archival sources<sup>136</sup> or building inscriptions as does Cogan.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Victor (A.) Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992): 224-233.

<sup>132</sup> Victor (A.) Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992): 231.

<sup>133</sup> When the temple is described on the basis of recollection or imagination, the end result is clearly recognizable, as seen in Ezekiel 40-42 and 2 Chronicles 3.

<sup>134</sup> John Van Seters, *In Search of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983: 309-311.

<sup>135</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 250.

<sup>136</sup> Nadav Na’aman, “Royal Inscriptions,” *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 333.

<sup>137</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 250.

If the purpose of the passage is to publicize the king's devotion to God through the construction of the temple, then it would be logical that the king would have presented that narrative in some form of votive inscription.

### 1 Kings 9

In chapter nine, the Book of Kings describes a divine appearance to Solomon, some of political and commercial dealings, as well as his royal works and implementation of forced labor to complete those projects. Immediately following the construction and dedication of the temple in chapter eight, the history recounts a theophany in which God tells Solomon that he is satisfied with his prayer, reiterates the Davidic covenant, and vividly reports what will become of Israel if the Israelites do not follow God and keep the commandments.<sup>138</sup> There is nothing to suggest that this section has its origin in any type of historical source. In fact, it appears undeniable that this theophany is an insertion by the two Deuteronomistic editors<sup>139</sup> in order to maintain the grand scheme of his history. Sandwiched between historical accounts of the temple's dedication and Solomon's political maneuverings, this is undoubtedly original composition from the historian, an editorial insertion that reminds the reader of the theological implications of the construction of a center of centralized worship in Jerusalem.

After a brief section narrating the anecdotal etiology of the land of Cabul, the

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<sup>138</sup> 1 Kings 9: 2-9.

<sup>139</sup> Or two Deuteronomistic editions.

author then lists in 9:15-17 the cities built by Solomon through the conscription of forced labor. The cities listed are Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer,<sup>140</sup> Lower Beth-horon, Baalath, and Tamar. He also built “cities for his chariots” and “cities for his cavalry.”<sup>141</sup> It is important to note the strategic importance of these cities. The fortress at Hazor in Galilee provided protection to the northern part of the kingdom, Megiddo protected the Jezreel valley,<sup>142</sup> Gezer defended western Judah, Beth-horon secured the coast, and Tamar guarded the southeast.<sup>143</sup> Due to the size and scope of the project, as well as its importance to the Israelite empire, it is entirely plausible that this information would have been posted by Solomon in the form of a public inscription.<sup>144</sup> The Mesha Stela provides a significant precedent for construction lists in monumental inscriptions.<sup>145</sup> Further, the formula used to begin this section: “This is the account...”<sup>146</sup> is a well-attested detailing formula indicating the presence of a primary source.<sup>147</sup> The formula is also present in the

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<sup>140</sup> For a discussion of the synchronicity between this text and the archaeological evidence, see William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001): 131-138.

<sup>141</sup> 1 Kings 9:19.

<sup>142</sup> Megiddo was one of the most strategically important fortresses in the country, as it was located along the route from Egypt to Mesopotamia.

<sup>143</sup> Claude Mariottini, “1 Kings,” In *The New Interpreter’s Study Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003): 498.

<sup>144</sup> James A. Montgomery, “Archival Data in the Book of Kings,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 53 (194): 51.

<sup>145</sup> Mesha Stela, lines 21-30. See J. Andrew Dearman, “Mesha Stela,” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 708-709.

<sup>146</sup> 1 Kings 9:15a.

<sup>147</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 300.

Siloam Inscription<sup>148</sup>, a non-biblical text that will be discussed later in regard to 2 Kings 20:20.

## 2 Kings 11

In chapter 11, the author of Kings shifts his focus to the Southern Kingdom. This chapter describes in vivid detail the revolt against Athaliah led by the high priest Jehoiada in order to enthrone Joash. Na'aman suggests that this story is based on a building inscription that also served as a source for the historian's narrative of Joash's restoration of the temple, found in the following chapter.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, the passage meets a number of the criteria specified above. Its main theme has been attested in other ancient Near Eastern inscriptions, it contains a number of unfamiliar words and phrases. It is well known that kings were often forced to legitimize their rule and that they went to great lengths to justify their accession to the throne.<sup>150</sup> There are also examples of ancient Near Eastern kings who commissioned inscriptions<sup>151</sup> as an apology for their reign.<sup>152</sup> It

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<sup>148</sup> Robert B. Coote, "Siloam Inscription," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 24. See also Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 300.

<sup>149</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 340. For more on Joash's temple restoration, see below.

<sup>150</sup> See Baruch Halpern, *David's Secret Demons* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). Also see the discussion in Eric Seibert, *Subversive Scribes and the Solomonic Narrative* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006).

<sup>151</sup> Egyptian Pharaohs went even further, erected massive temples covered with hieroglyphics depicting their divine origins, even going so far as to construct "birth houses", which were structures within the temple precinct dedicated solely to the depiction of the Pharaoh's divine parentage.

is possible that one large inscription detailed both Joash's accession to the throne, as well as his later restoration of the temple, in order to claim his right to the throne and then "justify his divine election."<sup>153</sup>

When the passage is viewed in its entirety<sup>154</sup> the themes do indeed appear to be appropriate fodder for a royal inscription. Nevertheless, there are some flaws with this suggestion. There is a bit of unattested and odd vocabulary, but the vast majority of it occurs in verses 5-7, which provide the technical details of Jehoiada's plan. The words in question refer to the titles of the specific officers, on and off duty officers, and the columns they will form into.<sup>155</sup> It is entirely possible that these words, unintelligible to us now, were well understood by ancient readers. The specifics of the combat logistics may have provided an authentic touch to what appears to be an original composition from the historian. Further, there are multiple hints of Deuteronomistic influence in the passage's composition, including the creation of a covenant in verses 12 and 17, as well as the cult reform detailed in verse 18. It therefore appears unlikely that this passage has an epigraphic source. It is even more unlikely that the passage's source is a massive inscription detailing both Joash's revolt and his subsequent temple restoration, and that

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<sup>152</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 340. The divine approval for the king's reign often came in the form of military victory, such as is seen in the Mesha Inscription.

<sup>153</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 341.

<sup>154</sup> Some scholars would divide the chapter into two sources, secular (13-18a) and priestly (4-12, 18b-20), but this is not supported by the evidence. See Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 132-133, and Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 340-341.

<sup>155</sup> Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 126-127.

this inscription was discovered during Josiah's further restoration of the temple, and that this inscription is the inspiration for the story of a book of *Torah* being found in the temple, as is suggested by Na'aman.<sup>156</sup>

### 2 Kings 12:4-17

This passage details the temple repairs undertaken by king Jehoash. The restoration was undertaken during the time of the high priest Jehoiada, an extremely influential figure in both religion and politics. According to the text, Jehoash utilized the three major sources of temple income – sacred donations, the poll tax, and voluntary contributions – to finance the project. Na'aman holds that three features of this passage evidence its usage of an original building inscription: the project described would have been a fitting occasion for a dedicatory inscription, the passage contains original expressions not found elsewhere<sup>157</sup>, and specific dates<sup>158</sup> are provided for the event.<sup>159</sup>

Many scholars agree that the text appears to have its basis in some sort of source material, but there is some debate as to the precise nature of the source. Suggestions include the Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah<sup>160</sup>, a temple archive, a history of

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<sup>156</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 343.

<sup>157</sup> For a list of the hapax and other difficult words found in the section, see Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 339.

<sup>158</sup> Although the author of Kings nearly always dates royal reigns and military campaigns as part of standard formulae, it is rare that construction project is given a specific date.

<sup>159</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 333

<sup>160</sup> See also Menahem Haran, "The Books of the Chronicles 'Of the Kings of Judah' and 'Of the Kings of Israel'," *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 156-164.

the temple narrated by a court historian, and a building or dedicatory inscription.<sup>161</sup> The passage in questions describes royal initiative to repair the temple after the priests have left it to disrepair. A good deal of their income is confiscated for the purpose of a royal renovation of the project, and the incident led to a rift between the royal family and the priesthood. Therefore, it is unlikely that the narrative would have been included in a temple archive in its presented form. The most likely sources, then, are either the Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah or a building inscription. Na'aman suggests that since the majority of the linguistic difficulties<sup>162</sup> are found in verses 5-9, which describe Joash's financial regulations, it would be most logical to conclude that the passage's source is a building inscription.<sup>163</sup> Such an inscription, erected at the completion of the project, would have described the project and the regulations in a technical matter, and would have explained all three of the characteristics noted above. Nevertheless, Na'aman's summary dismissal of the possibility that the information could have been found in the Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah is misguided.<sup>164</sup> This is exactly the type of material that would likely have been found in the book.<sup>165</sup> Explicit references

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid. 159.

<sup>162</sup> Simon B. Parker, "Did the Authors of the Book of Kings Make Use of Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 50 (2000): 359. For more on these linguistic difficulties, see Logan S. Wright, "MKR In 2 Kings XII 5-17 and Deuteronomy XVIII 8," *Vetus Testamentum* 39 (1989): 438-439, and Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 138-139.

<sup>163</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 339-340.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid. 336.

<sup>165</sup> Menahem Haran, "The Books of the Chronicles 'Of the Kings of Judah' and 'Of the Kings of Israel'," *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999): 157. Also see the discussion of the Books of the Chronicles above.



to the Book of Chronicles include three references to construction projects.<sup>166</sup> A literary work of this nature would also have explained all three characteristics, as well as the text's pro-royalty slant, and is therefore the most likely source for this passage.

### 2 Kings 16:10-19

In this passage, we are told of the journey of King Ahaz to Damascus<sup>167</sup>, where he sees an especially well-made altar. He returns to Judah with a plan of said altar and orders the high priest Uriah to build it. The altar is then constructed according to the Assyrian model and dedicated by King Ahaz. There are multiple suggested sources for the passage: the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah<sup>168</sup>, a temple history<sup>169</sup>, a dedicatory inscription<sup>170</sup>, and a priestly source.<sup>171</sup> Careful examination shows that the passage is using two separate sources, a dedicatory inscription and a temple chronicle. This passage is particularly interesting for a number of reasons. It shows royal initiative in temple innovation and construction, with a willing high priest simply following orders. The king oversees the construction and then dedicates the finished temple, as is

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<sup>166</sup> 1 Kings 15:23, 22:39, and 2 Kings 20:20.

<sup>167</sup> Immediately following the Assyrian conquest of the city by Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings 16:9).

<sup>168</sup> Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981): 63-66.

<sup>169</sup> Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988):193.

<sup>170</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 346-348.

<sup>171</sup> Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988):193.

custom.<sup>172</sup> Nevertheless, the impetus for the innovation is military defeat and vassal tributes. Further, the passage contains clear priestly vocabulary, and cites the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah at its conclusion.

The completion of the new temple altar would have been an apt occasion for the construction of a dedicatory inscription, either on the altar itself or else nearby. The grand new altar could have been seen as an upgrade over the old one, which was moved to the side, giving pride of place to the new altar.<sup>173</sup> All sacrifices were to be placed on the king's new altar at the front of the temple, including "the morning burnt offering, the evening grain offering, the king's burnt offering and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land."<sup>174</sup> The new altar would have been a great publicity piece and a wonderful opportunity for some good press from a king that had just been forced to rely on the military might of his Assyrian allies in order to fight off attacks from Israel, Aram, and Edom. A beautiful new altar, complete with an impressive inscription detailing the king's victory over the invaders as well as his world-travels and powerful allies, would have impressed his subjects while also distracting from the other temple alterations he was forced to make in order to pay his vassal tributes.<sup>175</sup> Evidence from an altar inscription from Tell Halaf and two other inscriptions from Bar-rakib, another

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<sup>172</sup> Cf. the dedication of the Jerusalem temple by Kings Solomon in 1 Kings 8.

<sup>173</sup> 2 Kings 16:14.

<sup>174</sup> 2 Kings 16:15.

<sup>175</sup> Including the dismantling of his private royal entrance, and the removal of both the bronze sea and bronze bulls (2 Kings 16:17-18).

Assyrian vassal, give precedents for just this type of an inscription.<sup>176</sup> An inscription of this type would also explain the priestly vocabulary found within the passage.

The other source of this passage is a temple history. A postscript following the royal dedication of the temple describes the measures taken by King Ahaz in order to pay his vassal tribute and demonstrate his obedience to Tiglath-pileser. The specifics listed would only be found in a temple history detailing the regular upkeep and maintenance of the temple, important innovations, and the use of temple funds to pay foreign conquerors.<sup>177</sup> The author of Kings used both of these sources in the composition of his history. The reference to the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah at the end of the passage is simply an element in a formulaic conclusion.<sup>178</sup> The onus of the temple renovation is placed on royal shoulders because the Dtr historian does not view this as a positive change. This passage is bracketed by a scathing indictment of Ahaz in 16:4, a reference to his plunder of the silver and gold found in the temple to pay Assyria, and a concluding description of his humiliating vassal payments in 16:18. The new altar was an unwelcome modern change in an ancient temple. The only changes in the temple accepted by Dtr are changes that restore the temple to its original state, such as the restoration of Josiah in 2 Kings 23.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 345-346.

<sup>177</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 94.

<sup>178</sup> See the discussion of the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah above.

<sup>179</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Royal Inscriptions," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 348. Also see Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 193.

## 2 Kings 17

The technique of *Wiederaufnahme*, discussed above<sup>180</sup>, proves useful in an examination of 2 Kings 17. This passage, which details the fall of the Northern kingdom at the hands of the Assyrian empire, is widely recognized as being composed of multiple independent sections.<sup>181</sup> The entirety of the section may be isolated based on the resumptive repetition of the account of Shalmaneser's siege of Samaria during the reign of King Hoshea.<sup>182</sup> The account is stated first in 2 Kings 17:4, and then repeated in 18:19. Within the larger whole, it is also possible to isolate the portions that are not attributable to the historian.<sup>183</sup> This method is employed by Talmon to isolate 17:3-6, 24, and 29-31 as verses attributable to a northern historical document.<sup>184</sup> The main sections contain third-person summaries that clearly show the mark of the Deuteronomistic editor.<sup>185</sup> The verses in question, however, are free from the recognizable characteristics of Deuteronomistic influence. These verses are sequestered from the majority of the

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<sup>180</sup> See Identifying Source-Based Narrative, above.

<sup>181</sup> Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 206-207

<sup>182</sup> Shemaryahu Talmon, "Polemics and Apology in Biblical Historiography – 2 Kings 17:24-41," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 60-62.

<sup>183</sup> See the analysis presented in Marc Brettler, "Ideology, History, and Theology in 2 Kings XVII 7-23," *Vetus Testamentum* 39 (1989): 268-282.

<sup>184</sup> Shemaryahu Talmon, "Polemics and Apology in Biblical Historiography – 2 Kings 17:24-41," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981): 61.

<sup>185</sup> Mordechai Cogan, *The Anchor Bible I Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 2001): 97.

chapter due their lack of historical or religious judgment, philosophical polemic<sup>186</sup>, narrative formulae, or synchronism with the events occurring in the south.

Taken together, the isolated verses certainly appear to have originated in a historical account from the Northern Kingdom.<sup>187</sup> Further linguistic analysis of the listed verses only reinforces their coherence to each other and incoherence to the surrounding verses.<sup>188</sup> The Deuteronomistic historian consulted a northern historical document in order to obtain the necessary factual data. He constructed his history around this information, which detailed the Assyrian siege, conquest, and resettlement of Israel. This information was, in the mind of the Deuteronomist, strong evidence of divine disapproval of the northerner's cultic practices. The historian surrounded the factual excerpts from the northern document with religious polemics in verses 9-18 and 34-40. This passage is a quintessential example of ancient historiographic methods that are seen throughout the Book of Kings. The historian takes factual historical data from extrabiblical sources,

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<sup>186</sup> The suggestion that the repeated usage of the term "to make" in verses 29-31 is a polemic against the northern cults, with the repetition signifying a wordplay that the settlers "do not 'perform service' to their gods; they merely 'make' gods," is unlikely. Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 211.

<sup>187</sup> With the possible exception of an editorial gloss in 29b. Shemaryahu Talmon, "Polemics and Apology in Biblical Historiography – 2 Kings 17:24-41," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkley: University of California Press, 1981): 62-63.

<sup>188</sup> Such as the recurring use of the verb "to make", which is used five times in verses 29-31, as well as the term "Samaritans," which is a *hapax legomenon*. See Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *The Anchor Bible II Kings* (New York: Doubleday, 1988): 210-211, and Shemaryahu Talmon, "Polemics and Apology in Biblical Historiography – 2 Kings 17:24-41," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman (Berkley: University of California Press, 1981): 64.

splices it into his own original composition, and redacts the entire composition to render a history that adheres to his religious and political views of history.

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## Appendix A

These are historical sources explicitly mentioned in the text that have not been found extant:

1. The Book of Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah (1 Kings 14:19, 29)
2. The Book of Jashar (Joshua 10:13, 2 Samuel 1:18)
3. The Book of the Wars of the Lord (Numbers 21:14)
4. Book of Chronicles (Nehemiah 12:23)
5. Book of Shemaiah the Prophet and Iddo the Seer (2 Kings 12:14-15)
6. The Covenant Code (Exodus 24:7)
7. The Manner of the Kingdom (1 Samuel 10:25)
8. The Acts of Solomon (1 Kings 11:41)
9. The Annals of King David (1 Chronicles 27:24)
10. The Book of Samuel the Seer (1 Chronicles 10:29)

## Appendix B

These are the references to the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel/Judah and the Book of the Chronicles of Solomon in Kings.

Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel

1. 1 Kings 14:19
2. 1 Kings 15:31
3. 1 Kings 16:5
4. 1 Kings 16:14
5. 1 Kings 16:20
6. 1 Kings 16:27
7. 1 Kings 22:39
8. 2 Kings 1:18
9. 2 Kings 10:34
10. 2 Kings 13:8
11. 2 Kings 13:12
12. 2 Kings 14:15
13. 2 Kings 14:28
14. 2 Kings 15:11
15. 2 Kings 15:15
16. 2 Kings 15:21
17. 2 Kings 15:26
18. 2 Kings 15:31



Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah:

1. 1 Kings 14:29
2. 1 Kings 15:7
3. 1 Kings 15:23
4. 1 Kings 22:46
5. 2 Kings 8:23
6. 2 Kings 12:20
7. 2 Kings 14:18
8. 2 Kings 15:6
9. 2 Kings 15:36
10. 2 Kings 16:19
11. 2 Kings 20:20
12. 2 Kings 21:17
13. 2 Kings 21:25
14. 2 Kings 23:28
15. 2 Kings 24:5

Book of the Chronicles of Solomon:

1. 1 Kings 11:41