

# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY



Volume 70:3/4

July/October 2006

## *Table of Contents*

---

<b>In Memoriam: Kurt E. Marquart (1934–2006)</b> .....	194
<b>Justification by Faith is the Answer: What is the Question?</b> Stephen Westerholm.....	197
<b>Resurrection as Justification in the Book of Acts</b> Peter J. Scaer.....	219
<b>The Chronicler's David: Saint and Sinner</b> Daniel L. Gard.....	233
<b>The Spirit of Holiness: The Holiness of Man</b> William C. Weinrich.....	253
<b><i>Iustitia Imputata Christi</i>: Alien or Proper to Luther's Doctrine of Justification?</b> R. Scott Clark.....	269
<b>The Holy Spirit, Sacraments, and Church Rites</b> David P. Scaer.....	311
<b>Faith in Contemporary Evangelicalism</b> Lawrence R. Rast Jr. ....	323

**Frederick Henry Quitman and the Catechesis of the American  
Lutheran Enlightenment**

Benjamin A. Kolodziej .....	341
<b>Theological Observers.....</b>	<b>367</b>
Here and There on Theological Journals	
Philipp Melancthon, Confessor	
The “Pentecostalizing” of Christianity	
<b>Book Reviews.....</b>	<b>374</b>
<b>Books Received.....</b>	<b>379</b>
<b>Indices for Volume 70.....</b>	<b>382</b>

## The Chronicler's David: Saint and Sinner

Daniel L. Gard

David was both saint and sinner. There is nothing surprising or novel about his sinfulness, as anyone who has attended Sunday school can attest. The great king's failures are known to anyone with a passing knowledge of the Old Testament. Yet Chronicles, unlike Samuel, presents David as the ideal king whose glory was exceeded only by that of his son Solomon. In fact, without Samuel/Kings, David's biography would be one of a saint who was nearly sinless.

That the picture of David given us by the Chronicler is substantially different than that of Samuel/Kings is a well established fact. Gerhard von Rad underscored the importance of the Chronicler's David by arranging *Das Geschichtsbild des chronistischen Werkes*<sup>1</sup> according to the themes of David's relationship to the ark, cultic personnel, the temple, the cult, and Israel. The idealization of David begins with the battle of Gilboa and the resulting death of Saul. With few changes, the Chronicler reports the events of the battle (1 Sam 31:1-13; 1 Chr 10:1-12) but adds that Saul died for his unfaithfulness because YHWH slew him "and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse" (1 Chr 10:13-14).

One barometer of the quality of a king in 1 and 2 Chronicles is that king's involvement in warfare. A faithful king will have either peace or, if war comes about, victory. Thus, the long account of David's successful foreign wars in 2 Samuel (8:1-12:31) is repeated almost verbatim in 1 Chronicles (18:1-20:3). Other wars are left unmentioned: the long civil war between David and the house of Saul in 2 Samuel 2-4,<sup>2</sup> the rebellion of Absalom in 2 Samuel 17-18, and the abortive rebellion led by the Benjaminite Sheba in 2 Samuel 20, perhaps incited by Absalom's failed

---

<sup>1</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild des chronistischen Werkes*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1930).

<sup>2</sup> The Chronicler acknowledges the war only in passing while enumerating David's army in 1 Chr 12:23. Of the entire narrative of civil war, only 2 Sam 3:2-5 (the sons of David born at Hebron) finds its way into the Chronicler's history, and that by transposition to the genealogies in 1 Chr 3:1-4.

revolt. For the Chronicler, David's accession to the throne had come without civil war; he had been crowned by all Israel at Hebron (1 Chr 11:1-4). His throne could not be threatened from within his own house, especially since the reason for the rebellion—David's murder of Uriah—is unreported in the Chronicler's account. Nor could a revolt from outside David's house threaten the throne.

Although the Chronicler faithfully transmits his *Vorlage's* statement that "David remained at Jerusalem" (2 Sam 11:1; 1 Chr 20:1), he omits the events in Jerusalem: the adulterous relationship with Bathsheba, the murder of Uriah, and the rebuke of David by Nathan the prophet. As a result, the disasters associated with Amnon and Absalom (2 Sam 13:1-18:33), directly linked by Nathan to their father David's sin against Uriah (2 Sam 12:11), are also omitted by the Chronicler.

This does not mean that the Chronicler's David is without fault. The Chronicler includes the census of Israel (2 Samuel 24; 1 Chronicles 21) and even adds the sentence, "But God was displeased with this thing, and he smote Israel" (1 Chr 21:7). It may be that "he tells the full story of the Numbering because it culminates in the providential choice of a site for the Temple (chap. xxii.1)"<sup>3</sup> Yet the connection between the census and the choice of a temple site is not in the *Vorlage*, only in Chronicles. Further, David's rejection for a role in the actual building of the temple is explained by the Chronicler because he has shed much blood (1 Chr 22:8) and is a man of war (1 Chr 28:3) and not because of his sin.

It is to this anomaly of the sinful census in 1 Chronicles 21 that we direct our attention. The saintly king was also the sinful king, even in the Chronicler's account.

### I. The Text of 1 Chronicles 21

Before examining 1 Chronicles 21, it is necessary to acknowledge the issue of the text used by the Chronicler. Was his *Vorlage* the same as we have before us in the canonical Samuel/Kings? To answer this question, it is important to focus on the differences between the received Masoretic Text (MT) of Samuel/Kings and of Chronicles. One possible reason for these differences is that the Chronicler's own theological *Tendenz*

---

<sup>3</sup> W. Emery Barnes, "The David of the Book of Samuel and the David of the Book of Chronicles," *The Expositor* 7th ser., 7 (1909): 49-59.

determined the material he added, modified, or omitted.<sup>4</sup> Closely related to this is the possibility that the Chronicler omitted material simply for the sake of brevity.<sup>5</sup> Such an approach normally assumes that the Chronicler had before him a *Vorlage* similar or identical to the MT of Samuel/Kings.

With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, this assumption has been challenged by F. M. Cross<sup>6</sup> and his students, especially Werner Lemke<sup>7</sup> and Eugene Ulrich.<sup>8</sup> Their work suggests that the differences between Chronicles and Samuel/Kings in the MT are often the result of different text types underlying the books and that many differences in individual readings arise from textual differences rather than a *Tendenz* on the part of the Chronicler. Thus, a second approach looks first to explanations based upon the text critical evidence and, secondarily, to the Chronicler's *Tendenz*.

Beyond the complex questions on the level of textual criticism lie the equally complex problems of the literary history of the Chronicler's *Vorlage*. It has long been recognized that distinct layers can be found in the Septuagint (LXX) text of Samuel/Kings.<sup>9</sup> This, coupled with a number of

---

<sup>4</sup> This position is that taken, for example, by Adrien M. Brunet, "Le Chroniste et ses sources," *Revue biblique* 60 (1953): 481-508, and "Le Chroniste et ses sources," *Revue biblique* 61 (1954): 349-386.

<sup>5</sup> Roddy Braun, *1 Chronicles*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986).

<sup>6</sup> Frank M. Cross, "The Contributions of the Qumran Discoveries" *Israel Exploration Journal* 16 (1966): 81-95; "The History of the Biblical Text in the Light of the Discoveries in the Judean Desert" *Harvard Theological Review* 57 (1964): 281-299.

<sup>7</sup> Werner E. Lemke, "The Synoptic Problem in the Chronicler's History," *Harvard Theological Review* 58 (1965): 349-363.

<sup>8</sup> Eugene C. Ulrich Jr., *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 19 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978). Ulrich and others believe that the text of the Chronicler's Samuel *Vorlage* is of the same type as the LXX, especially the Lucianic recension and Josephus. In Ulrich's analysis, a different Hebrew text, much closer to that of the LXX than that which underlies the MT, was before the Chronicler: "That textual tradition, or more pointedly, a Samuel text exceedingly close to 4QSam<sup>a</sup>, provided the basis in early post-exilic Judah for the Chronicler's recasting of his people's history. Furthermore, it was, in a less expansionist form, much closer than the Masoretic tradition to the Hebrew basis of the pristine Egyptian (Old Greek) translation produced in the late third or early second century. In its more expansionist form it provided the basis for occasional additions and corrections in the early stratum of the Lucianic Greek recension." Ulrich, *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus*, 257.

<sup>9</sup> H. St. J. Thackeray, "The Greek Translators of the Four Books of Kings," *Journal of Theological Studies* 8 (1907): 262-278; *The Septuagint and Jewish Worship, a Study in Origins*,

issues surrounding critical theories of the "Deuteronomistic History"<sup>10</sup> and its "double redaction,"<sup>11</sup> raises serious questions about the extent and nature of the *Vorlage* before the Chronicler.<sup>12</sup> The dependence of the Chronicler upon Samuel/Kings is generally recognized. Yet there are large blocks of material in Samuel/Kings which have no parallel in Chronicles. It is possible or, in the view of some scholars, even probable that at least some of this material was not in the Chronicler's *Vorlage*. Thus, the apparent omission of material by the Chronicler is attributed by some scholars not to the Chronicler's ideological editorializing but to the text of Samuel/Kings before him.<sup>13</sup>

---

Schweich Lectures 1920 (London: Milford for the British Academy, 1921), 9-28.

<sup>10</sup> Martin Noth, hypothesized that Deuteronomistic History is the work of a single exilic writer, Deuteronomist. *The Deuteronomistic History*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 15 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981). Frank M. Cross found a primary, pre-exilic edition (Dtr<sup>1</sup>) and a secondary exilic edition (Dtr<sup>2</sup>). "The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History," in *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic. Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1973), 274-289.

<sup>11</sup> Richard D. Nelson, *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 18 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981).

<sup>12</sup> Such questions are not confined to the books considered in this paper. In some cases, the LXX may preserve an earlier edition of a book or some section thereof. This is believed to be the case in Jeremiah, as Emanuel Tov concludes. "The Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Its Textual History," in *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism*, ed. J. Tigay (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1985), 213-237; "Some Aspects of the Textual and Literary History of the Book of Jeremiah," in *Le livre de Jérémie: Le prophète et son milieu, les oracles et leur transmission*, Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium 54, ed. P. M. Bogaert (Leuven: University, 1981), 145-167. On the one hand, LXX and 4QJer<sup>b</sup> preserve a shorter edition (Tov's "edition I"). On the other hand, the MT of Jeremiah, 2QJer, 4QJer<sup>a</sup>, and 4QJer<sup>c</sup> show a later expansion (Tov's "edition II"). Some witnesses to other texts display, in a secondary edition, intentional expansion, as in the harmonizing tendency of 4QpaleoExod<sup>m</sup> over against the MT. See Judith E. Sanderson, *An Exodus Scroll from Qumran: 4QpaleoExod<sup>m</sup> and the Samaritan Tradition*, Harvard Semitic Studies 30 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1986).

<sup>13</sup> An example of this is 1 Samuel 17-18, the story of David and Goliath, which is set before the kingship of David, outside the period in which the Chronicler is interested. However, it does illustrate the problem of multiple editions within the Samuel narrative. In studies by four scholars the narrative is approached from four perspectives; see Dominique Barthélemy, David W. Gooding, Johan Lust, and Emanuel Tov, *The Story of David and Goliath: Textual and Literary Criticism: Papers of a Joint Research Venture*, Orbis biblicus et orientalis 73 (Fribourg, Suisse: Editions Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1986). All agree that there are two literary

While recognizing the important implications of these textual and literary questions for the study of Chronicles, I will focus on one "window" into the literature of Israel's history, the MT. The evidence of Qumran is not as certain as it is often represented to be, since, for the Chronicler's Samuel *Vorlage*, we have merely fragmentary evidence from 4QSam<sup>a</sup> representing only about 5 to 10 percent of the text.<sup>14</sup> Nor do

editions to the story. Tov and Lust conclude that the earlier edition preserved in the LXX witnesses to the Old Greek and that the MT has an expanded narrative. Such examples within Deuteronomistic History could, of course, be multiplied. Four blocks of material are generally recognized in the Samuel material, with variations on the beginning and end of each block found among scholars:

1. The History of David's Rise (1 Samuel 16 [or 15]-2 Samuel 5)
2. The Ark Narrative (1 Samuel 4-6 and 2 Samuel 6)
3. The Succession Narrative (2 Samuel 9-20 and 1 Kings 1-2)
4. The Appendices or Miscellany (2 Samuel 21-24)

When these blocks and their individual units were added to the text of Samuel forms an important issue for determining the shape of the text before the Chronicler. Did the Chronicler have, for example, the material of the Succession Narrative (SN) before him? Leonhard Rost's study has been influential in this, delineating two major complexes of material in 2 Samuel, the SN and the History of David's Rise (HDR); *The Succession to the Throne of David*, trans. Michael D. Rutter and David M. Gunn (Sheffield: Almond, 1982). It is not insignificant that at 2 Sam 10:1 the LXX<sup>b</sup> radically changes and represents the so-called *kaige* recension. It is beyond my purpose to attempt a resolution of the potential problems of the literary history of 2 Samuel. Rather, what is significant for our purposes is the recognition of the problems posed if SN were not a part of the Chronicler's *Vorlage*. In this case, it would be difficult to speak of the Chronicler omitting material which was, in fact, not before him. Thus any conclusions regarding the Chronicler's *Tendenz* concerning David and his house based solely on the absence of this material from Chronicles would be suspect and subject to revision. Elements of SN are, of course, present in Chronicles. The capture of Rabbah (2 Sam 11:1, 12:26-31), minus the Bathsheba/Nathan material (2 Sam 11:2-12:25), is present in 1 Chr 20:1-3. Likewise, David's foreign wars (2 Sam 10:1-19) are found also in 1 Chr 19:1-19. Missing in Chronicles are the internal struggles of the house of David (2 Sam 13:1-20:26).

<sup>14</sup> The situation with the Chronicler's *Vorlage* of 1-2 Kings presents different problems. The Qumran evidence for Kings is far less substantial and generally agrees with the MT of Kings. The following information is derived from Steven L. McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 33 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1985), 114-115. Fragments of K have been found in caves 4, 5, and 6. Cave 5 contains three fragments of 1 Kgs 1:1, 16-17, 27-37. Cave 6 contains ninety fragments, most of which have yet to be identified; eighteen have been identified and comprise parts of nine passages: 1 Kgs 3:12-14; 12:28-31; 2 Kgs 5:26; 6:32; 7:8-10; 7:20-8:5; 9:1-2; 10:19b-21. The 4QKgs<sup>a</sup> material contains fragments of 1 Kgs 7:20-21, 25-27, 29-31, 31-42; 8:1-9, 16-18. Since McKenzie's study, the 4QKgs has been published by Julio Trebolle Barrera, "A Preliminary Edition of 4QKings (4Q54)" in Julio Trebolle

theories of a different *Vorlage* to Chronicles account for the equally possible redaction of 4QSam<sup>a</sup> towards the text of Chronicles. Finally, it is the MT, not the texts of the LXX or Qumran, that is the received text within the community of faith.

## II. A Reading of 1 Chronicles 21:1–22:1

The census of Israel described in 1 Chronicles 21:1–22:1 stands in stark contrast to the Chronicler's overall portrayal of David. Relying upon his *Vorlage* 2 Samuel 24:1–25, the Chronicler follows his source but with very different emphases. Much of the preceding material in 2 Samuel about David's mistakes was not included by the Chronicler and thus his purpose for the information about David's sinful census is not as a culmination of prior sinful acts as it is in 2 Samuel. Rather, by the additional information found only in 1 Chronicles 21:27–22:1, the Chronicler uses this material to connect David with the choice of the temple site. Note the difference in these two accounts:

---

Barrera and Luis Vegas Montaner, eds., *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Madrid, 8-12 March 1991* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 1:229–246. Moreover, the majority of Codex Vaticanus (1 Kgs 1:1–2:11; 22:1–53; 2 Kgs 1:1–25:30) is, as Dominique Barthélemy observed, representative of the *kaige* recension toward a proto-Rabbinic text. *Les devanciers d'Aquila*, *Vetus Testamentum*, Supplements 10 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963), 89–143. Even Josephus is less helpful for establishing the *Vorlage* of Kings since he consistently parallels the Chronicler at those places where the Chronicler has non-synoptic material, indicating that Josephus perhaps had a copy of the Chronicler before him. See McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 83. McKenzie, in his study of the MT, Old Greek, and Latin of 13 passages from 1 Kgs 2:12–21:29, reaches the conclusion that the MT of Chronicles and the MT of Kings "reflect a single text type of K[ings], i.e., the Chronicler's *Vorlage* of K[ings] was proto-Rabbinic." Although McKenzie does not attempt to establish "the affiliation of all these witnesses of the text of K[ings] to each other and to textual families," his identification of agreements between the MT of Chronicles and Samuel with fragments of 4QKgs<sup>a</sup> indicates "that we are dealing with recension within a text type and not just assimilation between K<sup>M</sup> and C<sup>M</sup>." *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*, 119–158. Certainly textual variants may account for some differences between the MT of Kings and that of Chronicles, but those are differences within the same textual family, a situation quite different from that of Chronicles and Samuel.



**2 Samuel 24**

1 Again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel,

and he incited David against them, saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah."

**1 Chronicles 21**

1 Then Satan (שָׂטָן) stood against Israel

and incited David to number Israel.

1 Chronicles 21 has the appearance of Satan, a transliteration of the Hebrew word for "adversary." The same term is found in Job 1:1-2:13 and Zechariah 3:1 but in those places with the definite article "the adversary." Here it is a proper name. Paul Evans has summarized a scholarly debate about the usage of this term into two primary interpretations.<sup>15</sup> One is that this is a proper name influenced by Persian dualism and by its use the Chronicler shifts responsibility for evil from YHWH to Satan. Others have argued that this represents a human adversary and should be translated as "an adversary." While agreeing with the former that this is a proper name, it seems to me that the influence of Persian dualism is overemphasized since the concept of Satan, if not the name itself, is consistent from the fall in Genesis 3 onward.

2 Samuel 24:1 implies that it was the Lord who incited David to take the census. The Chronicler chooses to emphasize the instrument used, that is, Satan. It is also of note that the Chronicler does not repeat his source in saying "Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel" since the Chronicler had not reported any of David's prior sinful acts.

**2 Samuel 24**

2 So the king said to Joab, the commander of the army, who was with him,

"Go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and number the people, that I may know the number of the people."

**1 Chronicles 21**

2 So David said to Joab and the commanders of the army,

"Go, number Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, and bring me a report, that I may know their number."

---

<sup>15</sup> Paul Evans, "Divine Intermediaries in 1 Chronicles 21: An Overlooked Aspect of the Chronicler's Theology," *Biblica* 85 (2004): 545-558.

3 But Joab said to the king, "May the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times as many as they are, while the eyes of my lord the king still see it,

but why does my lord the king delight in this thing?"

4 But the king's word prevailed against Joab and the commanders of the army.

So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.

1 Chronicles 21:3–4 states that Joab, David's faithful general, objected to the census. It is not that the census itself was evil; rather, the motivation for it was wrong: "Why should my lord require this?" (1 Chr 21:3). As the Chronicler will later demonstrate in warfare narratives, it is not the number of troops that matter. Only trust in the Lord wins battles. David here demonstrates not faith and trust in God but faith and trust in the size of the army of Israel.

## 2 Samuel 24

9 And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to the king: in Israel there were 800,000 valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were 500,000.

3 But Joab said, "May the LORD add to his people a hundred times as many as they are!

Are they not, my lord the king, all of them my lord's servants? Why then should my lord require this? Why should it be a cause of guilt for Israel?"

4 But the king's word prevailed against Joab.

So Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came back to Jerusalem.

## 1 Chronicles 21

5 And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to David. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword, and in Judah 470,000 who drew the sword.

6 But he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to Joab.

1 Chronicles 21:6 is unique to Chronicles. The Chronicler does not reproduce his source's description of the process of census taking (2 Sam 24:5–8) but only the total, 1,100,000 troops. He further notes that Joab did not count Levi and Benjamin (1 Chr 21:6) so David's army would have been even larger had he done so.

**2 Samuel 24**

10 But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people.

And David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

1 Chronicles 21:7 is unique to Chronicles, emphasizing that David's action was literally "evil in the eyes of God" and that, as a consequence, God struck Israel. It is not, as in 2 Samuel, a matter of David's conscience bothering him which resulted in his repentance; rather, David's repentance is the direct result of YHWH striking Israel:

**2 Samuel 24**

11 And when David arose in the morning, the **word of the LORD** came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

12 "Go and say to David, 'Thus says the LORD, Three things I offer you. Choose one of them, that I may do it to you.'"

This explains David's repentance and the choices of punishments offered by God (1 Chr 21:8-15a; 2 Sam 24: 10-16a). The Chronicler also emphasizes the intermediary role of the prophet as one who hears YHWH. He does so by eliminating the circumlocution "the word of."

**2 Samuel 24**

14 Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of man."

The three choices—famine, enemy destruction, and the sword of the Lord—were precisely the punishments decreed for covenant failure in Deuteronomy 28:15-25. David's choice is to trust the mercy of YHWH (1 Chr 21:13).

**1 Chronicles 21**

7 But God was displeased with this thing, (וַיִּרַע בְּעֵינֵי הָאֱלֹהִים) and he struck Israel.

8 And David said to God, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done this thing. But now, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."

**1 Chronicles 21**

9 And **the LORD** spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying,

10 "Go and say to David, 'Thus says the LORD, Three things I offer you; choose one of them, that I may do it to you.'"

**1 Chronicles 21**

13 Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let **me** fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is **very** great, but do not let me fall into the hand of man."

## 2 Samuel 24

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the calamity and said to the angel who was working destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand." And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of **Araunah** the Jebusite.

## 1 Chronicles 21

15 **And God sent** the angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but as he was about to destroy it, the LORD saw, and he relented from the calamity. And he said to the angel who was working destruction, "It is enough; now stay your hand." And the angel of the LORD was standing by the threshing floor of **Ornan** the Jebusite.

16 And David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.

David's reliance on the mercy of God is apparent in both accounts. But the Chronicler, even more than Samuel, emphasizes the king's own responsibility by pleading in the first person singular rather than plural. What happened to the nation has happened to the king himself. In both accounts, God sends a pestilence that kills 70,000 people (2 Sam 24:15; 1 Chr 21:14). But divine mercy prevents the destruction of more; God stops the "angel" from further destruction as the angel approaches the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

It is significant that the Chronicler, unlike his *Vorlage*, specifically attributes the intended destruction of Jerusalem to YHWH himself. As he does when he attributes the death of Saul to YHWH (1 Chronicles 10) and the later destruction by the Babylonians to YHWH (2 Chronicles 36), the Chronicler indicates that all things come from the hand of God. Israel was not at the mercy of the abstract fates of history but under the hand of God.

## 2 Samuel 24

17 Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people, and said, "Behold, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand be against me and against my father's house."

## 1 Chronicles 21

17 And David said to God, "**Was it not I who gave command to number the people?** It is I who have sinned and done great evil. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand, O LORD my God, be against me and against my father's house. **But do not let the plague be on your people.**"

Here the events of the numbering are directly connected to the selection of the temple site. There are several differences between the 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles accounts, some of which may reflect on the manuscript difficulties of the traditional Hebrew text of Samuel. The angel was stopped over a particular spot, the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (Araunah in 2 Samuel). This spot is then dedicated for the altar of the Lord. Note also that the Chronicler, much more than his *Vorlage*, accents David's acceptance of personal responsibility.

The Chronicler intensifies David's acknowledgment of his culpability by inclusion of the question "Was it not I who gave command to number the people?" and the plea "But do not let the plague be on your people." Both sin and its consequences belong to the guilty, not to innocent bystanders.

#### 2 Samuel 24

25 And David built there an altar to the LORD and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD responded to the plea for the land, and the plague was averted from Israel.

#### 1 Chronicles 21

26 And David built there an altar to the LORD and presented burnt offerings and peace offerings and called on the LORD, and the LORD answered him with fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt offering.

In 21:26, the Chronicler notes that the offering was burned with fire from heaven, something not known from 2 Samuel 24:25. This was a powerful indication of the Lord's approval. He sent fire on the offerings at the time of Aaron's offering (Lev 9:24), at the time of Solomon's offering for the dedication of the temple (2 Chr 7:1), and as confirmation of Elijah over the prophets of Baal (1 Kgs 18:36-40). David's role as the one who sacrifices demonstrates his priest-king identity, an identity given him earlier in 1 Chronicles 15:25-29 and 16:1-3. David is a unique king in that he embodies the promise of the future priest and king, the Messiah (see Zech 6:9-15 and Psalm 110). The divine approval is further noted by the Chronicler's note that "Then the LORD commanded the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath" (1 Chr 21:27).

#### 1 Chronicles 21

28 At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. 29 For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon, 30 but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD. 22:1 Then David said, "Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel."

The final material in this narrative is unique to Chronicles. Here the Chronicler notes that David, though not the builder of the temple, is in fact responsible for everything about the temple, even its site. The chapters which follow (22-29) further develop the role of David as architect and planner, though not builder of the temple, with only a few verses in this final section which are found also in 2 Samuel. This lengthy section comes from other sources and emphasizes David as the organizer of temple (chapters 23-26) and governmental personnel (chapter 27). These actions are encased in two speeches regarding his son's succession to the throne and role as builder of the temple. The first is a private speech to Solomon and the leaders of Israel (chapter 22); the second is a public charge to Solomon preceding David's death (chapters 28, 29). In this way, the Chronicler maintains both the legitimacy of the temple and the Davidic line through Solomon.

### III. David: The Paradigm of Saint and Sinner

#### *David as Paradigm of Rebellion*

Because the Chronicler does not mention the better known sins of David, the census of 1 Chronicles 21 is all the more important. Apart from this one incident, David is presented as the model king. And yet this stands as a paradox throughout the rest of the book. The tragedy of David's sin does not overshadow his role as the one to whom future kings will be compared and found wanting; in other words, David is the standard by which his descendants are judged. Good kings are positively compared to David (Hezekiah in 2 Chr 29:2 and 2 Kgs 18:3; Josiah in 2 Chr 34:12 and 2 Kgs 22:2) while evil kings are unfavorably compared. Ahaz, for example, is introduced by the negative comparison: "And he did not do what was right in the eyes of YHWH as his father David had done, but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel" (2 Chr 28:1b-2a; 2 Kgs 16:2a-3). The reign of Ahaz, in polar opposition to that of David, is marked by military defeat. However, he remains the legitimate king as a descendant of David. Even Jehoiakin, who was replaced by his uncle Zedekiah (2 Chr 36:10; 2 Kgs 24:17) at the command of Nebuchadnezzar, remains the generational link of the line of David (1 Chr 3:16-24). The divine covenant with David is not negated by the failures of his successors.

What was wrong, however, with the taking of a census? Why was this even an issue that would bring the wrath of YHWH? The Old Testament has a significant number of census figures throughout the history of Israel. The Chronicler even provides a listing of David's army divisions and their

numbers from a later census (1 Chr 27:1-34). This particular census was different because of the answer to the question posed by Joab, "Why does my lord want to do this?" (1 Chr 21:3). A more precise translation is: "Why does my lord seek (שָׁקַט) this?" This word, one of two words frequently used by the Chronicler for "seek,"<sup>16</sup> is used to reference either the seeking of YHWH or the seeking of false gods. Joab's question then is quite pointed: Why does David seek this rather than seeking YHWH? It is not the act of taking a census, which is in and of itself a neutral thing; it is rather the motivation.

In the prior chapters, the Chronicler had recorded the military victories of David, largely taken verbatim from his source in 2 Samuel. The list of defeated enemies (1 Chr 18:1-20:8) is a "Who's Who" of the ancient world in 1000 BC: Gath, Moab, Arameans of Damascus, Hamath, the Edomites, the Ammonites, and the Philistines. So great was his power that the Chronicler would note, "YHWH gave David victory everywhere he went" (1 Chr 18:13). But despite all this, David wanted to know the strength of his numbers. The point was not in a simple counting of heads but in the reason for the counting: David thought that there would be security in statistics. That neutral thing thus became an indicator that David trusted his "calculator" far more than God.

In the non-synoptic texts of 2 Chronicles, later kings of Judah would know the impotence of numbers.<sup>17</sup> Some, like Abijah, Asa, and perhaps Jehoshaphat, would be outnumbered by a ratio of 2 to 1 when they faced enemy armies and yet come out victorious because YHWH fought for them. On the other hand, Judah can outnumber the enemy and yet lose the battle. In the case of Joash, Judah's army outnumbered the enemy yet was defeated:

<sup>16</sup> Although the Chronicler prefers the term שָׁקַט, which he uses 25 times, he does employ שָׁקַט with essentially the same meaning eleven times (1 Chr 4:39; 14:8; 16:10; 16:11; 2 Chr 7:14; 9:23; 11:16; 15:4; 15:15; 20:4; 22:9).

<u>Text</u>	<u>King</u>	<u>Tally</u>
1 Chr 21:5	David	1,100,000 in all Israel, including 470,000 in Judah
2 Chr 11:1	Rehoboam	180,000
2 Chr 13:3	Abijah	400,000
2 Chr 14:8	Asa	580,000
2 Chr 17:14-18	Jehoshaphat	1,160,000
2 Chr 25:5	Amaziah	300,000
2 Chr 26:10	Uzziah (early years)	307,500

Though the army of the Syrians had come with few men, YHWH delivered them into their hand a very great army, because they had forsaken YHWH, the God of their fathers. Thus they executed judgment on Joash. (2 Chr 24:24)

The use of numbers in this way underscores the meaning of history for the Chronicler as he addresses the postexilic community in the Persian period. Judah might be powerless before the world. Other nations might exert tremendous military force against them. From the perspective of other nations, and indeed of Judah's citizens themselves, the situation would have been bleak. The Chronicler, however, does not understand the history of the nation in this way. When Judah was outnumbered and comparatively weak in the past on the one hand, or strong and powerful on the other, YHWH determined their fate. In this way, David's census warns the continuing people of God about reliance on numbers as an indication of power rather than on the Lord.

### *David as Paradigm of Repentance*

David in 1 Chronicles 21 also serves as a paradigm of repentance. The Chronicler's description of David's sin and repentance focuses attention on several aspects. First is the role of Satan who "incited David to number Israel." Lutherans often speak of their three great enemies as the world, the devil, and the flesh. In the case of this census, it is no less an enemy than the great deceiver himself who worked to tempt the great king of Israel to rely on human rather than divine strength.

David, however, does not lay the blame at the feet of Satan. There is no claim that "the devil made me do it." Instead, David accepts personal responsibility: "I have sinned greatly in that I have done this thing. But now, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly" (1 Chr 21:8). This is a matter of accountability of the sinner. Appeals to the accountability of others do not suffice, whether one has superiors or, as in the case of David, one is at the top. Each person is responsible for his own sin.

That David is a repentant sinner is further emphasized by the Chronicler in his expansion of his *Vorlage* at 1 Chronicles 21:17. There he records David's words acknowledging that he alone is responsible for his decisions. It was David and no one else who gave the command; therefore he, not the people he ruled, should bear the consequences. With great authority granted by God comes great responsibility for the exercise of that authority.



It is this contrite David who throws himself on the mercy of YHWH. He speaks to the prophet Gad and pleads, "Let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is very great" (1 Chr 21:13). The preposition used here (לְ) is simply translated "for" or "because." He does not ask to fall into the hand of the Lord "in order that" God's mercy might be great, as if David's contrition were the cause of divine mercy. Nor does he fall "into the hand of the Lord" with the hope that the Lord's mercy might be great because of the quality or sincerity of his own contrition. On the contrary, David understands that the mercy of God is great even before or without his contrition. In other words, God's great mercy exists and is objectively true even before David acknowledges his sin. It is the cause, not the result, of David's decision to fall into the divine hand.

The Chronicler's adaptation of 2 Samuel's account of the census of Israel thus serves not only the historical narrative but also the soteriological narrative. David, the guilty sinner, obtains mercy from YHWH at the site where the angel sheathed his sword, the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. It is this site that David designates to be the site of the temple. This is not the first or the last time that the temple mount would appear in the Biblical narrative. It is at this site that another act of divine mercy had occurred when YHWH stayed the hand of Abraham as he was about to offer up his son Isaac (Genesis 22). Abraham gave a name to the place in the region of Moriah where the binding of Isaac took place and YHWH provided the substitutionary sacrifice of a ram. This site is identified in 2 Chronicles 3:1 as the Temple Mount in Jerusalem,<sup>18</sup> where countless animals would be offered upon the altar. It is on this site in the Second Temple period where Christ, the final lamb offered for the sin of all humanity, would appear. Thus the divine mercy toward Abraham, David, and the world is located here.

This sacred site, of course, would not be developed from threshing floor to temple by David himself. Yet the chapters following 1 Chronicles 21, unique to this history, continue the theme of David's relationship to the temple. In these chapters, the Chronicler makes no further mention of David's census. Where God's grace is, sin is remembered no longer. It is true that David is not permitted to build the temple but that prohibition is

---

<sup>18</sup> Other texts refer to the temple as "the mountain of the LORD" (Ps 24:3; Isa 2:3; 30:29; Zech 8:3). In modern Jerusalem this site is home to the Dome of the Rock, a Muslim mosque from AD 691. There a rock is the traditional site of Abraham's sacrifice.

based neither upon the census, nor his adultery with Bathsheba, nor any other sinful act of David. It is rather based upon David's role as a man of war who had shed much blood. The role of temple builder would be given to a man of peace, his son Solomon.

In this way, David becomes a paradigm for rebellion and repentance. To briefly examine one example,<sup>19</sup> we turn to 2 Chronicles 12. In a reworking

---

<sup>19</sup> As a measure of repentance, symmetry of victory and defeat is attained in the Chronicler's account of the reigns of Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat. In each case, both the synoptic and the non-synoptic warfare narratives form an integral part of that symmetry. In the case of Asa, that symmetry is internal to the account. By placing the non-synoptic material within the framework of 1 Kings 15, the Chronicler constructs two parts to Asa's reign. A similar balance was seen within the Chronicler's arrangement of the synoptic accounts of the reigns of Rehoboam (2 Chr 11:1-12:16; 1 Kgs 12:1-14:31), Jehoram (2 Chr 21:1-20; 2 Kgs 8:20-22), Joash (2 Chr 24:1-27; 2 Kgs 12:1-21), Amaziah (2 Chr 25:1-28; 2 Kgs 14:1-22), Uzziah (2 Chr 26:1-23; 2 Kgs 15:1-7), Manasseh (2 Chr 33:1-20; 2 Kgs 21:1-18), and Josiah (2 Chr 34:1-35:27; 2 Kgs 22:1-23:30). A symmetrical balance is also obtained between the reigns of individual kings. Rehoboam, who suffered military disaster, is balanced by the military success of his son Abijah. The reigns of Asa and his son Jehoshaphat are likewise balanced by an intricate interweaving of synoptic and non-synoptic material. The pattern continues throughout the Chronicler's history of Judah. Jehoram (2 Chr 21:1-20), a cultically unfaithful king, loses territories to the east and south—precisely the areas in which cultically faithful Asa and Jehoshaphat had been successful. Uzziah (2 Chr 26:1-23), in the initial phase of his reign, is successful militarily, in contrast to the defeat by Israel at the close of his father Amaziah's reign (2 Chr 25:1-28). Jotham (2 Chr 27:1-9) is successful in war; his son Ahaz (2 Chr 28:1-27) meets defeat at the hands of Syria, Israel, Edom, Philistia, and Assyria. The disaster of Ahaz is then balanced by the cultically pure Hezekiah (2 Chr 29:1-32:33), for whom YHWH sends an angel to fight. Military defeat is ascribed to Hezekiah's son Manasseh (2 Chr 33:1-20), whose own son Amon (2 Chr 33:21-25) is cultically unfaithful. Josiah, though a religious reformer, fails to hear the word of YHWH through Neco and dies in battle (2 Chr 34:1-35:27) and is succeeded by a series of kings who are both evil and defeated in war (2 Chr 36:1-21). For the Chronicler, such a balance was necessary. Warfare must be explained whether it ends in victory or defeat. A faithful king will be victorious, either consistently or during that part of his reign in which he is faithful. An unfaithful king will meet defeat; that defeat, however, can be either averted or reversed through repentance. Yet there is more to this symmetry than merely explaining what the Chronicler found in his sources. A pattern is established which speaks to the Chronicler's own community. Each generation determines its own fate in the affairs of nations. The fact that the Chronicler's Judah was not a world power does not preclude its potential to become one again, no more than, for example, Ahaz's failure precluded Hezekiah's success. History is cyclical. Where one generation finds itself is dependent on its own relationship to YHWH through his institutions.

of the account of the first king of Judah after the division of the Kingdom, the Chronicler presents Rehoboam as one who followed his grandfather's paradigm. Though Rehoboam had the military, economic, religious, and familial blessings listed in 2 Chronicles 11, in 12:1 we read: "When the rule of Rehoboam was established and was strong, he forsook the law of YHWH, and all Israel with him." The Chronicler notes a shift in the character of Rehoboam when he forsook the law of YHWH. The verb "forsake" (עָזַב) is a key concept in the Chronicler's theological vocabulary, used elsewhere for irregular worship<sup>20</sup> or the worship of foreign gods.<sup>21</sup>

The result of this forsaking of the law of YHWH is an invasion by Shishak of Egypt (1 Kgs 14:25; 2 Chr 12:2).<sup>22</sup> Shemaiah the prophet approaches Rehoboam and the princes of Judah in Jerusalem with the message, "Thus says YHWH, 'You have forsaken (עָזַבְתֶּם) me so I have forsaken (עָזַבְתִּי) you to the hand of Shishak'" (2 Chr 12:6). Note that the very thing David wanted to avoid (falling into the hands of men) is imposed on Rehoboam. But the word of Shemaiah was received with a confession of guilt<sup>23</sup> on the part of Rehoboam and the princes of Israel,<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> 2 Chr 13:10–11; 21:10–11; 28:6; 29:6.

<sup>21</sup> 2 Chr 7:19, 22; 24:18; 34:25. עָזַב is used in the same way here so that this description may be taken as a summary of 1 Kgs 14:22–24: "And Judah did what was evil in the sight of YHWH, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they committed, more than all their fathers had done. For they also built for themselves high places, and pillars, and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree; and there were male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which YHWH drove out before the people of Israel." In other words, the Chronicler summarizes three verses in 1 Kings 14 by the use of one word, עָזַב.

<sup>22</sup> English versions of 2 Chr 12:2 normally place (d) after (b), thereby obscuring the dependence of the Chronicler on his *Vorlage*. Verse 2d marks the point where the Chronicler departs from his *Vorlage*, which he will rejoin at verse 9b, "He took away the treasures of the house of YHWH. . . ." All that comes between (2 Chr 12:2d–9a) is the Chronicler's addition to his *Vorlage* and is the result of Judah's unfaithfulness (בִּזְעֻל) to YHWH. This is marked by the *inclusio* of 2d and 9a, where the phrase "Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem" recurs.

<sup>23</sup> Simon J. de Vries defines "Confession of Guilt" as "a statement in which a defendant formally acknowledges his guilt and often discloses his action and/or the circumstances." *1 and 2 Chronicles, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature* 11 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 429. Cf. 1 Chr 17:16–17; 21:8; 2 Chr 28:13.

<sup>24</sup> Some see the change from "princes of Judah" in 2 Chr 12:5 to "princes of Israel" in 2 Chr 12:6 as indicative of the Chronicler's view of "an unbroken continuation of tradition in the south with the Israel of the united monarchy." H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles, The New Century Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 247;

"Then the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, 'YHWH is righteous'"<sup>25</sup> (2 Chr 12:6). As when David and the elders humbled themselves after the census, it is the humbling of themselves that brings reprieve from YHWH. "When YHWH saw that they humbled themselves" (2 Chr 12:7a) he mitigated the punishment to be inflicted by Shishak. This is almost certainly an application of the programmatic statement of Solomon's dedicatory prayer at the Temple: "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chr 7:14). In response to the humbling of themselves, YHWH grants three things (2 Chr 12:7b):

1. I will not destroy them;
2. I will grant them some deliverance (or deliverance for a while);
3. My wrath will not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

These are significant because they indicate who is responsible for the potential destruction of Judah. It is not ultimately Shishak, but YHWH himself. Shishak is but an instrument in his hands.

YHWH thus limits the destruction of Jerusalem by Shishak in 2 Chronicles 12:8-11 but uses it as a way of teaching his people: "They shall be the servants to him, that they may know my service and the service of the kings of the lands" (2 Chr 12:8). Implied in this is the opportunity to learn the difference between serving YHWH and other kings with its correlative that they will have future opportunities to serve YHWH.

The actual booty taken by Shishak (2 Chr 12:9b-10) is simply copied with minor changes as the Chronicler returns to his *Vorlage* (1 Kgs 14:26-28). Both the treasures of the temple and palace of the king are carried away, including the gold shields made by Solomon. Rehoboam is forced to have his guards carry bronze shields (2 Chr 12:10). Though the looting of Jerusalem was extensive, the Chronicler adds an instructive note to his *Vorlage*: "And when he humbled himself the wrath of YHWH turned from him, so as not to make a complete destruction; moreover, conditions were

---

and Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1977), 106-110.

<sup>25</sup> The same terminology of confession is used also in the more extensive confessions Exod 9:27, Ezra 9:15, Neh 9:33, Dan 9:14, Ps 119:137, and Ps 129:4.

good in Judah" (2 Chr 12:12). The destruction was quantitatively limited; it was not complete. In this sense, the  $\text{שָׁרְפוּ}$  of 2 Chronicles 12:7b is more quantitative than temporal. The destruction is quantitative in that, while extensive looting took place, Judah still survived; indeed, conditions were good. Yet the limitation of destruction is also temporal in so far as the wrath of YHWH is temporarily lifted and will not be poured out by the hand of Shishak. Rather, it will be poured out later by the hand of the Chaldeans.

#### IV. Conclusions

What can then be said about David as saint and sinner? Here are four observations.

First, the grace of God that extended to the sinner David is precisely that known from the continuing theological narrative of the canon: the objective justification of the world. The righteousness of David is not a righteousness that arose from David himself. This directly addresses a fundamental theological error of the popular *Prayer of Jabez*, a book based upon 1 Chronicles 4:9–10.<sup>26</sup> According to the author of this book, Jabez was heard by God because he was "more honorable than his brothers," a faulty translation of the biblical text.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, when sin is mentioned as a barrier to God, it is discussed only as something that the sinner himself can make right.<sup>28</sup> This radically misrepresents not only the text of 1 Chronicles 4 but also the theology of the Chronicler. David was not heard because of his righteousness but because of the exceedingly great mercy of the LORD.

Second, repentance requires the acknowledgement of personal responsibility. One may not plead that an act was justified because others assented to it or that it appeared to be a necessary and correct act at the time it was committed. This was David's sin in numbering the people. He wanted to measure the power of his kingship through a census of his subjects rather than to rely solely on the power of his God. External

---

<sup>26</sup> Bruce H. Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking through to the Blessed Life*, The Breakthrough Series (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2000).

<sup>27</sup> The Hebrew word  $\text{כָּבֵד}$  in the niph'al stem is better translated as "honorable," as the ESV does for other occurrences of the same form of this verb (cf. Gen 34:19; 1 Sam 9:6; 2 Sam 23:19, 23; 1 Chr 11:21, 25). In following an English tradition at 1 Chronicles 4:9, the ESV wrongly gives the impression that it is the character of the one who prays which determines God's hearing and answering of that prayer.

<sup>28</sup> Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez*, 85.

powers, whether that of the armies surrounding ancient Israel or the threatening power of cultural forces surrounding the people of God of every time, cannot alleviate the guilt of one who trusts his own strength of numbers rather than the power of God. Whenever the power of the law is exerted, the object of the law's accusation must accept personal responsibility for the actions taken.

Third, the call to repentance, while a gracious call to all people, is especially a call to those who have been placed in positions of leadership among the people of God. When David sinned in the exercise of his office, his people suffered. When he repented, he pled not for his own life but for his people. The first commandment, "You shall have no other gods," and Luther's explanation, "We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things," was a difficulty for David in his census; it remains so for all who hold office among the people of God. When something or someone other than God becomes the object of fear, love, and trust in the mind and heart of one called to lead the people of God, it affects not just the leader but the church.

Finally, whenever sin is forgiven by God, it is truly forgiven. To be justified is to be made holy, righteous, and free from condemnation. David the sinner remained David the saint, one who received that great mercy of YHWH. His biography is a prominent example of the life story of every believer.