

**THE CASE FOR KINGSHIP IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**  
**NARRATIVE BOOKS AND THE PSALMS<sup>1</sup>**

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The issue of God's attitude toward the human institution of kingship in Israel is one concerning which the Biblical texts appear -- on the surface -- to be ambiguous. On the one hand, God blessed the monarchy, and he even chose a kingly line from which to appear in human form. An impressive theology of kingship can be traced throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament. On the other hand, we read in several texts in 1 Samuel about Samuel's and God's displeasure over the Israelites' request for a king, and it appears that God's granting of a king is a second-best concession to the people's sinful request, much in the way that Moses permitted divorce as a concession to the people's hardness of heart (Matt. 19:8).

However, this analogy is not a good one, since God did not bless and use divorce the way he did the institution of kingship. Furthermore, the prevailing pictures of the idea of monarchy in the Old Testament are consistently positive ones; it is difficult to accept the fact that this view of the monarchy was a concession to a second-best ideal. The answer to the apparent tension in the Biblical texts is rather to be sought in the reasons for Israel's request for a king, and not in the question of whether God intended for there to be a king in Israel at all.

A recent work by Gerald E. Gerbrandt points the way toward the resolution of this issue.<sup>2</sup> His contention is that the view in what is commonly called the Deuteronomistic History<sup>3</sup> of the institution of kingship in Israel is essentially a favorable one, not a negative one, as is commonly supposed. The real issue in the Biblical texts is what kind

of monarchy was to exist or to be exercised, not whether Israel should have a monarchy or not.

Gerbrandt's basic thesis is that the king was "to lead Israel by being the covenant administrator; then he could trust Yahweh to deliver. At the heart of this covenant was Israel's obligation to be totally loyal to Yahweh."<sup>4</sup> The godly king was to lead the people in worship and in keeping covenant, and to trust in YHWH to fight Israel's battles. The true reason for the disapproval of the people's request for a king in 1 Samuel 8 was because they wanted a king "like all the nations" (8:5, 20), who would "go out before us and fight our battles" (8:20). Those kings who were the closest to the ideal -- David, Hezekiah, and Josiah -- were ones whom the texts especially emphasize as trusting in YHWH and keeping the Law.

The view here is that Gerbrandt has had good success in presenting his case. His thesis provides a compelling argument in its harmonizing of those texts within the Deuteronomistic History that have appeared on the surface to be anti-kingship and those that are clearly pro-kingship. Since it is the texts within this corpus that appear to be the most anti-kingship, his solution effectively resolves the tension mentioned above.

Gerbrandt's interest was limited to the Deuteronomistic History, and thus he did not consider texts elsewhere. However, when other Old Testament texts are considered, the issue becomes even more clear. It is apparent that, from the beginning, God had designs for kings in the lineage of Abraham. This essay is intended to support the thesis that all the Biblical texts that speak to the issue are pro-kingship. Any the texts that appear to be anti-kingship are dealing with the motivations behind the requests for it or with aspects of its exercise, and not questioning the legitimacy of its existence.

The survey here will cover the narrative corpus in the Protestant canon that is not part of the Deuteronomistic History -- i.e., Genesis through Numbers, Ruth, and Chronicles through Esther -- as well as the Psalms, with an eye toward highlighting the writers' attitudes toward the institution of kingship.<sup>5</sup> The texts prior to the

Deuteronomistic History present the earliest history of God's dealings, and they show kingship in Israel to be one of his intended blessings on his people and the nations at least from patriarchal times.<sup>6</sup> The remaining texts in this survey all were written in times when the establishment of the kingship was a fait accompli. They serve to link Israel's monarchy with the early promises and generally to present the monarchy --and the idea of monarchy -- in a favorable light.<sup>7</sup>

## **I. The Pentateuch**

The topic of kingship is not a major one in the Pentateuch, which is understandable, since the monarchy was not established until several hundred years after the events therein. However, when the issue is addressed, the institution is presented as a positive thing. The "Charter for Kingship" passage in Deuteronomy 17 aside, the major texts in the Pentateuch that speak to kingship are in Genesis and Numbers.

### **A. Genesis:**

It is significant that -- from the very beginning -- the promise of kings was given to the patriarchs. On three different occasions, God included kings as a blessing -- along with the other blessings -- upon Abraham and his family:

Gen. 17:6: Spoken to and about Abraham

Gen. 17:16: Spoken to Abraham, about Sarah

Gen. 35:11: Spoken to and about Jacob.

These references are not merely predictions of the (negative) state of affairs that would obtain at some later time.<sup>8</sup> Rather, they are part and parcel of the good things -- the blessings -- that God intended to confer upon Abraham's line.

In the Testament of Jacob, a "royal" promise to Judah is found in the well-known scepter prophecy (Gen. 49:10):

The scepter (sēbet) shall not depart from Judah,  
nor the ruler's staff (mehōqēq) from between his feet,  
until he comes to whom it belongs;<sup>9</sup>  
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

Almost all commentators and translations see this as a royal (or messianic) prophecy, by translating sēbet as "scepter" and mehōqēq as "ruler's staff," and by noting the royal imagery in vv. 10b\*, 11-12.

The evidence of royal imagery in the passage includes the following: (1) v. 10ba, which depicts a ruler's arrival;<sup>10</sup> (2) v. 10b\*, where the obedience of the peoples is fit only for a king; (3) v. 11a, where the reference to the donkey anticipates the royal imagery of Zech. 9:9, in which the victorious king comes riding on a donkey (and cf., of course, the NT references to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, Mt. 21:1-9 and parallels); (4) the language throughout vv. 10b\*, 11-12 -- and, indeed, all of vv. 8-12 -- is typical of a royal oracle, in promising peace, prosperity, and uncontested dominion.<sup>11</sup>

Given the context, the translation of sēbet and mehōqēq as "scepter" and "ruler's staff" is the most appropriate. It is true that sēbet can also be rendered simply as "rod."<sup>12</sup> However, there is ample justification here for understanding it as a royal instrument. Aside from the general contextual argument, we should note that sēbet is parallel with mehōqēq, which in most cases has royal connotations.<sup>13</sup> Sēbet carries royal connotations in several other passages, as well.<sup>14</sup>

Subsequent texts confirm that this is royal leadership, since it is from Judah that the kingly line blessed by God eventually comes.<sup>15</sup> This prophecy receives its initial

fulfillment in David, of the tribe of Judah, and its ultimate fulfillment in the Christ, the son of David (Matthew 1).

### **B. Numbers:**

Two references in Numbers -- in the Balaam oracles -- are relevant to the present discussion. The first is Num. 24:7:

Water shall flow from his [Israel's] buckets,  
and his seed shall be in many waters,  
his king shall be higher than Agag,  
and his kingdom shall be exalted.

While the understanding of v. 7a is somewhat obscure, v. 7b is clear: it is a promise concerning the ascendancy of Israel's king over his enemies,<sup>16</sup> and of his kingdom over theirs. As with the Genesis references, this prophecy is a promise of good things. It assumes Israel will have a king and a kingdom, and that their success is a blessing from God.

The second reference is Num. 24:17, another "scepter" prophecy:

... a star (kôkab) shall come forth out of Jacob,  
and a scepter (sëbet) shall rise out of Israel...

Here again we see a clear royal promise to Israel, and most modern commentators and versions render sëbet as "scepter."<sup>17</sup> The following context lists the various peoples over which Israel -- or Israel's star/scepter -- shall have ascendancy.

## **II. Ruth**

The "royal" significance of the book of Ruth can be found primarily in the blessing of Boaz in 4:11-12 and in the Davidic genealogy at the conclusion of the book (4:18-22).<sup>18</sup> Both serve to link David with Judah and the patriarchs.<sup>19</sup>

The blessing on Boaz does this in at least three ways. First, it mentions two of Jacob's wives: Rachel and Leah (who was Judah's mother). Second, it includes Ephrathah and Bethlehem, which are first juxtaposed in Gen. 35:16-19, in connection with the death of Rachel and the birth of Benjamin, step-mother and brother of Judah, respectively. Third, it mentions Judah himself, the father of Perez by Tamar, who are also mentioned. Ruth herself is to be like all three of these patriarchal wives, who were mothers of a great lineage.

In the genealogy, the ancestry of David is traced from Perez to David, including Boaz, Ruth's husband. This serves to link the short genealogy in 4:17 with the mention of Perez in 4:12. The significance of Perez here is that he was the son of Judah.

Ruth and Boaz are thus pivotal figures in the Davidic line. The blessing in 4:11-12 shows us their ties with Judah, Tamar, and the patriarchs; the genealogies in 4:17, 18-22 show us their ties with David. The emphasis on the patriarchs as a whole serves to highlight the continuities between the Davidic and Abrahamic Covenants,<sup>20</sup> particularly since nothing concerning Moses or the Mosaic Covenant is mentioned in the book.<sup>21</sup> Since a royal heritage is promised to Judah in Jacob's blessing on him, the three lines of evidence in the blessing -- as well as the genealogy itself -- all remind us of the legitimacy of David's royal status by pointing us back to these two figures.

The significance of the Ruth genealogy also can be seen in that the names therein are likewise found in the Davidic genealogy in 1 Chr. 2:3-15 (see below), and they also appear in the Matthean and Lukan genealogies of Jesus Christ. Both of the latter include the names in the Ruth genealogy essentially intact,<sup>22</sup> as well as those of the three patriarchs.

### **III. 1-2 Chronicles**

There is virtually universal agreement in discussions of the issue that the books of Chronicles have David and the Davidic dynasty as a central theme or motif.<sup>23</sup> Typical is R. North's comment, in a section entitled "Davidism": "The person and dynasty of David forms the heartbeat of all the Chronicler's theology,"<sup>24</sup> or that of P. R. Ackroyd:

The centrality of the David material ... appears from 1 Chron. 10 to 2 Chron. 9 explicitly, and implicitly also to the end of 2 Chron.... The elaboration of the Davidic genealogical material [1 Chronicles 1-9] ... would seem to point to an even greater concern with the Davidic ideal....<sup>25</sup>

The work opens with a massive genealogical section which begins in chapter 1 with Adam and ends in chapter 9 with the post-exilic community.<sup>26</sup> The shaping of these genealogies highlights the interest in Judah, the Davidic dynasty, and the institution by David of centralized worship at Jerusalem and the Temple.<sup>27</sup> For instance, the introductory section (chapter 1) moves quickly from Adam to Jacob ("Israel"), and then the body of the genealogical section (chapters 2-8) focuses in depth upon Jacob's descendants, mostly from the pre-exilic period, and particularly from the time of David. It begins with a rapid survey of 12 generations between Judah and David (2:3-15), then moves to Davidic (3:1-24) and Judahite (4:1-23) genealogies proper before proceeding to list the other Israelite tribes, with an eye to showing that they all were a legitimate and loyal part of a united Israel.<sup>28</sup> David, as the first king of a truly united Israel, and with whom the major narrative portions following the genealogies are preoccupied, is constantly in the background -- and sometimes explicitly mentioned -- even in these lists. The concluding section (9:1-34) is of the post-exilic Jerusalem community, particularly

those involved in the Temple service that David had inaugurated. The lists here also serve to emphasize the continuity between the post-exilic people of God and pre-exilic "Israel."<sup>29</sup>

David himself is the focus of the remainder of 1 Chronicles (chapters 10-29) and his son Solomon of the first part of 2 Chronicles (chapters 1-9). The remainder of the book focuses on the fortunes of the kingdom of Judah, the heir of the promises of the Davidic Covenant (chapters 10-36).<sup>30</sup> In particular, the importance of David and Solomon as ones who established the Temple and the true cult in Jerusalem is an important theme in Chronicles.

Clearly here we see a positive view of the kingdom and the Davidic dynasty. David and Solomon were both chosen by God as his royal representatives in Israel,<sup>31</sup> as were their descendants. The promises to David and Solomon were in perpetuity, and the work ends with a clear note of hope (2 Chron. 36:22-23), introducing the re-establishment of the centralized worship in Jerusalem that David and Solomon had initiated.

A question arises in Chronicles studies concerning whether the Chronicler had a "theocratic" or an "eschatological" perspective.<sup>32</sup> If his perspective was theocratic, he would have seen the Davidic dynasty as failed,<sup>33</sup> and thus of no abiding significance into the future, except in the roles of David and Solomon in establishing the cult and Temple worship, which were now to be regarded as the true expressions of God's rule. For most scholars who see the Chronicler as taking this position, the present order -- i.e., the end of the fifth century B.C., after the Ezra-Nehemiah reforms, when the Temple and the cult were now well established -- represented the culmination of past history and prophecy. An earthly king or kingdom was of no further value, since these had exhausted their usefulness in establishing the cult.

If the Chronicler had an eschatological perspective, he would have seen the Davidic dynasty as continuing beyond his own time, with an abiding significance in God's rule. In this understanding, the promises about the perpetuity of the dynasty<sup>34</sup> were still in effect

in the Chronicler's time, despite its absence from the political scene at the time. Most scholars who see the Chronicler as taking this position speak of a "Davidic messianism," the expectation that one day in the future a Davidic descendant would rise to re-establish the kingdom once again.<sup>35</sup>

The resolution of this issue is not essential to the purpose of this paper, which is to show that God was in favor of the idea of a human king in Israel from the beginning and throughout its history. Both positions show the monarchy to be highly valued in Chronicles; only the reasons for its valuation differ.

However, the question does take on some significance in light of the plainly eschatological views of the Davidic line in the prophetic corpus, the Psalms, and the New Testament. Is the book of Chronicles outside the mainstream in this matter -- "at the very edge of the Canon," in Rudolph's arresting phrase?<sup>36</sup> A majority would agree with Rudolph, based on what it perceives as a relatively closed view of the future in the book.<sup>37</sup>

Many scholars, however, have argued that the Chronicler was indeed at least somewhat eschatological in outlook, and the view here is that they have had the better of the argument.<sup>38</sup> Specifically, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Chronicler saw the Davidic dynasty as a perpetual one, given the consistent descriptions of it as "forever."<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, the reference in 2 Chron. 13:8 to "the kingdom of the LORD in the hands of the sons of David" is significant, in its assertion that God's kingdom -- about which there is no question as to its permanence -- is now expressed on earth via the Davidic dynasty in Israel. The permanence of the latter is indicated in v. 5, with the reference to the covenant of salt, which was an eternal covenant.<sup>40</sup>

Although he lacks the great eschatological vision found especially in the prophets and the New Testament, this is not to say the Chronicler was closed to the future,<sup>41</sup> and even a future in which the Davidic dynasty figured in some way. That his vision of the re-establishment of this dynasty may have been more limited than that of some writers does not negate his having such a vision. After all, this dynasty was not important for its

own sake; it was important as the symbol of the kingdom of God (see, e.g., 1 Chron. 17:14; 28:5; 29:11-12, 23; 2 Chron. 9:8).<sup>42</sup>

#### **IV. Ezra-Nehemiah**

The general consensus today is that the books of 1-2 Chronicles on the one hand and Ezra-Nehemiah on the other came from different authors, despite many similarities in situation and outlook and the repetition of 2 Chron. 36:22-23 in Ezra 1:1-3.<sup>43</sup> This has implications for understanding the views of the monarchy in the two corpora.

The strong emphasis on the Davidic dynasty in Chronicles is entirely absent in Ezra-Nehemiah. Furthermore, the emphasis in the latter on cultic reforms, covenant renewal, and the present order has led many to suggest a closed view of the future in these books.<sup>44</sup> Thus, there is little in these books that comments directly on the monarchy, whether historical or eschatological. The silence would indicate a devaluation of its importance, if anything.<sup>45</sup>

However, there are indications in the books that -- despite the relatively benevolent attitude of Persia toward the Jews, and the restoration of the Temple and the cult -- all was not well even in this period, and that there is more hope for the future than is commonly realized. J. G. McConville has recently argued this, that even here one can see a perspective of hope and an openness to the future,<sup>46</sup> as have Williamson and K. Koch.<sup>47</sup> McConville does this on the basis both of dissatisfaction in the book with the present state of affairs<sup>48</sup> and of parallels with several prophecies in the prophetic corpus, especially Jeremiah and Isaiah, which indicate that the expectations in Ezra-Nehemiah still looked to the future, just as these prophecies did.<sup>49</sup>

Most of the prophetic parallels in Ezra-Nehemiah do not refer to the monarchy or the Davidic Covenant at all, and thus one cannot see here any sort of the same messianic (or royalist) expectations as in Chronicles. However, the reference to the "holy seed" in

Ezra 9:2 is certainly suggestive of these, especially given the parallel in Isaiah (6:13), where the holy seed is the stump that remains after the purging of Israel.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, the references to the restored remnant, including "Israel," "all Israel," and "Ephraim," point to an expectation of some type of restoration of the earlier kingdom.<sup>51</sup> Also, we should note that the emphasis on the Temple and the Law is not incompatible with a "royalist" perspective, and even an eschatological, messianic perspective, since among the king's responsibilities were keeping the Law and worshiping correctly, and leading the people in doing so,<sup>52</sup> and it would be part of the future king's mission to re-establish these in some way.<sup>53</sup>

## **V. Esther**

At first glance, there is no evidence in the book of Esther of interest in the Davidic dynasty, or in Israelite kingship generally. This is not surprising, given its setting in the diaspora. None of the standard commentaries refers at all to any interest in this.<sup>54</sup>

However, S. B. Berg has recently argued that there is a clear interest in royal motifs in the book, including an interest in the Israelite monarchy.<sup>55</sup> An obvious sign of this is the portrayal of Esther's royal position and power throughout the book.<sup>56</sup> Another significant one -- although less obvious -- is the portrayal of Mordechai as a quasi-royal figure. For example, he is seen in royal regalia in Esth. 6:8-11 and 8:15. He is invested with royal power and acts like a king in 9:20-23. His ancestry is traced in 2:5 to names in the first Israelite king's (Saul's) lineage: Kish and (possibly) Shimei. His enemy in the book is "Haman the Agagite" (3:1), which recalls Saul's enemy Agag in 1 Samuel 15.<sup>57</sup>

The parallels between Saul/Agag and Mordechai/Haman are striking.<sup>58</sup> For example, we see the first pair as the respective ancestors of the second pair (as just noted). In addition, Saul disobeyed God's command, and spared Agag. Mordechai, by contrast, did not spare Haman, but killed him. Furthermore, Saul spared the best of the

booty, also contrary to God's command. Mordechai, on the other hand, did not touch the available booty (Esth. 9:10, 15, 16), despite authorization to do so (8:11). In the context of Esther, the reason for this last action is clear enough: it avoided the Jews' being contaminated by anything Gentile, which reinforces the concept of Jewish superiority over the Gentiles seen in the book.<sup>59</sup>

Set against the backdrop of 1 Samuel 15, however, this action takes on added significance. Together with the other parallels and contrasts between Saul and Mordechai, it could hardly have avoided a recalling of David to memory, as well.<sup>60</sup> If the Jews -- by their actions in Esth. 9:10, 15, 16 -- "honor the obligation ignored by their ancestors," as Berg suggests,<sup>61</sup> then the message would be -- at least in part -- that now, finally, the diaspora community has gotten it right, just as David got it right earlier. We are reminded of David in this situation, since Saul's failures were the prelude and necessary precondition to David's rise. David and Mordechai are paralleled in their doing what is right in contrast to Saul.<sup>62</sup>

However, the action in Esther 9 does not parallel Saul's situation exactly, since to do so Mordechai would have had to destroy all the booty, not merely avoid touching it.<sup>63</sup> Thus, the message here is -- at least in part -- that Mordechai is not simply the "new Saul," who did obey all of God's commands. Despite the esteem shown him in the book, Mordechai was not to be regarded in the last analysis as a substitute for a Davidic descendant; he was, after all, a Benjaminite. His actions do not correspond exactly to the conditions in 1 Samuel 15 that would have resulted in a Benjaminite's house being permanently established.<sup>64</sup> In this way, he is a contrast to David, whose house was permanently established.

Regardless of whether either of these views of David is actually present in the book -- and the judgment here is that the latter view legitimately can be seen as part of the book's presentation -- what can be stated with some certainty is that the book of Esther does present a view of (Israelite) kingship that is favorable. Despite the diaspora

situation, with no Israelite monarch reigning over an Israelite state, there is still an interest in the royal status of Esther and Mordechai, although of necessity covert, due to the prevailing political situation.<sup>65</sup> Whether it is narrowly focused on Esther or Mordechai as royal figures in and of themselves (so Berg), or whether it is also intended to call David to mind (as suggested here) is secondary. What is primary is that monarchy still retains its valued status in the book's presentation.

## **VI. Psalms**

In the Psalter, the idea of kingship is viewed very favorably. An obvious sign of this is the prominent place David the king occupies as author of approximately half of the psalms.

This also is evidenced very clearly by the royal psalms. These were first identified as such by Gunkel as Psalms 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 101, 110, 132, 144:1-11 (and 89:47-52).<sup>66</sup> In them, David and the Davidic king, and the office of kingship itself, are consistently seen as chosen and favored by God, as exalted and to be prayed for, as central to God's purposes in history. Several of these are quoted in the NT as messianic.<sup>67</sup>

Among those who have expanded upon Gunkel's work in this area, Eaton's is the most comprehensive in extending the category of royal psalms, which he did by paying attention to royal motifs.<sup>68</sup> He identified 31 additional psalms that were clearly royal in his view, and 21 that were arguably so. This is along the same lines taken earlier by many pre-critical and post-critical conservative scholars, who have seen messianic overtones in many more than just the 13-15 quoted in the NT.<sup>69</sup> The effect of these approaches is obvious with respect to displaying the psalmists' attitudes toward the kingship.

A further evidence for the high view of the monarchy in the Psalter is provided by B. S. Childs and his student, G. H. Wilson, in their studies of the placement of royal psalms.<sup>70</sup> They have shown that these are found at critical junctures throughout the

Psalter, and that this pattern functions to highlight their importance and provides a hermeneutic for reading the entire book.<sup>71</sup> The Davidic kingship is especially prominent in Books I-III; it gives way to an emphasis in Books IV-V on YHWH's kingship.<sup>72</sup> As Israel's history progressed, the eschatological aspect of its king and kingdom became more clearly understood. Israel's kingdom was a symbol of God's reign on earth; its king was God's vice-regent. It was in the later OT and intertestamental periods, and then in the NT period, that the eschatological understanding of the royal and other psalms attained its height.<sup>73</sup>

The net effect of the work on royal/messianic psalms for the purposes of this study is to confirm the importance of the office of king in Israel, including as it was seen in God's eyes. The psalms reflect the high view of the monarchy found particularly in Chronicles: David and the Davidic kings were chosen and blessed by God, the vehicles through which he would bless Israel and the nations.

## **VII. Conclusion**

This survey of the books containing the Biblical records of Israel's history and its songs of worship clearly shows that the idea of the monarchy in Israel was one which God favored from beginning to end. The kingship was no mere afterthought or second-best concession to Israel's foolishness. Rather, promised from the beginning, it appears in these books forming the centerpiece around which God accomplishes his redemptive work in the world. During the Israelite monarchy, the principle was thus: as the king went, so went the nation. The problems that God and his prophets had with the monarchy were in its administration, not in the fact of its existence. This high view of the institution in the Old Testament is affirmed in the New Testament, where it is shown to have received its climax and fulfillment in Jesus Christ, through whom all peoples of the earth are blessed as they respond to him.



## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup>Portions of this paper were read at the Midwestern Regional Meetings of the Evangelical Theological Society, Upland, Indiana, April 8, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> . G. E. Gerbrandt, Kingship According to the Deuteronomistic History, SBL Dissertation Series 87 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986). I have presented and assessed his argument in detail in a review article, "The Case for Kingship in Deuteronomy and the Former Prophets," forthcoming in Westminster Theological Journal.

<sup>3</sup> . The term refers to the books from Deuteronomy - 2 Kings. As used by Gerbrandt and most others, it also assumes some type of unified authorship for all of these books in one or more strata of the texts. I understand the adjective "Deuteronomistic" descriptively, referring to those books or ideas reflective of the distinctive viewpoints found in Deuteronomy, with no conclusions concerning authorship of Deuteronomy or the other books implicit in my use of the term.

<sup>4</sup> . Gerbrandt, Kingship: 102.

<sup>5</sup> . In general, the texts covered here will not be anti-kingship even in appearance. The major texts that appear to be negative toward the kingship are in the Deuteronomistic History and in the prophets.

<sup>6</sup> . The discussion here presupposes that the bulk of Genesis - Numbers (and Deuteronomy) was written earlier than most of Joshua - 2 Kings. More importantly, it presupposes that the promises and events in these books (Genesis - Numbers) actually were made and took place in history prior to those in the Deuteronomistic History.

<sup>7</sup> . The attitudes toward the institution of kingship in the prophetic and wisdom literature is the subject for another study. In brief, the attitudes here too are generally pro-kingship.

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For example, wisdom literature is favorable toward the monarchy, not least because its primary provenience was the royal court, with King Solomon functioning as a major source of it. (See Howard, "The Case for Kingship in Deuteronomy and the Former Prophets": n. 41.)

The prophets did spend much time denouncing the contemporary kings. However, this does not necessarily imply a condemnation of the institution of kingship per se. The prophetic denunciations can simply be seen in the same light as the Deuteronomistic denunciations: individual kings turned from obedience to the covenant, perverting justice, neglecting mercy, and generally leading the nation astray. Indeed, the Davidic dynasty is prominent in the prophets as an eschatological symbol of hope for the future.

<sup>8</sup>. Which is the interpretation that must be given here if it is argued that God was against the idea of a human king from the beginning.

<sup>9</sup>. Reading MT sîlôh as sellôh, with most ancient versions and modern commentators and versions. See J. Skinner, Genesis, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910): 520-524; E. A. Speiser, Genesis, AB 1 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1964): 365-366; W. C. Kaiser, Jr., Toward an Old Testament Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978): 96-97; C. Westermann, Genesis 37-50, trans. J. J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986): 230-231.

<sup>10</sup>[0]. See the similar passage in Ezek. 21:26-27 [MT 31-32], where the phrase "until he comes whose right it is" (ʿad-bo' aser-lô hammispāt) appears, referring unambiguously to a royal figure. (Despite the dissent of W. L. Moran, "Gen 49,10 and Its Use in Ex 21,32," Bib 39 [1958]: 405-425, most commentators see a royal promise in both passages, and not, as Moran does, only in the Genesis one. See, e.g., G. A. Cooke, The Book of Ezekiel, ICC [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936]: 235; W. Eichrodt, Ezekiel: A Commentary, OTL, trans. C. Quin [London: SCM, 1970]: 301-304; W. H. Brownlee, Ezekiel 1-19, WBC 28 [Waco: Word, 1986]: 273; and especially H. Cazelles, "Shiloh, the Customary Laws and the Return of the Ancient King," in J. I. Durham and J. R. Porter, eds., Proclamation and Presence, G. H. Davies Festschrift [London: SCM, 1970]: 239-251.)

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<sup>11</sup>. On the royal imagery in the passage (apart from the lengthy discussions of sēbet, mehöqëq, and syh), see, among others, F. Delitzsch, A New Commentary on Genesis, II, trans. S. Taylor (London: T. & T. Clark, 1888; repr. Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, 1978): 372-386; Cazelles, "Shiloh": 248-251; B. Vawter, On Genesis: A New Reading (Garden City: Doubleday, 1977): 462; Westermann, Genesis 37-50: 229-232; G. C. Aalders, Genesis, II, Bible Student's Commentary, trans. W. Heynen (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981): 278-281.

Westermann, for example (Genesis 37-50: 229-230), concludes that "vv. 10-12 are a promise to Judah. V. 10a promises that Judah will retain the dominion that at present belongs to it until it acquires the kingship" (p. 230). Westermann emphasizes that he concludes this before even considering the question of the meaning of syh. He sees kingship clearly in view in all of vv. 10-12 (pp. 229-232).

<sup>12</sup>. If it were to be so here -- and the contention here is that it should not be -- then at the very least it depicts tribal leadership as resident in Judah (cf. vv. 8-9), which is still compatible with later pictures of the royal line arising from it.

<sup>13</sup>. Mehöqëq "ruler's staff" occurs seven times, and is only found in poetic passages. It clearly possesses royal significance in four contexts (besides the passage under consideration):

(1) In Num. 21:18, it refers to a royal staff; it is parallel to mis`enet "staff," and both of these belong to "princes" (sārîm) or "nobles" (nedîbîm).

(2, 3) In Ps. 60:7 [MT 9] // Ps. 108:8 [MT 9], it is used with respect to Judah: "Judah is my scepter."

(4) In Isa. 33:22, it refers to YHWH as "ruler"; it is parallel to "judge," "king," and "deliverer."

In the other two contexts, it possesses leadership connotations:

(5) In Deut. 33:21, it is an adjective in the phrase "a commander's portion," with reference to Gad's choosing of the best of the land; it is parallel to "the best" (rë'sît).

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(6) In Judg. 5:14, it refers to "commanders" from Machir; it is parallel to sēbet sōpēr, commonly translated "commander's (or leader's) staff."

<sup>14</sup>. See Num. 24:17; Zech. 10:11; and especially Ps. 45:7 (2x); Isa. 14:5; Ezek. 19:11, 14; Amos 1:5, 8.

<sup>15</sup>[0]. A theological problem arises in light of 1 Sam. 13:13-14, where Samuel tells Saul that his house -- which is from Benjamin -- could have been established as rulers over Israel in perpetuity (ad-ôlam), but for his disobedience. If Saul had obeyed, would the promise of Gen. 49:10 been voided? The answer is clearly "no," in light of the emphasis on David as descendant of Judah. The question is, then, what did the promise to Saul mean? On the one hand, it could be asserted that there was never a genuine promise to Saul to begin with, and that Samuel or the narrator was incorrect in stating that Saul's line could have been established. However, this makes either one a rather unreliable conduit for God's words.

The example in 1 Kgs. 11:38 -- where Jeroboam is promised a sure house (bayit-ne'eman), like that promised to David -- is helpful here. In the Kings passage, there is no question of Jeroboam's house replacing David's; rather, it would exist alongside his. In the same way, undoubtedly Saul's house could have been established alongside the long-promised house of Judah had he obeyed. (See E. H. Merrill, Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987]: 209-210, 325 and the article cited in n. 21 here.)

Alternatively, it could be argued that the words to Saul represented a genuine -- though hypothetical -- promise, but were never actually intended by God to be fulfilled, and never in danger of needing to be fulfilled, given Saul's character. In this understanding, when God chose Saul in the first place (1 Sam. 9:16-17; 10:2), he chose him as a negative example -- as a foil to David -- whose future behavior was guaranteed to disqualify him. Thus the stage would be set for the introduction of the legitimate line of kingship, that of Judah. Because the

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establishment of kingship was accomplished in response to a sinful request by the people, they initially received what they deserved. When this king was disqualified, then the true king was inaugurated, from the line intended all along.

- <sup>16</sup>. On the reading and understanding of "Agag," and on the problems in the verse in general, see C. F. Keil, The Fourth Book of Moses (Numbers), trans. J. Martin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 reprint): 188-190; G. B. Gray, Numbers, ICC (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903): 363-366; N. H. Snaith, Leviticus and Numbers, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1969): 181. The LXX read the entire verse messianically: "A man shall issue from his seed, and he shall have dominion over many peoples; and he shall be higher than the kingdom of Gog, and his kingdom shall be exalted" (Snaith).

With reference to Agag, this prophecy receives a partial fulfillment under Saul (1 Samuel 15), and a more full one under Mordechai (Esther 9) (see below, Section V, on the latter). With more general reference to Israel's enemies, this prophecy is especially fulfilled under David and Solomon.

- <sup>17</sup>. Here, however, because of the parallelism with kôkab ("star") or for other reasons, a number do not translate it in this way. NEB has "comet," while NAB merely has "staff." Both of these versions translate sēbet as "scepter" in Gen. 49:10, however. The star was a frequent ancient Near Eastern metaphor for kingship (the only other Biblical use is at Isa. 14:12; cf. Rev. 22:16), however, and thus even the reading "comet" maintains the royal imagery here. See Keil, Numbers: 192-194; Gray, Numbers: 370-371; Snaith, Leviticus and Numbers: 182; P. J. Budd, Numbers, WBC 5 (Waco: Word, 1984): 255, 269-270 on the various ancient readings of the verse; they were all messianic.

- <sup>18</sup>. The extensive discussions about the literary history and integrity of the book -- and the place of the genealogical "appendix" -- are irrelevant here, since the genealogy after all is part of the final form, regardless of its original provenience. For similar assessments, see B. S. Childs,

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Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979): 563-568; E. F. Campbell, Jr., Ruth, AB 7 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975): 172-173.

- <sup>19</sup>. E. H. Merrill has noted the special functions of the book of Ruth as a whole in linking the Davidic monarchy with the patriarchs in general and with Judah specifically. (See Merrill, Kingdom of Priests: 182-187, and "The Book of Ruth: Narration and Shared Themes," Bibliotheca Sacra 142 [1985]: 133-137.)
- <sup>20</sup>. See Howard, "The Case for Kingship in Deuteronomy and the Former Prophets": nn. 39-41; also Merrill, Kingdom of Priests: 185-186; "Book of Ruth": 135-137.
- <sup>21</sup>. Specific Mosaic legislation can be seen behind some of the material in the book, of course (most point to the redemption laws of Leviticus 25 and the levirate marriage law of Deut. 25:5-10), but Moses himself is absent in the book, as is any reference to the Mosaic Covenant per se or to the Torah as a whole.
- We should note that the book of Ruth does not, strictly speaking, portray a levirate marriage as discussed in Deuteronomy. For one, the relevant root in Deuteronomy is ybm "to perform the duty of a brother-in-law", not gl "to act as a kinsman" (as in Ruth). Second, in Ruth there is no case of a brother actually marrying a widow (and there are three cases of widows portrayed in Ruth). The closest reference to a true levirate marriage is oblique, if it exists at all: in Ruth 1:11; the provision in 4:5 is not found in the Pentateuch.
- <sup>22</sup>. In Matthew, the list is identical (1:3-6); in Luke, there are two variants -- Sala for Salmon, and Admin and Arni for Ram -- but the list is otherwise identical (3:31-33).
- <sup>23</sup>. The following are representative: G. von Rad, Das Geschichtsbild des Chronistischen Werkes (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1930); A. C. Welch, The Work of the Chronicler: Its Purpose and its Date (London: Oxford University, 1939); D. N. Freedman, "The Chronicler's Purpose," CBQ 23 (1961): 436-442; R. North, "Theology of the Chronicler," JBL 82 (1963): 369-381; P. R.

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Ackroyd, "The Theology of the Chronicler," Lexington Theological Quarterly 8 (1973): 101-116; H. G. M. Williamson, "Eschatology in Chronicles," TB 28 (1977): 115-154; 1 and 2 Chronicles, NCB (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); R. L. Braun, 1 Chronicles, WBC 14 (Waco: Word, 1986).

<sup>24</sup>. North, "Theology of the Chronicler": 376.

<sup>25</sup>. Ackroyd, "Theology of the Chronicler": 112.

<sup>26</sup>. The chapter concludes with a genealogy of Saul, who is the subject of chapter 10.

<sup>27</sup>. See J. M. Myers, 1 Chronicles, AB 12 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1965): 6-7; Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles: 38-40 [p. 38 has been transposed in the book's binding with p. 2]; and especially M. D. Johnson, The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies, SNTSMS 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1969): 37-82, and W. L. Osborne, The Genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-2, Ph.D. dissertation, Dropsie University, 1979.

<sup>28</sup>[0]. See especially Johnson, The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies: 47-55; H. M. G. Williamson, Israel in the Books of Chronicles (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1975): 87-140; R. L. Braun, "A Reconsideration of the Chronicler's Attitude Toward the North," JBL 96 (1977): 59-62.

<sup>29</sup>. Williamson, 1 and 2 Chronicles: 38; Israel in the Books of Chronicles: 87-140; Johnson, Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies: 80.

We should highlight here an interesting observation of Johnson's, which is to note that in Chronicles, and especially in its genealogies, there is a particular emphasis on the "heads of the fathers' houses" as military commanders, and on military activity in general (Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies: 63-68). But, significantly, there are no military allusions in four genealogies: those of Judah, Levi, Manasseh, and Ephraim, "that is, the core tribes of Israel, both south

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and north" (Purpose: 69). This serves to highlight the emphasis on a united Israel (see n. ), for one thing. Johnson concludes that it probably was because the Chronicler had more sources available to him about these four tribes, and thus did not need to rely on military census lists for information. However, it might also reflect the downplaying of military activity that G. E. Gerbrandt highlighted with reference to the Deuteronomistic History (see Howard, "The Case for Kingship in Deuteronomy and the Former Prophets").

<sup>30</sup>. On the current consensus that the Chronicler was not merely a narrow Judahite nationalist, but that he was indeed a "pan-Israelite" who saw the northern kingdom included as part of the restored Israel, see the works cited in n. . This does not nullify the obvious focus on Judah, however.

<sup>31</sup>. On the importance of Solomon along with David in Chronicles, see R. L. Braun, "Solomonic Apologetic in Chronicles," JBL 92 (1973): 503-516; "Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder: The Significance of 1 Chronicles 22, 28, and 29 for the Theology of Chronicles," JBL 95 (1976): 581-590; R. B. Dillard, "The Chronicler's Solomon," WTJ 43 (1981): 289-300.

<sup>32</sup>[0]. The debate may be entered via J. D. Newsome, Jr., "Toward a New Understanding of the Chronicler and his Purposes," JBL 94 (1975): 201-217; Williamson, "Eschatology"; W. J. Dumbrell, "The Purpose of the Books of Chronicles," JETS 27 (1984): 257-266; J. G. McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah and the Fulfillment of Prophecy," VT 36 (1986): 205-224.

<sup>33</sup>. By the end of the 5th century B.C., at any rate.

<sup>34</sup>[0]. See 1 Chron. 17:12, 14, 17, 23, 24, 27; 22:10; 28:7, 8.

<sup>35</sup>. Williamson ("Eschatology": 154) prefers the less-freighted term "royalist."

<sup>36</sup>. W. Rudolph, Chronikbücher, HAT 21 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1955): xxiii (cited by Williamson ["Eschatology": 116, n. 5]).

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<sup>37</sup>. See Williamson, "Eschatology": 116-120 for a review of this view.

<sup>38</sup>. See Williamson, "Eschatology": 120-133 for a review of these, and 133-154 for his own argument in support, as well as "The Dynastic Oracle in the Books of Chronicles," in the Isaac Leo Seeligmann Festschrift, ed. Y. Zakovitch and A. Rofé (Jerusalem: Rubinstein, 1983), in which he develops the argument more fully.

<sup>39</sup>. See the references in n. . In all cases but 1 Chron. 17:17, the root is lm, usually in the phrase ad-`ôlam. In 17:17, the word is lemerahog: "for a great while to come" (RSV), "the future" (NIV). In two cases (17:23, 24), ad-`ôlam modifies the verb of mn "to establish," which is the same root used to describe the "sure house" of Jeroboam (see above, n. ). Here it must mean more than merely an "established" or "secure" house for David, speaking of its condition at any given time; it also speaks of duration in time.

The basic meaning of ôlam is "remotest time" (E. Jenni, "Das Wort `ôlam im Alten Testament," ZAW 64 [1952]: 197-248; 65 [1953]: 1-35, especially his summary on pp. 246-247; "ôlam Ewigkeit," E. Jenni and C. Westermann, eds., Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament, II [Munich/Zurich: Chr. Kaiser/Theologischer, 1984]: cols. 228-243), although James Barr has argued that it should include the concept of "perpetuity," as well (J. Barr, Biblical Words for Time, SBT 33, 2nd ed., [Edinburgh: SCM, 1969], especially pp. 73-74, 93, 123-124). In the case of a phrase such as ebed `ôlam "a perpetual slave," for example, the idea of perpetuity fits better than that of remotest time. It does not always mean "eternity" or "infinity" in the sense of time that never ends. However, it does refer to time that is beyond human perception, either into the past or the future, or time that is unending with reference to the present context (as in the case of ebed `ôlam). (See also B. Long, "Notes on the Biblical Use of - ,," WTJ 41 [1978]: 54-67.)

With reference to the Chronicler's use, the consistent use of ad-`ôlam to refer to the Davidic dynasty would indicate that he saw its existence as having a future well beyond his own time. His

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exalting of the glory days of David and Solomon was more than a mere antiquarian interest; it indicates that these days were of continuing relevance to him and suggests that they were to be re-established in some way.

<sup>40</sup>. To the discussions of the salt covenant noted in Williamson, "Eschatology": 147, n. 96, add H. C. Trumbull, The Covenant of Salt (New York: Scribner's, 1899).

<sup>41</sup>. The discussion here often cuts across the two opposing viewpoints mentioned. Dumbrell, for instance ("Purpose of the Books of Chronicles"), rejects the royalist/messianic viewpoint espoused by Williamson and others, but he nevertheless sees the Chronicler as very much open to the future, having an eschatological perspective with regard to Jerusalem, Temple worship, and the true cult. (See also his The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21-22 and the Old Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985], a stimulating Biblical theology that traces five motifs found in the Bible's last two chapters through their earlier development.)

<sup>42</sup>. See Williamson, "Eschatology": 133-154 for extended support. See also W. C. Kaiser, Jr., Toward an Old Testament Theology: 258-261; J. Sailhamer, First and Second Chronicles (Chicago: Moody, 1983): 11, 32-33, 66-68, and passim; R. B. Dillard, 2 Chronicles, WBC 15 (Waco: Word, 1987): 72, 108, 161, and passim.

<sup>43</sup>. D. N. Freedman, "The Chronicler's Purpose"; S. Japhet, "The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew," VT 18 (1968): 330-371; J. D. Newsome, Jr., "New Understanding of the Chronicler"; H. G. M. Williamson, Israel in the Books of Chronicles: 5-86; 1 and 2 Chronicles: 3-17; "Eschatology": 120-130; R. L. Braun, 1 Chronicles: xix-xxi.

<sup>44</sup>. See the works cited in n. .

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- <sup>45</sup>. Newsome, for example, who does see a clear eschatological vision centered around the monarchy in Chronicles, nonetheless does not see it at all in Ezra-Nehemiah: "no breath of royalist or messianic hope stirs in Ezra-Nehemiah" ("New Understanding of the Chronicler": 214).
- <sup>46</sup>. McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah and the Fulfillment of Prophecy."
- <sup>47</sup>. H. G. M. Williamson, Ezra-Nehemiah, WBC 16 (Waco: Word, 1985): li-lij; K. Koch, "Ezra and the Origins of Judaism," JSS 19 (1974): 173-197.
- <sup>48</sup>. E.g., glimpses of dissatisfaction with Persian rule, the inadequacies of the restored Temple and cult, and the persistence of mixed marriages; Williamson (Ezra-Nehemiah: li-lij) notes most of this, too.
- <sup>49</sup>. He finds extensive allusion in Ezra 7-9 to Jeremiah 31 and to motifs in Isaiah 40-66.
- <sup>50</sup>. McConville does not note that these two references are the only ones in the OT where the term "holy seed" occurs, nor does he mention the obvious parallels to the messianic shoot-stump-branch prophecy of Isa. 11:1ff; both facts strengthen his point.
- <sup>51</sup>. McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah and the Fulfillment of Prophecy": 222-223; W. C. Kaiser, Jr., Toward an Old Testament Theology: 259.
- <sup>52</sup>. See Gerbrandt's thesis in Kingship According to the Deuteronomistic History.
- <sup>53</sup>. See also Kaiser, Toward an Old Testament Theology: 261.
- <sup>54</sup>. See, e.g., C. F. Keil, Commentary on the Old Testament, III, trans. S. Taylor (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 reprint); L. B. Paton, The Book of Esther, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908); C. A. Moore, Esther, AB 7B (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971); J. G. Baldwin, Esther,

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TOTC (Downers Grove, Inter-Varsity, 1984); D. J. A. Clines, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, NCB (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984).

- <sup>55</sup>. S. B. Berg, The Book of Esther, SBLDS 44 (Missoula: Scholars, 1979): 59-72, 83-87.
- <sup>56</sup>. Berg, Esther: 59-61, 70-71.
- <sup>57</sup>. Berg, Esther: 61-70. On the last point here, see also W. McCane, "A Note on Esther IX and 1 Samuel XV," JTS 12 (1961): 260-261, reprinted in C. A. Moore, ed., Studies in the Book of Esther (New York: KTAV, 1982): 306-307.
- <sup>58</sup>. These similarities between early and late figures, suggestive of deliberate patterning in the way they are presented, recall the recent discoveries with respect to another post-exilic work -- Chronicles -- that its author patterned many of his later figures and motifs after earlier ones. See R. B. Dillard, "The Chronicler's Jehoshaphat," Trinity Journal 7 (1986): 17-22, and the review of others' work on p. 17 and nn. 1-6.
- <sup>59</sup>. McCane, "A Note": 261.
- <sup>60</sup>. Although Berg and McCane do not pursue this aspect of the issue.
- <sup>61</sup>. Berg, Esther: 67.
- <sup>62</sup>. David "got it right" in the matter of general and consistent obedience to God (contrary to Saul), not in the specific matter of disobedience to the command of God for total destruction in 1 Samuel 15.
- <sup>63</sup>. McCane also makes this point ("A Note": 260-261).
- <sup>64</sup>. Although, even if they had, this still need not have threatened the house of David (see above, n. ).
- <sup>65</sup>. Berg, Esther: 68.

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<sup>66</sup>[0]. H. Gunkel, Einleitung in Die Psalmen, ed. J. Begrich (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1933): 140-171.

A vast literature on royal psalms and kingship ideology/theology has since arisen, taking many turns.

See, among others, S. Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, vol. 1, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962): 42-80; K. Crim, The Royal Psalms (Richmond: John Knox, 1962); T. N. D. Mettinger, King and Messiah (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1976): 99-105; W. C. Kaiser, Jr., Toward an Old Testament Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978): 159-162; J. H. Eaton, Kingship and the Psalms, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: JSOT, 1986); H.-J. Kraus, Theology of the Psalms, trans. K. Crim (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986): 107-123.

See also several excellent reviews of the literature on royal psalms or kingship in the psalms: D. J. A.

Clines, "Psalms Research Since 1955: I. The Psalms and the Cult," Tyndale Bulletin 18 (1967): 118-126; R. E. Clements, One Hundred Years of Old Testament Interpretation (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976): 87-89; J. H. Eaton, "The Psalms and Israelite Worship," Tradition and Interpretation, ed. G. W. Anderson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979): 250-255.

<sup>67</sup>. The list of these is approximately 13-15 (although there is some subjectivity in determining this, given the varying types of NT usages). J. B. Payne ("Psalms, Book of," Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, vol. 4 [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975]: 940-944) lists 13: Psalms 2, 8, 16, 22, 40, 45, 69, 72, 89, 102, 109, 110, 132. See also Appendix B: "Messianic Psalms," in his Theology of the Older Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962): 519-520, where he includes a few more.

On the history of messianic interpretations in the Psalms, see B. K. Waltke, "A Canonical Process Approach to the Psalms," Tradition and Testament: Essays in Honor of Charles Lee Feinberg, ed. J. S. Feinberg and P. D. Feinberg (Chicago: Moody, 1981): 3-7 for a brief overview, and J. M. Neale and R. F. Littledale, A Commentary on the Psalms: From Primitive and Medieval

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Writers, 3rd ed., 4 vols. (London: Joseph Masters, 1874-1879) for a more comprehensive and general history, and examples of messianic exegesis.

- <sup>68</sup>. Eaton, Kingship and the Psalms.
- <sup>69</sup>. See, e.g., Delitzsch's judicious treatment (Commentary on the Psalms, vol. 1, trans. F. Bolton [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 reprint of 1881 original]: 65-71, and Waltke ("Canonical Process"), who follows Eaton in many areas.
- <sup>70</sup>. B. S. Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979): 515-517; G. H. Wilson, The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter, SBLDS 76 (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1985): 207-214; "The Use of Royal Psalms at the `Seams' of the Hebrew Psalter," JSOT 35 (1986): 85-94. Their work had been anticipated by C. Westermann, in "Zur Sammlung des Psalters," Theologia Viatorum 8 (1962): 278-284, translated as "The Formation of the Psalter," in Praise and Lament in the Psalms, R. N. Soulen, trans. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981): 250-258.
- <sup>71</sup>. See D. M. Howard, Jr., "Editorial Activity in the Psalter: A State-of-the-Field Survey," Word and World 9 (1989): 275-85, for recent approaches to reading of the Psalter as a literary unity, that is, as a "book."
- <sup>72</sup>. The "Kingship of YHWH" psalms (also referred to as the "Enthronement of YHWH" psalms) -- most notably Psalms 47, 93, 96-99 -- are similar in some respects to the royal psalms, but they form a separate category of their own. (On various aspects of these, see D. M. Howard, Jr., The Structure of Psalms 93-100, Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Michigan [Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1986]).
- <sup>73</sup>. This does not necessarily involve a "re-interpretation" of these psalms that obliterates their original intent. Rather, it can be seen as "a more precise interpretation of them in light of the

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historical realities" (Waltke, "Canonical Process Approach," p. 15; on the unfolding of the meaning of the psalms as ultimately messianic, see his discussion on pp. 10-16).

See also much of W. C. Kaiser, Jr.'s work, on a single-meaning hermeneutic: e.g., Toward an Exegetical Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981): 23-36, 55-57; The Uses of the Old Testament in the New (Chicago: Moody, 1985): 25-41. Note even W. S. LaSor, "Prophecy, Inspiration, and Sensus Plenior," Tyndale Bulletin 29 (1978): 49-60, where, despite his embrace of a sensus plenior hermeneutic, he argues that the search for the fuller sense must always begin with the literal meaning of the text, must develop it from grammatico-historical exegesis, and constitutes "the fullness of meaning required by God's complete revelation" (p. 59; N.B. that he does not speak of "new" meaning).

While Kaiser (on the one hand) and Waltke and LaSor (on the other) have very different hermeneutical standpoints, the judgment here is that their disagreements are largely terminological and hermeneutical; the final products of exegesis in both camps are strikingly similar.