

# The Characterization of Rehoboam and Jeroboam as a Reflection of the Chronicler's View of the Schism

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# THE CHARACTERIZATION OF REHOBOAM AND JEROBOAM AS A REFLECTION OF THE CHRONICLER'S VIEW OF THE SCHISM

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## PRESENTING THE PROBLEMS

The Chronicler's<sup>1</sup> version of the schism and the events that follow (1 Chr 10:1–12:16) is significantly different from its parallel narrative in the *Vorlage* (1 Kgs 12:1–13:34).<sup>2</sup> Many parts are omitted,

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<sup>1</sup> By "Chronicler," I refer solely to the author of Chronicles. See S. Japhet, "The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra–Nehemiah Investigated Anew," *VT* 18 (1968), 330–71; H.G. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 5–70; M.A. Throntveit, "Linguistic Analysis and the Question of Authorship in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah," *VT* 32 (1982), 201–16. Gary N. Knoppers believes the authors of Ezra–Nehemiah and Chronicles were all from the same school of thought, while the writing itself was done by different authors in different periods. See G.N. Knoppers, "Yahweh is not with Israel: Alliances as a 'topos' in Chronicles," *CBQ* 58 (1996), 601–26 (601 n. 1); idem, *I Chronicles 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 12; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 2004), 73–77.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, as Knoppers notes, "nowhere else does Chronicles diverge more radically from Kings than in depicting the period of the secession and early divided kingdom," see G.N. Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles: Villain or Victim," *JBL* 109 (1990), 423–40 (430). Sara Japhet is convinced that the Chronistic adaptation of the schism narrative effectively creates a new narrative, see S. Japhet, *I and II Chronicles* (OTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 664. Cf. E. Ben-Zvi, "The Secession of the Northern Kingdom in Chronicles: Accepted 'Facts' and New Meanings," in M.P. Graham, S.L. McKenzie, and G.N. Knoppers (eds.), *The Chronicler as a Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein* (JSOTSup, 317; London: T&T Clark, 2003), 61–87 (63). In regard to the *Vorlage* at the Chronicler's disposal (mainly in comparison to the Masoretic version of Kings), I concur with Knoppers: "On the one hand, caution is dictated in attributing tendentious intention to a Chronicles text whenever it differs from Genesis or Samuel, as the alleged change may be due either to the textual traditions represented by the Chronicler's *Vorlage* or to textual corruption. On the other hand, when neither of these two options seems likely, especially in dealing with the text of Kings, one can with confidence

while the abbreviated narrative contains details which are completely absent from the *Vorlage*. This briefer, different version invites questions about the nature of the alterations that the Chronicler makes; whether and how they illuminate the Chronicler's methodological considerations in general, and specifically, his attitude towards the schism.

This article seeks to address these questions through literary analysis of the main characters represented in the narrative: Rehoboam and Jeroboam. To date, research has largely focused upon the reliability of the new material found in the schism narrative, rather than on the characterization of the characters that traverse its pages. Even discussions that have been concerned with characterization focus mostly upon Rehoboam.<sup>3</sup> Jeroboam's characterization in Chronicles, and its relationship with Rehoboam's, has received little scholarly attention despite its explicit and implicit importance in the narrative. Troy D. Cudworth addresses this issue in part, but does not provide an analysis of 11:5–23, which is the continuation of the schism narrative.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, while Abijah's speech in 2 Chr 13 has received considerable scholarly attention as an example of an anti-Israelite source, what has been largely overlooked is the valuable retroactive perspective it provides of how the schism transpired, especially in comparison to the events narrated in 2 Chr 10:1–11:4.<sup>5</sup>

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more clearly recognize those instances in which the Chronicler consciously made a change in his text." See: Knoppers, *I Chronicles 1–9*, 70–71. See also S.L. McKenzie, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History* (HSM, 33; Atlanta, GA: Scholar Press, 1985), 119, 155. A different opinion has been expressed by Julio Treballe, who holds that the books of Samuel–Kings continued to develop after the redaction of the Masoretic version, so the Chronicler's writing might possibly be based on this later version, which is not always echoed in the Masoretic text. This is how Treballe explains the differences between the David narrative in Chronicles compared with that in Samuel. See J. Treballe, "Samuel/Kings and Chronicles: Book Divisions and Textual Composition," in P.W. Flint, E. Tov, and J.C. VanderKam (eds.), *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (VTSup, 101; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006), 96–108. For a summary of Treballe's view, and other related opinions (or opinions that are derived from this view, such as that of Graeme Auld), see R.F. Person Jr., *The Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Chronicles: Scribal Works in an Oral World* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 87–130.

<sup>3</sup> See Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles"; R. Boer, "Rehoboam Meets Machiavelli," in J. Corley and H. van Grol (eds.), *Rewriting Biblical History: Essays on Chronicles and Ben Sira in Honor of Pancratius C. Beentjes* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 159–72.

<sup>4</sup> See T.D. Cudworth, "The Division of Israel's Kingdom in Chronicles: A Re-examination of the Usual Suspects," *Bib* 95 (2014), 498–523.

<sup>5</sup> See Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles," 437–39. According to Knoppers (*ibid.*, 439), "The Chronicler's portrayal of the secession in Abijah's speech in 2 Chr 13:4ff. is consonant with his distinctive approach

These pages will attempt to analyze the characters of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, individually and in relation to each other. I will demonstrate how the characterization of each figure changes over the course of the narrative, and how the Chronicler takes care to maintain a certain balance between them. I will also explore how Abijah's speech contributes to the characterizations of Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and whether it serves to illuminate the Chronicler's perception of the schism and the events that followed.

Before I begin this analysis, the boundaries of the literary unit in question must be defined. While there is a marked scholarly tendency to focus on the negotiations in Shechem and the rebellion that lead to the schism (2 Chr 10:1–11:5), I believe that the schism narrative encompasses chs. 10–13, considering that ch. 10 begins with the crisis that leads to the schism, while ch. 13 marks the end of the process, which culminates in war between the kingdoms.<sup>6</sup>

These four chapters can be divided into 3 sections: the first is the story of the negotiations in Shechem (10:1–11:4). This section opens with Jeroboam's "hearing" and "return" from Egypt, and concludes with Israel's "hearing" and their "return" from the planned attack on Jeroboam, which generates a literary *inclusio* framed with the roots שמ"ע ("hear") and שו"ב ("return"). The second deals with Rehoboam's reign after the schism (11:5–12:15). This section opens with Rehoboam's residence in Jerusalem and concludes with his burial in the City of David, thus creating a literary framework revolving around Jerusalem. The third section is the story of Abijah's reign (ch. 13), which includes his speech and war against Jeroboam, king of Israel.

In the book of Kings, the beginnings of schism are already evident in Solomon's time, and perhaps even earlier.<sup>7</sup> His transgres-

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to the beginning of Rehoboam's reign." I will present a different approach later on. Ben-Zvi ("The Secession of the of the Northern Kingdom," 79) believes that Abijah's version of the schism must be consistent with the events in chapter 10, in order to create a sense of reliability with the readers and audience. Yet Abijah does not state that the schism transpired because of divine will, unlike the account presented in chapter 10. I point out further differences between the two sections below.

<sup>6</sup> The period of Rehoboam and Abijah's reign is also presented as a single unit in research, see, e.g., S.J. Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles* (New York/London: T&T Clark, 2007), 82. However, Allen argues that the literary unit of Abijah–Asa is a single kerygmatic unit linked through the root ש"ע, see L.C. Allen, "Kerygmatic Units in 1 and 2 Chronicles," *JSTOT* 41 (1988), 21–36 (29).

<sup>7</sup> See A. Frisch, *Torn Asunder: The Division of the Kingdom Narrative in the Book of Kings* (Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2013), 24–33 (Hebrew). Amos Frisch holds that the schism's roots are already inherent in the political structure of David's kingdom, and did not necessary only begin during Solomon's time. But compare to G.N. Knoppers, "Dynastic Oracle and Secession in 1 Kings 11," *Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Society* 7 (1987), 159–72.

sions at the end of his reign<sup>8</sup> lead to God's decree that the kingdom will be divided into two, leaving just one tribe under the house of David's rule (1 Kgs 11:11).<sup>9</sup> Jeroboam son of Nebat is anointed as king over Israel by Ahijah the Shilonite, who promises him a royal dynasty that will rule over ten of the tribes, similarly to the promise made to David (ibid., 29–39).<sup>10</sup> Following this prophecy, Jeroboam rebels, whereupon Solomon seeks his life and Jeroboam flees to Egypt (ibid., 40). The schism itself occurs later, as a result of the negotiations between Rehoboam and the people of the north in Shechem (1 Kgs 12:1–17).<sup>11</sup> Rehoboam's negative response to the people's plea leads to mutiny, and Jeroboam is then appointed by the people (ibid., 20). Rehoboam sets out to challenge Jeroboam in battle in order to restore his kingdom, but the words of a prophet of God stop Rehoboam in his tracks, and from this point on, the Deuteronomist tells the tale of two separate kingdoms, with almost no connection between them. Threatened by Jerusalem's cultic centrality, Jeroboam attempts to prevent his new kingdom's worship there by erecting two golden calves; this act effectively serves as the final nail in the coffin of the united kingdom of Israel (25–

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<sup>8</sup> The most prevalent opinion in research is that Solomon's sins begin in chapter 11. However, other voices trace the roots of Solomon's sins to his prayer in chapter 8, and even to chapter 3, see M. Avioz, "The Characterization of Solomon in Solomon's Prayer (1 Kings 8)," *BN* 126 (2005), 19–27; E.A. Seibert, *Subversive Scribes and the Solomonic Narrative: A Rereading of 1 Kings 1–11* (New York/London: T&T Clark, 2006); J.J. Kang, *The Persuasive Portrayal of Solomon in 1 Kings 1–11* (Bern: Lang, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> This promise has two different formulations: 1) the kingdom will begin to split during Solomon's time, but only partially: Jeroboam will receive ten tribes, and Solomon just one (1 Kgs 11:13); 2) the schism will occur during the reign of Solomon's son (ibid., 12:34–36). Either way, God's words to Solomon pose a great challenge to Nathan's oracle in 2 Sam 7, which promises David an eternal dynasty. This subject is discussed in research at length, see, e.g., N. Lohfink, "Welches Orakel gab den Davididen Dauer? Ein Textproblem in 2 Kön 8, 19 und das Funktionieren der dynastischen Orakel im Deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk," in T. Abusch et al. (eds.), *Lingering over Words: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Literature in Honor of William L. Moran* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 349–70.

<sup>10</sup> See T. Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel: A Study on the Formation and Development of Royal-Dynastic Ideology* (New York: de Gruyter, 1977), 171–82; G.N. Knoppers, *Two Nations under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies*, vol. 1: *The Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam* (HSM, 53; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 201.

<sup>11</sup> The story of the gathering in Shechem contains several difficulties in the book of Kings (1 Kgs 12). One concern is whether Jeroboam participated in the delegation to Rehoboam, as is implied in v. 3, 12, and 20. This difficulty led several scholars to claim that the Deuteronomist had two versions of the story, one southern and one northern, which were fused into one, see, e.g., S.L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Book of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 47.

33). Jeroboam's sins result in a harsh prophecy from Ahijah, who withdraws his promise of a royal dynasty for Jeroboam. Rehoboam, on his part, does not fare better than the kingdom of Israel; both he and Judah are described in terms as sinful of those of the kingdom of Israel (21–24).

Out of all these narrative elements, the Chronicler incorporates, almost verbatim, only three into his own account: he describes the negotiations in Shechem, the rebellion against Rehoboam, and the prophet's prevention of war against Israel. The rest of the story is omitted; for example, there is no description of Solomon's sins; or of God's warning to Solomon that the kingdom will be torn into two. With the exception of one brief comment (2 Chr 10:15), the story of Ahijah's anointing of Jeroboam and the promise of his reign is missing; as is the story of Jeroboam's rebellion, which is replaced by a brief mention of his escape to Egypt (10:2).<sup>12</sup> There is no background information about Jeroboam's erection of the calves, which are only mentioned once, and not even described as gold (11:15);<sup>13</sup> and the story of the people of the north's anointing of Jeroboam is omitted, as is Ahijah's prophecy of doom against Jeroboam.

Not only omissions characterize the Chronicler's retelling; there are many alterations. In comparison to his portrayal in Kings, the figure of Rehoboam is unrecognizable, and he is described—at least at the beginning of his reign—as a good and worthy king. The circumstances and significance of Shishak of Egypt's invasion is described differently than it is in Kings, and it is consistent with the Chronicler's scheme of reward and punishment.<sup>14</sup>

Other details find their way into the story. Rehoboam marries many women and builds fortified cities. Priest and Levites, as well as other people from the Israelite kingdom, migrate to Jerusalem. Rehoboam selects his son Abijah as his heir during his own lifetime. He leads the people to repent following Shishak's invasion, and this act serves to soften the blow against Jerusalem.

The following table summarizes the omissions and additions in the schism narratives in Kings and in Chronicles:

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<sup>12</sup> A more explicit mention is found later, in Abijah's speech (2 Chr 13:6). See below.

<sup>13</sup> Here, too, the explicit description of *golden* calves is found in Abijah's speech (*ibid.*, 8).

<sup>14</sup> See S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought* (BEATAJ, 9; New York: Lang, 1997), 132–34.

Jeroboam's rebellion	1 Kgs 11:26–28	-----
Ahijah's prophecy to Jeroboam	1 Kgs 11:29–39	-----
Jeroboam's escape to Egypt	1 Kgs 11:40	-----
The assembly at Shechem and rebellion against Rehoboam	1 Kgs 12:1–20	2 Chr 10:1–19
Shemaiah's prophecy	1 Kgs 12:21–24	2 Chr 11:1–4
Jeroboam builds Shechem and Penuel	1 Kgs 12:25	-----
Jeroboam makes golden calves in Dan and Bethel	1 Kgs 12:26–33	-----
The man of God's prophecy and the old prophet	1 Kgs 13:1–32	-----
Abijah son of Jeroboam falls ill	1 Kgs 14:1–18	-----
The concluding formula of Jeroboam's reign	1 Kgs 14:19–20	-----
Rehoboam builds cities and fortifies them	-----	2 Chr 11:5–12
The Levites and priests move to Jerusalem	-----	2 Chr 12:13–17
Rehoboam's marriage and birth of his children	-----	2 Chr 12:18–23
The opening formula of Rehoboam's reign	1 Kgs 14:21	2 Chr 12:13
The sins of Rehoboam and Judah	1 Kgs 14:22–24	2 Chr 12:1, 14
Shishak of Egypt's invasion of Jerusalem	1 Kgs 14:25–28	2 Chr 12:2–4, 9
The prophet Shemaiah's speech, and God's reaction	-----	2 Chr 12:5–8
Rehoboam and the people repent	-----	2 Chr 12:12
The concluding formula of Rehoboam's reign	1 Kgs 14:29–31	2 Chr 12:15–16

How can these omissions, additions, and alterations be understood? We may posit that the Chronicler, a firm supporter of the kingdom of Judah and the Davidic dynasty, was forced to depict an event he would rather have omitted: the divinely ordained reduction of the Davidic line's power. The Chronicler was unable to deny the schism as to do so would be to contradict an irrefutable historical reality,<sup>15</sup> but to present the story in its entirety would challenge the virtue of Solomon, whom the Chronicler characterizes as one of the ideal figure in the book.<sup>16</sup> He also elected to omit the promises to Jeroboam, in order to avoid placing him on similar footing with David following his divine election.<sup>17</sup> The Chronicler thus presented the schism in the most abbreviated form possible, including only the negotiation scene at Shechem. Even this narrative choice, however, poses a problem for the Chronicler, as it presents the schism as the result of a conflict of human interests, rather than an expression of divine will.

The Chronicler's negotiation episode includes additional details that are not directly related to the political assembly at Shechem. These details are listed succinctly, without any background information.<sup>18</sup> For example, while the Chronicler avoids explicit discussion of Jeroboam's rebellion, he nonetheless mentions Jeroboam's return from Egypt (2Chr 10:2). He notes that the people sent for him, although he makes no mention of Jeroboam's status.<sup>19</sup> He parenthetically mentions Ahijah the Shilonite's promise to Jeroboam (ibid., 10:15), but the content of the promise is not revealed to the reader. While he does bring the story of the prophet's prevention of attack on Jeroboam in its entirety, he omits the pre-

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<sup>15</sup> Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 657; Ben-Zvi, "The Secession of the of the Northern Kingdom," 62–63.

<sup>16</sup> See R. Mosis, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes* (Freiburger theologische Studien, 92; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1973), 164–69; R.L. Braun, "The Solomonic Apologetic in Chronicles," *JBL* 92 (1973), 503–16; H.G. Williamson, "Accession of Solomon in the Books of Chronicles," *VT* 26 (1976), 351–61. However, compare to Yong H. Jeon, who objects to the assumption that Solomon is characterized as an ideal, perfect figure, see Y.H. Jeon, *Impeccable Solomon? A Study of Solomon's Faults in Chronicles* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013). In this context, it is possible to consider Daniel D. Pioske's reading: that comparisons drawn between Solomon and Hezekiah (by Williamson, for example) do not necessarily emphasize Solomon's greatness so much as Hezekiah's, according to the criteria relevant to the context of the book's writing, the Persian era. On both sylleptic and proleptic aspects of the Chronicler's narrative style see D.D. Pioske, *David's Jerusalem Between Memory and History* (New York/London: Routledge, 2015), 132–76.

<sup>17</sup> See Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles," 430.

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, 88–89.

<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., Ben-Zvi, "The Secession of the Northern Kingdom," 66–67.

ceding episode of Jeroboam's coronation (1 Kgs 12:20), which somewhat obscures Rehoboam's incentive to go to war.<sup>20</sup>

In general, the Chronicler essentially omits the factors leading up to the negotiation scene in Shechem, so that when the narrative sequence of events in the book of Chronicles is considered in its entirety, this scene alone emerges as the central contributing factor to Israel's schism into two separate kingdoms.<sup>21</sup>

However, when we consider Abijah's speech in the third section of this narrative (2 Chr 13:4–12), a completely different story emerges, and some aspects of this new picture can be considered actual contradictions.

The narrator's neutral mention of how Jeroboam flees to Egypt, away from Solomon, becomes an explicit accusation that retroactively reveals the reason for his escape: "Yet Jeroboam son of Nebat, a slave of Solomon son of David, rose up and rebelled against his lord" (ibid., 6).<sup>22</sup>

The negotiation scene contains no personal criticism against Jeroboam, whereas in his speech, Abijah uses the disparaging title of "slave of Solomon."<sup>23</sup>

In ch. 10, the people of the north are presented as a legitimate party, and shortly after, the prophet Shemaiah describes them as "brothers" (11:4), while Abijah describes them as "worthless scoundrels" (13:7).<sup>24</sup>

Abijah's description of Rehoboam as "young and irresolute" (ibid.) contradicts Rehoboam's behavior in ch. 10. Even more so, it is inconsistent with the determination he displays when he plans to attack the northern kingdom.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The juxtaposition of these two events in Kings contributes to the understanding that Jeroboam's election was the *de-facto* motive for Rehoboam's war.

<sup>21</sup> Ben-Zvi holds that in Chronicles, Shechem is not only chosen for geopolitical reasons, as expressed in Kings; it is also based on the struggle between Yehud and Samaria, especially the conflict between Jerusalem and the Samaritan cultic ritual that took place in Shechem. In this way, the Chronicler alerts his readers not only to the question of why God brought about the schism, but why God created the possibility of cultic worship that essentially contradicts worship in Jerusalem. See Ben-Zvi, "The Secession of the Northern Kingdom," 87–88. And see further, below.

<sup>22</sup> I hold the accepted view that "his lord" (אֲדֹנָי) refers to Solomon rather than Rehoboam. However, Josephus, and Williamson in his wake, hold that the reference to "worthless scoundrels" (אֲנָשִׁים רָקִים) describes the young men who led Rehoboam astray. See H.G. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (NCB; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 252–53. And compare Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles," 437 n. 48.

<sup>23</sup> Cudworth explains that the word עֶבֶד does not mean "slave" here, but rather, "servant." See Cudworth, "The Division," 521. This interpretation, in my opinion, is not consistent with the spirit of the text.

<sup>24</sup> See E.L. Curtis and A.L. Madsen, *The Books of Chronicles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1910), 375.

<sup>25</sup> See M.J. Selman, *2 Chronicles* (TOTC; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press,

The request made by the people of the north in Shechem is presented as legitimate,<sup>26</sup> but Abijah portrays them as “worthless scoundrels” who seek to exploit the young, inexperienced king (ibid.).

The idea that Rehoboam’s decision to follow the younger men’s counsel was orchestrated in order to fulfill God’s word (10:15) is completely absent from Abijah’s speech, which points solely to human and political causes.

The negotiation scene in Shechem mentions Ahijah the Shilonite’s promise to Jeroboam. This promise is not mentioned in Abijah’s speech; the only promise that features is the divine promise of an eternal Davidic dynasty.

These contradictions can ostensibly be resolved by noting that Abijah’s speech is a polemic attack on the new Israelite kingdom, and therefore does not mention Jeroboam’s divine election or the people’s legitimate request of Rehoboam. However, even so, these contradictions still require reconciliation. Seeing as the Chronicler himself reshaped the schism narrative, omitting and adding certain details, he was presumably satisfied with the final product; if so, then why does he generate such contradictions through Abijah’s speech, which is also shaped by his own hand?<sup>27</sup>

This, in turn, brings us back to the question: what is the source of the disparity between the accounts of the schism presented by the narrator in Rehoboam’s time, and by Abijah in his speech?

I will now attempt to address the disparity between the first and third sections of the schism narrative through an exploration of the characterization of Rehoboam and Jeroboam during and following the schism. Scholars are divided in in regard to the char-

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2008), 380. But compare to Jeon, *Impeccable Solomon*, 19.

<sup>26</sup> The three days Rehoboam requests in order to reach a decision, as well the advice the elders give him, prove that their request is at least legitimate.

<sup>27</sup> In his 2007 article, Louis C. Jonker discusses the differences between Kings and Chronicles as part of the scholarly debate regarding the nature of the books of Chronicles. He holds that some of these changes result from the Chronicler’s objective to create a bridge between the period of the first temple and his current reality—Yehud in the Persian era. These two dimensions in time—the past and the present—are interdependent and must both be considered during the reading of the book, as the traditions of the past may serve to illuminate the changing circumstances of the present. See L.C. Jonker, “Reforming History: The Hermeneutical Significance of the Books of Chronicles,” *VT* 57 (2007), 21–44. This does raise the question whether Jonker’s opinion is relevant when dealing not with changes or contradictions between Kings and Chronicles, but within the book of Chronicles itself; can such contradictions point to a distinction between two different perceptions, each of which has its own place, rather than to a bridge between the past and the present? See further below.

acters' virtue: Hugh G. Williamson claims that the text portrays Rehoboam as a sinner, in which case the schism transpired because the northern population did not consider Rehoboam worthy of succeeding Solomon. If so, then the schism was initially legitimate and even necessary, but once a worthy, righteous king such as Abijah ascended the throne, there was no justification for a separate Israelite kingdom. Therefore, within this paradigm, once the Israelites rejected Abijah's plea to reunite the kingdoms, they were considered "worthless scoundrels."<sup>28</sup>

Gary N. Knoppers is convinced that in the book of Chronicles, the schism is never considered legitimate. He argues that in the book of Kings, the seeds of schism are already planted during Solomon's reign, while in Chronicles it is a shocking narrative surprise implemented solely by Jeroboam and the Israelites, who exploit Rehoboam's inexperience in order to undermine the legitimate cult and royal Davidic dynasty.<sup>29</sup>

I believe that a careful reading of the text challenges both Williamson's and Knoppers's analyses. For the first three years of his reign, the Chronicler describes Rehoboam in extremely positive terms. This undermines Williamson's assertion that the people of the north sought alternate leadership to Rehoboam's due to his sins—an antithetical picture emerges from the text.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, if Knoppers is correct in stating that the schism was never considered legitimate, and Jeroboam and the Israelites are presented as the sole culprits, then how is it logical that the Chronicler only reveals these charges against Jeroboam and Israel in Abijah's time, rather than factoring them in during the first three years of Rehoboam's reign, when he is still characterized as a worthy king?

In my opinion, the characters of Rehoboam and Jeroboam should be viewed in a different light—as changing, developing characters, rather than static, unchanging figures, as implied by Williamson and Knoppers's readings. In each section of the narrative, each character either progresses or regresses, and this fluctuation will illuminate the disparity between the different parts of the narrative.

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<sup>28</sup> Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 113.

<sup>29</sup> Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles," 424–25.

<sup>30</sup> See also Knoppers, *ibid.*, 434 n. 40. The reading that Rehoboam was the main cause of the schism is honed in Cudworth's aforementioned article. He believes that Rehoboam is solely responsible for the schism as he failed where David and Solomon had succeeded. While the two other kings unified Israel under the term "all of Israel," Rehoboam's reign presents a picture in which all of Israel is referred to as "Judah." This reading, however, is not convincing, and I believe that it results from Cudworth completely overlooking a crucial part of the schism narrative—ch. 11:5–23, which describes Rehoboam's successes; according to Cudworth's view, he would not be worthy of enjoying them.

**THE FIRST SECTION (10:1–11:4):  
NEGOTIATIONS IN SHECHEM**

I will begin with Jeroboam. Jeroboam is introduced as a character that fled to Egypt because of Solomon. This introduction deviates significantly from the Deuteronomist's version in Kings. While the Deuteronomist uses the root י"ש"ב, settled/sat: "and Jeroboam settled in Egypt," the Chronicler uses the root ש"ו"ב, return: "Jeroboam returned from Egypt." Some have claimed that the Chronicler made this change in order to show that Jeroboam left Egypt prior to the assembly in Shechem.<sup>31</sup> I believe that this emendation stemmed from the Chronicler's desire to portray Jeroboam's disinclination to remain in Egypt; while he fled there to escape Solomon, the Chronicler suggests, he returned at the earliest opportunity—presumably following Solomon's death prior to the assembly at Shechem.<sup>32</sup> It may be that through this, the Chronicler is hinting that Jeroboam was eager to fulfill the promise of his kingship. After Jeroboam's return from Egypt, he is mentioned four more times: twice as the head of the delegation to Rehoboam; once as the subject of Ahijah the Shilonite's promise; and finally, after Rehoboam's attack on the northern kingdom is prevented.

Jeroboam approaches Rehoboam twice; the first time, "Jeroboam and all Israel came" (2 Chr 10:3), whereas the second time, "Jeroboam and all the people came" (10:12).<sup>33</sup> On both occasions, emphasis is placed on Jeroboam's leadership; he leads the delegation, which might explain the singular form of the Hebrew verb "came" (וַיָּבֹא) in both verses.<sup>34</sup> Once Rehoboam takes his own generation's advice, however, the people are the ones who act and react: it is the people who "answered the king" (10:16); it is the people who return to their tents in protest; and it is the people who quote the mutinous motto of Sheba son of Bikhri, "What share do

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<sup>31</sup> The variations between the Chronicler and the Deuteronomist's versions and its relationship to the Septuagint (version B) are discussed widely in literature, see, e.g., J.R. Linville, *Israel in the Books of Kings: The Past as a Project of Social Identity* (JSOTSup, 272; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 155–58.

<sup>32</sup> See Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 652.

<sup>33</sup> There seems to be no significant difference between the expression "all of Israel" and "all the people." The phrase "all of Israel" features in v. 1 and v. 3. From vv. 5–15 Israel is referred to as "the people," a fact which explains the phrase "all the people" in v. 12. In v. 16, the Chronicler begins to use both phrases.

<sup>34</sup> The source in Kings (2 Kgs 12:3) has a *qere* and a *ketiv*. The latter is "came" in plural form (וַיָּבֹאוּ), while the former is singular (וַיָּבֹא). Knoppers also sees Jeroboam as the leader of the rebellion, see Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles," 435 n. 43. Cudworth, "The Division," 516–17, concludes from the plural "they spoke" that Jeroboam may not have been the leader, but this may not be accurate, as he is overlooking the singular form of "came," which appears twice, indicating that Jeroboam is the leader of the people who draws them to Rehoboam in protest.

we have in David?” (see 2 Sam 20:1). Jeroboam is not mentioned at all at this point, and there is no telling what part he played in the people’s uprising, if at all. Jeroboam’s apparent silence thus creates a balance between his role during the rebellion and his role at the beginning of the narrative. While he initially leads the delegation to Rehoboam, and presumably presents the people’s objection, he is silent as the rebellion surges and the people take over. The narrator does not present Jeroboam as an active member of the people’s rebellion.

I will now explore Rehoboam’s characterization. The narrative exposition presents Rehoboam’s arrival in Shechem for his coronation.<sup>35</sup> His departure from Jerusalem<sup>36</sup> and venture to Shechem, of course, raises the question of whether the coronation’s location was born out of goodwill towards the people of the north, or out of weakness when he understood that the Davidic dynasty’s control over the northern area of Israel was flagging.<sup>37</sup> I am convinced that had Rehoboam gone to Shechem in order to reaffirm his presence in the north, he would certainly have brought his army with him. The fact that he arrives without military accompaniment—a move that almost costs him his life (2 Chr 10:18)—suggests that he attempted to hold his coronation in Shechem as an act of goodwill.

The people’s request to Rehoboam is phrased moderately; there is no demand to cancel their labor, only to reduce their heavy burden. Rehoboam is thrown off guard by their request, and asks for three days in order to reach a decision. He seeks advice from the elders, who recommend that he accept the people’s request, and from younger men, who advise him to turn the people down with a display of strength.<sup>38</sup> Rehoboam takes the latter advice, and spurns the elders’ counsel.

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<sup>35</sup> Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 103, argues that the expression “all of Israel” refers to all of Israel, from the north and the south. Ralph W. Klein, however, believes that it is more likely that the Chronicler is referring to the ten tribes, see R.W. Klein, *2 Chronicles: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2012), 156.

<sup>36</sup> W. Johnstone, *2 Chronicles 10–36: Guilt and Atonement* (JSOTSup, 254; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 24–25. But compare to S.L. McKenzie, *1–2 Chronicles* (AOTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 261.

<sup>37</sup> Japhet, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 651–52, claims that the visit was intended to reinforce his hold upon the kingdom of Israel. Cf. L.C. Jonker, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (Understanding the Bible Commentary Series; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 209. Another possibility to consider is Nigel Allan’s evaluation that Shechem had a considerable number of Levites who were avid supporters of the Davidic line, see N. Allan, “Jeroboam and Shechem,” *VT* 24 (1974), 353–57 (356). The indirect link to a place that was home to many Levites is of course related to the Chronicler’s pro-Levite inclination, which is expressed in many places in the book. See Y.S. Kim, *The Temple Administration and the Levites in Chronicles* (CBQMS, 51; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2014).

<sup>38</sup> There is scholarly debate regarding the nature of these “elders” and

How should Rehoboam's course of action in this episode be assessed? Some have justifiably argued that Rehoboam's arrogance and indecisiveness lead him to accept the younger men's advice, which results in the schism.<sup>39</sup> Several aspects in the story, however, militate against this view. Firstly, the three days Rehoboam takes to reach a decision do not necessarily suggest that Rehoboam sought to reject the people's request.<sup>40</sup> Rather, Rehoboam seems to be inclined towards accepting the elders' advice and yielding to the people. This is supported by the fact that Rehoboam does not repeat the people's request to the elders, presumably because he is able to predict what their response will be. In contrast, when presenting the people's request to the young men, he repeats it in full: "What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us?'" (10:9)—as if through repetition of the people's words, repetition which is apparently superfluous, Rehoboam emphasizes the people's needs, and how they ought to be dealt with. The young men also repeat the people's words, as if hinting that they are about to agree with them—and this repetition, therefore, results in certain surprise when they reject the people's demands.

This narrative surprise, generated by Rehoboam's rejection of the people's demands, is explained immediately after, with mention of the promise to Jeroboam. Mentioning the promise at this stage illuminates precisely why Rehoboam makes the unworthy choice he does, despite his carefully calculated behavior. The people's rebellion and Rehoboam's fatal choice have already been determined by God. Rehoboam's decision can be compared to Absalom's decision to accept Hushai the Archite's advice rather than that of Ahitophel, a choice so disastrous that the narrator is compelled to explain that "the Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring ruin on Absalom" (2 Sam 17:14). Both Absalom and Rehoboam fail to choose the obviously preferable option because they are deprived of free choice.<sup>41</sup>

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"young men" (literally, "children"): are these two different age groups among the officials, or perhaps two different authorities the king would consult with on political affairs? See a survey of opinions in Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 654–55.

<sup>39</sup> The idea that Rehoboam's arrogance results in the schism is the most prevalent opinion in research. See, e.g., B.E. Organ, "The Man Who Would Be King: Irony in the Story of Rehoboam," in J.R. Wood, J.E. Harvey, and M. Leuchter (eds.), *From Babel to Babylon: Essays on Biblical History and Literature in Honour of Brian Peckham* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2006), 124–32.

<sup>40</sup> See Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 653.

<sup>41</sup> This can be compared to Amaziah's decision to fight against Jehoash: "But Amaziah would not listen—it was God's doing, in order to hand them over" (2 Chr 25:20); and perhaps to Josiah's decision to go out to war with Neco: "He did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God" (2 Chr 35:22).

After rebellion breaks out, Rehoboam does all he can to suppress it; Josephus explains that he dispatches Hadoram, “who was in charge of forced labor” (2 Chr 10:18), in order to placate them and ask for their forgiveness.<sup>42</sup> Amos Frisch believes that Hadoram’s official position was effectively that of treasurer or finance minister, and Rehoboam sent him as only he was capable of discussing more accommodating terms of employment with the people.<sup>43</sup>

The next section relates how Rehoboam’s plan to fight against Jeroboam is thwarted by prophetic intervention (11:1–4). This narrative seems to reveal another facet of Rehoboam’s personality. Scholars have noted the difference between his insecurity prior to the schism and his determination in this episode—until the prophet Shemaiah makes his declaration, and Rehoboam must go back on his intentions.<sup>44</sup> Essentially, this narrative is no different from the negotiation narrative in Shechem: in both, Rehoboam’s initial intentions ultimately capitulate to the will of God, who exercises absolute control over the unfolding events.

So far, this analysis shows that the Chronicler characterizes both kings as essentially faultless. Despite certain implicit ambiguity, it seems that Jeroboam always harbors hope to attain the kingship, and to this end he returns from Egypt at the first possible opportunity. Yet despite this ambition, he does not impose himself upon the northern tribes, and he is not necessarily the instigator of the rebellion. While he does lead the delegation to Rehoboam, their logical, moderate request indicates that the rebellion need not take place.

Rehoboam is characterized both overtly and covertly. Rehoboam is overtly presented as a positive, reasonable king. As an act of goodwill, he intends to hold his coronation in the vicinity of the northern tribes, and ventures out without his army. He does not answer the delegation’s request immediately, but confers first with his subjects, and displays willingness to take their demands into consideration. Even in a moment of weakness and revenge, he accepts the prophet Shemaiah’s call, and cancels his attack on the northern tribes. Reading between the lines, however, Rehoboam emerges as a puppet in the hands of God; although he seems inclined to accept the elders’ advice, in the end he accepts the advice of the young men, and though he seems determined to regain his kingdom, he accepts God’s word, conveyed by the prophet, and orders his army to retreat; both acts are direct fulfillments of God’s will. This process emphasizes that it is God who makes the decision to split the kingdom into two. A more negative characterization of Rehoboam would have resulted in the schism being attributed to his arrogance, rather than to God’s will. Casting Re-

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<sup>42</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* 8.220–221.

<sup>43</sup> Frisch, *Torn Asunder*, 264.

<sup>44</sup> See Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 660.

hoboam and Jeroboam in a positive light, therefore, presents the schism as the direct, exclusive act of God, despite other human intentions.<sup>45</sup>

### THE SECOND SECTION (11:5–12:15): REHOBOAM'S KINGDOM FOLLOWING THE SCHISM

The Chronicler does not describe the good deeds of Rehoboam, or summarize his reign with the Deuteronomistic formula, “he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord,” which he uses to describe the post-schism righteous kings of Judah.<sup>46</sup> Yet he still hints at Rehoboam’s virtue through a series of three descriptions which fit in well with his doctrine of reward and punishment.<sup>47</sup> These descriptions are the construction of fortified cities (11:5–12);<sup>48</sup> the migration of religious authorities and other people from the northern kingdom to Jerusalem (13–17); his marriages, the birth of children, and his designation of Abijah as his heir during his lifetime (18–23).

I am not convinced by the claim that Rehoboam only manages to maintain control once the kingdom is reduced.<sup>49</sup> Rather, I think the Rehoboam’s positive characterization in the negotiation episode continues here, after the schism, and these descriptions of his reign, which can be read as rewards, maintain the positive line that was introduced earlier.

These three successful achievements have no counterpart in the Deuteronomistic source, and their reliability therefore comes into question. Regardless of whether these details are based on an authentic source or are the product of the Chronicler’s own hand, however, they are far from arbitrary, and serve as a foil to deeds and events that befall Jeroboam after his rise to power (1 Kgs 12:25–14:20). Taking the central component of each event and

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<sup>45</sup> See J.G. McConville, *I and II Chronicles* (Daily Study Bible; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1984), 153. Ben-Zvi (“The Secession of the of the Northern Kingdom,” 75) also believes that the schism narrative is a good illustration of the doctrine that God does not take human considerations into account, regardless of how rational they are. However, I believe that this comes across more strongly because of Rehoboam’s positive characterization throughout this scene, whereas Ben-Zvi believes Rehoboam is presented in a negative light in this scene. If Rehoboam were indeed presented thus, then God’s intervention would be less evident; Rehoboam’s initial positive characterization and rational behavior is what serves to highlight the element of divine intervention in this scene.

<sup>46</sup> See: 2 Chr 14:1; 20:32; 24:2; 25:2; 26:4; 27:2; 29:2; 34:2.

<sup>47</sup> For a detailed breakdown of the reward according to the Chronicler’s doctrine, see B.E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSup, 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 242.

<sup>48</sup> See P. Welten, *Geschichte und Geschichtsdarstellung in den Chronikbüchern* (WMANT, 42; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973), 9–78.

<sup>49</sup> See C. Mitchell, *The Ideal Ruler as Intertext in 1–2 Chronicles and the Cyropaedia* (PhD diss., Carleton University, 2001), 247.

reversing their order, the Chronicler rewrites Rehoboam's reign to offset that of Jeroboam's.

The first event following the schism features Jeroboam's settlement and construction in Shechem. Jeroboam builds up Shechem, and then, for reasons which are not entirely clear, leaves Shechem and begins construction in Penuel (1 Kgs 12:25).<sup>50</sup> The Chronicler uses similar language to describe Rehoboam's establishment in Jerusalem and construction all over Judah.<sup>51</sup>

The second deed ascribed to Jeroboam is the erection of two golden calves—one in Dan, and one in Bethel—in order to prevent the northern tribes' pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the possibility that "the heart of this people will turn again to their master, King Rehoboam of Judah" (1 Kgs 12:27). The Chronicler answers this fear with a description of the priest and Levite migration to Jerusalem, along with many other Israelites "who had set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel" (2 Chr 11:16). According to the Chronicler, Jeroboam's fears are realized; this migration presumably continued for at least three years, and was not a one-time event, as only thus it can be understood how Rehoboam's kingdom grew stronger during the three years specified (*ibid.*, 17).

Following the construction of the golden calves, the next episode describes the illness of Abijah, son of Jeroboam (1 Kgs 14:1). Jeroboam's wife approaches the prophet Ahijah in order to beg for her child's life, but the prophet delivers a harsh vision of Jeroboam's fate, and decrees that the child will die (*ibid.*, 7–16). As a foil to the death of Jeroboam's son Abijah, the Chronicler launches into an atypical description of Rehoboam's wives, concubines, and many children. Moreover, the son whom Rehoboam appoints as his successor is also named Abijah; Jeroboam's Abijah dies in childhood, while Rehoboam's Abijah is chosen as king during his father's lifetime, promising life and continuation after Rehoboam's death.<sup>52</sup> The detailed description of Rehoboam's wives, children,

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<sup>50</sup> Some have suggested that Jeroboam was forced to flee eastward because of Shishak's military campaign, see M. Garsiel et al. (eds.), *1 Kings* ('Olam Hatanach; Tel Aviv: Dibre Hayamim, 2002), 133 (Hebrew). The places Penuel, Bethel and Shechem in the Jeroboam narrative hint to the story of Jacob in Genesis. This connection invites comparison between the instability of Jeroboam's kingship and the suffering and wandering of Jacob, a comparison which casts the Chronicler's Rehoboam in a positive light; unlike Jeroboam, Rehoboam manages to establish his place in Jerusalem, and fortify his surroundings.

<sup>51</sup> Ben-Zvi and Boer have already pointed this similarity out, see E. Ben-Zvi, "The Chronicler as a Historian: Building Texts," in M.P. Graham, K.G. Hoglund, and S.L. McKenzie (eds.), *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSup, 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 139–49 (142); Boer, "Rehoboam Meets Machiavelli," 168.

<sup>52</sup> The contrast between these two sons is reinforced through the fact that the Chronicler refers to Rehoboam's son as "Abijah" instead of "Abijam," as he is called in the *Vorlage*.

and even the arrangement of marriages for his sons,<sup>53</sup> stands in stark contrast to Ahijah's bitter prophecy about the end of the house of Jeroboam. The Chronicler's description of Rehoboam's continuity and dynasty is antithetical to the prophetic vision of the end of Jeroboam's line.<sup>54</sup>

Whereas in the first section, the presentation of Jeroboam and Rehoboam's characters is balanced, this section sees a change. Rehoboam's characterization is positive, while Jeroboam is cast in a negative light. It is worth noting, however, that Rehoboam's characterization is not completely, explicitly positive, while Jeroboam's is not completely, explicitly negative. While Jeroboam and his sons replace the priests and Levites with priests who worship at high places, goat-demons, and calves; these sins are described technically, without explicit narrative judgment or direct condemnation of their sins. At this point, the Chronicler does not mention that the calves were made of gold, and uses only the general term, "calves."<sup>55</sup> The migration of the Levitical priests is not explained as the result of persecution, but from their feeling of superfluity in a kingdom where religious authority is bestowed upon anyone who desires it.<sup>56</sup> Finally, the mass migration to Judah and Jerusalem testifies that Jeroboam did not prevent anyone from worshiping according to their traditional ritual practices.

As for Rehoboam, it is worth noting that despite the fact that his reign seems successful, which, within the framework of the Chronicler's notions of reward and punishment, suggests that Rehoboam is a positive king, the reader knows nothing of his deeds; rather, his virtue is implied through his contrast to Jeroboam and the events that befell him.<sup>57</sup> Unlike other kings of Judah, whose

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<sup>53</sup> The problematic Hebrew phrase, וישאל המון נשים, literally translated "he sought many wives", should probably read וישא להם נשים, "and he found wives for them", a reading that has become more widely accepted since Ehrlich, see W. Rudolph, *Chronikbücher* (HAT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1955), 232; Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 672.

<sup>54</sup> This prophecy contains many descriptions of the destruction of Jeroboam's seed, e.g.: "I will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will consume the house of Jeroboam just as one burns up dung until it is all gone."

<sup>55</sup> The addition of the word "gold" should not be viewed as a mere stylistic addition. This word is important because it links Jeroboam's act to the sin of the Golden Calf in Exodus. Textual connections have already been pointed out, see L. Smolar, "Aaron, Jeroboam and the Golden Calves," *JBL* 86 (1967), 129–40; H. Shalom-Guy, "Jeroboam's Reform and the Episode of the Golden Calf," *Sbnaton* 16 (2006), 15–27 (Hebrew).

<sup>56</sup> This is also implied by the narrative in Kings. See 1 Kgs 13:33.

<sup>57</sup> William Johnstone comments that the arrival of priests and Levites in Judah should not be accredited to Rehoboam, who did nothing to encourage this, see Johnstone, *2 Chronicles*, 33. It may be that the Levites' mass emigration may reflect the Levite's profound belief that the northern kingdom was inherently corrupt. In this context, we can also understand some of the prophecies of Hosea (assuming he himself was a Levite, or an

virtue is derived from their own acts, the Chronicler chooses to portray Rehoboam through comparison to Jeroboam, which detracts from his status.<sup>58</sup>

After three years of walking in the footsteps of David and Solomon, at the height of his strength, when “he grew strong” (2 Chr 12:1), he turns his back on God and betrays him. Consistent with the Chronicler’s doctrine of retribution, Rehoboam is swiftly punished through the figure of King Shishak of Egypt, who attacks Jerusalem. Now, the ideal picture of the three previous years is reversed: the fortified cities built by Rehoboam are captured by Shishak (12:4);<sup>59</sup> for three years, the Levites “left (עזבו) their common lands . . . and came to Judah and Jerusalem,” while God leaves His people (עזבתי, v. 5); instead of Israelites coming to Jerusalem, the text describes how Shishak came to Jerusalem (v. 4); in contrast to Rehoboam taking wives (2 Chr 11:18), the text describes how the treasures of the Temple are taken by Shishak (2 Chr 12:9).

The prophet Shemaiah comes to Jerusalem and explains why they have suffered Shishak’s invasion: “You abandoned Me, so I have abandoned you” (2 Chr 12:5). Israel’s officers and Rehoboam humble themselves before the Lord, and the decree is mitigated.<sup>60</sup>

Even though this part of the narrative does not relate to the northern kingdom, the observant reader may notice that the verse

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ardent supporter of the Levites, as argued by S.L. Cook, *The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism* [Leiden: Brill, 2004], 213–43). Additionally, this emigration conveys a clear message to the inhabitants of Yehud in the post-monarchic era: that a kingdom’s strength is not necessarily gauged by the strength of its king, but by the status of its religious leaders, in this case Levites, who were, as Yeong S. Kim notes, portrayed by the Chronicler as ideal, utopian, and not necessarily realistic characters in the Persian era. See Kim, *The Temple Administration*, 192. Of course, this perception serves to support Johnstone’s reading, above, that balance between Rehoboam and Jeroboam is maintained in this case as well.

<sup>58</sup> The only hint to Rehoboam’s good deeds can be found at the beginning of ch. 12; because he is described as one who “abandoned the law of the Lord,” it can be inferred that until then, he kept the Lord’s law.

<sup>59</sup> There is scholarly debate as to whether the building of these cities should be ascribed to Hezekiah or Josiah. See A.F. Rainey, “The Chronicler and his Sources—Historical and Geographical,” in M.P. Graham, K.G. Hoglund, and S.L. McKenzie (eds.), *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSup, 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 30–72 (48–49), and compare to Israel Finkelstein, who argues that the date of construction was as late as the Hasmonean era in the second half of the second century BCE (I. Finkelstein, “Rehoboam’s fortified cities [II Chr 11, 5–12]: A Hasmonean reality?”, *ZAW* 123 [2011], 92–107).

<sup>60</sup> Note the word order in the sentence: first the officers humble themselves, and only then Rehoboam does, in contrast to the word order in the verse describing the arrival of the prophet, who appears before “Rehoboam and the officials of Judah.” This ordering creates a chiasmic parallel, as already noted by Isaac Kalimi, see I. Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 221.

“because he humbled himself the wrath of the Lord turned from him, so as not to destroy them completely; moreover, *good things were found* (דברים טובים נמצאו) in Judah” (ibid., 12) is in dialogue with the prophecy to Jeroboam in Kings: “for [Abijah] alone of Jeroboam’s family shall come to the grave, because in him there is *found something good* (נמצא בו דבר טוב)” (1 Kgs 14:13). While the goodness God sees in Abijah will not save him from death, he alone of Jeroboam’s house will be buried, whereas “Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat; and anyone who dies in the open country, the birds of the air shall eat” (ibid., 11). Similarly, while the good found in Judah does not save the city from invasion, it suffices to save the city from complete destruction.

Another aspect worth pointing out in this context is the relationship between King Rehoboam and the people of Judah. The description in the book of Kings is unique and directly accuses the people of sinning, rather than the king himself: “Judah did what as evil in the sight of the Lord” (1 Kgs 14:22). In dialogue with this approach, the Chronicler emphasizes that good was to be found within Judah, and not necessarily in Rehoboam himself; in contrast, for example, with the prophecy to Jehoshaphat: “some good is found in you” (2 Chr 19:3). He surpasses himself when he summarizes Rehoboam’s reign with the classic Deuteronomistic formula: “*He did evil* [in the sight of the Lord]” (12:14),<sup>61</sup> even though, as mentioned, in Kings evil is ascribed only to Judah in this context.<sup>62</sup> The Chronicler’s deviation from Kings at the beginning of this section, which describes all the good that transpires during the first three years of his reign, is somewhat balanced out by this additional deviation, when he accuses Rehoboam of doing evil in the Lord’s sight—casting aspersion that even the Deuteronomist does not.

The final encounter with Jeroboam in this section, a certain adaption of the text in Kings, reads: “there were continual wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam” (2 Chr 12:15). This description seems to contradict the prophet Shemaiah’s order to Rehoboam, which prevented his attack on Jeroboam. The fact that Chronicler made changes to the phrase in Kings proves that it was not an accidental insertion, and it must be assumed that the disparity between the two descriptions is not coincidental. With time, this phrase implies, the evil that Rehoboam did in the sight of the Lord resulted in his violation of the prophet’s command, and at a certain point, he may even have attempted to regain control of the northern kingdom.

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<sup>61</sup> Considering the repetition of this formula throughout the book of Kings, it is likely, as it appears in BHS, that the words “in the Lord’s sight” should be inserted here.

<sup>62</sup> Wilhelm Rudolph believes that 2 Chr 12:13–14 is a later addition, see Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, 235.

In summary, the second section is concerned with Rehoboam and Judah in the wake of the schism. This section is divided into two: the earlier verses relate the high point of his reign, where Rehoboam reaps the rewards of good deeds which are unknown to us. These descriptions are presented as the antithesis to events that befall Jeroboam in the book of Kings. Whereas the kings are presented as neutral equals prior to the schism, the post-schism narrative marks a turning point. Rehoboam is presented as a positive character, although the nature of his good deeds is not clear, while Jeroboam is cast in a negative light, albeit with certain restraint. By the end of the section, however, balance between the two characters is restored when Rehoboam is accused of doing evil in the Lord's sight, and the narrative implies that war was resumed between the two kingdoms, despite the prophetic warning immediately after the schism.

### THE THIRD SECTION (13): ABIJAH'S SPEECH

Abijah's speech, which some scholars read as a speech with prophetic elements,<sup>63</sup> is essentially a fierce polemical diatribe against Jeroboam and the northern kingdom, delivered before the war between Abijah and Jeroboam. Surprisingly, in the opening verse of the narrative, the Chronicler places the two kings together in an unparalleled synchronic description that echoes the *Vorlage* almost word for word: "In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah began to reign over Judah" (13:1). The juxtaposition of these two kings legitimizes Jeroboam's reign; in fact, this is the only place the Chronicler refers to Jeroboam as "King Jeroboam."

Abijah's speech, to a great extent, reveals the Chronicler's negative attitude towards the northern kingdom, and there is clear, unequivocal distinction between the southern and northern kingdoms.<sup>64</sup> His descriptions of Jeroboam as "Solomon's servant," his grave "rebel[lion] against his lord," and the people who joined him as "certain worthless scoundrels" are harsh descriptions which shatter the moderate narrative of ch. 10. As we have already noted, this section challenges the first section's portrayal of the schism's circumstances.

Sara Japhet believes that these gaps can be bridged by positing that the Chronicler's work includes a range of different perspectives of the schism, including contradictory views.<sup>65</sup> She explains Abijah's war against Jeroboam as the result of Abijah choosing to

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<sup>63</sup> See J.D. Newsome, "Toward a New Understanding of the Chronicler and His Purposes," *JBL* 94 (1975), 201–17 (203). But compare to W.M. Schniedewind, *The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple* (JSOTSup, 197; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 191, 237.

<sup>64</sup> See G.N. Knoppers, "'Battling against Yahweh': Israel's War against Judah in 2 Chr 13:2–20," *RB* 100 (1993), 515–22.

<sup>65</sup> Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 689.

take a different path than that of his father; in a belated attempt to restore the northern kingdom to the house of David. I find this problematic as the Chronicler relates that “There were continual wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam” (2 Chr 12:15); Abijah does not actually stray from his father’s path.

Before I address the issue of disparity, it should be noted that the Chronicler retains a certain balance between Jeroboam and Rehoboam, even in this speech. Rehoboam is described as a young, inexperienced politician who was unable to withstand the pressures bearing down on him. The roots of the words “defied” (אָמַן, 13:7) and “could not overpower” (חָזַק, *ibid.*) recur throughout the section; אָמַן appears four times (10:18; 11:17; 13:7, 18), while the root חָזַק appears eight times (11:11, 12, 17; 12:1, 13; 13:7, 8, 21).<sup>66</sup> These roots are part of the same semantic field of strength and power. Associated with Rehoboam in negative forms, he emerges as a weak, powerless king. While his kingdom does gain strength following the schism, this may be the result of the Israelites who flock to Judah, rather than a result of his own personal strength (11:17). Even Abijah’s words subtly, indirectly criticize Rehoboam for his weakness he displayed in his encounter with Jeroboam’s people. Rehoboam’s only successful display of strength is undertaken to save his own skin (18).

Once again, this illustrates the balance that the Chronicler maintains between Rehoboam and Jeroboam’s characters. Even when Abijah singles out Jeroboam as the guilty party, his speech still draws attention to Rehoboam’s weakness and culpability; elements which could have been omitted.

A brief summary of what I have shown so far reveals that throughout all three sections of the schism narrative, the Chronicler retains certain balance between the figures of Rehoboam and Jeroboam. This balance is crucial for the sake of assertion that God’s will overrides all human intentions, as calculating and careful as they may be. In the second section, balance is also maintained between the two kings. While Jeroboam’s grave sins are downplayed by the Chronicler, they are not entirely omitted. Moreover, three negative events concerning Jeroboam in Kings are paralleled by positive events that befall Rehoboam during the first three years of his reign. After three years, however, Rehoboam turns his back on God, and even though he “humbles himself,” the final summary of his reign is unequivocal: “he did evil.” The balance in this section is maintained through the downplaying of Jeroboam’s sins and the lack of information regarding Rehoboam’s good deeds. At the end of the second section, balance is restored fully as Rehoboam is deemed as one who does evil in the Lord’s sight. The third section explores both characters; here, there is no restraint in Jeroboam’s characterization, and through Abijah, the Chronicler describes him

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<sup>66</sup> Both of these roots appear together throughout the Bible: see BDB, 55.

with harsh, derogatory language. However, Rehoboam is not spared either, and is described as a weak, inexperienced king who was unable to withstand the pressure of kingship. Through Abijah's description, "young and irresolute," Rehoboam is linked to the young men who misadvised him, and he is cast in a problematic light.<sup>67</sup>

What did the Chronicler seek to achieve through these characterizations?

From a theological perspective, the Chronicler hovers between two positions. On one hand, he believes that God's will overrides all, regardless of human action, while on the other, he emphasizes that humans are not exempt from responsibility for their deeds. Neither Jeroboam nor Rehoboam are responsible for the schism; yet they are both responsible. They are not responsible because the schism is a preconceived divine plan, and will come to pass regardless of their actions; but they *are* responsible because their behavior resulted in the concrete fulfillment of God's will.<sup>68</sup> The divine element in the narrative is emphasized by the Chronicler in the first section, which portrays both kings in a largely faultless light. Human responsibility is described later, through the eyes of Abijah, who describes the schism from a retroactive perspective. This perspective does not factor in divine will, and places responsibility solely on human shoulders. Rather than contradict each other, the first and third sections complete each other.

The phenomenon of "dual causality"<sup>69</sup> is central to biblical literature and is an integral part of the Chronicler's doctrine; there is nothing innovative about this two-dimensional presentation.<sup>70</sup> Rather, what this analysis brings to light is found in the balance that the Chronicler maintains between the two kings: in the first section, both Rehoboam and Jeroboam are characterized as rational figures, so the schism can be read as the result of divine will alone.<sup>71</sup> God's will, however, is lacking in the third section, as it would detract from each king's personal responsibility for the schism. The absolute distinction between divine will overriding rational human

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<sup>67</sup> Rehoboam began ruling at the age of 41, so that Abijah's description is not quite suitable. The Septuagint of Kings (version B) has: "He was 16 when he became king," which justifies Abijah's description, and even clarifies that the "young men/children" Rehoboam sought advice from were indeed actual children. The Septuagint of Chronicles uses a less extreme term for these "children": (νεώτερος), which means "youths."

<sup>68</sup> For a slightly different approach, see Ben-Zvi, "The Secession of the Northern Kingdom," 73–77.

<sup>69</sup> Regarding this phenomenon, see Y. Amit, "Dual Causality—A Further Look," *Bet Miqra* 38 (1993), 41–55 (Hebrew).

<sup>70</sup> As opposed to Japhet, *The Ideology*, 105–6, who argues that "the Book of Chronicles is not informed by this concept of double causality."

<sup>71</sup> Contra Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 656.

behavior, and human deeds in a world apparently devoid of God—this is the new idea offered in the schism narrative in Chronicles.<sup>72</sup>

From a literary perspective, it is possible to trace the two kings' gradual character development over the course of the three narrative sections. Rehoboam is initially presented as a positive figure; as a complex, composite character following the schism; and in the third section, in a largely negative light. Jeroboam, too, is initially presented as a positive figure; his negative portrayal in the second section is nonetheless inhibited and almost neutral; and finally, he is retroactively characterized with harsh, caustic language. This gradual progression helps us to understand the disparity between the two ends of the story. Rehoboam and Jeroboam are not flat, static characters; and as they evolve, so does their evaluation. Through each of their acts and decisions, these two kings were responsible for the schism between Israel and Judah. It is not surprising that Rehoboam is not described as a virtuous king who does what is right in the eyes of the Lord. Despite his Davidic lineage, he does not continue in the path of his father Solomon; rather, Solomon's legacy is continued by his grandson Abijah or perhaps even Asa, who is the first of the Judean kings to win the title of doing "what was good and right in the sight of the Lord his God" (14:1).<sup>73</sup>

Moreover, the balance maintained between the figures of Rehoboam and Jeroboam may have implications for the exploration of other important issues in Chronicles, such as the attitude towards the kingdom of Israel and its relationship with the kingdom of Judah. These issues, of course, far exceed the scope of this article, and we can only relate to specific points where they are tangent to the discussion at hand.

What, then, is the Chronicler's position towards the northern kingdom of Israel? Research does not provide a unanimous answer. Gerhard von Rad, who takes an exclusivist approach, holds that the Chronicler rejects the kingdom of Israel because Judah is "das wahre Israel."<sup>74</sup> Japhet and Williamson, who favor an inclusivist approach, believe that the Chronicler's attitude towards the northern kingdom is ambivalent: while the kingdom was founded as the result of sin, its establishment is nonetheless a fulfillment of God's word to Ahijah the Shilonite. This ambivalence is manifest in the

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<sup>72</sup> Amit, "Dual Causality," 54, takes an extensive look at characterization in narratives that contain both human and divine elements. She claims that in stories that attempt to emphasize divine will, the human character is reduced to one-dimensional. Here, however, it seems that the characters are not simplified, but rather characterized as a rational figures overruled by divine will.

<sup>73</sup> There is scholarly debate regarding Abijah's character. See D.G. DeBoys, "History and Theology in the Chronicler's Portrayal of Abijah," *Bib* 70 (1990), 48–62. But compare to Kelly, *Retribution*, 96.

<sup>74</sup> G. von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild des chronistischen Werkes* (BWA[N]T, 54; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1930), 31.

fact that despite all its sins, the kingdom of Israel is an inseparable part of the people of Israel.<sup>75</sup>

Both approaches have their own supporters,<sup>76</sup> but both agree that the kingdom of Judah is the a priori favorite, while only the kingdom of Israel's legitimacy is cast in doubt. However, I believe that the balance between Rehoboam and Jeroboam demonstrated above demands that the issue be considered with a more balanced approach. Knoppers, for example, claims that in contrast to the approach favored by Japhet and Williamson, the tension between the north and south is not resolved in the book of Chronicles, despite Judean efforts to reunite the kingdoms.<sup>77</sup> These efforts yielded limited, temporary results, and did not result in full unity; nonetheless, Knoppers argues that the center of gravity lies in these efforts, rather than in their limited results; it is these efforts that serve as a paradigm for the Chronicler, for whom "the unfulfilled legacy of the past becomes the agenda of the future."<sup>78</sup>

Louis C. Jonker also takes a more balanced approach. He argues that the attitude towards the kingdom of Israel after the schism (2 Chr 10–36)—in sharp contrast to the attitude reflected in the genealogical lists (1 Chr 1–9) or in David and Solomon's time (1 Chr 10–2 Chr 9)—is no longer defined according to ethnic factors, but according to cultic factors: whether or not Israel seeks out God.<sup>79</sup> It is in light of this that Jonker interprets the Chronicler's description of the relationship between the northern and southern kingdoms. Jonker believes that the Chronicler's attitude towards the northern kingdom is ambivalent; this is expressed in the fact that some narratives depict affinity between the two kingdoms, while others express the opposite. This ambiguity, he claims, is intentional, and its function is to underscore the tension between the inhabitants of Yehud and the inhabitants of the North: on one hand, there is fierce longing for assimilation, as they are, in a sense, brothers (see: 2 Chr 28: 8, 11, 15), while on the other, they wish to maintain their own identity through differentiation, as they have chosen Samaria as their cultic center in Jerusalem's place.<sup>80</sup> This

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<sup>75</sup> Japhet, *The Ideology*, 211, 248; Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*.

<sup>76</sup> See Jonathan E. Dyck's survey of research: J.E. Dyck, *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 25–43.

<sup>77</sup> G.N. Knoppers ("A Reunited Kingdom in Chronicles?," Proceedings: Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies 9 [1989], 74–88) explains why Hezekiah's attempts were not entirely successful (p. 82), but he does not explain why Josiah's attempt was only partially successful, as he claims on p. 83.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> L.C. Jonker, *Defining All-Israel in Chronicles: Multi-levelled Identity Negotiation in Late Persian-Period Yehud* (FAT, 106; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 166.

<sup>80</sup> Jonker points to the Jehoram narrative (2 Chr 21) as a story that contains this tension.

tension, Jonker argues, is expressed in the descriptions of the Passover celebration in Josiah and Hezekiah's time. On the one hand, the text depicts the kings' efforts to include the northern kingdom in their celebration, but on the other hand, the text displays criticism towards the inhabitants of the north: some of the northern people mock Hezekiah's invitation (2 Chr 30:10), and the text emphasizes that none of the northern kings ever celebrated Passover as Josiah did (35:18).<sup>81</sup>

The Chronicler, therefore, does not give *a priori* preference to the kingdom of Judah, nor does he *a priori* reject the kingdom of Israel. Rather, the attitude towards each kingdom is based on the fulfillment—or lack thereof—of legitimate worship in Jerusalem.<sup>82</sup>

I believe that only in this way can the relationship between Hezekiah's speech to the people of Judah and the speech that Hezekiah's messengers delivered to the people of Israel be understood. There are many parallels between the two speeches that have yet to receive significant scholarly attention.

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<sup>81</sup> Jonker, *Defining All-Israel*, 190.

<sup>82</sup> I concur with the approach that the preference of Judah and the Davidic line is not unconditional; rather, it serves to facilitate the Chronicler's objective of promoting Jerusalem as the center of worship, which does not seem to be possible without the existence of the southern kingdom. See, for example, Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, 89–90. The general omission of the history of the northern kingdom can be attributed to several reasons. See, for example, G.N. Knoppers, *Jews and Samaritans: The Origins and History of Their Early Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 74–75.

Hezekiah's Speech to Judah (2 Chr 29:5–11)	Hezekiah's messengers' speech to Israel (2 Chr 30:6–9)
For our <i>ancestors have been unfaithful</i> and have done what was evil in the sight of <i>the Lord our God</i> .	Do not be like <i>your ancestors</i> and your kindred, <i>who were unfaithful to the Lord God</i> of their ancestors.
<i>He has made them</i> an object of horror, of <i>desolation</i> , and of hissing, <i>as you see</i> .	So that <i>he made them a desolation</i> , <i>as you see</i> .
They have forsaken Him, and have turned away their faces from the dwelling of the Lord, and <i>turned their backs</i> (עָרְפוּ).	Do not now be <i>stiff-necked</i> (עֲרֹפְכֶם) as your ancestors were, but yield yourselves to the Lord and come to his sanctuary.
<i>So that His fierce anger may turn away from us</i> .	<i>So that His fierce anger may turn away from you</i> .

Hezekiah's speech reflects Judah's grim situation after the death of his father, King Ahaz, the most wicked of all the kings in the book of Chronicles,<sup>83</sup> while the second speech reflects the kingdom of Israel's situation, which has been no less grim following the exile of Samaria.<sup>84</sup> Both kingdoms are in an identical situation: both have acted unfaithful to God; both have turned their back on the Temple; both have been severely punished, and both are now being asked to repent so that God's anger will cease. The kingdom of Israel abandoned legitimate worship immediately after the schism, and this is what generates the Chronicler's negative attitude towards them throughout the book, while Judah was largely faithful, which resulted in God's positive attitude towards them. At this point in time, immediately after the Samaritan exile, both kingdoms are once again on similar footing. This equality, however, is due to both kingdoms' faithlessness, rather than their faith. Only their renewed, shared faith—as promoted by Abijah in his speech, and as repeated by Hezekiah and his messengers—can save them from God's fury. It is worth noting that neither Hezekiah nor his messengers make any mention of Passover, though this is the event that officially prompts his invitation; their speeches are more con-

<sup>83</sup> See I. Amar, "Chaotic Writing as a Literary Element in the Story of Ahaz in 2 Chronicles 28," *VT* 66 (2016), 349–64.

<sup>84</sup> Williamson has already noted the relationship between the kingdom of Judah in Ahaz's time, and its state under Abijah's rule. He believes that Ahaz's actions caused deterioration, and Judah is now in a similar state to that of Israel. However, Williamson does not notice the linguistic parallels between the two speeches in question, which reinforce this claim. See Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, 114.

cerned with general worship in Jerusalem. This generates a closer connection between Hezekiah's speeches and Abijah's speech, as all three are concerned with Jerusalem as the center of worship in general.

Placing emphasis on ritual worship as a gauge for the Chronicler's positive or negative attitude towards each kingdom facilitates understanding of the difference between the Chronicler and the Deuteronomist's attitudes towards the schism. Unlike the Deuteronomist, who perceives the schism as a terminal, irreversible event caused solely by Jeroboam, the Chronicler does not view the schism (for which, as discussed above, he holds Jeroboam and Rehoboam equally responsible) as the final word, but rather as a temporary obstacle that can be removed by the kingdom of Israel's renewed acceptance of Jerusalem as their center of worship. Abiah's appeal goes unanswered for generations, until Hezekiah invites the remnant of Israel for the Passover celebration. Hezekiah's message to the northern kingdom is a reworking of Abiah's speech with inverted language: instead of the root עז"ב, *abandon*, Hezekiah's messengers use the root ש"ב, *return*, no fewer than six times. The kingdom of Israel is asked to return to God and His temple in Jerusalem, as opposed to their desertion of God and His temple in Abiah's speech. The attempt to reunite the northern and southern kingdoms begins after the exile of Samaria, when the two kingdoms are in the same position, as they were in the days of David and Solomon.

These two speeches—Abijah's speech, and Hezekiah's messengers' speech, neither of which feature in Kings—illuminate the Chronicler's perception of the current state of Yehud, but moreover, they allow a glimpse of his future vision. In this context, it can be understood that Abijah's speech can be read as a realistic text addressed to the present inhabitants of Yehud, while the messengers' speech functions as a utopian text.<sup>85</sup> As long as the Samaritan temple was situated on Mount Gerizim (along with other temples in the region),<sup>86</sup> competing with the temple in Jerusalem,<sup>87</sup> the

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<sup>85</sup> In this context, it is worth recalling that here, a utopian text “Does not reflect historical reality, but future possibility,” see S.J. Schweitzer, “Exile, Empire and Prophecy: Reframing Utopian Concerns in Chronicles,” in S.J. Schweitzer and F. Uhlenbruch (eds.), *Worlds that Could not Be: Utopia in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah* (New York/London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 81–104 (87). However, in Schweitzer's opinion (*ibid.*, 88), Hezekiah's messengers' speech also falls under the category of “utopian text,” and I am inclined to disagree with him. I do not believe that the Chronicler's work can be entirely considered a worthier alternative to reality, and not infrequently, his words reflect his current situation from his own perspective.

<sup>86</sup> For a survey of temples established in the Chronicler's time, see Y. Amit, “Araunah's Threshing Floor: A Lesson in Shaping Historical Memory,” in E. Ben-Zvi and D. Edelman (eds.), *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 133–44 (141–42).

Chronicler was moved to warning (as reflected in Abijah's speech), but mainly to hope (the messengers' speech) that only one center of worship would exist in Yehud and its surroundings: the temple in Jerusalem.<sup>87</sup> The Chronicler is terrified of the current reality, in which many inhabitants of Jerusalem, including priests and Levites, were leaving Jerusalem in order to join the Samaritan community up north, which presented itself as the legitimate continuation of the kingdom of Ephraim. The Chronicler therefore seeks to shape the course of history by inserting unparalleled mentions of the northern kingdom arriving in Jerusalem in order to offer sacrifices in Jerusalem (2 Chr 12:16; 15:9). This is especially salient in the Passover invitation Hezekiah extends to the remaining inhabitants of the north. As Knoppers comments, this assumes that the people of the north are familiar with the laws of Deuteronomy (Deut 16:1–8), which states that Passover must be celebrated in “the place where the Lord has chosen.”<sup>89</sup>

I believe that this dichotomy—between the current situation in Yehud and the utopian hopes for the future—is also evident in the description of the Passover celebrations during Josiah and Hezekiah's reign. The description of Hezekiah's Passover celebration (2 Chr 30) is not paralleled in Kings, while the description of Josiah's Passover celebration in Chronicles (2 Chr 35:1–19) is sixteen verses longer than the account in Kings (2 Kgs 23:21–23). Both summaries, however, mention the participation of the northern kingdom:

<b>Hezekiah's Passover celebration (2 Chr 30:25)</b>	<b>Josiah's Passover celebration (2 Chr 35:18)</b>
The whole assembly of Judah, the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly <i>that came out of Israel, and the resident aliens who came out of the land of Israel</i> , and the resident aliens who lived in Judah, rejoiced.	No Passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as was kept by Josiah, by the priests and the Levites, by all Judah <i>and Israel who were present</i> , and by the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

<sup>87</sup> It appears that the temple in Mount Gerizim was active in the mid-fifth century BCE. See Y. Magen, “Mount Gerizim: A Temple City,” *Qad* 23 (1990), 76–96 (Hebrew).

<sup>88</sup> Knoppers discusses this at length, see G.N. Knoppers, “Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Zion: A Study in the Early History of the Samaritans and Jews,” *JR* 34 (2005), 309–38.

<sup>89</sup> Knoppers, *Jews and Samaritans*, 85.

These two summaries of the Passover celebrations seem very similar: both are attended by priests, Levites, Israel and Judah, and both are compared to Passover celebrations of the past. However, a closer look reveals a number of differences. While the Chronicler takes care to mention both “the assembly of Judah” and “the whole assembly that came out of Israel,” he separates them with the phrase “the priests and the Levites.” In contrast, in describing Josiah’s celebration, he mentions them in a single phrase, “all Judah and Israel,” while they are preceded by mention of the priests and Levites. The phrase “king of Judah” is replaced with the more general expression, “king of Israel,” which was in use before the schism. In regard to Hezekiah, this phrase appears in the singular form, referring to Solomon, while in context of Josiah’s celebration it appears in the plural form—“the kings of Israel,” referring to kings in general—possibly even kings of the north. The comparison to previous Passover celebrations is also worth noting: Hezekiah’s celebration is compared to those of Solomon, while Josiah’s is compared to Passovers celebrated in the prophet Samuel’s time as a metonym for the entire period before all the days of “kings of Israel and kings of Judah” (2 Kgs 23:22). The explanation for these differences, I believe, lies in the relationship between the current state of affairs and the ideal vision of the future. In Hezekiah’s time, there is still certain hostility between the north and the south, as is evident from the contempt some people of the north display to Hezekiah’s messengers (2 Chr 30:10). In contrast, by Josiah’s time, most of the physical and psychological barriers between the north and the south have been broken down (2 Chr 34:33). Unlike Knopper’s argument, which claims that both Hezekiah and Josiah failed to achieve a permanent, significant reunion between the kingdoms, I believe that a distinction can be drawn between these two kings: Hezekiah’s Passover celebrations should be read as a representation of the Chronicler’s own time, that is, when there was still certain tension between Yehud and Samaria; while the description of Josiah’s Passover celebrations can be read as a utopian vision for the future, when there will be no more barriers between the north and the south, just as there were no such barriers in the time of Samuel.

### CONCLUSION

The schism between Judah and Israel is, without a doubt, one of the most significant, traumatic, and formative events in the history of the first temple. The Chronicler relates to this event on two dimensions: both openly and covertly. Openly, the schism transpires through human acts, but covertly, the hand of God shapes history at will. The Chronicler attempts to present both Jeroboam and Rehoboam in a reasonable light, and in doing so, he contributes to the final narrative form in two ways. His first account of the schism emphasizes the hidden hand of God. God’s will, however, is only salient when Rehoboam and Jeroboam are presented as

reasonable, guiltless characters; characters whose rationality allows God's will to shine in the spotlight. A retroactive look at the schism, however, characterizes the two kings as guilty—each in his own way—of tearing the kingdoms apart. Both Rehoboam and Jeroboam play a significant role in executing God's plan; to the degree that even the pro-Judean Chronicler swerves his Davidic loyalties during Rehoboam's reign, and shoots accusations more caustic than those of the Deuteronomist.

The balance between Jeroboam and Rehoboam also generates new insights into one of the most debated topics among scholars of Chronicles: the relationship between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah following the schism. The kingdom of Judah is largely regarded as God's preferred kingdom, and only the kingdom of Israel's status is generally given to scholarly debate; is it considered part of God's chosen nation, or not? The balance I have noted between Jeroboam and Rehoboam proves that the Chronicler, unlike the Deuteronomist, holds that both kingdoms are on equal footing, for the legitimacy of both kingdoms is contingent upon whether they practice legitimate worship. Their separation is therefore temporary rather than final, and the kingdom of Israel is penalized only for its worship of other gods, as Abijah emphasizes in his speech. Samaria's destruction provides an opportunity for reunion, and Hezekiah takes advantage of this opportunity by sending messengers to the northern kingdom in an attempt to convince them to embrace legitimate worship once more. These two speeches—those of Abijah's and Hezekiah's messengers—each express a different dimension of the Chronicler's perception. The earlier speech expresses the current situation, in which Yehud and Jerusalem must contend against Samaria and its temple on Mount Gerizim (and possibly other sites as well), while the second speech expresses an utopian dream for the future, in which the temple in Jerusalem draws people from all corners of both kingdoms, as it did in Solomon's time. A similar dichotomy between present and future can be traced in the Passover celebrations of Hezekiah and Josiah. Hezekiah's celebration represents the present, given the tension that is still evident between the south and the north, while the utopian dimension of Josiah's celebration anticipates a future which will once again see Judah and Israel united as one.