

# CHAPTER 10: THE UNITED MONARCHY

## A) MINIMALISTS, MAXIMALISTS, AND THE UNITED MONARCHY

### 1) DAVID AND THE ACADEMIC DEBATE

The recent mainstream academic discussion about the United Monarchy has been characterized by a great debate. This debate has centered on the degree that the Biblical account should be considered historically accurate. Within the mainstream academic orbit, rather few authors would accept the inerrancy of God's Word. Inerrancy is a position defended by conservatives. Authors on the left begin with the assumption that many claims in the Biblical text are not correct. Then they debate how much of the text should be regarded as correct. Two decades ago, the mainstream was willing to credit substantial accuracy to Biblical events from the United Monarchy forward. Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis assumed that the "J" material in the Pentateuch was written during the United Monarchy. For over a century, Wellhausen's heirs assumed that Biblical material before the United Monarchy was of questionable historical value, and that real history in the Bible began with David. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Albright and his students evaluated the archaeological evidence based on the assumption that the United Monarchy was a historical reality. Many authors today still defend a Maximalist position and assume that much of the Biblical text was historically accurate.<sup>1</sup> In the last few decades, that assumption has been called into question by the Copenhagen school and by a rising group of archaeological Minimalists. Authors like Lemche and Thompson have called into question whether David and Solomon ever actually ruled in Palestine.<sup>2</sup> The rising skepticism among Lemche and Thompson's supporters may mirror the age in which they work.<sup>3</sup> The postmodern world in general calls into question whether truth of any kind can be known.<sup>4</sup>

The new skepticism about David's existence is surprising because David was the first leader of Israel to be mentioned in the texts of the ancient Near East.<sup>5</sup> Kitchen wrote an article about the references to David. Kitchen argued that the earliest of these references may have been written in 925 BC during the reign of Pharaoh Sheshonq I. He invaded Palestine during the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam.<sup>6</sup> Sheshonq I had a vast triumph scene carved on the walls of the temple of Amun at Karnak. This text contains a name associated with southern Palestine that could be David. While some authors have suggested that this name may refer to a god named Dod, Kitchen noted that there was no evidence for the existence of such a god anywhere in the ancient Near East. If Kitchen's understanding of this name was correct, Sheshonq's description of his Palestine campaign may have mentioned David only 50 years after

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William Hallo represented a Maximalist conservative position. He argued that the Bible's authors used sources from the Bronze Age when they wrote the history of early Israel. Hallo claimed that they did so "intelligently, purposefully and selectively." See the discussion of Hallo in Edwin Yamauchi, "The Current State of Old Testament Historiography," 1-36 in A. R. Millard, et al, eds. *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in its Near Eastern Context*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Amy Dockser Marcus, *The View from Nebo*, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 2000), 123.

<sup>3</sup> Neil Silberman gave a talk on the history of excavation at Megiddo. He noted that Megiddo, and any important archaeological site, served as a mirror reflecting the culture that dug the site. See the discussion of Silberman's comment in Marcus, *The View from Nebo*, 113. It could be argued that any archaeological conclusions merge hard evidence from the ground with the world view of those who excavate the site.

<sup>4</sup> The rising skepticism about the historical validity of the United Monarchy has been reinforced by sociological interpretations of the text. These studies have focused on the process by which states were formed in the ancient Near East. For a study of the implications of sociological studies of the reigns of David and Solomon, see Walter E. Rast, "The Problem of Stratigraphy Relating to David," *Eretz-Israel* 20 (1989): 166\*-73\*.

<sup>5</sup> This contrasts sharply with claims by recent authors like Finkelstein that the united monarchy was fiction rather than history. For the debate, see Michael D. Coogan, "Assessing David & Solomon: From the Hypothetical to the Improbable to the Absurd," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 32 (2006): 56-60.

<sup>6</sup> Kitchen discussed the chronology of this period in K. A. Kitchen, "Ancient Egyptian Chronology for Aegeanists," *Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry* 2 (2002): 7-8.

his death. While the name in Sheshonq I's text is somewhat uncertain, Kitchen pointed to another possible reference to King David that is more widely accepted. David's name was found on the Tel Dan Stela at Tell el-Qadi which was the ancient city of Laish. There has been a lot of academic debate about this stela in the last couple of years. Much of this debate has centered on how to translate it and how to fill in some of the holes in the text. The stela described a military conflict between Israel and Damascus that occurred no later than 841 BC. The text was written by the king of Damascus. The text claimed that he had defeated or killed Jehoram, the son of Ahab, the king of Israel. Then he claimed that he had killed Ahaziah, the son of Joram, the king of the house of David. So this text demonstrates that Judah was called the house of David more than a century after his death. Kitchen also mentioned a reference to King David on the Mesha stela. In this Moabite text, Mesha claimed that the house of David had lived in Horonen until the god Kemosh commanded Mesha to capture Horonen.<sup>7</sup> So it is quite credible to claim that David was a real historical person, no matter how the accuracy of the Biblical text as a whole is evaluated.

Kitchen noted that T. L. Thompson had argued against the historical validity of the united monarchy by questioning whether the name "David" would have been used at the time. Thompson argued that the word David was a very unusual name. On the Mesha Stela, it could have been an epithet for a deity. While not the name of a god, Thompson argued that the word David could have been a title for a deity. Thompson also argued that the texts that appeared to mention the name David could have been forgeries. Kitchen argued that the name David was clearly a name in use in the region. Kitchen noted that already in 1730 BC, there was a West Semitic carpenter named David. His name appeared on an Egyptian stela.<sup>8</sup>

Margreet Steiner discussed Thomas Thompson's claim that during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age, Jerusalem only functioned as a political center for small agricultural settlements near it. Thompson argued that Jerusalem was only a small provincial town during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. Thompson argued that Jerusalem was only transformed into a regional capital during the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. Thompson complained that his conclusions were hampered by the relative lack of archaeological evidence caused by the fact that excavations of Jerusalem had not published adequately their findings. Steiner noted that she had access to the original archaeological data from Kenyon's excavations in 1961-67, Macalister's excavations in the 1920's, Parkers excavations in 1911, and Yigal Shiloh's excavations after 1979. Steiner noted that this evidence made it possible to correct and augment Thompson's claims about the history of Jerusalem. Steiner claimed that Jerusalem had been a regionally important administrative center during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. Steiner claimed that by the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, Jerusalem had become an exceptionally large city. Steiner noted that this model for Jerusalem's history was based on the pottery sequence, and that pottery from the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC was very hard to date. Steiner noted that the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC level at Jerusalem has produced defensive walls, fortifications, and administrative buildings. Steiner noted private homes from this period have not been found. Steiner argued that Jerusalem was really a small area made up largely of public buildings. Steiner argued that this site was the capital of a new state, although Steiner doubted that it could have been large enough to administer the kind of empire suggested in the Biblical text.<sup>9</sup> The archaeological evidence for Jerusalem was augmented recently when a tractor doing maintenance work on Temple Mountain dug a trench 100 meters long and a 1.5 meters deep across the top of the temple mountain. No archaeological digs have been allowed on Temple Mountain because of the site's religious significance. The maintenance trench exposed artifacts from a sealed occupation layer at the site that was formed in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>10</sup> The trench demonstrates that substantial archaeological evidence could be recovered from Temple Mountain if an

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K. A. Kitchen, "A Possible Mention of David in the Late Tenth Century BCE and Deity \*Dod as Dead as the Dodo?" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 76 (1997): 29-44. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 32-4, 92-6.

K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000), 452. Marcus also noted that N. P. Lemche and Thomas Thompson suggested that the Tel Dan stela might have been a planted forgery. Marcus suggested that this claim grew from their zeal to disprove the United Monarchy, but their claim proved to be mistaken. Marcus, *The View from Nebo*, 118.

Margreet Steiner, "Jerusalem in the Tenth and Seventh Centuries BCE: From Administrative Town to Commercial City," 280-88 in Amihai Mazar, ed. *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan*, (Sheffield: JSOT, 2001), 280-83.

<sup>10</sup> Etgar Lefkowitz, "Link to First Temple Found," *The Jerusalem Post*, October 24, 2007.

excavation were allowed. Conclusions about the Jerusalem's history based on archaeological evidence have always been limited by the amount of evidence available and should be taken with a grain of salt.

Michael Niemann made a useful observation about the United Monarchy. He noted that David and Solomon were good examples of oriental rulers. They reigned by forming alliances. Niemann noted that David chose Jerusalem as his capital because it could not be identified with any of the tribes. Niemann noted that Solomon relied strongly on marriage alliances. This kind of reign produces a different kind of empire than Assyria or Babylon. David and Solomon could have controlled a large area without a great army. Niemann argued that Jerusalem could have been rather sparsely populated during the United Monarchy while it was also the center of a great empire.<sup>11</sup>

It should not be surprising that it has been somewhat difficult to identify an archaeological level with David's reign. David came to the throne when Israel's continued existence was in doubt. Israel was poor, weak, and dominated by her neighbors. It is unclear how distinct Israel's material culture actually was from that of her neighbors. David was a shepherd king. He built no great structures. He did capture Jerusalem, but Jebusites continued to live alongside the Israelites. So it is unclear how striking an Israelite cultural horizon could be observed even at Jerusalem. It is reasonable to believe that David's government could have used a substantial amount of velum or perhaps papyrus, but these would not have survived through the centuries. Jerusalem was a small hilltop city that was continually rebuilt, and new builders often cleaned their sites down to bedrock. So it is possible that only a limited amount of archaeological evidence has survived from David's time.<sup>12</sup>

## 2) SOLOMON AND THE ACADEMIC DEBATE

The debate over the historical validity of the United Monarchy becomes more heated with the reign of Solomon. Archaeological evidence for his reign can reasonably be expected because he carried on construction projects in Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. He built both a temple and a palace in Jerusalem. Solomon fortified Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer, but the Biblical text does not state exactly what he built in these cities.<sup>13</sup> The text also does not record how extensive Solomon's building projects really were.

In 1981, Amihai Mazar expressed the understanding of Solomon's reign that was common at the time. Mazar wrote,

The excavations at Hazor between 1954 and 1958, and in 1968, demonstrated that the city was built anew during Solomonic times after a long period of abandonment. During the Solomonic period the city was circumvallated by a casement wall and was entered through a six-chambered gate identical in plan and measurement to the gate found in stratum IV at Megiddo. Following this discovery, and in the

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<sup>11</sup> See the discussion of Niemann's position in Marcus, *The View from Nebo*, 124-25.

<sup>12</sup> In 1998, Ong Kar Khalsa of UCLA summarized the Maximalist/Minimalist debate. Khalsa noted that Minimalists see the Bible as a late narrative that is a combination of mythical and historical elements while Maximalists believe that the combination of Biblical and archaeological evidence can produce valid historical conclusions even though not every element of the account can be demonstrated. Khalsa noted that the debate has been affected by two features. The first is that in Jerusalem it is more practical to remove earlier construction and to build on bed rock than to build on earlier debris. The second is that Jerusalem had a continual settlement from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, and this constant occupation did not leave as clear an archaeological footprint as would have been left by periods of destruction. Khalsa argued that the main problem with the minimalist position is the correlation of the Biblical account with historical accounts from the ancient Near East. Khalsa also argued that the Biblical description of Solomon's temple resembled so closely the Canaanite MB temple and the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC temple at Tell Tainat that the account was unlikely to be fictional. Khalsa also argued that Kenyon's LB date for the Stepped Stone structure at Jerusalem was incorrect because ceramic evidence found at the site demonstrated an Iron Age date for the structure which was consistent with Solomonic origin. Khalsa noted that the Tel Dan stela has been called a forgery because the text lacks a word divider, but Khalsa noted other examples of texts from the period that lacked word dividers as well. Khalsa noted that 1Kgs. 10:15 attributed to Solomon the six chamber gates at Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer. Ushishkin and Finkelstein tried to redate the Megiddo gate to the 9<sup>th</sup> century Khalsa argued that similar gates at Hazor and Gezer have been demonstrated to have a 10<sup>th</sup> century date. Khalsa noted that the Biblical account mentioned Pharaoh Sheshonq's destruction of Megiddo, and Sheshonq's victory stela have actually been found at both Megiddo and Karnak. Ong Kar Khalsa, "The Debate over the Historicity and Chronology of the United Monarchy in Jerusalem," <http://www.mediasense.com/athena/jerusalem.htm>.

<sup>13</sup> Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 132

light of the statement in the Bible that Solomon built cities at Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer (I Kings 9:15), Yadin returned to Megiddo and closely examined the buildings there. His exploratory excavations (in which he was assisted by the architect I. Dunayevsky) led him to suggest a new interpretation for the development of Israelite Megiddo. The offset-inset wall and the stables previously attributed to Solomon's time were now pushed forward to the ninth century B. C. E., to the time of King Ahab, while a newly discovered palace (building 6000) was attributed to King Solomon's time, together with another palace excavated in the 1930's. The Solomonic city was fortified, according to this suggestion, by a casement wall related to the early phase of the six-chambered gate.

Following his work at Hazor and Megiddo, Yadin proposed that the "Hasmonean Fortress" uncovered by Macalister at Gezer at the beginning of this century is, in fact, part of a Solomonic six-chambered gate to which a casement wall was joined.<sup>14</sup>

Mazar's claim was popular in 1981, and it is still being defended today. However, it is now far more controversial than it was in 1981. Finkelstein, Thompson, and their followers now reject any archaeological evidence for the reigns of David and Solomon.

Amy Marcus summarized the case against the United Monarchy. Marcus noted that when Megiddo was excavated in the 1930's, Chicago's Oriental Institute found a set of pillared buildings that they identified as Solomon's stables. This explanation of the buildings was later rejected and the buildings were dated a century after Solomon's time. Yigael Yadin led excavations at Megiddo, and he argued that Solomon was responsible for the gates found at Megiddo, Hazor, and Masada. Yadin suggested that these gates represented Solomon's construction in I Kings 9:15-19. Yadin argued that the similarity of the gates demonstrated that a central administration constructed them. Then Finkelstein and Ussishkin began working at the site in 1994. Starting in 1996, Finkelstein published articles questioning whether anything at Megiddo could be associated with Solomon. Ussishkin argued that the gates at Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer were not as similar as Yadin had thought. Ussishkin argued that similar gates were found in Philistine cities and other locations. Ussishkin argued that the pottery, palaces, and architecture found at Megiddo were actually made in Ahab's time.<sup>15</sup>

Marcus noted that Finkelstein and Mazar were still debating how much Solomon really built. Finkelstein believed that Solomon did not build very much at Megiddo, while Mazar gave more credence to the Biblical account.<sup>16</sup> He believed that Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer were built and fortified by Solomon.<sup>17</sup> Marcus noted that Finkelstein and his students studied Omride architecture in detail. Norma Franklin was one of Finkelstein's students. Franklin studied 9<sup>th</sup> century BC architecture. Franklin noted that some of the Solomonic buildings at Megiddo resembled buildings that Omri made at Samaria. The similarities included the masons' marks on blocks. Franklin argued that some of the buildings attributed to Solomon at Megiddo did not have to be redated. Others did. After a careful study of masons' marks, Franklin noted 14 kinds of masons' marks in use in Omri's Samaria. Franklin noted that 12 of these

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Amihai Mazar, "Archaeological Research on the Period of the Monarchy (Iron Age II)," 43-57 in Hershel Shanks and Benjamin Mazar, eds., *Recent Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, (Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1981), 44-5.

<sup>15</sup> Marcus, *The View from Nebo*, 109-11.

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Walter Rast noted the problems associated with finding a Davidic layer at Megiddo. Rast noted that Stratum VB is normally associated with David. Rast noted that only scraps of walls have survived from Stratum V. Rast noted that the structures in level VIA were more impressive. This level may not have represented a completely different settlement because the "lower gate" of Stratum IVB may have continued into level V. The level VA-IVB four entryway gate was between levels VIA and VA-IVB. This level has been associated with David while the Stratum VA-IVB has been associated with David. Rast noted that the destruction of level VIA has been associated with David, although he may not have caused it. Rast noted that no large governmental buildings have been found in level VB. Rast noted that Tannic also was occupied in the late 11<sup>th</sup> and early 10<sup>th</sup> centuries BC during David's reign, but not in the level before it. Rast suggested that a gradual development of settlement during David's reign can also be seen in Stratum XI at Hazor. This was followed by the fortified city built in level X during Solomon's reign. Rast noted that one of the chronological debates over this period concerns the origin of the red-burnished pottery found at sites from the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC forward. Rast noted that red-burnished pottery may have moved into Israel from Syria during David's reign. Rast suggested that this may have happened because according to II Sam. 8:3-12, David was involved militarily in the heartland of Syria at this time. Rast suggested that David's presence in Syria may have opened a "corridor for cultural influence" into Israel from Aram. Rast, "The Problem of Stratigraphy Relating to David," 166\*-73\*.

<sup>17</sup> Marcus, *The View from Nebo*, 114.

masons' marks also appeared on monuments at Megiddo. This suggested that either the same masons or the same schools of masons worked at both sites.<sup>18</sup> Of course, if the masons' marks were associated with schools instead of individual masons, the marks could have been in use over a long period of time.

J. Maxwell Miller also traced the rising skepticism about Solomon's reign. Miller argued that both literary critics and archaeologists had begun with the assumption of a golden age during Solomon's reign. This assumption then affected how the archaeological evidence was interpreted. Miller argued that through the 1970's, both Biblical scholars and archaeologists supported Solomon's golden age. Miller outlined the evidence against Solomon's empire this way.

Realizing that the discussion has rushed on ahead, that for some scholars the more appropriate question to be asked now is whether there was a historical Solomon at all, it will perhaps be useful to summarize the case for a less extensive and fabulous Solomonic realm than was generally envisioned until a decade ago. The case reduces to four interrelated but essentially independent arguments: A) The emergence of such an empire during the early Iron Age would have been out of keeping with the general circumstances of the times. B) An empire of such magnitude and renown as envisioned in the biblical accounts surely would have left some epigraphic traces. C) While it is possible that the two biblical accounts of Solomon's reign preserve literary elements which hark back to Solomonic times, this can no longer be maintained with any degree of certainty. Moreover, close examination of the passages which show even some promise of having derived from Solomonic times suggests a territorial realm and royal operation of relatively modest proportions. D) The archaeological evidence also seems to argue against the existence of an empire and golden age centered in the Palestinian hill-country during the 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Taken by itself, no one of these arguments is decisive. Together they constitute a strong case.<sup>19</sup>

Given the ambivalence of our evidence, biblical and otherwise, the most we can hope to achieve is an informed guess about the historical Solomon. My "best guess," spelled out more fully in the Miller-Hayes history, is that Solomon probably was a historical figure, but of more local stature than the biblical writers envisioned.<sup>20</sup>

Miller noted that by the end of the 1970's, there was no longer critical consensus that anything in the Hebrew Bible could be attributed to Solomon. For example, Whybray argued that while Wisdom Literature might have existed in Solomon's court, no strong case could be made for it. At the same time, Finkelstein and Ussishkin questioned the archaeological evidence for Solomon's reign. Miller noted that he had already argued in the 1980's that Solomon might have been a local ruler in Palestine who controlled the region west of the Jordan and some of the northern Transjordan but not the coastal zones. Miller noted that Garbini, Knauf, Redford and Thompson have been more skeptical of Solomon's historical existence. Miller suggested that the real question today was whether Solomon existed at all. Miller argued that there might have been a minor ruler in the region named Solomon. Miller noted that the plan for Solomon's temple resembled other excavated Iron Age temples, and the wealth ascribed to Solomon could also be paralleled by other rulers in the region. Miller noted that the most likely archaeological remains that might be attributed to Solomon are the fortifications at Megiddo, Hazor and Gezer, but their association with Solomon is being questioned. Miller noted that another serious question in the field is whether any artifacts in Palestine can be associated specifically with the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC instead of the centuries before and after it.<sup>21</sup>

Alan Millard responded to Miller's paper about the Solomon of legend. Millard wrote,

In common with many writers, Miller gives the impression there is a lot of historical knowledge available about the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC, although he begins by noting the absence of contemporary Hebrew and Phoenician records, citing Josephus' version of one Greek reporter of Phoenician history. The period is apparently too well known, however, that, partly quoting from an earlier study, he can

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<sup>18</sup> Marcus, *The View from Nebo*, 140.

<sup>19</sup> J. Maxwell Miller, "Separating the Solomon of History from the Solomon of Legend," 1-24 in Lowell K. Handy, ed. *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium*, (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 13

<sup>20</sup> Miller, "Separating the Solomon of History from the Solomon of Legend," 23.

<sup>21</sup> Miller, "Separating the Solomon of History from the Solomon of Legend," 4-19.

assert, "The Phoenicians...would have desired access to the Red Sea Gulf..."Thus they apparently allowed Solomon some participation in the Red Sea trade in return for transit permission through his kingdom and some access to the gulf"[p.7]. Yet this is speculation in the absence of evidence.<sup>22</sup>

Millard went on to note that the Phoenicians were depicted as traders in the later times, but the later texts can not prove that the Phoenicians dominated Solomon. It is as possible that they treated him as an equal as the biblical account claims. Millard noted that Miller simply discounted the biblical text in favor of his own speculation. Millard also challenged Miller's claim that "any competent search for the historical Solomon must be firmly grounded in careful literary-critical analysis" of the Biblical text. Millard responded that literary-critical analysis was established in the intellectual milieu of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Millard argued that literary-critical analysis did not deserve the priority that was often given to it. Millard argued that the Biblical text needed to be seen in light of the ancient Near East instead of being seen in a literary-critical context.<sup>23</sup>

Millard discussed the evidence for the Solomonic Age. Millard noted that while the account in the book of Kings can not be dated, it clearly was written before it was translated into Greek in 200 BC. The last dated event in Kings was the elevation of Jehoiachin from prison. This occurred shortly after Awel-Marduk came to the throne in 562 BC.<sup>24</sup> Millard noted that the text in Kings is sometimes the only surviving record for events recorded in it. Millard noted that the Biblical text was written for religious purposes but that did not render the historical account invalid. Millard argued that an evaluation of the historical merit of the text must be based on evidence from ancient times instead of assumptions about what may be likely held by modern scholars. Millard noted that Solomon's temple was patterned after a long-established temple plan and its decorations can be paralleled with other temples in the region.

Millard also noted that the relative lack of clearly 10<sup>th</sup> century BC artifacts does not demonstrate that the 10<sup>th</sup> century was a poor period. Millard noted that only the final generation to occupy a site before its destruction usually leaves rich archaeological deposits. Millard noted that the final generation before the destruction of a city would have discarded almost everything that was more than three generations old. Millard noted that this could be seen at Nimrud in Ashurnasirpal II's palace. Only one cuneiform tablet has survived from his reign because later generations did not need the texts. On the other hand, hundreds of tablets have survived from the last century of the Assyrian empire. Millard argued that Jerusalem was too small a place for each ruler to build his own palace. So subsequent kings occupied Solomon's palace, and records from his reign were destroyed.

Millard noted that Solomon's name has not survived in ancient texts, but this should not be surprising.<sup>25</sup> There were no 10<sup>th</sup> century BC Babylonian or Assyrian records of a kind that could be expected to mention his name. Both Babylon and Assyria were in decline during Solomon's reign, and neither had contacts with cultures to their southwest. Millard noted that Solomon's reign could be compared to the reign of his ally Hiram of Tyre. Almost no archaeological evidence has survived for Hiram's reign, and no texts have survived from the city before the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. Millard noted that only a handful of Egyptian texts have survived that record events in Palestine after 1000 BC. None of these texts mention the name of any king from Judah or Israel.<sup>26</sup>

K. A. Kitchen also addressed the lack of textual evidence for the United Monarchy. He noted that it has often been claimed that there was no continuity between the Israel mentioned on Merenptah's stela

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<sup>22</sup> Alan Millard, "Assessing Solomon: History or Legend?" 25-9 in Lowell K. Handy, ed. *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium*, (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 27.

<sup>23</sup> Millard, "Assessing Solomon: History or Legend?" 25-9.

<sup>24</sup> Awel-Marduk is the Evil-Merodach of the Biblical text.

<sup>25</sup> It is possible that Solomon's name may have appeared in texts that have not survived. Josephus claimed in *Antiquities of the Jews* 8:146-49 that he had found references to Solomon's reign in the writings of Dius and Menander of Ephesus. Josephus claimed that these authors had access to ancient Phoenician records. Josephus claimed that these authors mentioned the riddles that Solomon and Hiram of Tyre sent to each other. While there would seem to be little reason to doubt Josephus' claims, they can not be proven correct.

<sup>26</sup> Alan Millard, "King Solomon in his Ancient Context," 30-53 in Lowell K. Handy, ed. *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium*, (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

and the mention of Ahab as an opponent of Shalmaneser III at Qarqar in 853 BC.<sup>27</sup> So the group called Israel on Merenptah's stela has been called "proto-Israel." Kitchen noted that the real lack of continuity was not in Israel's history but in references to Israel in Near Eastern texts. Kitchen noted that the only Pharaoh after Merenptah to be involved in the Levant was Ramesses III, and his topographical lists were just edited versions of earlier lists. They do not reflect the people or places of his own day. After Ramesses III, no Pharaoh led his army into Canaan until Siamun around 970 BC and Sheshonq I around 925 BC. In Mesopotamia, no Assyrian king after Tukulti-Ninurta led his army west as far as the Mediterranean coast for several centuries. Tukulti-Ninurta ruled around 1244 to 1208 BC. The next Assyrian rulers to reach the Mediterranean coast were Tiglath-pileser I in 1100 BC, Assur-bel-kala soon after Tiglath-pileser I, and Ashurnasirpal II in 882 BC. No Assyrian ruler entered southern Syria before Shalmaneser III in 853 BC. Kitchen noted that for between 300 and 350 years, no Assyrian chronicler was in contact with Palestine. Kitchen also noted that no Iron Age archives have survived from Phoenicia, Aram, or Transjordan. So Kitchen argued that it is a waste of time to complain that David and Solomon were not mentioned in the ancient texts.<sup>28</sup>

Kitchen also noted that Hadadezer of Aram formed an empire that lasted from 990 to 970 BC before his empire was destroyed by David. Hadadezer ruled from Damascus to the Euphrates. Kitchen noted that no narrative inscriptions have survived from this empire. Hadadezer's empire was mentioned rarely by Assyrian rulers. Kitchen noted that the Old Testament provides most of the information that is known about Hadadezer's empire. Yet the minimalists have not called its existence into question. Kitchen argued that Solomon's empire was a typical example of the small and temporary empires that appeared and passed away in the region at this time.<sup>29</sup>

K. A. Kitchen noted that Thompson rejected Biblical descriptions of Solomon's wealth. Thompson saw these claims as legendary fiction. Thompson claimed that they were the same kind of fiction as Esarhaddon's claims that he had layered gold like plaster on his palace walls. Kitchen argued that Esarhaddon's claims were correct. Kitchen noted that layering gold on buildings was common in the ancient Near East. He noted that columns at Karnak in Egypt contained grooves designed to anchor the gold covering to them. Kitchen noted that Solomon had much less gold than Osorkon I who ruled a decade after Solomon's death. So Solomon's claims of wealth were realistic and accurate.<sup>30</sup>

Millard also discussed Solomon's great wealth. He noted that the Old Testament's claims about Solomon's wealth have often been viewed as exaggerations. Millard noted that gold furniture and golden goblets were common features of royal courts. In 1331 BC, Tutankhamun had been buried with gold furniture in his tomb. A thousand years earlier, Egypt's queen Hetepheres had been buried with a gold covered bed, chair, and canopy. Millard noted that the Amarna letters from the 14<sup>th</sup> century BC included an extensive list of gold objects exchanged between kings. The list included gold jewelry, bowls, toilet articles, furniture, and gold plated chariots. Millard noted a list of the spoil seized by Sargon II in 714 BC. The list included 25,212 bronze shields, 1,514 lances, 305,412 bronze daggers, and a profusion of gold, silver, ivory furniture and jeweled robes. Esarhaddon of Assyria claimed that he had restored the shrine of his god Ashur. Esarhaddon claimed that he had plated its doors with gold and had covered the shrine's walls with gold as if it were plaster. A century later, Nabonidus of Babylon also claimed to have covered the temple of Sin with walls of gold and silver. So Millard argued that there was no reason to doubt the accuracy of the claims about Solomon's wealth.<sup>31</sup> Millard also discussed I Kings 10:27. This verse claimed that Solomon's wealth was so great that silver lost its value. It was as common as stones in Jerusalem.

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The Kurkh inscription noted that Ahab fought at Qarqar during the 6<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Shalmaneser III. This would have been about 853 BC. The Kurkh inscription is one of the key texts synchronizing biblical and Assyrian chronology. See the discussion in James K. Hoffmeier, "What is the Biblical Date for the Exodus? A Response to Bryant Wood," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50 (2007): 229.

Kenneth A. Kitchen, "The Controlling Role of External Evidence in Assessing the Historical Status of the Israelite United Monarchy," 111-29 in V. Philips Long, et al, eds. *Windows into Old Testament History: Evidence, Argument, and the Crisis of "Biblical Israel"*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 111-13.

<sup>29</sup> Kitchen, "The Controlling Role of External Evidence in Assessing the Historical Status of the Israelite United Monarchy," 115-16.

<sup>30</sup> Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 454.

<sup>31</sup>

Alan R. Millard, "Does the Bible Exaggerate King Solomon's Golden Wealth?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* 15.3 (1989): 20-9, 31, 34.

Millard noted that this was typical oriental hyperbole. Millard noted that the same kind of hyperbole can be seen in the Amarna Letters where a Mesopotamian king claimed that gold was like dust in Pharaoh's Egypt. It only needed to be scooped up.<sup>32</sup>

K. A. Kitchen added to the discussion of Solomon's wealth a note about where Solomon's gold went. Kitchen noted that Sheshonq I attacked Jerusalem during Rehoboam's reign. Sheshonq I carried off all the treasures of Yahweh's temple and the treasures of the royal palace. Sheshonq I's raid probably occurred in 925 BC. Kitchen noted that Sheshonq I died within a year or so of his conquest. He was followed by his son Osorkon I who recorded his gifts to the gods and goddesses of Egypt. While only fragments of his list of gifts survive, the list seems to approximate 383 tons of precious metal. Kitchen suggested that this was the wealth that Sheshonq I seized from Rehoboam.<sup>33</sup>

Kitchen discussed how the minimalists understood the United Monarchy. Kitchen noted a claim by Thompson. He argued that even the construction of the ark by Bezalel in the Pentateuch could no longer be called a retrojection from the Solomonic temple. 19<sup>th</sup> century authors had believed that the construction of the tabernacle and the ark was a fictional story modeled after the construction of Solomon's temple. Thompson argued that it could no longer be believed that Solomon built a temple in Jerusalem. So the wilderness constructions could not even be linked to that period. Kitchen noted that Thompson simply made an unsupported assumption that Solomon and Jeroboam were not historical persons. Also, Thompson overlooked the fact that the construction of Israel's sanctuaries was part of a cultural pattern common in Egypt from 3000 to 1000 BC. It was also common in Semitic contexts from 1900 to 1100 BC.<sup>34</sup>

Kitchen also discussed the claims of N. P. Lemche. He argued that the Old Testament was simply an invented history that contained only a few references to things that really happened. Lemche called Old Testament history a monstrous creature that sprang from the fantasy of Biblical historiographers. Lemche argued that Biblical history could not be reconciled with the archaeological history of the region. In response, Kitchen asked why Genesis 1-11 resembled Mesopotamian texts so strongly. Kitchen asked why the Patriarchal narratives fit so well into the objective history of the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. Kitchen asked why the exodus account included so many Egyptian traits instead of Palestinian or Babylonian ones. Kitchen asked why Merneptah's stela would describe a people named Israel in Palestine. Kitchen asked why substantial material changes occurred in the culture of Palestine in the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC. Kitchen asked how Israel's history could be fiction when Egypt's pharaoh Sheshonq I described his invasion of Palestine and included a long topographical list from Judah and Israel. Kitchen asked how Israel's captivity could have been fiction when Jehoiachin was called the king of Judah by the Babylonians who held him in exile. Kitchen asked how the LXX could have been produced as a Greek translation of an Old Testament Hebrew text that according to Lemche had not yet been written.<sup>35</sup>

John Monson also critiqued the Minimalist rejection of the United Monarchy. He noted that they rejected the presuppositions of those who accepted the United Monarchy, but they often failed to examine critically their own presuppositions. Monson argued,

The "maximalist-minimalist" debate also demanded a healthy reassessment of the methods and presuppositions of the discipline. And yet it is disturbing that the "minimalists" do not accept critiques of their own presuppositions. Not only the biblical accounts but also archaeological and epigraphic finds are all too often re-created in the reader's image or dismissed. Moreover, a good number of the so-called minimalists have limited linguistic training and no field experience, as Dever has noted. They engage in a type of guerilla warfare against any position that contradicts their assertions, regardless of how grounded their opponent's view may be in the classical disciplines of philology and archaeology.

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<sup>32</sup> Alan Millard, "Story, History, and Theology," 37-64 in A. R. Millard et al, eds., *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in its Near Eastern Context*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 49.

<sup>33</sup> Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Where Did Solomon's Gold Go?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* 15.3 (1989): 30.

<sup>34</sup> Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 450-51.

<sup>35</sup> Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 450-63. Kitchen also discussed the architecture of Solomon's temple. The descriptions of the temple in I Kings. 6:5-10 have often been challenged. Kitchen compared Solomon's temple to the architecture of temples across the ancient Near East and argued that the Biblical descriptions of it were probably accurate. Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Two Notes on the Subsidiary Rooms of Solomon's Temple." *Eretz-Israel* 20 (1989): 107\*-12\*. On temple architecture, see also Alan Millard, "The Doorway of Solomon's Temple," *Eretz-Israel* 20 (1989): 135\*-39\*.

This leads to pointless controversy over the legitimacy of the Tel Dan inscription, the Siloam Tunnel inscription, and more recently the nature of 10<sup>th</sup>-century Jerusalem.<sup>36</sup>

## **B) THE UNITED MONARCHY AS AN ESCHATOLOGICAL KINGDOM**

The book of Judges closed with Israel in serious trouble. The nation was dominated by the Philistine Iron Age culture. I Samuel 13:15 claimed that the Philistines had 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and troops "like the sand of the sea shore." The Sea Peoples had always had a huge number of troops. A text from the reign of Ramesses III recognized the threat that the Sea People provided. It claimed that the Sea Peoples had troops "like the sand of the sea shore."<sup>37</sup> I Samuel 4:9 noted that the Israelites had become slaves to the Philistines. I Samuel 10:5 noted that a Philistine garrison occupied Bethel. I Samuel 14:21 noted that some of the Hebrews were even fighting in the Philistine army alongside the Philistines. The Philistines had driven Israel into the highlands, and they were threatening to drive Israel from the land completely.

As Israel struggled to survive, the Israelites found less and less security in Yahweh's theocracy. Israel sought human kingship as their hope for survival. They may have begun to interpret Genesis 3:15 and subsequent messianic passages as a promise that God would give them a king instead of a righteous judge. Had not Moses himself promised in Deuteronomy 17:14 that Israel would appoint a king over them? This messianic hope for a human king can be seen in Hannah's prayer. Hannah was childless, and her family sought Yahweh at His holy mountain sanctuary at Shiloh. In I Samuel 1:11, Hannah vowed that if Yahweh gave her a son, the son would live as a Nazirite like Samson. Unlike Samson, the child would serve Yahweh all of his life. When God gave her a son, she sang in I Samuel 2:10, "Those striving against Yahweh will be shattered. Against them, He thunders in the heavens. Yahweh judges the ends of the earth, and gives strength to His king. He exalts the horn of His anointed." This was an amazing claim. It said that Yahweh's anointed, Yahweh's king, would rule the land." In a broader context, this drew from the messianic promise, but it had a clearer focus than this. The child born to Hannah would grow up in Yahweh's tabernacle as the prophet Samuel. He would oversee the transition in Israel from theocracy to human kingship.

I Samuel 2:26 noted that the boy Samuel grew in stature and in favor with Yahweh and with men.<sup>38</sup> As Samuel grew in Yahweh's sanctuary,<sup>39</sup> Yahweh's tabernacle was administered by Eli the high priest. As high priest, Eli also served a role similar to a judge. Eli was a very old man and his sons were wicked.<sup>40</sup> They sinned openly in the tabernacle, and their leadership would have been devastating for God's people. So an unnamed prophet came to the tabernacle. He warned Eli that Yahweh would take the lives of his sons for their sin. Yet the prophet also promised in I Samuel 2:35, "I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest. He will do according to what is in My heart and in My soul, and I will build for him a sure house, and he will walk before My anointed always."<sup>41</sup> Since this statement was made before the rise of kingship in Israel, the identity of "My anointed" may be important. This promise echoed Hannah's song, promising that Yahweh's anointed was about to appear in Israel.

As Samuel grew to maturity, Yahweh brought him into the ranks of His Messengers. I Samuel 3:21 noted that Yahweh appeared to Samuel at Shiloh. As Samuel's prophecies became well known, all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Yahweh had chosen Samuel as His prophet. An unknown

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John M. Monson, "The Role of Context and the Promise of Archaeology in Biblical Interpretation," 309-27 in James K. Hoffmeier and Alan Millard, eds., *The Future of Biblical Archaeology*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2004), 316.

<sup>37</sup> James Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents*, 5 vols. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962 reprint), IV:201.

<sup>38</sup> Luke alluded to this verse in Lk. 2:52 when he described Jesus' development as a child.

<sup>39</sup> I Sam. 1:24; 3:3. It is unclear if Yahweh's sanctuary at this time was the tabernacle, a building, or a complex that involved both. I Sam. 1:24 referred to the "house of Yahweh." I Sam. 3:3 referred to the temple.

<sup>40</sup> I Sam. 4:18 noted that Eli had served as Israel's judge for 40 years. Yet he had been unable to judge his own family in righteousness. Eli showed how completely ineffective the offices of high priest and judge had become.

<sup>41</sup> The promise of a faithful priest and promised anointed would become very important in the 1st century AD. The Qumran community believed that God would send Israel two Messiahs, both a priestly one and a royal.

prophet had promised Eli that both of his wicked sons would die on the same day in God's judgment. This promise was fulfilled when Israel fought the Philistines near the old Egyptian administrative center at Aphek. The Philistines killed 4,000 Israelites. In I Samuel 4:3, the Israelites recognized that Yahweh was responsible for their defeat. So they decided to force Yahweh to give them victory. They took the Ark of the Covenant from the tabernacle at Shiloh, and Eli's sons carried it before Israel into battle. In the battle, 30,000 Israelites were killed. The ark was captured, and Eli's sons died.<sup>42</sup> The ark was the model of Yahweh's cherubim throne according to I Chronicles 28:18, and it demonstrated Yahweh's rule among His people. In I Samuel 4:4, Samuel described it as "the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh of hosts who sits above the cherubim."<sup>43</sup> Since Israel no longer valued Yahweh's theocracy, Yahweh allowed the symbol of His presence to be carried away by Israel's enemies. When Israel repented, God gave them victory for a time. I Samuel 7:14 noted that the Israelites under Samuel were able to recover cities from Ekron to Gath that the Philistines had seized. While the location of Gath has been debated, this verse probably suggests that the Israelites were able to recapture the Shephelah from the Philistines.

In I Samuel 8:5, Samuel was an old man. He had judged Israel for many years. His sons also served as judges in Beersheba, but they were not righteous men. They took bribes and perverted justice. Israel's elders came to Samuel and asked him to appoint a human king over them since Samuel's sons could not be trusted to lead the nation. In I Samuel 8:7, God told Samuel to give the people their way. Yahweh said that Israel had not rejected Samuel. They had rejected Yahweh as their king. Yahweh also told Samuel to warn Israel of the consequences of their choice. A human king would violate Moses' principles of government from Deuteronomy 17. He would take their sons to build a standing army. He would take their daughters to be his servants and he would tax them severely. Samuel warned that the Israelites would cry out to God because of the king they had chosen, but God would refuse to hear them. I Samuel 8:19 noted that the Israelites refused to listen to Samuel's warning and chose a human king for themselves.

## 1) SAUL AND HISTORY

Samuel anointed Saul as Israel's first king around 1042 BC. After being anointed by Samuel, Saul was told to go up to the house of God at Bethel.<sup>44</sup> Then God's Spirit came on him and he prophesied. In I Samuel 10:24-25, Samuel presented Saul to Israel as their new king. Then Samuel told Israel the ordinances of their new kingdom. Samuel wrote these new laws in a book and placed the book before God in His sanctuary. Saul had his first test when he was asked to stop the Ammonites' oppression at Jabesh.<sup>45</sup> Saul gathered 300,000 men from Israel and 30,000 from Judah by threatening to kill the oxen of

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Capturing Yahweh's ark proved an unfortunate action. The Philistines' idol of Dagon was destroyed and the Philistines themselves were struck with hemorrhoids. After seven months, the Philistines sent the ark back to Israel. After the captivity, Asaph described this event in Ps. 78:58-64. Asaph interpreted this as Yahweh abandoning His tent at Shiloh because of their idolatry.

<sup>43</sup> Mettinger compared this idea with an ancient Near Eastern tradition of cherubim thrones. Mettinger noted that winged sphinxes with human heads were commonly associated with royal thrones. This motif can be seen in Ahiiram's coffin at Byblos, an ivory plaque found at Megiddo from the Late Bronze Age, and an ivory model of a cherubim throne found at Megiddo. Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, "YHWH SABAOTH-The Heavenly King on the Cherubim Throne," 109-38 in Tomoo Ishida, ed., *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1982), 113.

<sup>44</sup> This was one of the oldest holy mountain worship places in the Levant, and it had been the most important worship site for Israel's patriarchs.

<sup>45</sup> I Sam. 11 described Saul's conflict with the Ammonites. A manuscript found at Qumran may shed light on this battle. 4QSamuel 2 was one of three important manuscripts of Samuel that were found in Cave 4 at Qumran. The manuscript was written around 50 BC. The 4Q Samuel 2 text included a long addition to I Sam. 11. This addition claimed that the Ammonites had oppressed the children of Gad and Reuben. The Ammonites had gouged out the Israelites' right eye. There were only about 7,000 Israelites left beyond the Jordan whose right eye had not been gouged out by the Ammonites. These 7,000 men fled north to Jabesh-Gilead where they were besieged by the Ammonites. The omission of this paragraph in the Hebrew Old Testament could represent a common kind of copying error where a scribe's eye jumps down to similar wording later in the text. If so, this paragraph may explain why Saul was willing to help the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead. It also may explain why the Ammonite king demanded as a surrender term from Jabesh that the right eye of each man be gouged out. Frank Moore Cross, "The Ammonite Oppression of the Tribes of Gad and Reuben: Missing Verses from I Samuel 11 Found in 4QSamuel," 148-58 in H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld, eds. *History*,

anyone who did not join him for the battle. Saul defeated the Ammonites and scattered their survivors. After this initial success, Samuel gathered Israel at the holy mountain worship place in Gilgal and renewed the kingdom there. Samuel made Saul king before Yahweh and sacrificed to God. Samuel reminded Israel in I Samuel 12:1-19 how they had rebelled against God time after time. Now their rebellion had led them to demand a king even though God had been their king. Samuel warned Israel to obey God in the future. Then God sent a thunderstorm during harvest that destroyed much of their crop. They had worshiped Baal as the god of storm and fertility. Yahweh's storm warned that He could remove their fertility at will. Israel feared and repented. The people asked Samuel to pray for them because they had added to their sins by asking for a king. Samuel warned them to fear God. If they chose not to do so, both they and their king would be swept away.

In I Samuel 13:14, Saul violated God's law out of fear and unbelief. Samuel announced to Saul that God had taken the kingship from his descendants. Yahweh had found a man after His own heart and had appointed him as ruler over God's people. Saul tried to ignore Samuel's warning, but I Samuel 14:37 noted that Yahweh no longer heard his prayers. I Samuel 16:14 noted that Yahweh's Spirit departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from Yahweh terrorized him. Saul became increasingly emotionally unstable.

Saul launched a campaign against the Philistines. Christian Hauer discussed Saul's strategy.<sup>46</sup> He noted that around 1000 BC, Saul fought a battle against the Philistines at Mt. Gilboa. Hauer argued that this was really one of the pivotal points in the history of Palestine. Even though the Philistines won the battle, it set the stage for David's conquests. Hauer argued that the battle at Mt. Gilboa was a disastrous climax to a policy that had worked well for Saul up to that point. Hauer suggested that Saul's strategy was to accomplish three things: 1) secure Israel's center after the battle of Michmash, 2) secure the Judean south, then 3) attempt to secure the far north. Looking at this strategy in more detail, Saul first tried to secure Israel's center after the battle of Michmash. The Philistines were the great threat to Israel. The battle of Michmash was Saul's first decisive military action against the Philistines. Before this time, the Philistines had been able to do whatever they wanted to do on the hill country where Israel lived. After the battle of Michmash, the Philistines lost control of the hill country. Saul patrolled the area between Michmash and Bethel with 2,000 troops. Saul's son Jonathan patrolled further south with 1,000 men. Jonathan forced the Philistines to choose between giving Israel autonomy and attacking Israel in force. The Philistines chose to attack in force. Saul was forced to fall back to Geba, putting a wadi between his army and the Philistine army that had occupied Michmash. The Philistines sent three groups of raiders through Israel to cut off Saul's popular support by spreading terror and destruction. The main Philistine garrison at Michmash then moved out to keep an eye on Saul. Hauer noted that the Philistines had hoped that Saul's army would melt away under pressure. Then the Philistines would regain control of the highlands without a major battle. The Philistine strategy almost worked. Saul's army melted down to 600 men. Jonathan's bold attack routed the Philistines, and Saul's whole army pursued them. After the battle, the Philistines were not able to launch incursions into the highlands. So the center of Israelite territory became rather secure for the first time in many years.

Saul's next step was to secure control of Judah. He attacked the Amalekites in the south to make Judah secure. This would firm up Judean support for his reign. Then he attacked the Philistines on the borders of Judah. Hauer noted that Saul pursued David at this time. Hauer noted that from Saul's perspective, he had good reason to suspect David's loyalty. David was from the south, and Judea had not supported Saul's reign very strongly. Dissident elements of the population had been gathering around David according to I Samuel 22:2. David had even placed his family in the protection of a foreign king according to I Samuel 23:3-4. David had been doing things that would ingratiate him with his fellow tribesmen at Saul's expense. He had come to the relief of the city of Keilah. He had protected Nabal's herdsmen. He had shared Amalekite booty with Israel's elders. In the end, David even became a servant of Saul's enemies. All of these things would have struck Saul as highly suspicious.

Hauer noted that Saul's campaigns in Judah were small scale attacks on limited targets. He did not have a strong enough army to launch large scale attacks against the Philistines. These limited attacks were enough to secure Israel's center and south. The third stage of Saul's strategy was to secure Israel's north. One of Saul's big problems was that Israel's territory was divided in half by a band of land that was controlled by the Philistines. This band of Philistine land ran inland from the plain of Sharon, along the valley of Jezreel as far as Beth-Shean, then south into the Jordan valley. This band of land connected

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<sup>46</sup>*Historiography and Interpretation*, (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1983).

Christian E. Hauer Jr. "The Shape of Saulide Strategy," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 31 (1969): 153-67.

cities that had been controlled by the Philistines for a long time. Beyond this band of land stood the tribes of Dan, Asher, Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali. Saul tried to break this Philistine band of land and unite Israel. Saul moved into the Jezreel valley, and took a position half way between the Philistine cities on the coast and Beth Shean. The lords of the Philistine cities responded in mass by attacking Saul. The Philistine army moved from Aphek to Jezreel, and the Israelites fell back to Mt. Gilboa. The Philistines attacked with an archery barrage and a cavalry charge. The Israelites were completely routed and Saul was killed.

The events associated with Saul's death have proven to be a difficult problem. His death was recorded both in I Samuel 31 and II Samuel 1. I Samuel 31 claimed that Saul was wounded. He asked his armor bearer to kill him so that he would not fall into the hands of his enemies. When his armor bearer refused to kill him, Saul committed suicide by falling on his own sword. When Saul's armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he killed himself as well. II Samuel 1 included a report by an Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul because he was already badly wounded. It is not impossible to reconcile these accounts. Perhaps Saul was originally wounded. Then he tried to commit suicide by falling on his sword, but he was only more seriously wounded. Then perhaps the Amalekite ended Saul's misery. However, how would Saul's armor bearer then have fit into the story? Did he watch the Amalekite kill Saul and then kill himself? That seems unlikely. As would be expected, the higher critical orbit has always seen this as an awkward combination of contradictory sources. Bill Arnold suggested a better way to understand the passage. He argued that the Amalekite may simply have lied. Arnold noted that the Amalekite brought to David Saul's diadem and armband. Arnold argued that these served the same role as a royal crown. The Amalekite may have found Saul dead. Then he may have taken Saul's signs of office to David. The Amalekite may then have lied about having a role in Saul's death because he believed that David would reward him for giving David the throne. Instead, David killed him for lifting his hand against the Lord's anointed ruler.<sup>47</sup>

Saul was followed to the throne by David. He was in some ways an unlikely candidate for the throne. He was the descendant of Judah's line. Yet he was also descended from a gentile prostitute named Rahab and a Moabite woman named Ruth. This was surprising because Moses had commanded that no Moabite even to the 10th generation could enter the congregation of Israel.<sup>48</sup> David was a man of courage, strength, and faith. He was loved by God. He belonged to the tradition of Yahweh's Messengers. In II Samuel 23:1-3, David declared that God had spoken to him, and that the Spirit's Word was on his tongue. Yet it is striking how seldom the accounts in Samuel and Chronicles depicted him actually seeing God.

## 2) DAVID AND HISTORY

I Samuel 17 recorded that David first rose to fame in Saul's kingdom when David accepted Goliath's challenge. Goliath was a giant from Gath who had become the Philistines' champion. Both the Bible and an ancient Egyptian text recognized that such giants lived in the region. Joshua 11:22 recorded that Joshua killed all of the Anakeim from the land except for some who remained in the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. The Anakeim were giants like Goliath although they were usually about five cubits tall instead of six. A 19th Dynasty Egyptian text mentioned giants like Goliath. This text described the difficulties involved in invading Palestine. Aside from the trees, hills, and ravines, the Egyptian text claimed that some of the inhabitants of Palestine were up to five cubits tall.<sup>49</sup> Other Biblical texts also describe these unusually large people, including Genesis 6:4, Numbers 13:33, Deuteronomy 1:28, and 9:2. David's challenge to Goliath demonstrated a global perspective which was surprising in such a young man. In I Samuel 17:45-46, David warned Goliath that Yahweh would deliver him into David's hand so that

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Bill T. Arnold, "The Amalekite's Report of Saul's Death: Political Intrigue or Incompatible Sources?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32 (1989): 289-98.

David's right to the throne may have been justified by the book of Ruth. It argued that Ruth was a special case because she was a righteous woman who chose to worship Israel's God. The book of Ruth was written during David's reigns since the last verse in this book traced the genealogy of David's family down to David's time.<sup>49</sup>

James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 477. Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings*, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), I:227-28.

all the *eretz* may know that there was a God in Israel. *Eretz* can mean earth or land. David may have been claiming that all of the land or all of the earth would know that Yahweh ruled in Israel.

Saul was threatened by David's successes. When Samuel warned Saul that he would be replaced as Israel's ruler, Saul pursued and persecuted David. Yet David's bravery and integrity won him a close friend and ally in Saul's son Jonathan. In I Samuel 20:8, Jonathan made a covenant of Yahweh with David. I Samuel 20:16 noted that Jonathan had formed this covenant with the house of David instead of just David himself. This meant that Jonathan recognized David as the founder of a royal line and Jonathan committed himself to David's dynasty. In I Samuel 20:31, Saul warned Jonathan that as long as David lived, neither he nor his kingdom would be established. Jonathan accepted this as Yahweh's will. In I Samuel 23:16-17, Jonathan chose to serve David as king, and he encouraged David's faith in Yahweh. In I Samuel 20:42, Jonathan repeated his covenant with David in words that echoed the early Patriarchal blessings.

Before David became king, he had married Saul's daughter Michal. David lost Michal when he had to flee from Saul, and she was given to another man. When David rose to the throne, he insisted that Michal be returned to him despite the fact that he had other wives. She was happily married to someone else. Why did David insist on this? Zafira Ben-Barak noted that Saul's defeat at Gilboa left Israel divided into the northern tribes and Judah. Saul's only remaining son Eshbaal ruled the northern tribes while David ruled Judah. This political division led to a civil war between Israel and Judah.<sup>50</sup> David demanded the return of Saul's daughter Michal because a marriage to Michal would justify his claim to rule Israel, and their marriage would act as a bridge between the two halves of the nation. Saul's son Eshbaal would have understood this. Eshbaal's hold to power was very weak. He did not really even have a legal right to rule. In Saul's day, Israel's monarchy was not yet a dynastic succession. So why would Eshbaal have allowed David to get Michal back? Ben-Barak noted that two other questions are also very hard to understand. The first question is how is it possible to understand Michal's marriage to David, then Paltiel, then to David again? Such a remarriage would have been seen as adultery and would have been punishable by death.<sup>51</sup> The second question is, how can David's remarriage to his former wife be reconciled with the law in Deuteronomy 29:1-4? This law specifically declared that a man who put away his wife could not reclaim her after she married another. Ben-Barak tried to answer these questions by pointing to ancient Near Eastern parallels. Ben-Barak pointed first to the *Laws of Eshnunna* which were written in the 19th century BC. This law code dictated that captives who were able to return home from captivity could reclaim their wives even though their wives had married another in their absence. So women had a right to remarry when their husbands were carried out of the country as military captives. If their first husbands were able to get back, they had to go back to their first husbands. Ben-Barak noted that these Mesopotamian laws explain why David's wife Michal was given to another man when David was forced to flee from Saul. These laws also explained why Michal was forced to return to him after he returned home. So the relationship between David and Michal is appropriate to the historical setting in which the event occurred.<sup>52</sup>

After David was crowned king, one of his first priorities was to capture the Jebusite city of Jerusalem. This city had been in Canaanite hands for 400 years. It was a very important site and a city

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The formal split between Judah and Israel occurred during Rehoboam's reign. However, the tensions between Judah and the northern tribes were very ancient by that time.

This was not just an Israelite law. It was also an Old Assyrian law. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 218.

<sup>52</sup> Another ancient Near Eastern parallel can be seen in paragraph 135 of the *Laws of Hammurabi*. These laws were written in the 18th century BC. This paragraph decreed that if a man is out of the country and there is no money to support his household, his wife could enter another man's house. When the man returned, he must receive back his wife, but any sons born during his absence would remain with their father. Ben-Barak noted that the law applied to people who were forced to leave the country because of political action. Ben-Barak noted a similar parallel in paragraph 45 of tablet A of the Middle Assyrian laws. The Middle Assyrian laws discussed this situation at substantial length. The Middle Assyrian laws required a woman to wait two years after her husband had been taken as a captive. During these two years, she could sell all of her property to provide for her own needs. After two years, she could marry another if she had no other means of support. If her first husband returned, she must go back to him. Any property that she had sold could be purchased back by him. However, any sons she has born to her second husband would stay with the second husband. Zafira Ben-Barak, "The Legal Background to the Restoration of Michal to David," 15-29 in J. A. Emerton, ed. *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979).

that could be easily defended.<sup>53</sup> Jerusalem stood on Palestine's central spine of mountains. These mountains are 2700 feet high. The area west of Jerusalem fell to a coastal plain in 20 miles. East of Jerusalem, the land dropped down to sea level and below in the Jordan valley. The flanks of the mountain range are deeply cut by ravines and valleys which make travel along the flanks almost impossible. North/south travel down the Jordan valley is blocked by the Dead Sea, and north/south travel along the coastal plain is under the control of the Philistines. The only north/south route through Israelite territory was along the mountain crests. Jerusalem sat on the mountain crests along this north/south route. It is also located along one of the few east/west routes through the hills. So Jerusalem was in a position to control trade and travel through the hills.

David had always had a determination to capture Jerusalem. I Samuel 17:18 noted that as soon as David killed Goliath, David carried the giant's head to Jerusalem as a warning that he would conquer the city. David's interest in Jerusalem may have been motivated by theological concerns as well as practical ones. In Genesis 14:20, Abraham had given a tithe of his spoil to Melchizedek, the priest/king of Jerusalem. Melchizedek had been a priest of El Elyon, Possessor of Heaven and Earth. In Genesis, El Elyon was one of Yahweh's names. David identified himself with Melchizedek. In Psalm 110:4, David applied Melchizedek's example to himself because Melchizedek was also a non-Levitical priest/king who reigned in Jerusalem. David declared that Yahweh had sworn and would not change His mind, that David would be a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

II Samuel 5:5-10 noted that David captured Jerusalem, the stronghold of Zion. David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. When David captured Jerusalem, it was a watershed in Israel's history. Several other cities had come under Israelite control at the same time. These cities were bigger and more important than Jerusalem. So why did Jerusalem become so important? Jerusalem was located more or less between Judah and Israel so it could serve as a capital for both halves of the nation. David made Jerusalem both the political and religious capital of the nation. To do this, he brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Yet the gentile character of the city also had its destructive impact on David's life. II Samuel 4:13 noted that David took more concubines and wives for himself from Jerusalem in violation of the Mosaic Law. David had sons and daughters with these Jebusite wives and they did not help the serious problems within David's family.

Once he became king, David was able to gain control of a very large area of land because the ancient Near East as a whole was experiencing a power vacuum.<sup>54</sup> The united monarchy of Saul, David and Solomon lasted roughly from 1030 BC down to 930 BC. During this period, the Tigris Euphrates valley was broken up into regions. The southern end of the valley saw the 2nd Dynasty of the Sealand, the Dynasty of Bazu, the Elamite Dynasty, and the Dynasty of E. Weak rulers followed each other quite rapidly through the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon. Further north in the Tigris Euphrates valley, the Assyrians had retreated to Assyria after Tiglath-pileser I had conquered northern Syria. The Assyrian empire disintegrated after the death of Tiglath Pileser I in 1074 BC. During David's reign, the Assyrians were led by a feeble ruler named Asshur-Rabi II who reigned from 1012 BC to 971 BC. The Assyrian outposts on the Euphrates were captured by the Aramaeans. During Solomon's reign, Assyria was led by Tiglath-pileser II who ruled from 966 BC to 934 BC. He could do little to restore Assyrian power and influence. Assyria did not regain control of the Upper Euphrates until after 875 BC.<sup>55</sup> In Asia Minor, the Hittites had disappeared when their culture was destroyed by the Sea People around 1200 BC. The Egyptians were ruled by the weak 21st Dynasty.

David eventually became the dominant power in the Levant. While the northern part of David's empire was very thinly populated, David controlled or influenced events in a lot of territory. I Chronicles 18:1-17 noted that David subdued the Philistines and took Gath with its towns from the Philistines. This brought an end to the great conflict that had persuaded Israel to choose human kingship instead of God's direct rule through His Judges. David went on to expand the borders of his rule on all sides. Kitchen described the borders of David's empire. Kitchen noted that David controlled Judah and Israel. He conquered Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Aram. Hamath was an ally subjected to David. Hamath's northern

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In II Sam. 5:6, the inhabitants of Jerusalem claimed that the lame and blind in the city would be enough of a force to prevent David from taking the city.

<sup>54</sup> See the discussion in Benedikt Otzen, "Israel under the Assyrians," *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 11 (1978): 96-110.

<sup>55</sup> Merrill Unger, *Israel and the Aramaeans of Damascus*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980).

border was the Euphrates. So David controlled or strongly influenced the region from the Euphrates to the southern borders of Judah and Edom. Kitchen noted that David did not control Philistia or Phoenicia, although Tyre's king Hiram became an ally of David near the end of his reign.<sup>56</sup> The extent of David's influence at Tyre is difficult to determine. II Samuel 24:7 included the fortress of Tyre in David's census of the land.<sup>57</sup> Yet it could be argued that Tyre was never subservient to David.<sup>58</sup>

Malamat noted that the United Monarchy lasted for 75 years. Malamat noted that the kingdom of David and Solomon was not uniform. It was varied and complex. David dominated Edom. II Samuel 8 noted that David put garrisons throughout Edom and the Edomites became his servants.<sup>59</sup> Malamat suggested that the Edomites may have been harshly treated. Malamat suggested that David may have treated Damascus in the same way, but only Edom and Damascus were treated this harshly. Malamat added that at the end of Solomon's reign, I Kings 11:14 and 11:25 noted that a "Satan," or an adversary, arose against Solomon in Edom and Damascus. Malamat noted that David also ruled Ammon although the text does not claim that David placed garrisons there. II Samuel 12:30 noted that David had removed the crown from the head of Malcam, the king of Ammon. David then placed Malcam's crown on himself, crowning himself the king of Ammon. Malamat noted that David also had satellite nations like Toi, the ruler of Hamath in Syria. Toi's son blessed David and brought him silver and gold as tribute. Malamat argued that this was not an alliance of equals, but a hint of Hamath's dependence on the United Monarchy. In II Chronicles 8:3, David fought against Hamath-Zobah and prevailed against it. Malamat suggested that David and Solomon may have imposed their power on Hamath to resist the power of the neo-Hittite countries. Malamat noted that Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, and from the Euphrates to Gaza.<sup>60</sup> Malamat noted that Ezra 5:11 described the glorious temple in Jerusalem that a "great king" of Israel had built. Malamat noted that the term "great king" (*melekh rav*) was an exact parallel to an Akkadian term "*sarru rabu*." This term was used to describe an overlord who ruled over other kings.<sup>61</sup>

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Kitchen, "The Controlling Role of External Evidence in Assessing the Historical Status of the Israelite United Monarchy," 111-13.

<sup>57</sup>

Ezek. 28:11-20 may be significant here. In a complex prophecy, Ezekiel combined Satan's fall in heaven, Adam's fall in Eden, and Tyre's revolt against Israel. Ezekiel claimed that Tyre had once served a role similar to the anointed cherub that covers God's throne just like Satan and Adam had done in their own ways. Ezek. 28 may point back to Tyre's relationship with Israel during the United Monarchy.

Malamat argued that Hiram had a political and economic treaty with Israel. Avraham Malamat, "The Monarchy of David and Solomon," 161-72 in Hershel Shanks and Benjamin Mazar, eds. *Recent Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, (Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1981), 162. Katzenstein argued that Tyre gained control of the seas during the United Monarchy and held that control for 300 years. On the mainland, David annexed the cities of Jezreel and Galilee. He made treaties with the kings of Geshon and Hamath. II Sam. 8:6 noted that he was victorious over the small Aramaean cities like Damascus. Katzenstein argued that all of this gave David sole control over the trade and caravan routes leading to ports like Tyre. Katzenstein argued that the king of Tyre supported David's expansion. It was beneficial to Tyre's trade to have all of the trade routes in the hands of one person. Katzenstein noted that Tyre gave David cedar logs, carpenters, and stone masons to build a house for himself. This was recorded in II Sam. 5:11 and I Chron. 14:1. Katzenstein suggested that this was partial payment for the use of the trade routes that David controlled. Katzenstein noted that Solomon formed a commercial treaty with Hiram. Solomon was the stronger of the two rulers at the beginning of his reign, but in the next 20 years, the balance of power shifted to Tyre. Katzenstein noted that the commercial treaty was based on trading Tyre's building materials and construction skills for Solomon's silver and agricultural produce. Hiram gave Solomon what he wanted, but Hiram demanded payment in full for all of it. H. Jacob Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre*, (Jerusalem: The Schocken Institute for Jewish Research, 1973), 138.

David's domination of Edom fulfilled Isaac's blessing to Esau. Isaac had declared that Esau's descendants should serve Jacob's descendants. Yet when Esau's descendants became restless, they would break the Israelites' yoke from their neck.

<sup>60</sup>

This fulfilled Yahweh's promise in Gen. 15:18-21. In I Kings 8:56, Solomon declared that all of God's good promises had been fulfilled as He had promised Moses. Solomon repeated a claim that had been made earlier by Joshua in Josh. 21:45 and 23:19. In the ancient Near East, it was not unknown for a sovereign to claim that his word was fulfilled. It was claimed of Ramesses II that nothing that he said had failed. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents*, III:205.

<sup>61</sup>

Malamat, "The United Monarchy of David and Solomon," 163-64.

### 3) SOLOMON AND HISTORY

David was followed by Solomon who ruled for roughly 40 years. There has been a debate about exactly when he reigned. The most popular dates in the Evangelical orbit are either 970 to 931 BC or 962 to 922 BC. The first set of dates is based on calculating from a fixed date during the reign of Shalmaneser III of Assyria. He ruled a long time after Solomon, so this calculation is somewhat tenuous. The second set of dates is found by comparing the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Tyre's king Hiram and the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Solomon. This calculation is equally tenuous. The dates chosen for Solomon's reign determine which 21<sup>st</sup> Dynasty Pharaoh formed a marriage alliance with Solomon. Solomon was the son of Bathsheba.<sup>62</sup> David had taken her as one of his many wives after he had murdered her husband Uriah. He and Israel had suffered God's judgment for this sin. Yet David clung to Bathsheba as no other wife. According to I Kings 4:21, Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt. These were the limits of the land originally promised to Abraham in Genesis 15:18. They were also roughly the limits of Egypt's northern empire as described in the *Annals of Thutmose III*.<sup>63</sup> Like David, Solomon stood among the ranks of Yahweh's Messengers. II Chronicles 1:7 noted that God appeared to Solomon and tested his heart. Solomon asked wisdom from God, and God granted him wisdom, wealth, and honor. Solomon became the wisest man in history. Yet he ended his life in paranoia and disgrace. Most of his life, he violated the principles laid down in Deuteronomy 17 for a righteous ruler. Eventually, he suffered the result of disobeying God's law.

During the period of Judges, Israel had obeyed Moses' prohibition in Deuteronomy 17 against standing armies. Israel's judges had called for volunteers whenever a battle had to be fought. However, the nation had not maintained a permanent force of armed men. This changed immediately with the rise of the monarchy. Beginning with Saul, Israel always had warriors supported by the state. Many of these permanent warriors were gentiles instead of Jews. I Samuel 21:7 noted that Doeg the Edomite was a servant of Saul. In I Samuel 22:16, Doeg killed Yahweh's priests at Saul's command when others refused to do so. He was accepted as Saul's servant, but he was an enemy of God. David's mighty men were generally people of better character. The best of these gentile warriors may have been Uriah the Hittite. II Samuel 11:11 noted that Uriah showed his righteousness by telling David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and Joab and David's servants are camping in the open field. Should I then eat and drink in my house and lie with my wife?" Uriah was a man of honor and faith. The tragedy was that his honor itself led to his murder by David. Uriah was far from the only gentile mighty man who served David. I Samuel 15:18-19 noted that David's bodyguard was made up of 600 men who had served him in Gath when he had fled from Saul. These 600 mighty men included Pelethites, Gittites and Cherethites. David was also served by Ittai the Gittite. When David fled from Absalom, David encouraged him to remain in Jerusalem because he was a foreigner and exile in the land. So why should he be forced to wander with David in his flight. In I Samuel 15:21, Ittai showed his faith in Yahweh and his and loyalty to David.<sup>64</sup>

The United Monarchy's reliance on a standing army had its consequences. The military power given to David and Solomon was soon taken away. Rezon of Damascus revolted against Solomon in I Kings 11:23. After that time, the Aramaean kingdom that centered in Damascus became the strongest kingdom in Syria. This was reflected in the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III of Assyria. These inscriptions

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<sup>62</sup>

II Sam. 12:24.

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Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, II:180.

<sup>64</sup> Gentiles had always lived within Israel. They were an important part of the nation, and their presence was allowed as long as they obeyed God's law. The Patriarchs' households had included many gentiles like Hagar the Egyptian. Ex. 12:38 noted that a mixed multitude of gentiles left Egypt with Israel. Deut. 29:10-13 noted that Jews and gentiles stood together to enter God's covenant and become a people for Yahweh their God. Num. 31:35 noted that 32,000 young Midianite girls were brought into the community in one day. The nation of Israel had never been exclusively Jewish. The Kenites were part of the nation from Moses' time forward. In Joshua's time, the Gibeonites entered the nation. The whole conquest actually resulted in a melting pot culture with Israelites dominating the highlands and Canaanites dominating the coastal plain. Yet some Israelites always lived among the Canaanites and the Philistines. Some Jews even served in the Philistine army. David's reign differed from earlier Israelite history in the key role that he gave to gentiles in his government. This changed with Solomon. I Kngs. 9:20-1 noted that Solomon turned the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites in the community into forced labor for his construction projects.

always placed Hadad-esser of Damascus at the head of the list of rulers and nations. Damascus would become a huge problem for Israel in the future.<sup>65</sup>

David and Solomon also violated Moses' administrative principles in another important way. Both engaged in marriage alliances with other nations. These marriage alliances would have a terrible impact on Israel because David and Solomon married idolaters to form alliances. II Samuel 3:3 noted that David's son Absalom was the child of Maacah, who was the daughter of the king of Geshur. This marriage alliance would bring great trouble in the future as Absalom murdered his older brother and later revolted against David. I Kings 3:1 noted that Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Egypt's Pharaoh. This alliance brought Pharaoh's daughter to Jerusalem.<sup>66</sup> Solomon allied himself with Egypt because the Philistines threatened both.<sup>67</sup> Solomon reigned during the Egyptian 3rd Intermediate Period when Egypt was generally weak and disorganized. So Egypt would have valued a strong ally in the north.<sup>68</sup> Solomon even structured his administration after the pattern of the Egyptian court. Solomon knew that his marriage alliance with Egypt was not the proper thing to do. II Chronicles 8:11 described Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter. This passage added to the account in I Kings. Solomon's argued that his Egyptian wife could not be allowed to live in David's house. Solomon had to build a new house for her because the ark of Yahweh had entered David's house. The ark's presence had left a residual holiness to David's house which would be corrupted by the presence of Solomon's Egyptian wife. Solomon knew from the time that he brought his Egyptian wife to Jerusalem that she could not live on holy ground. Pharaoh's daughter was not the only wife that Solomon gained through marriage alliances. I Kings 11:1-3 noted that Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh. He took wives from the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites. These wives were drawn from the nations that Yahweh had forbidden to Israel as associates because they would turn the Israelites hearts after their gods. Yet Solomon held fast to them in love. Solomon eventually had 700 wives and 300 concubines although perhaps not all at the same time.

During the united monarchy, Israel's theology of kingship developed rapidly. This theology of kingship would have a great impact on the nature of messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. David and Solomon knew that God was the true King of His creation. In Psalm 5:2, David prayed, "My King and

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<sup>66</sup> See the discussion in Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre*, 136.

<sup>67</sup> For an example of an Egyptian marriage alliance, see the Hittites' marriage alliance with Ramesses II in Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, III:184, 191. There has been quite a bit of discussion about which Pharaoh gave his daughter to Solomon. The two main candidates are the last two Pharaoh's of the 21st Dynasty Siamun and Psusennes II. Alan Schulman noted that marriage alliances were common in Egypt from the 17th Dynasty through at least the days of Ramesses the Great. Schulman argued that in such alliances, the stronger nation always sent an envoy requesting that the weaker nation provide a bride to seal an alliance. Schulman argued that by sending a bride, the weaker nation recognized the political and military superiority of the stronger nation. Schulman suggested that this marriage must have occurred sometime between 968 and 960 BC during the reign of either Pharaoh Siamun or Pharaoh Psusennes II. The scholarly consensus has favored Siamun since there is some evidence that he campaigned briefly in Philistia. A relief was found at Tanis that showed Siamun killing an enemy who was armed with the kind of Greek double edged weapon that the Philistines used. There is also evidence that Gezer and Tel Mor were destroyed at this time. Schulman noted that the ruler of the Edomites also married an Egyptian bride. The details of this marriage alliance are recorded in I Kings 11:14-22. In this case, the Egyptian Pharaoh gave Hadad a wife after Hadad had fled to Egypt. Hadad's son was raised in Pharaoh's house. After David died, Hadad returned to Edom where he reigned as Solomon's enemy. We could add here that Pharaoh captured Gezer and gave it to Solomon as a dowry. This committed Solomon to helping him fight the Philistines. Alan R. Schulman, "The Curious Case of Hadad the Edomite," 122-35 in Leonard H. Lesko, ed. *Egyptological Studies in Honor of Richard A. Parker*, (Hanover: Brown University Press, 1986). Schulman does not note that parity treaties could require equal rulers to give daughters to each other as brides. The Hittites formed a marriage alliance with Egypt and sent a bride to Egypt. However, the Hittites would not have considered themselves subservient to Egypt.

<sup>68</sup> Malamat argued for a different explanation of Solomon's marriage alliance. Malamat argued that Pharaoh had hoped to regain control over the Gaza strip and the coastal plain. Egypt had lost control of this region 200 years earlier. Malamat argued that Pharaoh hoped to rule Israel after David's death. Malamat argued that Pharaoh underestimated Solomon's power. Egypt was forced to give up its hopes for conquest and seek a treaty with Solomon. To obtain this treaty, Pharaoh made territorial concessions to Solomon. Malamat, "The Monarchy of David and Solomon," 171.

The 3rd Intermediate Period lasted approximately from 1085 to 712 BC, and it included Dynasties 21-24.

my God."<sup>69</sup> In Psalm 103:19, David declared that Yahweh had established His throne in the heavens and that His sovereignty ruled over all. In Psalm 145:11-13, 20, David declared,

The glory of Your Kingdom they will declare, and your might they will describe to make known to the sons of men Your might and the glory of the splendor of His Kingdom. Your Kingdom is a Kingdom of all eternity, and your rule among every generation and generation.

Yahweh guards all who love Him, but all the wicked, He destroys.

While David and Solomon recognized Yahweh's eternal sovereignty,<sup>70</sup> they also taught that God would now delegate His sovereignty to men. They would now rule God's people as His anointed. This divine anointing gave them a unique kind of authority. In I Samuel 24:6, David refused to lift his hands against Saul despite Saul's attempts to kill him. David explained that he could not strike Yahweh's anointed. In I Samuel 21:11, even the Philistines in Gath recognized that David was properly Israel's king because of Yahweh's anointing. They said, "Is this not David, the king of the land." This was a striking thing to claim during Saul's reign.<sup>71</sup> At the end of his life, David stood before the assembled leaders of the nation. In I Chronicles 28:5, David declared that Yahweh had chosen Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of Yahweh over Israel. In 28:9, David told Solomon that God had chosen him to build the sanctuary in Jerusalem. Then in I Chronicles 29:22-23, the assembled leaders of the nation made Solomon king a second time and anointed him as ruler for the Lord. Then Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh as king instead of David his father. In II Chronicles 9:8, the queen of Sheba visited Solomon. She said to Solomon,

Yahweh your God be blessed who delighted in you to put you on His throne as king for Yahweh your God, in the love of your God to Israel, to establish them forever. He put you over them to be king to do justice and righteousness.<sup>72</sup>

When Yahweh chose men to rule on His throne over Israel, their sovereignty was based on a covenant with the nation and a covenant with Yahweh.<sup>73</sup> God's covenant with His human ruler flowed into the great messianic tradition. God's covenant with David was also God's covenant with David's great descendant, Jesus. In II Samuel 7:12-16, Nathan promised that God would build a dynastic house for David. God would raise a successor to David who would build a house for God's name and would establish his throne forever. God promised that David's house and David's kingdom would endure before Him forever and his throne would be established forever. II Samuel 7:19 noted that these words applied to the distant future. Since David's royal succession ceased with the Babylonian captivity, a promise of an eternal throne had to point beyond the Davidic dynasty to Christ. In Psalm 110:1-2, David sang, "A statement of Yahweh to my lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a stool to your feet.

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<sup>70</sup>Ps. 44:4 echoes these words, although the Psalm was attributed to Korah.

<sup>71</sup>In Ps. 55:19, David recognized that God sat enthroned from of old.

<sup>72</sup>When David was crowned king in II Sam. 5:1-5, the Israelites claimed that even while Saul was king, David was the one who led Israel out and in.

<sup>73</sup>I Kngs. 10:9 recorded the same account. The idea of a man ruling on god's throne was common in Egypt. It can be seen in Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, II:266, III:181, 242, IV:21, 37, 200. Ps. 122:1-5 associated the thrones of the house of David in Jerusalem with Yahweh's house and Yahweh's judgment throne.

The king's covenant with the nation can be seen in II Sam. 3:21. Abner said to David, "Let me rise and go and gather to my lord the king all Israel that they may cut (or form) a covenant with you that you may rule over all that your soul desires." Then in II Sam. 5:1-5, all Israel crowned David king and made a covenant with him. II Sam. 23:1-7 recorded the last words of David. He declared, that Yahweh's Spirit had spoken by him, and had made an everlasting covenant with him. In I Kngs. 2:1-4, David had made Solomon co-regent. Then shortly before he died, David charged Solomon to walk in Yahweh's ways so that Yahweh would keep with him the Davidic covenant. In I Chron. 16:13-18, David assigned a song to Asaph that called on Israel to remember God's covenant.

Yahweh will send out a rod of your strength from Zion to rule in the midst of Your enemies." The New Testament claimed repeatedly that these words described Jesus.<sup>74</sup>

Since David's kingship theology was at heart covenantal, Yahweh's covenant was an important theological motif during the united monarchy.<sup>75</sup> For David and Solomon, Yahweh's covenant was at the heart of His relationship with His people. David and Solomon continued the ancient tradition of using technical treaty terminology. They used the words "love," "know," "good," and "evil" in a loosely covenantal context.<sup>76</sup> In Psalm 25:14, David declared that the secret of Yahweh was for those who feared Him, and He would make them "know" His covenant.<sup>77</sup> In Psalm 16:2, David declared that he had no "good" beside God. In Psalm 36:3, David said of the wicked that he has ceased to be wise and to do "good." In Psalm 37:3, David encouraged people to trust in Yahweh and do "good." In Psalm 38:20, David described those who repaid "evil" for "good," and who opposed David because he did "good."<sup>78</sup> The word "love" may reflect treaty usage in I Samuel 18:16 which claimed that all of Israel and Judah "loved" David and served him. The word may also appear with this meaning in II Samuel 19:6 where Joab accused David of "loving" those who "hated" him, and "hating" those who "loved" him. I Kings 11:4-8 also recorded that Solomon did "evil" in the sight of Yahweh, because his foreign wives turned his heart to worship idols.

Between Joshua and Saul, Israel had continually done "evil" in Yahweh's eyes, and they had brought judgment on themselves in almost every generation. Solomon's failure of faith would lead to judgment and trouble in the future. The united monarchy was unable to bring in the kingdom of God. Yet David and Solomon clearly understood the basic features of Biblical theology. David recognized that even though he ruled God's kingdom, he was also still just a Hebrew and sojourner waiting to inherit God's promises.<sup>79</sup> David recognized that Israel's God was their great heavenly father. In I Chronicles 29:10-11, David blessed Yahweh, and said, "Blessed are you, Yahweh God of Israel, our Father from eternity and to eternity. To You, Yahweh, (be) the greatness, the power, the glory, the pre-eminence, the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth belongs to Yahweh."<sup>80</sup> David recognized that this great Father was both present and sovereign everywhere in His creation. In Psalm 139:7-15, David prayed,

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Matt. 22:44, Mk. 12:36, Lk. 20:42, Acts 2:34-35, Heb. 1:13. Ps. 45:6-7 (MT 45:7-8) provided a similar Messianic promise. In this passage, the sons of Korah sang, "Your throne, God, is forever and ever. Ascepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. You loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, Your God, has anointed Thee with the oil of joy above Thy fellows." (The verb "anointed" here is the root verb behind the name Messiah. The Messiah is the anointed one.)

Dumbrell argued that a major theme in the books of I and II Samuel was the growing relationship between kingship and covenant. He noted that kingship first developed in Israel at this time, and that a theology of kingship developed hand in glove with the development of the new office. According to Dumbrell, this developed almost immediately into a theology of an ideal king, and this in turn laid the groundwork for the messianic theme that would become important in later texts. Dumbrell did not discuss how these ideas were prefigured by passages like Gen. 3:15 and Deut. 17:14-20. William J. Dumbrell, "The Content and Significance of the Books of Samuel: Their Place and Purpose within the Former Prophets," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33 (1990): 49.

In I Sam. 29:6, the Philistine king Achish used the word "evil" as treaty term. While David was hiding from Saul, Achish said of him, "As Yahweh lives, you have been upright, for I have not found "evil" in you from your coming to this day."

Assigning these words to David assumes that the psalm titles in the text are accurate. This assumption is problematic. The titles may or may not have been included in the original text. If they are not correct, little can be known about the setting in which most of the Psalms were written.

In Ps. 51:18, David prayed that Yahweh would do "good" to Zion. Along the same lines, Ps. 125:4 called on Yahweh to do "good" to those who were "good." Similar treaty usage can be seen in a Messianic context in Ps. 45:7. The sons of Korah sang, Thou hast "loved" righteousness and "hated" wickedness. Treaty terminology can also be seen in Ps. 50:5-6. These verses appealed to heaven and earth as treaty witnesses, and gathering those who made a covenant by sacrifice.

In Ps. 39:12 (MT 39:13), David prayed, "Hear my prayer, Yahweh, and give ear to my cry, at my tears do not be silent, because I am an alien with You, a sojourner like all my fathers." In I Chron. 29:15, he prayed, "... for aliens are we before You, and tenants as were all of our fathers."

Other verses could be added. For example in Ps. 62:11-12 (MT 62:12-13), David prayed, "Once God spoke. Twice I heard this, that power belongs to God, and mercy belongs to You Lord for You are at peace with a man according to his deeds."

Where can I go from Your Spirit, or where from your face shall I flee? If I go up to heaven, there You are, or I lay down in Sheol, behold You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the farthest part of the sea, even there, your hand will lead me, and your right hand will seize me. If I say, surely darkness will cover me, even night is light around me. Even darkness is not dark to You, and night is as light as day. For you have possessed my inward parts, You wove me in the womb of my mother. I will thank You because I was wonderfully made with fearful things. Your works are marvelous, as my soul knows well.

These verses express both omnipresence and predestination in an almost Pauline form.<sup>81</sup> David was describing Israel's opponents. This Psalm largely replicates Psalm 14. Solomon recognized this truth in Ecclesiastes 9:3. He wrote that the hearts of the sons of men were full of evil, and insanity was in their hearts throughout their lives.<sup>82</sup>

A key theme in David's thought was the motif of seeing God and being seen by Him. David's claims would be echoed a thousand years later in Paul's Merkabah mysticism.<sup>83</sup> In Psalm 17:15, David claimed, "I, in righteousness, I will see Your face. I will be satisfied when I feel the dread of seeing Your form."<sup>84</sup> This presence of God was found first in Yahweh's sanctuary. In Psalm 42:2, David asked, "... when will I come, and when will I appear before God?" In Psalm 67:1 (MT 67:2), David prayed in a way that resembled somewhat Moses' request in Exodus 33:18. David prayed, "God be merciful to us and bless us. Make His face shine on us."<sup>85</sup> While David recognized the importance of sacrifices in worship, he also recognized in Psalm 51:16-17, that Yahweh did not delight in sacrifice. He was not pleased with burnt offerings per se. David recognized that the sacrifices of God were a broken spirit, and that Yahweh would not despise a broken and contrite heart.<sup>86</sup>

Solomon followed David to the throne. Solomon continued David's stress on Yahweh's covenant. For Solomon, one of the most important aspects of Yahweh's covenant was covenantal wisdom and knowledge. Solomon had learned the importance of wisdom from his father David. While David's personal life was seldom typified by wisdom, David did stress to Solomon its importance. In Proverbs 4:3-5, Solomon told his own son,

When I was a son to my father, soft and the only one in the presence of my mother He taught me and said to me, "Keep my commands and live. Get wisdom. Get knowledge. Do not forget, and do not bend the words of my mouth!"

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Other parallels between Paul and the united monarchy could also be defended. In passages like Rom. 3:23, Paul claimed that all men have sinned and have fallen short of God's glory. David expressed similar thoughts. In Ps. 51:5 (MT 51:7), David recognized, "Behold, in iniquity was I brought forth, and in sin my mother conceived me." David recognized that he was born in sin even though God had chosen him before he was even born. In Ps. 53:1-3, David commented on human sinfulness in even stronger terms. He noted that the fools said in his heart, "There is no God." David noted that they were corrupt and unjust. David claimed that there was no one who did good. David argued that God looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there is anyone who understood and who sought God. Every one of them had turned aside. Together they became corrupt. There was not one who did "good," not even one.

<sup>82</sup> Paul argued in Rom. 6:23 that the wages of sin was death. David and Solomon certainly recognized this truth in their own day. In Ps. 109:14-20, David prayed that the iniquity of his foes may be remembered before Yahweh. David claimed that his opponent had loved curses so curses came to him. He had not delight in blessing, so it was far from him. He had clothed himself with curses as with a garment. So curses entered his body like water and like oil in his bones. David noted that the natural consequence of a sinful heart was judgment and Yahweh gave him what he had chosen. Then in Ps. 140:9-12, David prayed that Yahweh would make burning coals fall on his foes. David prayed that they would be cast into the fire, into deep pits from which they could not return.

<sup>83</sup> Merkabah mysticism, or "chariot throne mysticism," was the desire to see God in a way that paralleled the visions of the Old Testament prophets.

<sup>84</sup> This claim could be compared to the Coronation Inscription of Thutmose III and similar Egyptian texts. It could also be compared to Moses' request to see Yahweh's face.

<sup>85</sup> An allusion to Moses' radiance on Sinai may also stand behind Ps. 34:4-5.

<sup>86</sup> See for example, II Sam. 12:13, 14:14, Ps. 51:6-13, 139:23-24, 103:17-18.

Solomon learned this lesson from David. At the beginning of his reign, I Kings 3:3-9 noted that Solomon went to the great holy mountain sanctuary at Gibeon and offered a thousand burnt offerings to Yahweh. Moses' wilderness tabernacle and bronze altar were located at Gibeon at this time.<sup>87</sup> Yahweh appeared to Solomon and asked him what he wanted from God.<sup>88</sup> Solomon asked for wisdom to lead the people to discern between good and evil.<sup>89</sup>

Wisdom was the central goal of Solomon's reign.<sup>90</sup> To gain it, Solomon collected proverbs and wisdom sayings from across the Near East. I Kings 4:29-32 noted that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, wrote 1,005 songs, and his wisdom surpassed the wisdom of the sons of the East. Solomon collected wise sayings from across the ancient Near East, and he wrote many of his own wise statements. Bruce Waltke noted parallel wisdom texts that have been found from the ancient Near East. Collections of proverbs have been found from Nippur, Susa and Ur from the Sumerian period. Two of the collections have been published by Edmund Gordon. These two collections contained 200 and 165 proverbs that were strikingly similar to the proverbs of Solomon recorded in Proverbs 10:1 to 22:16 and Proverbs 25:1 to 29:27. Gordon dates both of these collections around 1700 BC. W. G. Lambert published a set of Assyrian proverbs that were preserved in both the Sumerian and the Akkadian languages. He also published two Sumerian and Akkadian wisdom texts that dated to between 1500 BC and 1200 BC. Wisdom texts have also been preserved in Egypt from every period of Egyptian history. The earliest of these dated to the Old Kingdom (2686 BC to 2160 BC). In short, wisdom literature was common in the ancient Near East long before Israel arose in history.<sup>91</sup>

One of the most important covenant and treaty terms had always been that of "knowing" the sovereign. The loyal vassal "knew" the sovereign and was "known" by him. In the Biblical tradition, "knowing" was sometimes used in this technical way. More often, the treaty terms like "know" were used in a more general covenant context. In this less specific usage, the treaty terms characterized the nature of the sovereign/vassal relationship. In this general sense, "knowledge" of Yahweh and His ways always played a key role in Israel's covenant. For Solomon, wisdom and knowledge could not be divorced from Yahweh's covenant. Solomon learned that human wisdom for all of its practical value was less important than spiritual and covenantal wisdom. Solomon stressed repeatedly that true wisdom was grounded in a relationship with God. In Proverbs 1:7, Solomon taught that the fear of Yahweh was the beginning of knowledge. In Proverbs 3:5-7, Solomon called Israel to trust in Yahweh with all their heart. Solomon warned them,

Trust Yahweh with all your heart. Do not support yourself with your own understanding. In all your ways, "know" Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your eyes. Fear Yahweh and depart from evil.

Solomon learned that his search for human wisdom only gave practical benefits. It brought little of lasting value because no man could understand God's actions in history. In Ecclesiastes 3:10-11, Solomon concluded,

I have seen the question which God has given to the sons of men to answer. He made all things beautiful in their time. Also, He set eternity in their hearts, without which a man can not find out the deed that God did from the first even to the end.

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<sup>88</sup> I Chron. 21:29, II Chron. 1:3-5.

<sup>89</sup> Similar claims of divine appearances were not uncommon in the ancient Near East. While Israel was in the wilderness, Thutmose IV claimed that he had begun his reign with a rather similar vision. He claimed that the sun god Re appeared to him and gave Re's kingdom to him. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, II:323.

<sup>90</sup> This remained a desire for Solomon. Ps. 72:1-4 was a Psalm of Solomon. In it, Solomon prayed, "Give the king Your judgments, O God, and Your righteousness to the king's son, may he judge Your people with righteousness.

<sup>91</sup> In Ecc. 1:16, Solomon claimed that he had magnified and increased wisdom more than all who had been over Jerusalem before him, and his mind had observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge.

See also the discussion in Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Egypt and Israel during the First Millennium BC," *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 40 (1986): 107-23, and John Ruffle, "The Teaching of Amenemope and its Connection with the Book of Proverbs," *Tyndale Bulletin* 28 (1977): 29-68.

In Ecclesiastes 5:7, Solomon advised, "For in many dreams and in many words there is vanity, but fear God."<sup>92</sup> These were revolutionary claims. During Israel's period of the Judges, the Canaanite city states had been the high culture in Palestine. Israel in the highlands had been an intellectual and cultural backwater. During the united monarchy, Solomon claimed that epistemology itself had to be grounded in a relationship with Yahweh. Faith in Yahweh had moved from the backwoods to the center of culture in the Levant.

Before David's time, Israel had viewed the highlands of Palestine as God's dwelling place in a rather loose and general way.<sup>93</sup> Yahweh was worshiped at a variety of holy mountain sites scattered up and down the highlands of Palestine.<sup>94</sup> In Psalm 87:1-7, the sons of Korah sang that God's foundation is in the holy mountains. The noun translated "mountains" was plural because Yahweh had several holy mountain sanctuaries. Psalm 87:1-7 went on to claim that Yahweh loved the gates of Zion more than all of the other divine dwelling places of Jacob. All of these mountain top sanctuaries were regarded as manifestations of the same heavenly reality. This can be seen in Psalm 68:15-16. This verse claimed that the mountain of Bashan east of the Jordan was a mountain of God. At times, these holy mountain sites had been used for the proper worship of Yahweh just as the Patriarchs had worshiped there in the past. Other times, the same high places were used for idolatry.

David and Solomon brought many important changes to Israel. They brought the monarchy and they made Jerusalem the nation's capital. Perhaps the most important change that they brought to Israel would be the role that Jerusalem would now play as the central worship site of Judah and at least in theory of the whole land.<sup>95</sup> Jerusalem would become the central focal point in Yahweh's relationship with His people, and it would retain that role until the eschaton. David may have interpreted Yahweh's choice of Jerusalem in the context of Deuteronomy 12:4-13. Moses promised that Yahweh would one day choose a place in the Promised Land as a dwelling place and a place for His Name. In David's time, Moses' promise was finally fulfilled as Yahweh chose Jerusalem.<sup>96</sup>

While David and Solomon turned Jerusalem into Yahweh's sanctuary, they also recognized that God's true temple was in heaven. In II Samuel 22:1-14 and Psalm 18:6-12, David sang that Yahweh had heard him from His temple. Then the earth shook from His anger. He bowed the heavens and came down with thick darkness under His feet as he brought deliverance to David. This was a song for his deliverance from Saul and others. David sang, "Yahweh is my rock and my God, my refuge and my Savior." This Psalm assumed that Yahweh had heard David while God was in His heavenly temple. Israel's new sanctuary would not replace God's heavenly temple. The Jerusalem shrine would instead become a "heaven on earth" manifestation of God's heavenly dwelling. This idea was at the heart of temple theology across the ancient Near East, and it had always been a key part of Israel's theology. The Garden of Eden had been "heaven on earth." The Tower of Babel and the Mesopotamian ziqqurats had been heaven on earth sites as their temple hymns clearly demonstrated. The high places in Palestine like Bethel had been

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Then Solomon concluded the account of his search for wisdom in Ecc. 12:13-14. Solomon wrote, "Let us hear the end of the whole thing. Fear God. Keep His commandments for this applies to everyman. For God will bring every deed into judgment with all that is hidden, if it is good or evil."

Ps. 10:16 claimed that Yahweh was King forever and that nations have perished from His land. This assumed that Palestine was God's land.

<sup>94</sup>

These holy mountain shrines included Bethel, Gilgal, and Gibeon among others.

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During the United Monarchy, Jerusalem was never the only worship site in Palestine. Holladay surveyed the archaeological evidence for worship places in Judah and Israel. He surveyed the evidence from Megiddo, Ta'anach, Dan, Beer-Sheba, Arad, Samaria, Kuntillet-'Ajrud, Jerusalem, Ashdod, Sarepta, and Ta'yinat. Holladay argued that worship sites were quite similar in Judah and Israel during the United Monarchy. The worship sites were usually connected to the houses of important government officials. Holladay argued that the sanctuary at Dan moved in a different direction than the Judean sanctuaries like the shrine of Arad. John S. Holladay, Jr. "Religion in Israel and Judah under the Monarchy: An Explicitly Archaeological Approach," 249-99 in Patrick D. Miller, Jr., et al., eds., *Ancient Israelite Religion*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 280.

<sup>96</sup>

Other worship sites would continue in use. Solomon not only built the Jerusalem temple, he also built a sanctuary at Arad. Aharoni noted that the temple at Arad contained an altar of burnt offering, an incense altar, and an offering table. Yohanan Aharoni, "Solomon's Temple, the Tabernacle, and the Arad Sanctuary," 1-8 in Harry A. Hoffner, Jr. *Orient and Occident*, (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercher, 1973).

“heaven on earth” sites since the Chalcolithic Age. Jerusalem as a Canaanite city would have contained a Baal shrine defined as Baal's Mount Zaphon manifested in Jerusalem. Now David's Jerusalem sanctuary would become Yahweh's heavenly temple manifested on earth. To accomplish this goal, David moved the Ark of the Covenant and the tabernacle to Jerusalem.<sup>97</sup>

Dumbrell and Kleven argued that the book of Samuel provided a continuation of the historical record in the book of Judges. Because of this, I Samuel began with events at the corrupt worship place at Shiloh where a degenerate priesthood abused the people. The books of I and II Samuel moved from this corrupt worship at Shiloh to David's new temple site in Jerusalem. Dumbrell and Kleven argued that the main theme of the books of I and II Samuel centered on the move of Israel's central sanctuary from Shiloh to Jerusalem. They argued that I and II Samuel also stressed the revival that occurred because of this move in the worship site.<sup>98</sup>

The location of Yahweh's ark was theologically important. When David collected material for the temple in I Chronicles 28:18, David included in his collection gold for the “model of the chariot, even the cherubim that spread out their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of Yahweh.”<sup>99</sup> This verse suggested that Yahweh's Ark of the Covenant was a “model” of the cherubim throne seen in Ezekiel 1 and so many other passages. The presence of the ark made Jerusalem the place of Yahweh's presence over the ark's mercy seat.<sup>100</sup> In I Chronicles 28:1-2, David said that he intended to build in Jerusalem a permanent home for the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh that was the footstool of God. In I Chronicles 23:25, David declared that Yahweh would dwell in Jerusalem forever. Yahweh's dwelling in Jerusalem was at the heart of David's theology. In II Samuel 15:24-27, David fled from Absalom. Zadok brought the ark from Jerusalem to David, but David told Zadok to return it to the city. David said that if he found favor in Yahweh's sight, God would bring him back to the city to see both the ark and God's habitation.<sup>101</sup> Jerusalem and its sanctuary became the place where heaven was manifested on earth.<sup>102</sup> David returned to this claim constantly throughout the Psalms.<sup>103</sup> Before Solomon built the Jerusalem temple, David stressed that Yahweh dwelt in Zion and that His Temple was in Zion.<sup>104</sup>

Sanctuaries in the Levant were usually associated with holy mountain imagery in one way or another. David participated in this tradition. When David moved the ark to Jerusalem, he placed it in a holy mountain shrine within the city.<sup>105</sup> In Psalm 68:17-18, David contrasted the mountain of Bashan with the mountain which God had desired for His abode. Surely, Yahweh will dwell there forever.<sup>106</sup> I Kings 3:2 noted that at the beginning of Solomon's reign, people were still sacrificing on the high places because

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<sup>98</sup> I Kngs. 8:4 and II Chron. 5:5 claimed that the ark, the tabernacle, and its utensils had been brought to Jerusalem.

<sup>99</sup> Dumbrell, “The Content and Significance of the Books of Samuel,” 49.

<sup>100</sup> There maybe an interesting Canaanite parallel to the description of the ark as a chariot. Wyatt translated part of the Baal myth as “Indeed I say to you, O Prince Baal, I repeat, O Charioteer of the Clouds.” Wyatt translated the Ugaritic word *rkb* as Charioteer instead of Rider as is common in other translations of the text. Wyatt argued that the chariot in this verse would have been the clouds. N. Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, (Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 65.

<sup>101</sup> I Chron. 13:6 noted that, David brought up to Jerusalem “the ark of god, Yahweh, who dwells among the cherubim where the Name was called.”

<sup>102</sup> In Ps. 42:2-4, the sons of Korah sang a Psalm that seemed to echo David's thoughts at this time. The Psalm claimed that the king had once led a procession into God's house. Now his soul thirsted for God as he hid beyond the Jordan. The Psalmist asked when he would be able to come and appear before God.

<sup>103</sup> Alexander and Gathercole recently discussed the concept of temple as heaven on earth. They argued that Israel's temple made the presence of God's glory the heart of Israel's religion. T. Desmond Alexander and Simon Gathercole, *Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Thought*, (Wayneboro: Paternoster Press).

<sup>104</sup> In Ps. 61:4 (MT 61:5), David prayed, “Let me live in Your tent forever.” See also Ps. 63:1-2, 65:4 and 68:29-35.

<sup>105</sup> Ps. 5:7; 9:11; 20:2.

<sup>106</sup> Even street corner shrines were theologically holy mountain sites. A holy mountain shrine required little or no actual elevation, although they usually were elevated above the surrounding ground in some way. Any worship place within Jerusalem would have been a holy mountain site.

Ps. 43:3-4 prayed, “Let Your light and Your truth lead me to Your holy hill, Your dwelling place, and I will go to the altar of God.”

there was no house built for the name of Yahweh. Solomon built the temple at a site chosen and purchased by David. In II Samuel 24:24-25, David purchased the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite and sacrificed on it to Yahweh. When Yahweh judged Israel because of David's census, the Angel of the Lord appeared to David with His hand stretched out to destroy Jerusalem. David confessed that he had sinned and not the Israelites who were dying. David asked that God's hand be turned against him and his house instead of Israel. Then the prophet Gad appeared to David. Gad told David to build an altar to God on the threshing floor of Araunah. I Chronicles 21:26-30 added that David prepared burnt offerings and peace offerings. He called on the name of Yahweh as fire from heaven fell on the altar of burnt offering. Then the angel of Yahweh put his sword of judgment back in its sheath.<sup>107</sup> This site became the temple mountain in Solomon's time.

I Kings 6:1 noted that Solomon built the Jerusalem temple 480 years after Israel came out of Egypt.<sup>108</sup> Solomon was assisted by the king of Tyre in this construction. Katzenstein noted that Hiram I ascended the throne of Tyre in 970 BC when his father Abibaal died. He reigned for 34 years. Hiram's title was "king of Tyre," but his people were called Sidonians. Katzenstein noted that an Assyrian picture showed the main temple at Tyre.<sup>109</sup> Two pillars stood beside its entrance that resembled the two pillars that he helped Solomon build beside the entrance to Solomon's temple.<sup>110</sup> Katzenstein argued that the strong pillar of Tyre mentioned in Ezekiel 26:11 was an allusion to these two pillars of Tyre.<sup>111</sup>

Katzenstein noted that the king of Tyre sent Solomon a man whose name is spelled both as Hiram, and as Hiram-Abi.<sup>112</sup> This man was the son of a man from Tyre and a widow from the tribe of either Dan or Naphtali, depending on whether the account in I Kings 7:14 or II Chronicles 2:13-14 is preferred. Both passages were actually correct because the tribal territory of Dan was located in the district assigned to Naphtali. Katzenstein noted that the tribe of Dan was always closely related to the city of Tyre. The people from Dan worked in the ports of Tyre and Sidon. So it is not surprising that Hiram's mother should be an Israelite.<sup>113</sup> Katzenstein argued that the plan of the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem was Phoenician. His evidence for this came by comparing the descriptions in the Jerusalem temple in the Bible with archaeological findings in Syria and the northern coast of Palestine where similar shaped temples have been found. Katzenstein noted that Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber on the Red Sea shore. Hiram sent his own men to serve on these ships since Canaanite sailors had been

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<sup>107</sup>

David was terrified by God's judgment. After this event, David did not dare to go to the tabernacle at Gibeon because he was terrified by the sword of the Angel of the Lord. In Ps. 7:12-13, David showed that he had learned a lesson. He wrote that God would sharpen His sword if a man did not repent, and He would bend His bow.

Shanks noted that three texts have recently been found that mention Solomon's temple. Hershel Shanks, "Three Shekels for the Lord," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 23 (1997): 28-33.

The architecture of Solomon's temple has been the subject of nearly endless discussion. Much of this discussion has centered on the parallels between Solomon's temple and other temples in the ancient Near East. Elizabeth Bloch-Smith discussed the temple's architecture and symbolism. Bloch-Smith noted that many authors have seen the temple as a symbol for heaven, creation, or Eden. Bloch-Smith noted that the temple's courtyard objects have been compared to archaeological parallels in the ancient Near East. The two columns by the temple door have been compared to columns at the temples in Shechem, Hazor, Tell Tainat, and Tyre. The temple's molten sea has been compared to Assyrian, Cypriot, and Syrian parallels. The molten sea's theology has been compared to "primal deep" and "water of life" motifs across the region. Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, "Who is the King of Glory? Solomon's Temple and Its Symbolism," 18-31 in Michael D. Coogan, et al, eds. *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 18-20, 27.

<sup>111</sup> I Kngs. 7:21.

Ezekiel also commented on Tyre in Ezek. 28:11-19. This passage combined Satan's fall in heaven, Adam's revolt in Eden, and Tyre's opposition to Yahweh's people. Just as Satan had once served God faithfully in heaven, and just as Adam had once served God righteously in Eden, so also an earlier king of Tyre had served David and Solomon as a faithful vassal. As such, this earlier king of Tyre had stood on God's holy mountain in Jerusalem. He had seen Yahweh's glory fire fill His new temple. Yet just as Satan fell into sin, and just as Adam fell in the Garden, so also a later king of Tyre joined the enemies of God's people and persecuted them severely.

<sup>113</sup> I Kngs. 7:13 or II Chron. 2:12-13

Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre*, 138.

using the sea trade routes for over 2,000 years. Solomon sent the ships south to Ophir to trade for gold.<sup>114</sup> By doing this, Solomon violated Moses' principles in Deuteronomy 17. Despite Moses' direction that Israel's kings were never to multiply gold, Solomon made gold and silver abundant in Jerusalem.<sup>115</sup>

Solomon built the first temple in Jerusalem on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. This was the site purchased by David after he saw the Angel of Yahweh with His sword stretched over Jerusalem. It is significant that David did not choose a temple site that had been a place of Baal worship. David and Solomon chose a threshing floor. There was to be no direct continuity between Yahweh's temple and earlier Baal shrines in Jerusalem. This is important because it has been claimed so often that Solomon inherited Zion theology from the Jebusites at Jerusalem. There was only a limited amount of truth to this claim. David and Solomon's Zion and temple theology was grounded in the ancient holy mountain motif that was as old as man himself. This ancient tradition was represented in David's time by Israel's Sinai and "high place" theology as well as by Canaanite idolatry with its emphasis on Baal's Mount Zaphon and El's Mount Amanus.<sup>116</sup>

Lawrence Stager explored this motif in some detail. Stager noted that Solomon's temple and palace were both located on Mt. Zion, so Zion was a place of both worship and administration. Stager claimed that Zion was the place where Yahweh met with His holy ones, and it was the place from which Yahweh ruled His world. Stager argued that Jerusalem's Gihon spring served theologically as the source of living water that flowed from the cosmic mountain. Stager noted that water from this spring was carried in an aqueduct to irrigate gardens and parks created in the Kidron valley by Israel's kings. Stager compared these gardens with the royal gardens of several rulers across the ancient Near East. Stager argued that these gardens theologically located Solomon's temple in paradise. Theologically, the temple was in the Garden of God and the Garden of Eden.<sup>117</sup>

J. M. Roberts also argued that the Jerusalem temple and Mount Zion were described in terms very similar to holy mountain imagery across the ancient Near East. Roberts traced how Israel's Mount Zion motif resembled holy mountain imagery.<sup>118</sup> Roberts noted that the Zion tradition in the Old Testament was a combination of four major ideas. 1) Zion was the real Mount Zaphon, the holy mountain of god, the highest mountain. 2) The rivers of paradise flowed from it. 3) God defeated the primal waters of chaos there. 4) God also defeated gentile kings and peoples there. Roberts noted that most scholars believed that these ideas were originally carried over from the pre-Israelite Jebusite inhabitants of Jerusalem. Roberts noted that little is really known about the theology of the Jebusites. The little evidence that does exist suggests that they shared much of the Canaanite theology. To support this, Roberts pointed to Genesis 14 where the ruler of Jerusalem worshiped El-Elyon, which Roberts associated with the Canaanite god El. Roberts noted that this does not fit together very well. Some of the ideas associated with Zion resemble the worship of Baal and other ideas resemble the worship of El. The two gods were not usually worshiped on the same mountain. So Roberts suggested that the Zion traditions could not really have come from the pre-Israelite Jebusites. Roberts suggested that the Zion traditions could best be explained as originating in the days of David and Solomon. Roberts suggested that the empire of David and Solomon associated ideas from Baal and El worship with the worship of Yahweh. Roberts suggested that this was done to create a religious ideology which would justify David's imperialistic claims to rule over the nations. In other words, David had a right to rule over the nations because he ruled as God's representative on God's holy mountain. This holy mountain was the center of God's own rule over the nations. While Evangelicals may disagree with Roberts' explanation of David's purposes, holy mountain imagery was clearly at the heart of Israel's temple theology throughout its history.

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We could note here that Canaanite ships had been sailing the sea trade routes for at least two thousand years by this time.

<sup>115</sup> Millard noted that the amount of gold attributed to Solomon was consistent with the evidence for other rulers in the ancient Near East. Millard, "Does the Bible Exaggerate King Solomon's Golden Wealth?" 20-9.

<sup>116</sup> Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*, (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 19. There has been a lot of discussion about how Solomon's temple participated in the kind of holy mountain imagery found everywhere in the ancient Near East. Levenson noted that Ps. 68 has sometimes been considered one of the oldest sections of Israelite poetry. This Psalm described God coming from Sinai the mountain of God. Levenson argued that this Psalm demonstrated how the older Sinai traditions were being transferred to Mount Zion.

<sup>117</sup> Lawrence E. Stager, "Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden," *Eretz-Israel* 26 (1999): 183\*-94\*.

<sup>118</sup> J. J. M. Roberts, "The Davidic Origin of the Zion Tradition," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 92 (1975): 329-44.

The central importance of holy mountain imagery for David's new shrine can be seen in Psalm 48:1-3 (MT 48:2-4). In this Psalm, the sons of Korah sang,

Great is Yahweh and exceedingly to be praised in the city of our God, the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful on high, the joy of all the earth, is Mount Zion in the sides of *Zaphon* (the north), the city of the great King. God in her citadels is known as a refuge.

The Hebrew word often translated as "north" in this verse is *zaphon*. Much academic discussion has centered around that fact that *zaphon* is the name of Baal's holy mountain on the Mediterranean coast north of Palestine. The sons of Korah claimed in this verse that Yahweh's temple in Jerusalem was the true holy mountain, not any of the Baal shrines in Jerusalem, in Palestine, or elsewhere in the Levant.<sup>119</sup>

In I Kings 8:10-53, Solomon dedicated his temple. A cloud of God's presence filled the temple, and Yahweh's glory filled the temple. Yahweh said that He had not chosen a city as a place for His temple, but He had chosen David to be king. It had been in David's heart to build a house for God's name. Solomon had built the house that David desired. Then Solomon recognized that heaven and the highest heaven could not contain God, much less a house. Yet Solomon asked Yahweh to hear in heaven any prayers offered toward the temple in Jerusalem. Then Solomon looked far into the future. Solomon recognized that in time, Israel would sin and would be driven from Yahweh's land into exile. Solomon prayed that God would hear from heaven any prayers offered in exile by those who faced toward the temple in repentance for their sins. Solomon asked that God would forgive those in exile who prayed in repentance for their sins. Solomon prayed that Yahweh would make them objects of compassion in the lands to which they had been driven. These words would have been especially meaningful to the captivity generation that wrote the words of I Kings. While this book recorded the events in Solomon's reign, it was written early in Israel's Babylonian captivity when Israel needed repentance and also needed compassion from their captors. As a part of Solomon's dedication ceremony, Solomon offered sacrifices. I Chronicles 7:1-3, noted that fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering, just as fire from heaven had consumed David's sin offering at the same place a few years earlier. Then the Lord's glory filled the temple. In Psalm 72:19, Solomon remembered Yahweh's glory in the temple. Solomon looked far beyond his own temple and promised that one day the whole earth would be filled with Yahweh's glory.

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This Psalm drew on the ancient holymountain tradition represented in the Egyptian Old Kingdom motif that the "north" was the spiritual realm of the blessed death, and similar motifs in the ancient Near East. This Psalm might even have drawn on the fact that Yahweh's Garden of Eden was located on a mountain in the far north from the perspective of Palestine.