EXPOSITION OF 1–2 CHRONICLES

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by

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Canonical Context

All 66 inspired books of the Protestant canon relate to the progressively revealed Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative of the Bible, but not in the same way. Each book either *carries* the metanarrative,[1] *contributes* to it but does not carry it,[2] or *contemplates* the metanarrative.[3] A book's placement into one of these three categories does not necessarily depend on genre, even though a correlation frequently exists. Rather, a book's categorization depends on its contents and its relationship to other books.[4]

In the Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative of Scripture, the following compose the major elements of the story:

Table 1: Elements of the Metanarrative of Scripture

Setting:	Heaven and earth	Gen 1–2
Hero:	God the Father	Gen 1–2
Hero's desire:	Image bearers to rule the earth	Gen 1:26–28
Problem:	Image bearers gave their rule to the serpent	Gen 3
Solution (the plot):	Promise seed will strike the serpent and restore rule to image bearers	Gen 3:15–Rev 19
Turning point:	The Cross	Gospels
Climax:	The Great Tribulation	Rev 6–19
Resolution / denouement:	Image bearers again rule the earth	Rev 20–22

[1] The carrier category refers to biblical books that carry the primary plotline of the Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative of the Bible. Many books of historical narrative and certain parts of prophetic books fall into this category because they carry the Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative. Such books describe the outworking of the promise in Genesis 3:15–16.

[2] The contributor category refers to biblical books that contribute to, but do not carry, the plot of the Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative of the Bible. Most prophetic books and certain parts of the NT epistles fall into this category because while they do not carry the Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative, they contribute important (often prophetic) information about that metanarrative. Additionally, certain historical narratives run in parallel to one another (e.g., Kings and Chronicles, the four Gospels). In these cases, 1–2 Kings function as the carrier and 1–2 Chronicles as the contributor. Among the Gospels, Matthew functions as the carrier and the other three as contributors.

[3] The contemplator category refers to biblical books that neither carry nor contribute to the plot of the Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative of the Bible. Rather, these books reflect upon (contemplate) the realities of that narrative. Books of wisdom, poetry, and most NT epistles fall into this category, because in light of the Genesis 3:15 promised seed having come, they address how the people of God should live until he returns to establish his kingdom.

[4] For this reason, certain biblical books fit into more than one of these three categories.

As shown in Table 1, the Bible as a whole presents God as the hero of the story who desires his image bearers to rule the world on his behalf. This metanarrative begins in the book of Genesis and concludes in the book of Revelation. Genesis presents the setting,[5] the characters,[6] the plot problem,[7] and the beginning of the rising action. The problem identified in Genesis 3 did not change God's desire for his image bearers to rule the world. The prophecy of Genesis 3:15–16 indicates a war between the serpent's seed and the woman's seed. This battle is the central conflict in the entire biblical narrative; a conflict not resolved until Revelation 20. In this prophecy, God promised the seed of the woman—a man—would defeat the serpent, restore humanity to the garden, and restore rule of the earth to God's image bearers. The anticipation of this promised seed drives the plot of the biblical narrative. The entire plot of the metanarrative thus revolves around how Genesis 3:15–16 comes to fruition. This prophecy reaches the first phase of its fulfillment in Revelation 20 in the thousand-year kingdom of Christ on earth, and its final phase of fulfillment in Revelation 21–22 in the new heaven and earth.

In narrative (or a metanarrative such as the whole Bible), "The story is the meaning."[8] Every book must be interpreted in light of the plot problem, rising action, and resolution. Recent decades have seen advances in narrative criticism applied to biblical texts which have brought to light the complexity and skillful crafting of biblical narratives. Such complexity is not merely limited to individual biblical books. As one scholar noted, "Narrative structure, usually interconnected to plot or characterization, may extend across several books, supporting the evangelical concept that the divine author provides unity and continuity in the biblical story."[9] This paper, then, recognizes the place of Chronicles in light of the divine author's total metanarrative. Indeed, "The Bible's total story sketches in narrative form the meaning of all reality."[10]

A word is necessary regarding the relationship between Chronicles and Deuteronomic history (Genesis–Kings). The Deuteronomic history (i.e., Torah and Former Prophets) *carries* the Messiah-redeemer-rule metanarrative. Even though Chronicles does provide a sweeping history covering the same timeframe from Adam (ca. 4,000 BC?) to Cyrus (539 BC), it serves a different function than *carrying* the metanarrative. In contrast to Deuteronomic history, the narrative of Chronicles addressed a specific rhetorical situation in the postexilic Israelite community. The Chronicler frequently copied Samuel–Kings word-for-word, yet, he also added, deleted, modified, and rearranged material from Samuel–Kings and other sources, and he did so in a way that suited his rhetorical purposes. For example, the Chronicler's account of David's ascent to the throne (1 Chr 11–12) did not include his seven years in Hebron and the ongoing war between the houses of Saul and David during that time (2 Sam 2–4). Instead, the Chronicler

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[5] Heaven and earth, Genesis 1–2.

[6] God, the hero of the story; mankind, the object of God's desire; and the antagonist, the serpent.

[7] Despite God's desire for mankind to rule the earth on his behalf, the man and woman gave their rule over to the serpent (Gen 3).

[8] Leland Ryken, *Words of Delight* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 88.

[9] J. Daniel Hays, "An Evangelical Approach to Old Testament Narrative Criticism," *BSac* 166 (2009): 8.

[10] Richard Bauckham, *God and the Crisis of Freedom: Biblical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 64.

focused on the universal support for David's kingship even at Hebron from "all Israel" and "all the elders of Israel" (1 Chr 11:1, 3, 4, 10). As another example, the Chronicler ignored David's adultery with Bathsheba, his murder of Uriah, and the subsequent fratricide and civil war in David's house (2 Sam 11–20). While some suggest this served the purpose of idealizing David, it seems more likely that the material simply didn't align with the Chronicler's emphasis on temple and cult.[11]

In the Hebrew canon, the Writings form the final portion of the Hebrew Bible. The book of Chronicles, originally one book in Hebrew, constitutes the final book of the Writings. Chronicles, then, is one of the latest, if not *the* latest OT book written (see section on "When?" below). As such, it answers the question of what the postexilic Israelite community should do in their present circumstance in light of the broader biblical metanarrative. Specifically, the Chronicler wanted the postexilic Israelites to humble themselves and seek Yahweh by returning to the land of Israel, worshiping at the temple in Jerusalem, and living in covenant fidelity while awaiting the Messiah in accordance with the Davidic Covenant. As such, the 1–2 Chronicles therefore functions as a *contemplator* of the Messiah-redeemer-ruler metanarrative.

Glossary of Literary Terms and Devices[12]

Acrostic: A poem in which the successive units begin with the consecutive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.
Allegory: A work of literature in which some or all of the details have a corresponding other meaning and refer to either a concept or historical particular.
Alliteration: involves the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words in close proximity, used to create rhythm or emphasis.
Allusion: a reference to another work of literature, person, or event, often used to enhance meaning or provide deeper insight.
Ambiguity: the use of language that allows for multiple interpretations or meanings, adding complexity and depth to the narrative.
Anti-hero: a literary protagonist who exhibits an absence of the character traits that are conventionally associated with literary heroes.
Anti-romance: a work of literature, or part of a work of literature, that presents unideal experience; a literary world of total bondage and the absence of the ideal.
Anthropomorphism: the attribution of human characteristics, emotions, or behaviors to animals, inanimate objects, or deities.
Antagonist: the character or force that opposes the protagonist, thus creating conflict in the narrative.

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[11] For a fuller treatment of the differences between Samuel–Kings and Chronicles and an analysis of the author's intent for crafting such differences, see R. Braun, "The Message of Chronicles: Rally 'Round the Temple," *CTM* 42 (1971): 502–14.

[12] This list is a composite of terms from four sources: (1) Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 513–17, (2) Schnittjer, *Torah Story*, 8–19, (3) Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., *Interpreting the Historical Books: An Exegetical Handbook,* edited by David M. Howard, Jr., Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2006), 227–31, and (4) David R. Klingler, "Bible Exposition Template and Instructions," unpublished manuscript, 2023.

Antithetic parallelism: a two-line poetic unit in which the second line states the truth of the first in the opposite way or introduces a contrast.
Aphorism: a short, memorable statement of truth.
Archetype: an image, plot motif, or character type that recurs throughout literature and is part of a reader's total literary experience.
Blazon: a love poem that praises the attractive features and / or virtues of the beloved by means of a catalogue or listing technique.
Calling stories: in the Gospels, stories in which Jesus calls a person to follow him or to respond to a command. Also called vocation stories.
Canonical form: the present or final form of the text as it appears within the canon of Scripture, as opposed to a hypothetical form the text may have had before it was placed in its present location in the canon of Scripture.
Characterization: the process by which the author reveals the personality, traits, and attributes of a character or group of characters in a narrative.
Climax: the moment of peak tension / plot conflict in the story.
Climactic parallelism: a form of parallelism in which the first line is left incomplete until the second line repeats part of it and then makes it a whole statement by adding to it.
Comedy: a story with a U-shaped plot in which the action begins in prosperity, descends into potentially tragic events, and rises to a happy ending.
Conflict / plot tension: the central struggle or problem between opposing forces that drives the plot forward. This can be internal (within a character) or external (between characters or between a character and an external force). The plot tension generally revolves around the protagonist's desire and the antagonistic elements (see "antagonist") working against that desire.
Conflict stories: Gospel stories that narrate Jesus' controversies with an opposing person or group. Also called controversy stories.
Denouement: the last phase of a story, following the climax; literally the "tying up of loose ends."
Didactic: having the intention or impulse to teach.
Discourse: an address to an audience.
Dramatic monologue: a literary work in which a single speaker addresses an implied but silent listener and in which various details keep this dramatic situation alive in the reader's consciousness.
Dramatic structure: the arrangement of a story's scenes and episodes, sometimes distinguished in the story's discourse structure.
Emblem: a symbolic and sometimes pictorial image to which a person or thing is compared.
Emblematic blazon: a love poem that lists the features of the beloved and compares them to objects or emblems in nature or human experience.
Encomium: a work of literature that praises an abstract quality or a generalized character type.
Encounter stories: gospel stories in which a person is confronted with the claims of Jesus, which that person must either accept or reject.
Epic: a long narrative having a number of conventional characteristics.
Epiphany: a moment of heightened insight in a literary work.
Episode: An incident or a series of incidents that forms a distinct literary subunit in a narrative or story; an episode can include two or more scenes.
Epistle: a letter that attains literary status by virtue of the literary techniques used in it.
Epithalamion: a lyric poem that celebrates a wedding.

Epithet: an exalted title for a person or thing; a feature of the high style, especially as found in epic.
Explication: the literary term for close reading of a text. It implies not only careful analysis of a text but also putting one's analysis into organized form for written or oral presentation to an audience.
Exposition: the opening phase of a story in which the writer presents the background information that the reader needs in order to understand the plot that will subsequently unfold.
Expository writing: writing whose main purpose is to convey information.
Ellipsis: the author may drop an element of what is expected in the story in order to draw attention to it.
Extended Echo Effect: the repetition of parallel ordering, elements, or features in multiple narrative units (A-B-C, A-B-C). Similar to "typological pattern," but without the inclusion of prophetic expectation.
Flashback: a scene that interrupts the narrative to show events that happened at an earlier time, providing background or context.
Foil: a character who stands in contrast to another, thereby highlighting one or more of the latter's characteristics or traits.
Foreshadowing: involves hints or indications of what is to come later in the story, creating anticipation or suspense.
Folk literature: literature couched in the language of everyday speech and appealing to the common person. Also called popular literature.
Genre: a literary type or kind.
Hero: a protagonist who is exemplary and representative of a whole community.
Hero story, heroic narrative: a story built around the character and exploits of a protagonist who is exemplary and representative of a whole community.
Hybrid forms: narratives that combine elements of one or more genres.
Hyperbole: a figure of speech in which a writer uses conscious exaggeration for the sake of effect, usually emotional effect.
Imagery: descriptive language that appeals to the senses, helping to create a vivid mental picture for the reader.
Image: any concrete picture of reality or human experience, including any sensory experience, a setting, a character, or an event.
Inclusio: the bracketing of a unit of text identified by the repetition of features or elements at the beginning and end of the unit.
Interchange: an alternation of elements in the story which can cause heightened literary irony or develop comparative imaging.
Irony: a contrast between expectation and reality which can take various forms:

- **Verbal Irony:** occurs when a speaker says one thing but means another.
- **Situational Irony:** occurs when there is a discrepancy between what is expected to happen and what actually occurs.
- **Dramatic Irony:** a situation where the reader knows something which some or all the characters in a story are ignorant.

Janus: a bidirectional turning point looking both backward and forward.
Juxtaposition: placing two contrasting elements side by side to highlight their differences or create a particular effect.

- **Comparison:** the juxtaposition of similar elements such as words, imagery, or events.

Contrast: the juxtaposition of dissimilar elements such as words, imagery, or events.

Lyric: a short poem containing the thoughts or feelings of a speaker. The emotional quality, even more than the reflective, is usually considered the differentia of lyric.

Metaphor: a figure of speech in which the writer makes an implied comparison between two phenomena.

Miracle stories: gospel narratives that focus on miracles that Jesus performed.

Motif: a recurring element, theme, or idea in a narrative that has symbolic significance and helps to develop the story's themes.

Narrative Perspective (Point of View): the lens through which the story is told, affecting the reader's perception. Common perspectives include:

First-Person: the narrator is a character in the story, using "I" or "we."

Second-Person: the narrator addresses the reader directly using "you."

Third-Person Limited: the narrator is outside the story but knows the thoughts and feelings of one character.

Third-Person Omniscient: the narrator knows all the thoughts and feelings of all characters.

Narrative space: narrators may employ physical space / locations as part of the setting, but may also assign symbolic meaning to certain physical spaces.

Narrative sequence: narrators may employ dischronological narrative in the form of previews or flashbacks in an advantageous way to the story.

Narrative time: in real history, time is a constant. But in narrative literature, the narrator may speed up (pass many years briefly) or slow down (focus an extended portion of text in a brief window of time) according to his discretion.

Narrative typology: a case in which, by design of the narrator, an earlier character or event supplies the pattern for a later character or event in the story.

Normative character: a character in a story who expresses or embodies what the storyteller wishes us to understand is correct.

Occasional literature: a work of literature that takes its origin from a particular historical event or a particular situation in the writer's life.

Ode: an exalted lyric poem that celebrates a dignified subject in a lofty style.

Paneled sequence: a literary structural technique where repeated elements appear in successive movements, yielding a structure of ABC // ABC.

Parable: a brief narrative that explicitly embodies one or more themes.

Paradox: an apparent contradiction that upon reflection is seen to express a genuine truth; the contradiction must be resolved or explained before we see its truth.

Parallelism: the verse form in which all biblical poetry is written. The general definition that will cover the various types of parallelism is as follows: two or more lines that form a pattern based on repetition or balance of thought or grammar. The phrase thought couplet is a good working synonym.

Stairstep parallelism: a type of parallelism in which the last key word of a line becomes the first main word in the next line.

Synonymous parallelism: a type of parallelism in which two or more lines state the same idea in different words but in similar grammatical form; the second line repeats the content of all or part of the first line.

Synthetic parallelism: a type of parallelism in which the second line completes the thought of the first line, but without repeating anything from the first line. also called growing parallelism.

Parody: a work of literature that parallels but inverts the usual meaning of a literary genre or a specific earlier work of literature.

Passion stories: gospel stories that narrate the events surrounding the trial, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Pastoral: literature in which the setting, characters, and events are those of the shepherd's world.

Personification: a figure of speech in which human attributes are given to something nonhuman, such as animals, objects, or abstract qualities.

Plot: the sequence of events in a story, usually based on a central conflict and having a beginning, middle, and end.

Plot Twist: an unexpected or surprising turn of events in a narrative that alters the direction of the story or changes the reader's understanding of the plot.

Poetic justice: the feature of stories by which good characters are rewarded and evil characters are punished.

Poetic license: figurative language that is not literally true or factual.

Prolepsis (opposite of flashback): interrupts the chronological flow of a story by jumping ahead in time to reveal something that will happen later. Prolepsis can take several forms, such as a direct flashforward showing future events, or more subtly, through hints or statements that suggest what will happen.

Proportion: highlighting a work's emphasis by the quantitative amount it occupies in the narrative.

Protagonist: the leading character in a story, whether sympathetic or unsympathetic.

Proverb: a concise, memorable expression of truth.

Pun: a play on words, often using a word that sounds like another word but that has a different meaning.

Repetition: the recurrence of similar or identical elements (words, actions, concepts).

Resolution: following the climax, the part of the story where the conflict is resolved and the narrative comes to a conclusion. It ties up loose ends and provides closure for the characters and the plot.

Rhetorical question: a figure of speech in which the writer asks a question whose answer is so obvious that it is left unstated; a question asked, not to elicit information, but for the sake of effect, usually an emotional effect.

Rising Action: rising action is the building of tension as the plot conflict escalates towards the climax.

Sarcasm: the use of irony to mock or convey contempt, often through exaggerated statements that are not meant to be taken literally.

Satire: the exposure, through ridicule or rebuke, of human vice or folly.

Satiric norm: the standard by which the object of attack is criticized in a satire.

Scene: a subunit of an episode; it records an incident that takes place in a different place and/or at a different time than the incidents that precede and follow it.

Setting: the time and place in which a story occurs.

Simile: a figure of speech in which the writer compares two phenomena, using the explicit formula "like" or "as."

Suspense: the feeling of anticipation or anxiety about what will happen next in the story, often created through uncertainty or danger.
Symbol: any detail in a work of literature that in addition to its literal meaning stands for something else.
Symbolism: involves the use of symbols to represent ideas or concepts beyond their literal meaning, often conveying deeper significance.
Temporal overlay: a literary technique where the narrator juxtaposes episodes or scenes that overlap chronologically, rather than presenting events in strictly chronological succession.
Theme: a generalization about life that a work of literature as a whole embodies or implies.
Tone: the attitude or emotional stance of the narrator or author towards the subject matter, conveyed through word choice and style.
Tragedy: a narrative form built around an exceptional calamity stemming from the protagonist's wrong choice.
Turning point (character): the place in a narrative where a character's characterization changes significantly due to events in the plot.
Turning point (plot): the point from which, at least in retrospect, the reader can begin to see how the plot conflict will be resolved.
Typological pattern: the prophetic expectation of similarities in character or events. Similar to "extended echo effect," but with the inclusion of prophetic expectation.
Voice: the distinct personality and style of the narrator or author, influencing how the story is perceived.
Well-made plot: a plot that unfolds according to the following pattern: exposition (background information), inciting moment (or inciting force), rising action, turning point (the point from which, at least in retrospect, the reader can begin to see how the plot conflict will be resolved), further complication, climax, and denouement.
Witness stories: gospel stories in which either Jesus or another character testifies about Jesus or his works. Also called testimony stories.

Occasion

Who and when?

The text of Chronicles identifies neither the date of composition nor its author / editor / compiler. The narrative concludes with the proclamation of Cyrus (539 BC), making that the earliest possible date of composition. Other textual elements factor into the date, but are likewise indecisive: some have pointed to the genealogy of Zerubbabel son of Pedaiah (1 Chr 3:19) and its successive two-to-six generations as evidence for a fifth-century date. If the Zerubbabel here is the same Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel mentioned in Ezra and Haggai (the change in father's name possibly accounted for by scribal error or by levirate marriage), and six generations is the correct understanding, then we may certainly look to the mid- to late- fifth century. If another Zerubbabel were in view, then the point is moot, although it does not negate the possibility of a fifth century composition. Indeed, the rhetorical situation in Chronicles of promoting the post-exilic temple-based theocracy by connecting to its historical roots aligns well with fifth-century Israelite history. Many Jews had remained outside the Promised Land (see book of Esther, for example). Those who had returned demonstrated a general lethargy toward the temple and the priorities of Yahweh (see Haggai and Zechariah, ca. 520 BC) and fearfulness of the Gentile inhabitants of the land (see Ezra and Nehemiah, ca. mid-fifth century). Some have pointed to the possibility of the Chronicler working in conjunction with Haggai and Zechariah in the late sixth century since their literary aims aligned together.[13] This is possible, but difficult to validate with certainty. Given the text's interest in the Levites and particularly the musicians, some have pointed to the possibility of a levitical musician as author / compiler. Jewish tradition acknowledged Ezra the scribe as the compiler of Chronicles. Zerubbabel led the first return from exile (ca. 538 BC), Ezra the second (ca. 458 BC), and Nehemiah the third (ca. 444 BC). Ezra would certainly fit the timeline (later than 538 BC) and the book's apparent rhetorical concerns regarding the temple and adherence to the Law. As a skilled scribe and leader, Ezra would also have the capability to undergo such a task. He would also likely have had access to the many contributing documents like Samuel–Kings and others. As the author of the book of Ezra, he had also composed other inspired Scripture. While all these points favor the not unreasonable possibility of Ezra's authorship, this nevertheless remains uncertain.[14] In the end, authorship and date cannot be validated with certainty. For the purposes of this paper, the author is assumed to be anonymous, and the date of composition broadly in the Persian era (539–333 BC). To assume a narrower window likely exceeds the available literary and historical data.

To Whom?

The text does not explicitly identify its audience. Based on its apparent rhetorical purpose, however, Chronicles appears to have been written for all Israelites. The message and intended response would apply just as much to repatriates to the Promised Land as to those who remained in Babylon / Persia. Indeed, a prevalent theme throughout is the idea of "all Israel."

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[13] David Noel Freedman, "The Chronicler's Purpose," *CBQ* 23, no. 4 (1961): 441.

[14] For fullers discussions of authorship and date, see R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969), 1153–69, and Tremper Longman III, and Raymond B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 192–95.

Unlike Samuel–Kings which have a distinct anti-Northern Kingdom polemic, the Chronicler avoided such bias in his call for all Israel to return to the Jerusalem temple and faith in Yahweh.

Where?

The text does not identify the location of its composition. Given the apparent rhetorical emphasis on the temple and Jerusalem, it would seem somewhat duplicitous and hypocritical (though not impossible) for its author to compose the work while living outside of Judea. While the location cannot be validated with certainty, this paper will assume that the anonymous author composed Chronicles in Judah, and most likely in Jerusalem itself. The work, intended for all Israelites, was most likely sent to the diaspora in addition to being used in Judea.

Why?

Following Jeremiah's decreed seventy years of service to Babylon (Jer 25:11), the Persians conquered Babylon (539 BC; Dan 5:30–31). Cyrus issued a decree (539 BC; 2 Chr 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–4) permitting a Jewish return to Judea to rebuild their temple. However, only a relatively small minority of Israelites (42,360 Israelites and 7,337 servants, according to Ezra 2:64–65) answered the call and returned. The vast majority remained in Babylon / Persia.[15]

While it's unfortunately not possible to date the book of Chronicles much more precisely than the Persian period in general (539–333 BC), the message and rhetorical purposes of the book would certainly fit most of the Persian period, aligning with several of the messages of other canonical books written during that period. A lack of zeal for the temple and the priorities of Yahweh remained prevalent among both the repatriated and the diaspora Jews. Among those who returned, despite the initial excitement of starting to rebuild the temple, their fervor waned and the repatriates grew sluggish. The temple remained incomplete for over 15 years until the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah (520 BC) bolstered the Israelites' energies and they finished rebuilding (ca. 516 BC). Nevertheless, fearfulness of the non-Israelite inhabitants of the land continued to pervade the repatriates well into the fifth century (see Ezra and Nehemiah, ca. mid-fifth century). Additionally, the problem of moral laxity relative to the Mosaic Law also continued into the fifth century (see books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi). Meanwhile, the majority who had remained in the diaspora likewise showed little concern for the temple and Yahweh's priorities (see book of Esther)—the chief evidence being their presence outside the Promised Land.

With his narrative work, the Chronicler thus addressed the general spiritual sluggishness of the postexilic Jews in the Persian era. His genealogical and geographical records connected the postexilic Jews to their historical roots as the elect nation of Yahweh. He showed Yahweh's choice of David as king and recipient of an eternal covenant, and Solomon his son as the legitimate heir and builder of the divinely approved temple in Jerusalem. Post-Solomonic kings were measured by their actions relative to the temple, its personnel, and the Law. Ultimately, the Chronicler composed this narrative so that all Israelites would humble themselves, seek Yahweh, and be part of the restored Israelite community by (1) returning to the Promised Land if in the diaspora, (2) participating in and uniting around the legitimate worship

[15] The number of Jews who remained in Babylon / Persia is uncertain, but estimates generally range from 100,000–300,000. In any case, a minority returned to Judea while the majority remained in the diaspora.

of Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and (3) living in covenant fidelity while waiting with hope for the coming Davidic king because of Yahweh's enduring *ḥesed* as exemplified in the Davidic Covenant.

Genre

The book of Chronicles was written as an historical narrative, although it contains other genres within is, such as psalms and genealogical records. These sub-genres, however, contribute to the historical narrative.

Proposed Message Statement

In order to address the general spiritual apathy of postexilic Jews in the Persian era, an unknown author wrote an historical narrative to all Israel during the Persian era (539–333 BC) in order to explain the divinely-appointed centrality of the Davidic dynasty and the Jerusalem temple to the Israelite identity of both Northern and Southern kingdoms, so that all Israelites would humble themselves, seek Yahweh, and be part of the restored Israelite community by (1) returning to the Promised Land if in the diaspora, (2) participating in and uniting around the legitimate worship of Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and (3) living in covenant fidelity while waiting with hope for the coming Davidic king because of Yahweh's enduring *ḥesed* as exemplified in the Davidic Covenant.

Proposed Outline

I. Genealogical and geographical preamble (1 Chr 1:1–9:34)
II. David the King (1 Chr 9:35–29:30)
III. Solomon the King (2 Chr 1:1–9:31)
IV. Post-Solomonic Judahite Kings (2 Chr 10:1–36:23)

Use of Rhetoric in 1–2 Chronicles

Classical rhetoric employs three modes and three species of rhetoric. The three modes of rhetoric include *logos*,[16] *pathos*,[17] and *ethos*.[18] The three species include judicial,[19] epideictic,[20] and deliberative[21] rhetoric.[22] The author of 1–2 Chronicles had an overall deliberative purpose, namely that all Israelites would humble themselves, seek Yahweh, and be part of the restored Israelite community by (1) returning to the Promised Land if in the diaspora, (2) participating in and uniting around the legitimate worship of Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and (3) living in covenant fidelity while waiting with hope for the coming Davidic king because of Yahweh's enduring *ḥesed* as exemplified in the Davidic Covenant. To achieve this deliberative purpose, the author employed all three modes of rhetoric.

As brief examples, in his narrative accounts of David and Solomon, the author made an airtight logical case (*logos*) for the divine legitimacy of Solomon's reign and the ongoing Davidic dynasty, as well as for the unique and divinely approved place of the temple in Jerusalem. No one could point to other locations, cultic practices, or religious leaders which would legitimately carry forward from Yahweh, Moses, and David in the way that Solomon and the Jerusalem temple had. Emotionally, the author portrayed both the great joys of celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem under good kings (Hezekiah and Josiah) as well as the deep turmoil of Judah suffering under disobedient kings (*pathos*). The audience continually experiences the emotional roller-coaster of distress from invading armies and relief and joy at Yahweh's deliverance. But the pattern is clear: righteousness brings deliverance while wickedness results in misfortune and punishment. Ethically, the author appealed to the authority of Yahweh, kings, priests, and prophets (*ethos*) in speeches that cleverly fit both the narrative *and* the audience. In this way the audience hears, as it were, directly from the authoritative characters themselves. All of these modes of rhetoric contribute to the author's overall deliberative purpose.

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[16] The rhetoric of *logos* employs logical arguments intended to appeal to rational principles found within the author's discourse.

[17] The rhetoric of *pathos* employs arguments intended to arouse an emotional reaction and play upon the audience's feelings.

[18] The rhetoric of *ethos* makes ethical appeals on the basis of credibility: good character or authority.

[19] With judicial rhetoric, the author seeks to persuade the audience to make a judgment about events that occurred in the past. This judgment often deals with questions of truth or justice, and can be positive (a defense or "apology" of correctness / innocence) or negative (a prosecution, emphasizing guilt).

[20] With epideictic rhetoric, the author seeks to persuade his audience to hold or reaffirm a certain point of view in the present time. The author wants to increase (or decrease / undermine) his audience's asset to a certain value or belief. To this end, epideictic rhetoric will frequently use examples of *praise* and *blame*.

[21] With deliberative rhetoric, the author seeks to persuade the audience to take (or not take) some action in the (often near) future. Deliberative rhetoric deals with questions of self-interest and future benefits for the audience, and appears in the form of exhortation (positive) or warning (negative).

[22] For a complete discussion of classical rhetoric in biblical studies, see George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, Studies in Religion (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

Proposed Argument Exposition

In his **genealogical and geographical preamble (1 Chr 1:1–9:34)**, the author rooted the story of Israel's current Persian-era generation (his intended audience) in the context of Yahweh's divine history of the world. The line of David which will rise to prominence later in the narrative finds its origin in the elect nation of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and then to Judah and beyond. The line of Judah, and specifically David, is highlighted early and prominently in the genealogy so as to prepare for David's central place in connection to the Davidic Covenant, Jerusalem, and his desire to build the temple. All of these important elements will find prominence later in the narrative of Chronicles. Specific mentions of the families of priests, Levites, and those with specific cultic roles (like temple musicians, gatekeepers, etc.) highlight the divine and historical grounding of temple worship in Jerusalem, thus preparing the audience for the author's focus in the narrative on the building of the temple and the call to worship in Jerusalem. This section is not *only* a genealogy, but also a geographic record of the land inheritance of the Israelite tribes both before and after the exile. The city of Jerusalem is mentioned no fewer than nine times, pointing to its prominence in Israel's history and preparing the audience for the upcoming emphasis on Jerusalem as the divinely ordained site for the temple in the remainder of the narrative. The extensive geographic references thus anchor Israel's identity in a specific place—the Promised Land as a whole, and the city of Jerusalem in particular.

The entire Israelite audience could trace their ancestry from the genealogies of Jacob / Israel (1 Chr 2:1–9:1), thus providing for them a source of grounded national identity. The genealogies of Esau and Edom (1 Chr 1:35–54) function literarily as a contrast to Israel. The descendants of Esau take up a minimal amount of text compared to the subsequent eight chapters devoted to the descendants of Israel (chs. 2–8). Even though the Edomites had kings earlier than Israel (1 Chr 1:43), the author stressed by repetition (וַיָּמָת, "and he died," eight times) the point that each Edomite king died off. In the seven chapters of Israel's genealogy, only occasional mention is made of death (five times total), and never in respect to the Judahite kings. Thus, the author demonstrated a contrast: even though Esau was in the line of Abraham and Isaac, he was not chosen. His line died off, faded into obscurity, and had no place in Yahweh's program. By contrast, the line of Israel included the illustrious Judah, David, Solomon, and their royal progeny. Additionally, when compared to the eternal Davidic rule (1 Chr 17), the Edomite kingship did not endure the way Israel's did. Edom, then, functions literarily as a foil to Israel. It highlights the special nature of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and to the Israelite audience, would emphasize their need to seek Yahweh in order to fulfill their national role in Yahweh's plan. That the genealogy begins with Adam even ties Israel back to God's purposes in all creation. Rhetorically, the author intended his Persian-era Jewish audience to recognize their special (elect) place in Yahweh's plan for history, and furthermore to recognize the ongoing place of the Davidic line in that plan. This prepares the audience to accept David and Solomon's role in constructing the divinely authorized temple in Jerusalem.

In addition to genealogical records and occasional narrative asides, the author also included a large amount of geographical references regarding where the Israelite tribes lived before the exile (1 Chr 2:22–24, 55; 3:4–5; 4:12, 22–23, 28–33, 39–43; 5:8–11, 16, 19–23; 6:39–66 MT [6:54–81]; 7:24, 28–29; 8:8, 12–13, 28–29, 32) and also after the exile (1 Chr 9:2–3, 16, 34). These included areas within the Promised Land, and especially Jerusalem (noted multiple times) as well as the Trans-Jordan region. Such geographic references establish the historical and

ancestral inheritance (i.e., land) of the tribes of Israel as well as the re-settlement of the first wave of repatriates from Babylon. To the diaspora Jews especially, the continued references to Jerusalem and the various other locations within the Promised Land would create a sense of dissonance between their present reality outside the land, and their historical roots within it. One of the purposes of the Chronicler was to urge a return to the Promised Land, and these geographic references would certainly contribute to that effort. David had established Jerusalem as Israel's capital, and then Solomon built the temple there. All the tribes had an inheritance there. Thus, the faithful Israelite wanting to seek Yahweh would return to the land and worship in Jerusalem.

The lengthy lists of priestly and non-priestly Levitical personnel, all associated with the temple (1 Chr 5:27–6:66 MT [6:1–81]), prepares the audience to accept the ongoing legitimacy of the temple operations under the current Persian-era generation of Levites and priests. The then-present temple servants were not the result of haphazard appointments, but were grounded in divine and historical legitimacy going back to Moses and Aaron. Since the audience's ancestors had worshiped in this way around the Jerusalem temple, the current generation should also worship in this way.

The first mention of "all Israel" (כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל) occurs in 9:1 in reference to "all Israel" being listed in the genealogies of the kings of Israel and Judah. The author presented all the tribes—Northern and Southern alike—as a unified "all Israel," a phrase repeated dozens of times in Chronicles and a major theme of the entire narrative. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was taken to Assyria for their covenant infidelity (מַעַל, 1 Chr 5:25–26), and the Southern Kingdom of Judah to Babylon for theirs (also מַעַל, 1 Chr 9:1). Since "all Israel" was only outside the Promised Land because of infidelity, it thus implies that *faithful* Israelites would return to the land.

Thus, in his section on genealogical and geographical preamble (1 Chr 1:1–9:34), the author used the above-mentioned techniques to identify *all* the tribes of Israel as those who must humble themselves and seek Yahweh, connecting them to the Promised Land of Israel and especially Jerusalem, and highlighting the Davidic line in a way that anticipates the appearance of David and Solomon and their role in establishing the Jerusalem temple. These essentially constitute a logical argument (*logos*): because of their heritage as the elect nation of Yahweh and their historical possession of the Promised Land, they should therefore return and be part of that covenant community. The author therefore used the genealogies and geographical preamble to support his overall deliberative purpose that all Israelites would humble themselves, seek Yahweh, and be part of the restored Israelite community by (1) returning to the Promised Land if in the diaspora, (2) participating in and uniting around the legitimate worship of Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and (3) living in covenant fidelity while waiting with hope for the coming Davidic king because of Yahweh's enduring *ḥesed* as exemplified in the Davidic Covenant.

In his account of **David the King (1 Chr 9:35–29:30)**, the author portrayed David as the divinely appointed king with an eternal covenant who united all the tribes of Israel in one kingdom and established the necessary conditions for his son Solomon to build the temple. By (1) capturing Jerusalem and purchasing the threshing floor (future site of the temple), (2) creating peace in the region through his military victories, (3) appointing and organizing the various orders of temple personnel, (4) providing the financial and physical resources for Solomon to build the temple, and (5) appointing Solomon as his son to rule after him and to build the temple for Yahweh, David's reign prepared the way for Solomon to build the temple.

With these elements of the narrative, the author intended his Israelite audience to recognize the legitimacy of the Davidic dynasty inasmuch as they contribute to Solomon building and instituting the temple and its worship system in Jerusalem, and therefore to seek Yahweh by returning to Israel, worshiping Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and living in covenant fidelity.

Saul's genealogy (1 Chr 9:35–44), the narrative of Saul's final moments (1 Chr 10:1–12; see also 1 Sam 31), and the narrator's commentary of Saul's demise (1 Chr 10:13–14) function to contrast Saul and David. Saul, then, is a character foil to David. Even though Saul had legitimately been appointed by Yahweh through the prophet Samuel (not mentioned in Chronicles), his unfaithfulness led to Yahweh's putting him to death (1 Chr 10:13–14). Saul's failure to seek Yahweh (דָּרַשׁ) and instead to seek a medium (also דָּרַשׁ) constitute the first mentions of this important verb in Chronicles.[23] The author would later use these verbs of "seeking" to explain his retribution theology, whereby seeking Yahweh resulted in success, and failure to seek, with disaster. Saul served as the first such example. He sought a medium instead of Yahweh, and so Yahweh put him to death. See Table 2 below for a summary of the use of "seeking" verbs in Chronicles.

Table 2: Summary of use of the seeking verbs דָּרַשׁ and בָּקַשׁ in Chronicles

דָּרַשׁ and בָּקַשׁ (negative examples)	
Saul sought a medium and did not seek Yahweh	1 Chr 10:13–14
Israel did not seek of the ark of Yahweh in Saul's day	1 Chr 13:3
David and the Israelites did not seek the ark according to the Law[24]	1 Chr 15:13
Rehoboam committed evil because he had not set his heart to seek Yahweh	2 Chr 12:14
With Asa's renewal covenant to seek Yahweh, all who refused to seek Yahweh were executed	2 Chr 15:13
Asa refused to seek Yahweh concerning his illness	2 Chr 16:12
Ahab hated the true prophet who sought Yahweh	2 Chr 18:7
Yahweh was angry at Amaziah who sought the gods of the people	2 Chr 25:15
Amaziah and Judah judged for seeking the gods of Edom	2 Chr 25:20
דָּרַשׁ and בָּקַשׁ (positive examples)	
In David and Asaph's psalm, those who seek Yahweh may rejoice	1 Chr 16:10
In David and Asaph's psalm, Israelites commanded to seek Yahweh and his strength	1 Chr 16:11
In David and Asaph's psalm, Israelites commanded to seek Yahweh's face continually	1 Chr 16:11
David commanded the leaders of Israel to set their hearts and minds to seek Yahweh	1 Chr 22:19
David commanded the leaders of Israel to seek the commandments of Yahweh	1 Chr 28:8
David told Solomon that if Solomon sought Yahweh, he would find him	1 Chr 28:9
Yahweh promised Israel forgiveness if they humbled themselves and sought his face	2 Chr 7:14
Many from all the tribes of Israel sought Yahweh	2 Chr 11:16
Asa commanded Judah to seek Yahweh	2 Chr 14:3 MT [14:4]
Judah given rest and success because they sought Yahweh	2 Chr 14:6 MT [14:7]
Azariah told Asa and Judah that if they sought Yahweh, they would find him	2 Chr 15:2

[23] דָּרַשׁ and בָּקַשׁ are used synonymously as verbs of seeking Yahweh.

[24] That is, they failed to transport the ark in the prescribed manner.

Azariah told Asa and Judah that previously Israel had sought Yahweh and found him	2 Chr 15:4
Asa and Judah entered a covenant to seek Yahweh	2 Chr 15:12
Asa and Judah given rest when they sought Yahweh with their whole desire	2 Chr 15:15
Jehoshaphat did not seek the Baals, but sought Yahweh	2 Ch 17:3–4
Jehoshaphat urged Ahab to seek Yahweh	2 Chr 18:4, 6
Jehu the seer commended Jehoshaphat for setting his heart to seek Yahweh	2 Chr 19:3
Jehoshaphat set his face to seek Yahweh against Aramean invasion	2 Chr 20:3
Judah (under Jehoshaphat) sought Yahweh against Aramean invasion	2 Chr 20:4
Uzziah rewarded with success as long as he sought Yahweh	2 Chr 26:5
Yahweh accepted Hezekiah's prayer of atonement for everyone who set their heart to seek Yahweh	2 Chr 30:19
Hezekiah prospered as he obeyed the commandment to seek Yahweh with all his heart	2 Chr 31:21
Josiah sought the God of David	2 Chr 34:3
Judah temporarily spared because Josiah sought Yahweh	2 Chr 34:21–26

As seen above in Table 2, there are many positive examples in Chronicles of those who sought Yahweh and experienced a resultant success (military or otherwise), and likewise negative examples of those who failed to seek Yahweh, resulting in his anger and some kind of punishment or curse. These serve to exemplify the retributive theology of the Chronicler.

When Saul died and Yahweh turned over the kingdom to David (1 Chr 10:14), "all Israel" (1 Chr 11:1, 10; 12:38) and "all the elders of Israel" (1 Chr 11:3) made David king and "all Israel" (1 Chr 11:4) went to Jerusalem called "the city of David" (1 Chr 11:7) which was captured (1 Chr 11:5) and built up by David (1 Chr 11:8). The repetition of "all Israel" surrounding David and Jerusalem functions to emphasize the unity the author intended for the fractured diaspora in the Persian empire. They too should support the Davidic monarchy and temple worship in the Israelite capital city of Jerusalem. Since "Yahweh was with him [David]" (1 Chr 11:9), the audience should likewise rally around what David established.

The listing of David's mighty men and those who joined him (1 Chr 11:10–12:40) demonstrate first, David's strength, and second, how people from all tribes united under David. That the list included relatives of Saul (1 Chr 12:2–8 MT [12:2–7]), Gadites (1 Chr 12:9–16 MT [12:8–15]), Benjaminites (1 Chr 12:17–19 MT [12:16–18]), defecting Manassites (1 Chr 12:20–23 MT [12:19–22]), and many thousands from each of the tribes who joined David (1 Chr 12:24–41 MT [12:12–40]) further demonstrates how the entire nation of Israel joined David. That many of these examples defected (בדל) or deserted (נפל) from Saul (of Benjamin) and the tribes of the Northern Kingdom function further demonstrate the "all Israel" aspect of David's reign. He truly was Israel's king, and all the tribes accepted this. Indeed, all the warriors joined David ready for battle with their "whole heart" (1 Chr 12:39 MT [12:38]) and "all Israel" had one heart to make David king (1 Chr 12:39 MT [12:38]). The recorded statement of Amasai, "We are yours, O David! And we are with you, O son of Jesse! Peace! Peace to you, and peace to those who help you, for your God helps you" (1 Chr 12:19) functions as the rallying cry for the Jewish diaspora, and especially those of the Northern tribes, to pledge their allegiance to the Davidic king. By extension, they should also align themselves with David's cultic institution—the Jerusalem temple which both he and Yahweh authorized his son Solomon to build.

David's transporting of the ark to the house of Obed-Edom (1 Chr 13:1–14) connects David's (then future) institution of the temple as the ark's resting place back to Moses. Since

Yahweh had authorized Moses to construct the ark and the tabernacle, the fact that "all Israel" (1 Chr 13:4, 5, 6, 8) agreed and participated would speak to the acceptance by all tribes of the temple cult which David instituted. Especially for the Northern tribes and the diaspora, they would have no excuse for promoting alternative and illegitimate forms (or locations) of worship.

The striking down of Uzzah and David's fear of transporting the ark to Jerusalem in (1 Chr 13) are contrasted by David's inquiring of Yahweh multiple times (1 Chr 14:10, 14) and his subsequent military victories (1 Chr 14:11, 16). His kingship was recognized by himself (1 Chr 14:2), Hiram of Tyre (1 Chr 14:1), and in "all the lands" and "all the nations" (1 Chr 14:17). These elements contribute to the author's development concerning the legitimacy David's rule: David sought Yahweh, Yahweh established him, and all the nations recognized him. Therefore, the audience, and especially those of the Northern tribes, needed to likewise recognize the dynasty which began with David as authorized by Yahweh.

David's seeking of Yahweh and his obedience (1 Chr 14:10, 11, 14, 16) literarily show David's character development in preparation for the successful transport of the ark to Jerusalem (1 Ch 15) following his previous failure (1 Chr 13). Unlike Saul who did not learn from his mistakes, the author portrayed David as a man who did (1 Chr 15:12–13), and who also followed the Law by recognizing the proper role of the Levites carrying the ark (1 Chr 15:2). Multiple elements contribute to the further legitimacy of the ark's transport to Jerusalem: (1) David assembled "all Israel" in Jerusalem (1 Chr 15:3) and the ark came to the City of David (1 Chr 15:29), and (2) David appointed Levites as musicians and ministers before the ark (1 Chr 15:16, 17; 16:4, 7).

The thanksgiving psalm David appointed Asaph to sing (1 Chr 16:8–36) furthermore included various elements contributing to the author's purposes for his audience. First, a directive to call upon and sing to Yahweh (1 Chr 16:8–9). Second, a triple injunction to seek Yahweh (1 Chr 16:10–11). "Seeking" Yahweh is of course one of the major intended responses for the audience. Third, the audience would readily identify themselves in the psalm as the elect offspring of Jacob (1 Chr 16:13) and Yahweh as "our" God (1 Chr 16:14) who had entered into an eternal covenant with them (1 Chr 16:15–18). Fourth, the declaration of Yahweh's everlasting חֶסֶד (loyal love) (1 Chr 16:34) is the first of numerous mentions in Chronicles pointing to Yahweh's everlasting loyal love to Israel (1 Chr 16:41; 17:13; 2 Chr 1:8; 5:13; 6:14; 7:3, 6; 20:21). Among these references, Yahweh's eternal loyal love to Israel is connected with the Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the temple in Jerusalem. The audience could therefore recognize in this psalm and elsewhere in the narrative that as Israelites, they constituted the party to which Yahweh had eternally obligated himself. Therefore, they should align themselves with Yahweh's covenant program, thereby pledging their allegiance to the Davidic king and worshiping in the Jerusalem temple which he instituted.

The narrator's account of the Davidic Covenant (1 Chr 17:7–14) and David's response (1 Chr 17:16–27) carry several important functions. First, the covenant itself proves the importance of David and the Davidic dynasty. Because of the eternality of the covenant, Yahweh would never renege or abandon the house of David. Therefore, neither should the Israelite audience abandon or rebel against the Davidic dynasty. Since the covenant included the appointing of "a place for my people Israel" (1 Chr 17:9), the destiny of the audience lay connected with the fulfillment of the covenant in a particular location—Jerusalem. The covenant also demonstrated that David's seed would build the temple rather than David himself (1 Chr 17:11–12). Therefore, the audience could know that Solomon's building of the temple was

legitimate according to the provisions of the Davidic Covenant.[25] David rightly understood he had been most exalted of men (1 Chr 17:16–18), and so the Israelite audience should likewise recognize the special place of David and his seed in Yahweh's plan. The covenant points to the eternality of several things: (1) the eternality of David's throne (1 Chr 17:12, 14), (2) the eternality of David's kingdom (1 Chr 17:14), (3) the eternality of David's dynasty (1 Chr 17:23), (4) the eternality of Israel as a nation for Yahweh their God (1 Chr 17:22), (5) the eternal establishment and magnification of Yahweh's name tied to Israel and the house of David (1 Chr 17:24), and (6) the eternal blessing of David's house (1 Chr 17:27). Given these realities, the audience's only hope rested in their alignment with Yahweh's eternal promises to the house of David and the nation of Israel. Therefore, they should support the Davidic king and the Jerusalem temple he desired to build, even though the privilege of building that temple would rest with his son Solomon.

Records of David's military successes (1 Chr 18:1–13) are each concluded by the author's note that Yahweh saved / delivered (יָשַׁע) David wherever he went (1 Chr 18:6, 13). This success would contrast with Saul who died in battle in humiliating fashion. Since Yahweh granted the victory, the audience should therefore align with David (and his line) as the one through whom Yahweh acted. The note that David reigned over "all Israel" (1 Chr 18:14) reinforced earlier statements of Israel's unity under David. That he administered justice and righteousness (1 Chr 18:14) and showed חֶסֶד (loyal love) even to non-Israelites (1 Chr 19:2) portrayed David as an excellent king ruling with the very character of Yahweh.

The Ammonite insult to David's envoy (1 Chr 19:4) served literarily as the instigating event for David's successful campaigns against the Ammonites and Arameans (1 Chr 19:6–20:3), and even the Philistines and their giants (1 Chr 20:4–8). These events portrayed David as an extremely successful and prosperous king as an outworking of the Davidic Covenant. His victories over all the surrounding nations created the peaceful conditions for the building of the temple under the man of peace, his son Solomon.[26]

David's sinful command to take a census (1 Chr 21:1–2) demonstrated that even David's disobedience would not alter or annul the Davidic Covenant. While David recognized his act as a great sin (1 Chr 21:8) and received his due penalty (1 Chr 21:13–17), Yahweh withheld the destruction of Jerusalem (1 Chr 21:15) and David retained his kingship as an outworking of the covenant. This account revealed several differences between Saul and David. Whereas Saul lost his kingship due to his failures, David did not. Instead, David demonstrated a humble and penitent response, while Saul had not. In the end, the account portrayed David as the loving shepherd of Israel (1 Chr 21:17) and it explained how David came to legitimately own the land (the threshing floor of Araunah) which would be the site of the future temple (1 Chr 21:18–

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[25] While it seems most likely in view of the argument of Chronicles that the covenant pointed to Solomon as the one building the temple, the various statements of eternality (and the fact that the Jerusalem temple was destroyed) do suggest a future seed of David beyond Solomon's time would build an eternal temple. Similarly, the rest and freedom from anguish in a place for Israel most plausibly align with the kingdom age once the Messiah reigns in Jerusalem. Therefore, the Davidic Covenant does in fact point to the temple Ezekiel described (Ezek 40–48) to be built during the kingdom age.

[26] There is a word play between the Hebrew word for "peace" (שָׁלוֹם) and Solomon's name (שְׁלֹמֹה). They both contain the same root letters.

25).[27] That David offered sacrifices and Yahweh answered by fire from heaven (1 Chr 21:26) mirrored Yahweh's response by fire to the Mosaic Tabernacle (Lev 9:24), thus showing Yahweh's acceptance of the threshing floor of Araunah as the valid site for the temple (1 Chr 22:1).

Having procured the land for the temple, divine acceptance of its location, and peaceful conditions on all sides, David's preparations for the temple prior to his death show how the divinely authorized king set up his son Solomon to construct the divinely authorized temple (1 Chr 22–29). The extensive details provided by the Chronicler in the remainder of 1 Chronicles record how David prepared (1) the physical materials for the temple (1 Chr 22:2–5, 14), (2) his son Solomon to be king of Israel and builder of Yahweh's temple (1 Chr 22:6–16; 23:1; 28:9–10, 20–21), (3) the leaders and officials of Israel to assist Solomon (1 Chr 22:17–19; 23:2; 28:1–8), (4) the various orders of Levites (1 Chr 23:2–32; 24:20–31) for their respective duties as musicians (1 Chr 25:1–31), gatekeepers (1 Chr 26:1–19), and treasurers (1 Chr 26:20–32), (5) the various orders of the priests (1 Chr 24:1–19), (6) the leaders of the military (1 Chr 27:1–15),[28] (7) the tribal leaders (1 Chr 27:16–24), (8) the king's officials (1 Chr 27:25–34), (9) the architectural plans for the temple (1 Chr 28:11–19), and (10) the requisite finances from himself (1 Chr 29:1–5) and other Israelites (1 Chr 29:6–9). The extensive details provided in these chapters solidify David as Yahweh's chosen king (especially 1 Chr 28:4–7) who prepared his son Solomon to build the temple after him. That all Israel contributed and participated would speak to the Israelite audience on the importance of their participation in the ongoing temple efforts in Jerusalem. Several reminders of seeking Yahweh (1 Chr 22:19; 28:8–9), obeying the Law (1 Chr 22:12; 28:7–8, 20),[29] and of Yahweh's searching human hearts (1 Chr 28:9; 29:17) would function like direct exhortations to the audience. They too, needed to know that Yahweh searched their hearts and that they should seek him and obey the Law.

The section also prepared the reader for the transition from David to Solomon and Solomon's building of the temple (2 Chr 1–9). This transition in fact occurs quite seamlessly, minus the artificial break between First and Second Chronicles. In David's quoting of Yahweh's speech about his son, he identified Solomon as a "man of rest" (1 Chr 22:9) whose name Solomon, שְׁלֹמֹה, the same Hebrew root as "peace," שָׁלוֹם, for Yahweh would grant peace and quietness to Israel in Solomon's days (1 Chr 22:9). Yahweh had chosen Judah, chosen David, and now chosen Solomon (1 Chr 28:4–7). That Solomon sat on *Yahweh's* throne over Israel (1 Chr 28:5; 29:23; 2 Chr 6:10; 9:8) signified the merger between the kingdom of Yahweh and the kingdom of Israel.[30] For the Israelite diaspora in the Persian era, the author intended that they understand Yahweh's program for the earth included an Israelite king from the line of David. To be part of that kingdom meant accepting both the Davidic dynasty and the temple instituted in Jerusalem by David's son Solomon.

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[27] The author also connected the ark of Moses, then located at Gibeon, to the ark's new site at the threshing floor of Araunah. He therefore associated the legitimacy of the Mosaic institution with David's efforts.

[28] The military leaders included those from various tribes including even Ephraimites and Benjaminites (see 1 Chr 27:10, 12, 14). The selection of leaders from not just Judah shows that David truly was Israel's king.

[29] In 1 Chronicles 28:20, David urged Solomon to be "strong and courageous," which links back to Yahweh's command to Joshua and the Israelites (Josh 1:6, 7, 9, 18). In the context of Joshua, being "strong and courageous" meant being faithful to the Mosaic Law.

[30] See also 1 Chronicles 17:14; 2 Chronicles 13:8.

Thus, in his account of David the King (1 Chr 9:35–29:30), the author portrayed David as the divinely appointed king with an eternal covenant who united all the tribes of Israel in one kingdom and established the necessary conditions for his son Solomon to build the temple. By (1) capturing Jerusalem and purchasing the threshing floor (future site of the temple), (2) creating peace in the region through his military victories, (3) appointing and organizing the various orders of temple personnel, (4) providing the financial and physical resources for Solomon to build the temple, and (5) appointing Solomon as his son to rule after him and to build the temple for Yahweh, David's reign prepared the way for Solomon to build the temple. The account provided a primarily logical case (*logos*) for accepting the temple: (1) Yahweh chose David, (2) David established the conditions for building the temple, and (3) both Yahweh and David appointed Solomon to build it. Therefore, the audience should accept the legitimacy of the Jerusalem temple. The author's account of David's reign prepares for the transition to Solomon's reign and his construction of the temple (2 Chr 1–9). The above-mentioned narrative elements support the author's overall deliberative purpose that all Israelites would humble themselves, seek Yahweh, and be part of the restored Israelite community by (1) returning to the Promised Land if in the diaspora, (2) participating in and uniting around the legitimate worship of Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and (3) living in covenant fidelity while waiting with hope for the coming Davidic king because of Yahweh's enduring *ḥesed* as exemplified in the Davidic Covenant.

In his account of **Solomon the King (2 Chr 1:1–9:31)**, the author portrayed Solomon's kingship and his construction of the temple in Jerusalem as the divinely chosen outworking of Yahweh's promises and חֶסֶד (*ḥesed*, loyal love) to David and Israel. He emphasized the temple's continuity with Mosaic cultic patterns, Yahweh's acceptance of the temple, the inclusion of "all Israel" in constructing and worshiping at the temple, the city of Jerusalem as the chosen place for Yahweh's Name, and the importance of obedience to the Law. With these narrative elements, the author intended his Israelite audience to further recognize the legitimacy of Solomon's reign and the ongoing Davidic dynasty, as well as the central place of the temple in Jerusalem so that the audience would seek Yahweh by returning to Israel, worshiping Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and living in covenant fidelity.

This section continues many of the themes driving the audience's intended response to the literary work. First, the author continued his emphasis on "all Israel" participating in Solomon's reign and the consecration and feasting at the Jerusalem temple:

- Solomon spoke to "all Israel" and "all the leaders" (2 Chr 1:2).
- The whole assembly of Israel was at Gibeon with Solomon (2 Chr 1:3).
- "All the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes" came to Jerusalem to bring the ark from the city of David into the temple (2 Chr 5:2).
- "All the men of Israel" assembled before the king for the feast (2 Chr 5:3).
- "All the elders of Israel" came as the Levites carried the ark (2 Chr 5:4).
- "King Solomon and the whole community of Israel" were before the ark (2 Chr 5:6).
- Solomon blessed "all the assembly of Israel" (2 Chr 6:3).
- Solomon's prayer by Yahweh's altar was before "all the assembly of Israel" (2 Chr 6:12).
- Solomon's prayer requested that pleas made by "all your people Israel" be heard (2 Chr 6:29).
- "All the Israelites" saw Yahweh's fire and his glory (2 Chr 7:3).

- "All the people" offered sacrifices along with Solomon (2 Chr 7:4).
- "All Israel" stood as the priests played their trumpets (2 Chr 7:6).
- "All Israel" "from Lebo-Hamath to the river of Egypt" was with Solomon for the seven-day feast (2 Chr 7:8).
- "Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years" (2 Chr 9:30).

These various references highlighting "all Israel" function to convey (1) the universality of Israel's acceptance of Solomon as king, (2) the universality of Israel's participation in bringing the ark to Jerusalem, (3) the universality of Israel's participation in the consecration of the Jerusalem temple, and (4) the universality of Israel's worship at the Jerusalem temple. These features of the narrative would especially speak to diaspora Jews scattered throughout the Persian empire of the importance of Israelite unity centered around the Jerusalem temple built by Solomon and authorized by Yahweh. It is further possible that with his "all Israel" theme, the author issued a subtle rebuke to some among the Southern tribes who were hesitant to accept those from the North as brethren.[31]

Second, the author stressed the continuity of legitimate worship from Solomon back to Moses:

- When Solomon and the Israelites went to Gibeon, the author highlighted the presence of the "Tabernacle of God which Moses the servant of Yahweh had made in the desert" (2 Chr 1:3).
- Solomon and the people sought out the bronze altar made by Bezalel (Exod 38:22, 30) which had remained in Gibeon (2 Chr 1:5).
- Solomon's thousand burnt offerings upon the bronze altar (2 Chr 1:6) demonstrated his desire not for cultic innovation, but historical grounding in Moses.
- Solomon emphasized that the Jerusalem temple was for "the name of Yahweh" (2 Chr 2:1, 4), a concept introduced by Moses: "But only to the place that Yahweh your God will choose from all of your tribes to place his name there as his dwelling shall you seek, and there you shall go" (Deut 12:5).
- Solomon's building of the temple was for the purpose of offering incense and sacrifices according to the schedules and cycles that Moses prescribed (2 Chr 2:4; see Lev 23).
- The author noted the presence of "nothing in the ark but the two stone tablets that Moses had put inside at Horeb on which Yahweh had made a covenant with the Israelites" (2 Chr 5:10).
- Solomon's alignment in dedicating the altar with the Feast of Tabernacles (2 Chr 7:9–10) shows respect for the Mosaic calendar (see Lev 23:34) and Moses' prescription that the feast be celebrated at the place of Yahweh's choosing (Deut 16:15).
- Solomon made offerings "according to the commandments of Moses" (2 Chr 8:13).
- The detailed furnishings of the Jerusalem temple reflected the Mosaic pattern of the tabernacle rather than cultic novelty. See Table 3 below for a detailed comparison.

[31] Braun, "The Message of Chronicles: Rally 'Round the Temple," *CTM* 42, 512–13.

Table 3: Comparison between the furnishings of the Mosaic Tabernacle and Solomonic Temple

Mosaic Tabernacle	Solomonic Temple in Jerusalem
Ark of the covenant (Exod 25:10–22)	Most Holy place prepared for the ark (2 Chr 3:8–10)
Cherubim over the ark (Exod 25:18–20)	Two large cherubim of gold in Most Holy place (2 Chr 3:10–13)
Veil with cherubim design (Exod 26:31–33)	Veil of blue, purple, and crimson with cherubim (2 Chr 3:14)
Bronze altar of burnt offering (Exod 27:1–8)	Bronze altar made by Solomon (2 Chr 4:1)
Bronze laver / basin for washing (Exod 30:18–21)	"Sea" of cast metal for priestly washing (2 Chr 4:2–6)
Lampstand of gold (Exod 25:31–40)	Ten golden lampstands (2 Chr 4:7)
Table for the bread of the presence (Exod 25:23–30)	Ten tables with bread of the presence (2 Chr 4:8, 19)
Utensils: bowls, pans, forks, basins (Exod 27:3; 38:3)	Utensils: pots, shovels, forks, basins, etc. (2 Chr 4:11, 16, 22)

The above bullet points and the above table all point to how the Chronicler portrayed Solomon's temple not as a theological or cultic innovation, but as a legitimate extension in continuity with the Mosaic cult. Thus, the audience could not argue against worshiping at the temple in Jerusalem on the basis of its novelty (see also the next section on divine selection and approval).

Third, in this section the Chronicler emphasized the divine choice of David, Solomon, and Jerusalem. He also pointed to Yahweh's acceptance and approval of the Jerusalem temple:

- Solomon quoted Yahweh, "I have chosen my name to be there in Jerusalem, and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel" (2 Chr 6:6).
- Yahweh had noted David's desire to build the temple was good. That task, however, would not go to David but to his son. Solomon understood his building of the temple as the fulfillment of Yahweh's words to his father David (2 Chr 6:6–10).
- The author made repeated mention of Jerusalem being chosen by Yahweh as a place for his temple and his name forever (2 Chr 6:34, 38; 7:12, 16).
- In response to Solomon's prayer of dedication (2 Chr 6:14–42), Yahweh responded with fire from heaven consuming the sacrifices (2 Chr 7:1). This mirrors Yahweh's response by fire to the Mosaic Tabernacle (Lev 9:24) and to David at the threshing floor of Araunah (1 Chr 21:26), thus showing Yahweh's acceptance of the temple built by Solomon.
- In addition to heavenly fire, the glory of Yahweh also filled the temple (2 Chr 7:1–3), so echoing Yahweh's glory filling the Tabernacle (Exod 40:34). Just as Moses was unable to enter the Tabernacle (Exod 40:35), so also the priests could not enter the temple (2 Chr 7:2). These events cast the legitimacy of the temple of Solomon on par with that of the Tabernacle of Moses.
- Yahweh appeared to Solomon and confirmed hearing his prayer (2 Chr 7:12).
- Yahweh's eyes and heart would be with the temple forever (2 Chr 7:15–16).

With such emphasis on the divine choice of David, Solomon, and Jerusalem, the audience could not argue for an alternative location of worship as established by someone other than David and Solomon (such as Jeroboam's illegitimate sites in Bethel and Dan and his illegitimate priesthood). The author therefore pointed out the indelible connection between Yahweh, David,

Solomon, Jerusalem, and the temple. The Israelite audience could then recognize that true Israelite worship of Yahweh should be done at the Jerusalem temple which was constructed by Solomon with Yahweh's divine approval.

Fourth, the author emphasized that Solomon constructed the temple in alignment with the plans of his father David and according to the חֶסֶד (loyal love) of Yahweh for David:

- The first mention of Solomon in this section noted him as "Solomon the son of David" (2 Chr 1:1).
- The author noted David's bringing up of the ark to Jerusalem (2 Chr 1:4) in preparation for Solomon's moving it to the temple.
- Solomon noted the חֶסֶד (loyal love) Yahweh had shown his father David (2 Chr 1:8) and his prayer to fulfill that loyal love in Solomon's reign (2 Chr 1:9) was answered positively (2 Chr 1:11–12).
- Solomon acquired the help of Hiram of Tyre (2 Chr 2:3) just as David had (1 Chr 14:1).
- Solomon built on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, where Yahweh had appeared to David, demonstrated divine approval by fire from heaven (1 Chr 21:26), and David had established Mount Moriah as the site of the temple (2 Chr 3:1).
- Solomon installed in the temple all the objects prepared by David (2 Chr 5:1).
- Solomon saw his own building of the temple as a fulfillment of Yahweh's promise to David (2 Chr 6:4–11). He understood Yahweh's fulfillment in him as an act of חֶסֶד (loyal love) to David (2 Chr 6:14–17).
- Solomon concluded his prayer by appealing to Yahweh's חֶסֶד (loyal love) for David (2 Chr 6:42).
- The priests sang according to the songs David had prescribed (2 Chr 7:6).
- The author portrayed the dedication of the temple as "good" (טוֹב) Yahweh had done for David (2 Chr 7:10).
- Yahweh's establishment of Solomon's throne was a result of Yahweh's promise to David (2 Chr 7:18).
- Solomon followed David's ordinances regarding the priests and Levites (2 Chr 8:14).
- Even Solomon's burial in the city of David aligned him with his father (2 Chr 9:31).
- Multiple mentions of Yahweh's חֶסֶד (loyal love) are associated with the temple (2 Chr 5:13; 7:3, 6), with Yahweh's covenants (2 Chr 6:14), and with David (2 Chr 1:8; 6:42). In several cases, this *ḥesed* is mentioned as "eternal" (2 Chr 5:13; 6:3, 6).

As demonstrated by these points above, Solomon's construction of the temple was aligned with the will of his father David and the will of Yahweh. Yahweh had made the eternal covenant with David based on his חֶסֶד (loyal love), and the Jerusalem temple functioned as an outworking of Yahweh's loyal love and his covenant with David. Therefore, based on the continuity between Yahweh, David, and Solomon, none could argue that Solomon built an illegitimate temple. See also the section above on Solomon's continuity with Moses for a similar argument.

Fifth and lastly, the author emphasized the need for covenant fidelity. The requirement of obedience to the Law for the characters in the narrative would speak directly to the audience as well for their need to adhere to the Mosaic Law:

- Solomon prayed that when Yahweh's people humbled themselves and repented of their sin, that Yahweh would hear their plea and forgive them (2 Chr 6:26–27, 30, 38). Particularly v. 38 of the prayer would stand out to the diaspora Jews because it mentioned Israelites in the land of captivity (where they still resided of their own free will) praying

toward "their land" (i.e., the land of Israel) and "the city that you [Yahweh] have chosen" (i.e., Jerusalem).

- When Yahweh appeared to Solomon, he emphasized the need for Solomon's obedience (2 Chr 7:17). But if Israel disobeyed (the plural pronoun is used in 2 Chr 7:19–20 of disobedience), then the nation would be uprooted from the land. The entire audience would know that is exactly what had happened in the sixth century. For the audience still scattered in Persia, they were living out that "uprooting."

These elements of Solomon's prayer and Yahweh's response would speak as if directly to the audience. They, too, needed to repent and turn their hearts toward Yahweh and seek him in Jerusalem.

With his account of the visit by the Queen of Sheba and Solomon's grandeur (2 Chr 9:1–28), the queen functioned literarily as a foil to the diaspora audience. If even a Gentile queen traveled a great distance to Jerusalem and the Davidic king, how much more the diaspora Jews? Her trip functioned, then, as a vignette and example of how the author wanted the diaspora Jews to return to Judea. Her marveling at the temple and Solomon's burnt offerings (2 Chr 9:3–4) and her further recognition of Solomon sitting on Yahweh's throne as a blessing because he did righteousness and justice (that is, he built the temple) (2 Chr 9:8) demonstrates how even Gentiles recognized the legitimacy and importance of Solomon's throne and the temple he built. This idea was further reinforced by the fact that "all the kings of the earth" sought out Solomon and his wisdom (2 Chr 9:23). The accounts of his great wealth showed the audience what life could be like under a Davidic king in Jerusalem. Solomon's great success as connected to his building of the temple initiates the retributive pattern of justice that will continue for the rest of the Judahite kings in 2 Chronicles 10–36. Those kings who treat the temple well are blessed, while those who don't are cursed (see next section).

Thus, in the Chronicler's account of Solomon the King (2 Chr 1:1–9:31), he portrayed Solomon's kingship and his construction of the temple in Jerusalem as the divinely chosen outworking of Yahweh's promises and חֶסֶד (loyal love) to David. He emphasized the temple's continuity with Mosaic cultic patterns, Yahweh's acceptance of the temple, the inclusion of "all Israel" in constructing and worshiping at the temple, the city of Jerusalem as the chosen place for Yahweh's Name, and the importance of obedience to the Law. With these narrative elements, the author essentially built an airtight logical case (*logos*) for the legitimacy of Solomon's reign and the perpetual Davidic dynasty, as well as for the unique and legitimate place of the temple in Jerusalem. No one could point to other locations, cultic practices, or religious leaders which would legitimately carry forward from Yahweh, Moses, and David in the way that Solomon and the Jerusalem temple did. Instead, he showed that by building the temple in Jerusalem, Solomon aligned himself and the temple worship with Yahweh, Moses, and his father David. The author, then, used these above-mentioned narrative elements to support his overall deliberative purpose that all Israelites would humble themselves, seek Yahweh, and be part of the restored Israelite community by (1) returning to the Promised Land if in the diaspora, (2) participating in and uniting around the legitimate worship of Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and (3) living in covenant fidelity while waiting with hope for the coming Davidic king because of Yahweh's enduring *ḥesed* as exemplified in the Davidic Covenant.

In his narrative account of the **post-Solomonic Judahite kings (2 Chr 10:1–36:23)**, the Chronicler ultimately presented a pattern of divine retribution based on the attitudes and actions of each king toward the temple cult and the Mosaic Law. That is, actions intended to

promote and protect the worship of Yahweh in the Jerusalem temple and adherence to the Law correlated with a tangible blessing such as military victory (Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Amaziah, Uzziah), peace (Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham), revival (Hezekiah, Josiah), deliverance (Rehoboam, Hezekiah, Manasseh), or prosperity (Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Hezekiah). On the other hand, neglecting or profaning the temple and the Law resulted in curses such as military defeat (Rehoboam, Jehoram, Joash, Amaziah, Ahaz, Zedekiah), disease (Asa, Jehoram, Uzziah), assassination (Ahaziah, Athaliah, Joash, Amaziah, Amon), or exile (Jehoram, Manasseh, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah). Kings with a mixed reign (Rehoboam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah) received proportional reciprocity: fidelity resulted in blessing while disobedience led to judgment. Repentance and humility after disobedience resulted in restoration or deliverance.

In any case, the pattern was clear: the kings who honored the temple and the Law were blessed and those who scorned the temple and the Law were cursed. See Table 4 below on the retributive temple ethic of the Judahite kings for details.

Table 4: Retributive temple ethic for the Judahite kings

King	Attitude & Actions Toward Temple and Law	Resulting Retribution
Rehoboam	Abandoned the law of Yahweh, and all Israel with him (2 Chr 12:1).	Cursing: Shishak invaded and plundered the temple (2 Chr 12:2–4, 9).
	Humbled himself once confronted by the prophet Shemaiah (2 Chr 12:5–6, 12).	Partial deliverance. Still subject to Shishak, but not totally destroyed (2 Chr 12:7–8, 12).
Abijah	Stood on Mount Zemaraim and declared Yahweh as Israel's God, defended the priests and temple worship, and rebuked Jeroboam for alternative cults (2 Chr 13:4–12).	Blessing: military victory against Jeroboam and the Northern Kingdom (2 Chr 13:13–18). Abijah grew in strength (2 Chr 13:21).
Asa	Removed foreign altars, repaired the altar of Yahweh, and covenanted with the people to seek Yahweh (2 Chr 14:2–4 MT [14:3–5]; 15:8–15).	Blessing: Yahweh gave rest from enemies, peace in the land, and prosperity (2 Chr 14:5–7 MT [14:6–8]; 15:19). Military victory over the Cushites; great plunder (2 Chr 14:8–14 MT [14:9–15]).
	Relied on Aram instead of Yahweh and imprisoned the seer (2 Chr 16:7–10).	Cursing: suffered war and disease (2 Chr 16:10–12).
Jehoshaphat	Followed David's ways and sought Yahweh (2 Chr 17:3–4).	Blessing: Yahweh established his kingdom and gave him great wealth and honor (2 Chr 17:5).
	Sent Levites and priests to teach the law (2 Chr 17:7–9).	Blessing: fear of Yahweh fell on surrounding nations, resulting in peace on all sides (2 Chr 17:10–11). Jehoshaphat grew more powerful (2 Chr 17:12).
	Urged Ahab to seek Yahweh (2 Chr 18:6).	Blessing: Yahweh delivered him in battle (2 Chr 18:31).
	Helped wicked Ahab (2 Chr 19:2).	Cursing: wrath of Yahweh upon him (2 Chr 19:2).
	Appointed judges, Levites, and priests with a charge to act in the fear of Yahweh (2 Chr 19:5–11). Sought Yahweh along with all	Blessing: Yahweh caused the enemies to destroy one another, Judah collected

	Judah when confronted with a massive invasion (2 Chr 20:1–13).	abundant spoil, and had rest all around (2 Chr 20:22–30).
	Allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel (2 Chr 20:35–36).	Cursing: Yahweh destroyed his fleet of ships (2 Chr 20:37).
Jehoram	Killed his brothers, committed evil (2 Chr 21:4, 6).	Cursing: rebellions in Edom and Libnah (2 Chr 21:10).
	Built high places and led Judah astray (2 Chr 21:11).	Cursing: Enemies invaded, looted the palace,[32] carried away his family, and he died of an incurable disease (2 Chr 21:16–19).
Ahaziah	Followed the house of Ahab and did evil (2 Chr 22:3–5).	Cursing: killed by Jehu during his purge (2 Chr 22:7–9).
Athaliah *(usurper)*	Killed most of David's line (2 Chr 22:10) and her sons broke into the temple and used its sacred things for Baal worship (2 Chr 24:7).	Cursing: executed at the Horse Gate by the temple on orders from Jehoiada the priest (2 Chr 23:14–15).
Joash	Under Jehoiada, Joash restored and repaired the temple and organized offerings (2 Chr 24:4–14).	Blessing: Jehoiada buried with the kings because of the good he had done for the temple (2 Chr 24:16).
	After Jehoiada's death, Joash abandoned the temple, worshiped other gods, rejected the prophets, and killed Zechariah the prophet (2 Chr 24:17–22).	Cursing: Joash forsaken by Yahweh (2 Chr 24:20), invaded and plundered by Arameans (2 Chr 24:23–24), and wounded and assassinated (2 Chr 24:23–25).
Amaziah	Did right according to Yahweh's laws (2 Chr 25:2, 4).	Blessing: defeated the Edomites (2 Chr 25:11–12).
	Trusted in the armies of the Northern Kingdom (2 Chr 25:6).	Cursing: Israelites killed and plundered in Judah (2 Chr 25:13).
	Worshiped Edomite idols (2 Chr 25:14–15) and refused prophetic rebuke (2 Chr 25:16).	Cursing: Jerusalem plundered, Amaziah defeated by Israel and assassinated by conspirators (2 Chr 25:17–24, 27).
Uzziah	Sought Yahweh and did what was right (2 Chr 26:4–5).	Blessing: military victories, prosperity, and growing power (2 Chr 26:5–15).
	Became prideful and unfaithful by burning incense in the temple (2 Chr 26:16).	Cursing: struck him with leprosy, lived in isolation, and barred from the temple (2 Chr 26:19–21).
Jotham	Acted rightly and walked steadfastly before Yahweh (2 Chr 27:2, 6).	Blessing: grew mighty and received tribute from Ammon (2 Chr 27:5–6).
Ahaz	Forsook Yahweh and acted in unfaithful and abominable ways (2 Chr 28:2–4, 19), gave temple treasures to Assyrian king (2 Chr 28:21), cut up the temple furniture and closed up the temple doors (2 Chr 28:21–24).	Cursing: military defeat by Aram, Israel, Edom, Philistia, and Assyria (2 Chr 28:5–8, 17–20).
Hezekiah	Opened and cleansed the temple, reinstated temple worship, celebrated the Passover,	Blessing: The nation experienced revival, prosperity, agricultural abundance,

[32] The fact that the invaders plundered the king's palace and not the temple implies a disregard for the temple. In the case of the good kings in Chronicles, several are mentioned as having stored treasures in the temple: Solomon (2 Chr 5:1), Asa (2 Chr 15:18), and Hezekiah (2 Chr 31:11–12).

	atoned for the sins of the nation with sacrifices, and reorganized the priesthood and offerings (2 Chr 29–31).	deliverance from Sennacherib, and Hezekiah healed and honored (2 Chr 31–32).
	Hezekiah's heart grew proud after recovering from illness (2 Chr 32:25).	Cursing: Yahweh's wrath came upon Hezekiah, Jerusalem, and Judah (2 Chr 32:25).
	Repented of his pride (2 Chr 32:26).	Blessing: Yahweh withdrew his wrath (2 Chr 32:26).
Manasseh	Constructed pagan altars in the temple, placed an image in the temple, and committed many other abominations (2 Chr 33:2–7).	Cursing: exiled in Babylon in chains (2 Chr 33:11).
	Humbled himself and sought Yahweh (2 Chr 33:12).	Blessing: Yahweh restored him to Jerusalem and his kingdom (2 Chr 33:13).
Amon	Sacrificed to idols, did not humble himself, and did not seek Yahweh (2 Chr 33:22–23).	Cursing: assassinated by his servants (2 Chr 33:24).
Josiah	Sought Yahweh, humbled himself, purged idolatry, repaired the temple, rediscovered the Book of the Law, led a national covenant renewal, reorganized the Levites and priests, placed the ark in the temple, and held the greatest Passover since Samuel's days (2 Chr 34–35).	Blessing: granted peace for the remainder of his life (2 Chr 34:27).
	Opposed God by attacking Pharaoh Neco (2 Chr 35:21).	Cursing: died in battle (2 Chr 35:23–24).
Jehoahaz	No mention of his deeds one way or another. Presumably he did evil (see 2 Kgs 23:32 for validation).	Cursing: Pharaoh Neco deposed him and exiled him in Egypt (2 Chr 36:3–4).
Jehoiakim	Committed evil (2 Chr 36:5).	Cursing: exiled to Babylon; temple treasures taken (2 Chr 36:6–7).
Jehoiachin	Committed evil (2 Chr 36:9).	Cursing: exiled to Babylon and more temple articles taken (2 Chr 36:10).
Zedekiah	Committed evil, stiffened his neck, refused to humble himself, ignored Jeremiah the prophet, and defiled the temple (2 Chr 36:12–14).	Cursing: temple burned, Jerusalem destroyed, Judeans slaughtered, surviving remnant exiled to Babylon (2 Chr 36:17–20).

As demonstrated in the data of the above table, blessings of various kinds resulted from humility, repentance, obedience, and positive actions toward the Jerusalem temple and the Levites and priests. Inversely, curses ensued from pride, idolatry, disobedience to the Law, and scornful actions toward the temple and its personnel. The Chronicler portrayed the good kings as zealous for the temple and the Law (especially Hezekiah and Josiah, who receive disproportionately lengthy accounts), and just the opposite for the bad kings. The author intended his Israelite audience to recognize the pattern and so incline them to have a positive disposition to the temple and the Law. Like the kings, the author intended all Persian-era Jews, and the diaspora especially, to humble themselves and seek Yahweh in Jerusalem. They had to recognize the importance of worshiping at the Jerusalem temple wholeheartedly and with the appropriate temple personnel in a revived Israelite community if they were to validly participate in Yahweh's purpose for his elect nation.

Other major rhetorical features of the author's account of the post-Solomonic Judahite kings (2 Chr 10:1–36:23) include recorded speeches (or letters) functioning rhetorically as spiritual calls to the Northern Kingdom, a positive portrayal of Northern tribes and their inclusion in the Judean assembly in Jerusalem, and use of key words / concepts like being humble and seeking Yahweh, and the appropriate heart attitude before Yahweh. The remainder of this section below will discuss these three major features.[33] With numerous speeches in this section, the author employed ethical rhetoric (*ethos*) by appealing to the authority of Yahweh, kings, priests, and prophets. The author cleverly arranged the speeches of these characters to fit both the narrative *and* the audience. In this way the audience would hear, as it were, directly from the authoritative characters themselves.

During Rehoboam's reign, the narrator's comment that, "Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day" (2 Chr 10:19) would give pause to the northern tribes and cause them to consider whether their current state represented rebellion against the Davidic dynasty. As the Davidic king represented the throne of Yahweh, it would mean they opposed their nation's God. This statement was followed closely by the prophetic word of Yahweh through Shemaiah, "Do not go up to fight against your fellow Israelites" (2 Chr 11:4).

The fact that the Levites and priests abandoned the Northern Kingdom of Jeroboam to side with Rehoboam in Jerusalem (2 Chr 11:13) would point to the legitimacy of the cult and temple personnel in Jerusalem, while at the same time highlighting the illegitimacy of the priests appointed by Jeroboam (2 Chr 11:15). That people "from all the tribes of Israel, those who set their heart to seek Yahweh, the God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to offer to Yahweh," thus following the Levites and priests (2 Chr 11:16) also serves as a vignette of what the author intended his audience to do: seek Yahweh and come to Jerusalem to worship him where the legitimate Levites and priests were. Abijah's rebuking speech to Jeroboam and the Northern tribes (2 Chr 13:4–12) would also speak directly to much of the Persian-era audience: the speech highlighted the capricious means of rebellion against David's dynasty, how Yahweh had established the Davidic throne, how the rebels set themselves against Yahweh himself, how Judah maintained the legitimate priesthood over against the "priests" of the Northern tribes, and how "God is with us [the Judahite monarchy]" (2 Chr 13:12). All these elements of the speech contribute to the author's intended response for his audience.

Asa's speech to Judah regarding owning the land, building up towns, and having rest on all sides *because* they sought Yahweh their God (2 Chr 14:6 MT [14:7]) would also have rhetorical effect for the audience: they belonged in the land of Israel and could also have peace there if they sought Yahweh. Azariah's speech to Asa and Judah that Yahweh could be found by them if they sought him (2 Chr 15:2), the reminder that for a long time Israel without their true God, without true priests, and without Law (2 Chr 15:3) functioned rhetorically to sting the consciences of the diaspora Jews, particularly of the Northern tribes. Azariah's speech also provided the promise for the audience: those who had turned to Yahweh and sought him had found him (2 Chr 15:4). That even people from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon responded positively to Azariah's speech and assembled in Jerusalem to worship and covenant with Yahweh (2 Chr 15:9–12) demonstrated to Israelites of the Northern tribes their welcome inclusion in the Jerusalem cult if they would likewise seek Yahweh wholeheartedly (2 Chr 15:15). The speech of Hanani the seer (2 Chr 16:7–9) also conveyed rhetorical impact for the Persian-era audience, especially his note that Yahweh's eyes roamed the whole earth to

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[33] The first and second points are treated together, while the third is distinct.

strengthen those who were fully committed to him. Asa's angry response (2 Chr 16:10) would make the audience wonder if they similarly scorned the words of the prophets and seers. Jehoshaphat's repeated encouragements that Ahab seek the counsel of Yahweh (2 Chr 18:4, 6) would speak directly to the audience and their need to seek Yahweh. Furthermore, Jehoshaphat's commissioning speech to judges, priests, and Levites (2 Chr 19:6–9) with its exhortations to faithfully and wholeheartedly serve in the fear of Yahweh would indict the audience and cause them to question their own devotion. His speech to Judah when facing the Edomite invasion (2 Chr 20:6–12) connected their ownership of the land back to Yahweh's promise to Abraham and the building of a temple for Yahweh's name where Israelites could stand in Yahweh's presence where he will hear them. The speech implicitly required the audience in diaspora to question why they weren't living out such a significant part of their elect heritage. That Jehoshaphat and all Judah returned joyfully to Jerusalem to worship in the temple following a substantial military victory (2 Chr 20:27–28) served as an example of what could be possible for the audience. They too could worship in the temple in Jerusalem with great joy. However, the subsequent note that the people had not completely set their hearts to worship Yahweh (2 Chr 20:33) showed that the audience could not merely go through the motions. Their worship and seeking of Yahweh required wholehearted devotion.

The letter of Elijah indicting Jehoram (2 Chr 21:12–15) would also function to convict the audience, particularly the diaspora Northern tribes, and serve as a warning of coming judgment should they fail to return to Yahweh. That Jehoiada the priest was honored with a burial among the kings on account of the good he did for Yahweh and the temple (2 Chr 24:16) demonstrate to the audience that his zeal for the Davidic king (Joash, in his case), his execution of Athaliah the usurper, his covenant with Yahweh, and his temple reforms (2 Chr 23:1–24:14) all earned the praise of Yahweh. Rhetorically, the account would force the audience to question whether they held such earnest concern for the Davidic dynasty and the temple, or whether they de facto supported a usurper by failing to pledge allegiance to the Davidic king. Zechariah's speech to the people proclaiming their failure to prosper because of disobedience and forsaking Yahweh (2 Chr 24:20) would similarly cause the audience to question their own disobedience and failure to prosper. Joash's assassination of Zechariah (2 Chr 24:21–23) would force the audience to think about how they would respond to Zechariah's prophetic message. The unnamed man of God's speech to Amaziah that Yahweh was not with Israel (2 Chr 25:7) further indicted the diaspora audience, particularly of the Northern tribes. To be with Yahweh, they would need to reunite with Judah and worship Yahweh in Jerusalem with their whole heart.

That the leaders in Ephraim responded to the prophetic word (2 Chr 28:9–11) by confessing their great guilt (2 Chr 28:13) and their care for and restoration of the Judeans (2 Chr 28:14–15) shows the favorable attitude of the author regarding the Northern tribes. They were indeed guilty, but if they listened to the prophetic word, acknowledged their sins, and returned to Jerusalem, they could make amends and be restored into the revived Israelite community.

Hezekiah's speech to the priests and Levites (2 Chr 29:5–11) also contained rhetorical impact for the Jewish audience scattered in the Persian empire. His comment that, "Our fathers were unfaithful" and turned away from Yahweh's temple and the regular acts of worship (2 Chr 29:6–7) would resonate with the audience because they faced the same situation: they too had acted unfaithfully and turned away from Yahweh and from worshiping at the Jerusalem temple. Hezekiah's intention to enter a covenant with Yahweh to remove his fierce anger (2 Chr 29:10) and his appeal to not be negligent concerning worship (2 Chr 29:11) would further speak directly to the audience of Chronicles. Hezekiah's sin offerings on behalf of Judah (2 Chr 29:21) and all

Israel (2 Chr 29:24) would address the necessity of atonement for the audience. Only in the Jerusalem temple could this occur. His invitation for Judah and "all Israel" to celebrate the Passover (2 Chr 30:1–9) emphasized the inclusiveness and openness of the Jerusalem temple to the Northern tribes. That "men from Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem" (2 Chr 30:11) served as an example of what the Chronicler intended his audience to do, rather than scorning and ridiculing the messengers as some had done (2 Chr 30:10). In terms of rhetorical effect, the letter of Hezekiah to all Israel may as well have been written to the Chronicler's audience because it carried the same intended response: to eschew the unfaithfulness of their ancestors, submit to Yahweh, and come to his sanctuary (2 Chr 30:30). Further, that Yahweh responded favorably to Hezekiah's prayer of atonement for the unpurified people from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun (2 Chr 30:18–20) again showed the welcoming attitude of Yahweh to those from the Northern tribes who willingly came to Jerusalem. The participation of Israelites from the North in the Passover (2 Chr 30:25–26) and in destroying the Asherim and sacred stones (2 Chr 31:1) made the same point: even Northerners may participate in doing what is good and right in Yahweh's eyes. Like Hezekiah, Josiah's reforms and inclusion of many from the Northern tribes (2 Chr 34:6, 9, 33) pointed to the same truth that Yahweh would accept all Israelites who participated in the wholehearted worship of Yahweh in Jerusalem.

Thus, even though these speeches (or letters) were delivered hundreds of years before the Persian-era audience, their rhetorical effect is powerful because the words would speak directly to the audience's situation. That is to say, the invitation of Hezekiah (for example) for all Israel to submit to Yahweh and come to his sanctuary, functioned as an open invitation to the Persian-era audience as well. The narrator consistently portrayed northerners positively when they defected to Judah and worshiped in Jerusalem. Many of the other speeches / letters carry the same rhetorical effect of calling the North to Jerusalem, thus contributing to the Chronicler's important theme that "all Israel" should worship at the temple in Jerusalem. The author's portrayal of Manasseh as the epitome of evil among the Judean kings, even worse than the nations Yahweh had previously destroyed (2 Chr 33:2–9), followed by his humility and seeking of Yahweh (2 Chr 33:12) and his restoration to Jerusalem (2 Chr 33:13) demonstrate the generosity of Yahweh's forgiveness. If the very worst of kings could be forgiven, then so could the rebellious Northern tribes scattered around the Persian empire.

Another major rhetorical feature of this section is the author's use of repeated key words or concepts which convey aspects of the intended response for the audience via the actions of the characters in the narrative. These include key words and concepts like "humble," "seek," and having a proper heart attitude before Yahweh. For example, various characters positively humbled themselves: Rehoboam and the Judeans (2 Chr 12:6–7, 12), men from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun (2 Chr 30:11), Hezekiah (2 Chr 32:26), Manasseh (2 Chr 33:12), Josiah (2 Chr 34:27). The narrator viewed each of these favorably and some resultant blessing came to them. On the other hand, some characters failed to humble themselves: Amon (2 Chr 33:23) and Zedekiah (2 Chr 36:12), and negative consequences ensued. Many positively sought / inquired (דרשׁ or בקשׁ) of Yahweh: those from all the tribes who came to Jerusalem in Jeroboam's day (2 Chr 11:16), Jeroboam (2 Chr 12:14), Asa and Judah (2 Chr 14:3, 6 MT [14:4, 7]; 15:5; 15:12), of a previous generation of Israelites (2 Chr 15:4), Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 17:4; 18:4, 6; 19:3; 20:3–4), Uzziah (2 Chr 26:5), the Northerners at Hezekiah's Passover (2 Chr 30:19), and Josiah (2 Chr 34:3, 21, 26). Because of their seeking Yahweh, these had favorable outcomes. But the narrator noted several who did not: in Asa's day, those not seeking Yahweh were executed (2 Chr 15:13),

Asa during his illness (2 Chr 16:12), and Amaziah (2 Chr 25:20).[34] Previously, David had noted that in Saul's day the nation didn't seek Yahweh (1 Chr 13:3). Thus, from the numerous examples and uses of these key words, the author intended his audience to humble themselves and seek Yahweh with their whole heart by worshiping in Jerusalem. In the narrative, those who did this always received a tangible and positive response from Yahweh, and those who did not faced profound consequences.

The Chronicler's conclusion of the entire work (2 Chr 36:15–23) employed a powerful rhetorical synthesis of history, prophecy, and hope, in order to reinforce his central message. The repeated rejection of Yahweh's messengers "until there was no remedy" resulted in the most severe judgment of destruction and exile. Yet, the fact that Jeremiah's prophecy of restoration after 70 years had come true would instill hope that other prophecies of Israel's restoration still lay ahead, and the Chronicler had just expended much ink explaining the means of participating in that restoration. The final words about Cyrus' decree and Israelites being free to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple and be with their God (2 Chr 36:22–23) would leave the audience with a very confrontational question: having read everything and seen the benefits of seeking Yahweh and the consequences of rebellion, what will they do? How will they respond to Yahweh, to Jerusalem, to the temple, and to the Davidic king? They could either remain in rebellion and suffer judgment as the Babylonians had wrought on Judah, or they could humble themselves, seek Yahweh with all their heart, and join the covenant community in Judea by participating in worship at the Jerusalem temple.

Thus, in his narrative account of the post-Solomonic Judahite kings (2 Chr 10:1–36:23), the Chronicler ultimately presented a pattern of divine retribution based on the attitudes and actions of each king toward the temple cult and the Mosaic Law. He demonstrated through key words and examples the necessity of seeking Yahweh wholeheartedly, and the cost of failing to do so. He employed the speeches of Yahweh, kings, prophets, and priests with brilliant rhetorical effect such that the speeches "spoke" directly to the post-exilic audience despite their being given centuries earlier. All of these elements contributed to the Chronicler's overall deliberative purpose that all Israelites would humble themselves, seek Yahweh, and be part of the restored Israelite community by (1) returning to the Promised Land if in the diaspora, (2) participating in and uniting around the legitimate worship of Yahweh at the Jerusalem temple, and (3) living in covenant fidelity while waiting with hope for the coming Davidic king because of Yahweh's enduring *ḥesed* as exemplified in the Davidic Covenant.

[34] See Table 2 for a complete summary of use of the seeking verbs דָּרַשׁ and בָּקַשׁ in Chronicles.

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