

**Theocracy: Reflections of the Relationship between God and King in Samuel-  
Kings and Chronicles**

By

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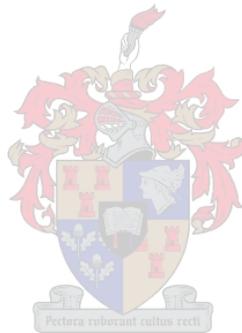
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*“Declaration*

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:..... Date:.....”



## **Abstract**

One of the challenging questions for the religious people is whether theocracy is still relevant in a pluralistic society like the South African society. In this assignment I argue that theocracy is relevant for all times. It can just change form as the context changes to adapt to new circumstances.

To test this assertion, this study concentrates on the study of Old Testament views regarding theocracy in different contexts. This is done by comparing the narratives of kings Saul, David, Solomon and Rehoboam as told by the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler.

The focus is on how contextual influences are reflected in their telling of the stories of these kings and thereby also purport a certain form of theocracy befitting their particular contexts. The study then concludes that theocracy is relevant for all times but the change in context should be taken into consideration.

## **Abstrak**

Een van die belangrike vrae vir godsdienstige mense is of die idee van teokrasie steeds tersake is in pluralistiese samelewings soos Suid-Afrika. In hierdie taak word geargumenteer dat teokrasie tersake is vir alle tye. Dit verander slegs van vorm om in veranderde kontekste aan te pas.

Om hierdie aanname te toets, fokus hierdie studie op Ou Testamentiese perspektiewe op teokrasie in veranderende kontekste. Dit word onderneem deur 'n vergelyking van die narratiewe oor Saul, Dawid, Salomo en Rehobeam soos vertel deur die Deuteronomis en Kronieke-skrywer.

Die fokus is op hoe kontekstuele invloede en vorme van teokrasie wat by daardie kontekste pas, weerspieël word in hul vertelling van die stories van hierdie konings. Die studie konkludeer dat teokrasie relevant is vir alle tye, maar dat veranderinge in konteks in ag geneem moet word.

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1. Objective and hypothesis of this study

The objective of this thesis is to study the OT views on theocracy in different historical contexts. Precipitating this study is a personal interest in the concept of **theocracy**. In simple terms, the concept means “the rule by God”. This study is meant to be reflections of the relationship between God and king in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. The study wants to find out how the concept is understood in the books of Samuel-Kings on the one hand, and in the books of Chronicles, on the other. The driving force here is to perceive how the understanding of, or views on theocracy changed according to the different contexts of these two text collections<sup>1</sup>.

This driving force does not engage into this venture without a **hypothesis** accompanying it. The hypothesis is that: theocracy can survive different contexts, even if in the process, it has to change forms.



### 2. Concepts and terminology

#### a. History of Israel

In his final chapter, Giovanni Garbini<sup>2</sup> (1988) acknowledges that the Hebrews did have an interest in historiography<sup>3</sup>. Noticing its traces in the Deuteronomistic history<sup>4</sup>, he describes it as “a historiographical work relating to the Hebrew monarchy which could have been something more than a mere annalistic repertoire” (1988: 178). Garbini states, however, that this historiographical work was then utilized by authors who did not have any real interest in history, but who were reflecting on the end of the Hebrew monarchy. My interpretation of Garbini’s assertion is that, the Deuteronomist’s redaction was an ideological and religious reaction to earlier societies. His conclusion is,

<sup>1</sup> The different contexts of these two text collections refer to the contexts of the writers as reflected in the texts *per se*.

<sup>2</sup> History & Ideology in Ancient Israel

<sup>3</sup> The principles, theories, or methodology of scholarly historical research and presentation.

<sup>4</sup> This mini-thesis includes the Chronistic history in this discussion

the narratives which are to be found in the Hebrew Bible are all less than historical, and therefore it is useless to look for an ‘idea of history’ in them, but regardless of the Bible, the Hebrews probably had a historiography, even if it was not a rich one...(1988:178).

On the other hand, we have Hans M Bastard (1997), who categorically states that, if a text makes use of stereotyped genres, it is not a purely fictional text, but also a ‘historical’ one. As a historical text, it comes out of the past and it reflects historical reality. This is the kind of ‘historical truth’ which we may find in the texts of the Hebrew Bible, he asserts. He argues the fact, that the Deuteronomistic history is expressed through specific genres (e.g. 2 Sam 12:1-6 is a parable). This should not make us think everything is pure fiction. It is the order of some elements that is fictional. He argues from that does not flow that there was no ancient ‘kingdom’ of Israel at all. For him, it is not a problem to call it history, but it is pre-modern narrative and not modern/logical/analytical. He states:

What we have here is a kind of history telling which does not pass down the past, but which actually *creates* the past. This, however, is not so unusual. We can say that in the Hebrew Bible we have an example of ‘national’ history writing (1997:56).

What is common in both arguments is that in the biblical story of the monarchical era, there is both fictional and factual information. This mini-thesis will rather approach the issue from Terence E. Fretheim’s (1983) perspective. He argues the material is narrative in form with a variety of narrative genres. It has become popular to call these narratives a “story”, which puts emphasis upon the imaginative character of the material and also focuses attention on the material from a literary perspective, he continues. However, he points at disadvantages of using the designation “story”. The first point suggests that we are dealing with a material which is entirely imaginative and fictional, with no roots in what actually happened. The second one is the suggest that the Deuteronomistic history is a unitary and original production like a modern novel. Finally, it does not sufficiently recognize the importance of generalizations<sup>5</sup> in making sense of the biblical material.

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<sup>5</sup> For example, speeches and prayers by key leaders, the author’s intervention at key junctures in the story to bring a suggested focus or a truth claim.

For these reasons the paper will continue to use the designation “history” while recognizing that it is a mixture of fact and fiction and also appreciating that “the story form allows for (in a way that history proper does not) an admixture of Israel’s story and God’s story” (Fretheim: 1983:39). The words “history” and “story” can thus be used interchangeably, for history refers to the story of the Bible.

## b. Theocracy

Theocracy, as a central concept in this thesis, needs to be defined. D.A.S.Fergusson (1997)<sup>6</sup> explains the concept as it was identified by Josephus amongst the Jews. Josephus “claims that according to Mosaic principles of government all rule (*archē*) and exercise of power (*kratōs*) belong to God. This gives rise to a model of society in which the total ordering of the people’s life discloses the salvific will of God. Although the rule of God can be mediated by a charismatic leader, a monarch or a priest the Hebrew Bible can also look forward to an eschaton in which the JUDGEMENT of God will be immediate and direct (Isaiah 2)<sup>7</sup>”.

In his introduction, Jonathan E. Dyck (1998) refers to theocracy as “rule by God” insofar as it meant in effect “rule by priests”. This was a rule by the high priest or in a diarchy<sup>8</sup> with an appointed governor<sup>9</sup>. This is a kind of theocracy that operated during the Second Temple era. He also identifies the Hasmonean<sup>10</sup> kingdom as theocracy because the Hasmoneans were both kings and priests.

Fergusson (mentioned above) further notes that the term theocracy has never been precisely defined in subsequent theology or in social theory. Its use since the nineteenth century has been degenerating, referring to societies in which there is a close alignment between church and state. John Calvin’s Geneva is an illustration of such a theocracy. Later Reformed theology, particularly in the U.S.A., called for a sharper distinction

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<sup>6</sup> Dictionary of Ethics, Theology and Society

<sup>7</sup> The reader is advised to read Isaiah 2 to get the full meaning of this quotation.

<sup>8</sup> Government by two joint rulers

<sup>9</sup> Appointed by the Persians in the case of post-exilic Yehud (Judah)

<sup>10</sup> A family of high priests and kings descended from Mattathias, the father of JUDAS MACCABEUS. They were prominent in Judea from 165 until 37 B.C. and controlled it as rulers between 142 B.C. and 63 B.C. The family belonged to the priestly course of Joarib (= Jehoiarib, 1 Chr 24:7; Joiarib, Neh 11:10), originated in Jerusalem, but had settled before the time of Mattathias in Modein, near Lydda (1 Macc 2:1).

between the church and the state<sup>11</sup>. He applauds this approach for preventing imperialism of any one religious group while also warning that it divorces the spiritual from the political, hence relegating religion to a private domain with little direct impact on public affairs. The concept of theocracy has become quite a complex issue in a context of divided religious establishments. The division among the Christian churches themselves is more exemplified. However, this is a topic for another day. For our purpose, theocracy is significant only as it was understood by the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler.

### c. Ideology and Paradigm

God made a covenant with Abraham which became a determining factor in the fate of Israel. This God-Israel relationship came to form the basis of the worldview of the Israelites; that all rule (*archē*) and exercise of power (*kratōs*) belong to God. Israel therefore had to reflect this worldview by giving rise to a model of society in which the total ordering of the people's life discloses the salvific will of God. It is against this background that the study introduces the term *ideology*. Jonathan Dyck gives a broad definition of ideology as “a set of ideas, beliefs and attitudes held by a person” (1998:15). The last words can be stated as “held by a person or a group” to fit our discussion. In the light of this discussion, the understanding that all rule and exercise of power belong to God underlies a set of ideas, beliefs, attitudes held by Israel. Theocracy is an ideology of Israel. Because both the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler are the remnants of the Israelites from the Southern kingdom (Judeans), theocracy is their ideology as well. At this point, let it be highlighted again that the study wants to realize how both the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler understood this same heritage of theirs (theocracy as an ideology). Also, the study wants to establish the role of the context in this understanding. So, in addition to the broader definition of ideology given above, we add the socio-cultural influences that people cannot divorce themselves from. Our definition therefore can be expressed as a set of ideas, beliefs and attitudes held by a person/group within a particular socio-cultural setting. This can be qualified by a statement from Dyck (1998: 17) that states; “one can describe the author's social context as reconstructing the author's ideology (as in system of ideas)...” This definition is chosen because it serves

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<sup>11</sup> Here the case for religious tolerance, freedom of worship and religious pluralism became effective.

the interests of our study best and an opposition to other definitions described by Dyck. Dyck also describes two other definitions besides the one we have chosen. The first one is the broader one we have already mentioned above. However, it does not refer to the “social status” of the ideas it mentions and is no part of a particular social research. He associates Sarah Japhet with this definition. He quotes Japhet’s conclusion on the position of the Northern kingdom in the Chronicler’s ideology. Japhet concludes that, “in contrast to Samuel-Kings, it is clear that the North ‘is a part of Israel, and without the members of the Northern tribes, the people of Israel cannot be complete’” (1998: 15)<sup>12</sup>. What Dyck queries is Japhet looked at what the Chronicler says, which is compared and contrasted it with other biblical books without also considering the Chronicler’s context. The other definition is an ideology within a context of social criticism while our chosen one is an ideology within a context of anthropology. The difference in our definition ideology is a “normal” part of social life while in the definition within a context of social criticism ideology is “a distortion” within social life. Marx’s historical materialism is associated with the ideology within a context of social criticism. In short, theocracy, as a set of ideas, beliefs and attitudes of the Israelites within a particular socio-cultural setting, is an ideology of both the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler.

Related to ideology is the term *paradigm*. A paradigm is something used as a model or example for other cases where a basic principle remains unchanged, though details differ. Waldemar Janzen (1994) looks extensively at the concept of the paradigm. He argues that paradigms pass on the necessary information to help the readers to live rightly before God. He uses stories to demonstrate the Old Testament use of these stories to foster behaviour deemed to be pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. The stories will use their protagonists to emphasize certain behaviour. In his book, Janzen gives five different paradigms to demonstrate his argument. They include the familial paradigm, the wisdom paradigm, the priestly paradigm, royal and prophetic paradigms. However, a paradigm cannot be contrary to the ideology. In fact, the ideology informs the contents of the paradigm. So, the ideology gives birth to a paradigm. The story used as a paradigm to illustrate ideological beliefs, demonstrates the acceptable behaviour. According to

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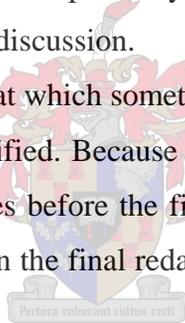
<sup>12</sup> The quotation is used as used by Dyck. In Japhet it is on page 324

Janzen, the “Story is the literary genre that, next to actual cultic practice, was most important in the transmission of theological-ethical instruction in Ancient Israel itself” (1994: 2). It can be what truly happened, a fictitious narrative based on historical people, places, circumstances, times etc., or absolute fiction to project a truth-claim. Understanding this is useful for grasping what the biblical authors intend to teach by the stories they tell. We will consider these paradigms in our understanding of how the writers interpret theocracy.

#### d. Contexts of origin

When we refer to a context, we refer to a number of factors that surround the person or the occurrence that is being discussed. These factors range from time<sup>13</sup>, place, kind of society, culture, politics, economy, religion, education etc. - and many other spheres of life extant at a specific time. One can pick any of these and leave any of them as determined by their relevance to the discussion.

Origin, on the other hand, is a point at which something comes into existence. This one is easily misinterpreted if it is not clarified. Because our corpus could have been written for the first time three or four phases before the final redaction, origin may refer to the first phase of writing. Our focus is on the final redaction<sup>14</sup>, and hence the final redactor’s context.



### 3. An Overview of the History of Israel

Now the objective and the hypothesis of the study have been outlined and the concepts have been explained. It’s objective imposes on us a demand to outline Israel’s history. This demand is prompted by two reasons. The first reason is that our objective<sup>15</sup> refers to different contexts within the history of Israel. It is therefore imperative to identify these contexts in order to have a clear distinction between the contexts of the redactors that we are dealing with. The second reason is that the objective involves the institution of

<sup>13</sup> An interval separating two points within a continuous extent of minutes, days, months, years etc. In our case years.

<sup>14</sup> The corpus as we have now

<sup>15</sup> To determine the influence of context on the theocratic understanding of these biblical writers.

governance. It is therefore vital to have a cursory look at the different structures of governance in the history of Israel.

The “story of Israel” starts with Abraham. This study starts here for two reasons. The first reason is that, the Bible tells us that God took the initiative to call Abraham in order to reveal Himself to humanity (Genesis 12). This is the basis of the existence of Israel. In today’s vocabulary, Israel was God’s project to reveal Himself to humanity and in order to bless all the nations. The second reason is that God sealed His calling of Abraham with a covenant. This covenant has been a determining factor in the fate of Israel. These two reasons explain why God has been central in the history of Israel.

Because the story of Abraham is more family-based than community-based<sup>16</sup>, the study does not bother to identify structures of governance. The first context includes the time of Joseph as one period of the Patriarchs (Genesis 50).

The second context refers to the slavery in Egypt. Because the Israelites were slaves, they had no political power so they were under a foreign ruler (Exodus 1-13).

The third context is their Exodus. In this period, God ruled directly over Israel. Moses acted as a courier of God’s messages. God even provided food falling from heaven (manna) and water from rocks (Exodus 13- Deuteronomy 34).

The fourth context is the life in the Promised Land under the guidance of the Judges (Conquest and Settlement). Siegfried Herrmann<sup>17</sup> (1973) describes the situation of the period as plagued by wars from neighboring nations. A certain hero would be called every time a certain tribe was under threat to rescue that tribe. Once safety has been restored, their task was fulfilled and the hero returned to his family to become the member of the tribe again. They gained temporary authority. When a tribe deviates from God He would send foreigners to threaten with war. When that tribe repents, God would appoint somebody (a judge) to rescue it (Judges 1- 1 Samuel 12).

The fifth context is life in the Promised Land under the kings (1 Samuel 13-2 Kings 25). God appointed somebody to be king and to rule according to His law. Although the appointment of a king was an initiative from the people, copied from the neighboring

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<sup>16</sup> In Abraham’s story there is no reference to social institutions of politics and religion. He himself is the head of the household.

<sup>17</sup> A History of Israel in Old Testament Times

nations, it was negotiated into God's influence so that God appointed the king. The study is interested in this period because both the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler expounded on this period. However, from 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 9, more is referred to the prophets than the kings. Interpreting the strong presence of the prophets, Fretheim (1983) says:

This serves to demonstrate that the word of God, both in grace and judgment, provides the perspective from which the history of Israel must finally be understood (p 44).

The next context is the Babylonian exile<sup>18</sup>. In 2 Kings 25:21 it is stated that

<sup>21</sup> The king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah went into exile out of its land.

The entire kingdom of Judah was attacked in 589 B.C. by Babylon and sent into exile. This is the time the Deuteronomist finalized his work<sup>19</sup> which shaped the context of the Deuteronomist. The foreigners ruled over Israel. They had no political power, as the case was in Egypt. According to Giovanni Garbini, Israel's possession of own land until exile formed a chiasmic frame<sup>20</sup>.

The last context is the post-exilic era. Persia took over from Babylon. The Persian Emperor, Cyrus liberated the Jews and the willing returned to Judah. Instead of a kingdom now, they had a province called Yehud, under the Persian Empire. Instead of a king, they had a governor accounting to the Persian Emperor. 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 and Ezra 1-3 state<sup>21</sup>:

<sup>22</sup> In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom and also declared in a written edict: <sup>23</sup> "Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him! Let him go up.

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<sup>18</sup> There is an Assyrian exile of the North in 722 B.C. as well. After Solomon, the kingdom was divided into North & South but the study is focusing on the Southern kingdom.

<sup>19</sup> There are many theories on when did the Deuteronomist do his work. The study prefers the above-mentioned one.

<sup>20</sup> In Egypt there is no land. During the time of Judges there is land. During the time of kings there is land. In Babylon there is no land.

<sup>21</sup> The quotation is taken from Chronicles

According to Tamar Cohn Eskenazi (2000), Ezra depicts the early stages of reconstruction of Jewish life in Judah (Yehud) under Persian colonial rule in the aftermath of the destruction of Jerusalem and exile to Babylonia. The Book of Nehemiah, on the other hand, records the events of Nehemiah's governorship under the Persian rulers. According to Mark A. Throntveit (2000), the books of Ezra and Nehemiah were originally a single work called Ezra. He affirms this by saying:

This is indicated by the earliest manuscripts of the LXX (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus) to treat the two books as one, calling them Esdras B, and the Masoretic annotations that deal with both books but occur only at the end of Nehemiah (p955).

This context, the post-exilic time, shaped the Chronicler. Still the foreigners ruled over the Jews. The books of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, according to the older consensus position, are the work of the Chronicler. However, a growing number of scholars dispute this assertion (Throntveit: 2000). Because our discussion is on Chronicles, it is better not to get into this debate now and rather focus on Chronicles, although this paper leans more towards the older consensus position.

#### 4. Studying “theocracy” in two contexts

##### a. The Deuteronomist's time

The debate about the authorship of the Deuteronomistic history is an ongoing one. A conclusion on authorship is automatically also a conclusion on the time of the author(s). In an abstract introducing Martin Noth's excerpt from **The Deuteronomistic History**, Garry N Knoppers gives Noth's main thesis that, “the DH is a unified product of an exilic historian who uses the available sources and supplements them with his own compositions in order to support his interpretation of Israel's history” (2000: 20). Steve L. McKenzie (1997) states that “Weinfeld suggested that Deuteronomistic literary activity began during the time of Hezekiah and continued into the Exile (1972: 25). Hence, like Nicholson, Weinfeld agreed with Noth's date for the final form of the DH”<sup>22</sup>. Noth's date for the final form of the DH is the exilic era. It seems scholars differ on

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<sup>22</sup> Deuteronomistic History in The Anchor Bible Dictionary (Logos Library System 2.1c)

particular details about the Deuteronomistic history (DH), but agree that the final production was finalized during the exile. This paper therefore, maintains that the time of the Deuteronomist is the exile. The time of the exile is when Israel's main economic resource, the land had been taken away from them. Their religious center, the Temple, had been destroyed. Their political institution, the kingdom, had been demolished. It is a when the Covenant seemed to have lapsed. Their identity and their pride had been shattered. Their future appears bleak. This is the context that informed the author(s) of the DH.

### b. The Chronicler's Time

“Within the post-exilic period Chronicles is very hard to date...A range of more than 350 years (from the late 6<sup>th</sup> to the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E.) has been suggested. Although an absolute date cannot be assigned, one past the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century is unlikely...”, so says Knoppers<sup>23</sup> (2000:242). One thing that the majority of scholars seem to agree with is that Chronicles were finalized in the post-exilic era. According to Pierre Briant<sup>24</sup>, the Persian Empire reigned from 539-330 B.C.E (From Cyrus to Darius III). Without doubt, Ezra falls within the Persian Empire, although, according to Eric F. Mason<sup>25</sup>, some scholars date his mission to 458 while others to 398 B.C.E. (2000: 448). In fact Ralph W.Klein says:

Jerusalem is clearly the place of authorship. If there was a Chronicler's History, including all or parts of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, then the Chronicler must be subsequent to the work of Ezra (458 or 398 B.C.E. [7th year of Artaxerxes I or Artaxerxes II]) and Nehemiah (445–432 B.C.E.).

The Persian era is the time of the Chronicler. The paper will lean more towards Sara Japhet's “own conclusion” that the date can be the later period in the Persian era, towards the end. This can also make provision for the differences between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah due to contextual changes in the course of time passage. The post-exilic time is when Israel's main economic resource, the land had been restored albeit they still

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<sup>23</sup> Book of Chronicles in Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible

<sup>24</sup> Persian Empire in The Anchor Bible Dictionary (Logos Library System 2.1c)

<sup>25</sup> Ezra in Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible

adhered to a colonial power. Their religious center, the Temple, had been rebuilt. Their political institution, the kingdom, had been demolished but they had a governor, who still accounted to the colonial power. It is a when the Covenant seemed to have been renewed. Their identity and their pride had to a certain extent been restored. Their future is promising. This is the context that informed the author(s) of the CH.

### c. The stories of four kings: reason for choice

The thesis will look at four kings of Israel, Saul, David, Solomon and Rehoboam. All of these kings ruled over Israel before there were two kingdoms<sup>26</sup> although it is during Rehoboam's time that the kingdom broke into two.

Saul is important because it started with him that theocracy is mediated through a human king. In his time however, the offices of king and priest were separate and he was punished for taking a role of a priest.

In David the roles come gradually together and there is no complaint about it. In fact David brought them together although he still arranged the priestly duties and delegated different roles to different people. Also, the promise of Yahweh to the house of David has introduced into the kingship a religious factor which overrides its purely institutional function. Solomon reinforced the combination of these offices even further. God is even talking directly to him while he talked to David through the prophet Nathan.

It is David's theocratic rule that Dtr upholds and uses to judge the subsequent kings, including Solomon. For Chr, it is David's & Solomon's theocratic reigns that he upholds and he uses them to measure whether a king is a model or an anti-model. Rehoboam is judged by this model whether he is on the right track or not. That makes the four kings important for this mini-thesis.

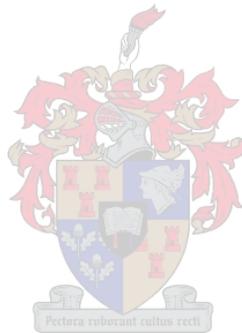
### d. Method for analysis

As previously mentioned, this study concentrates on the study of OT views regarding theocracy in different contexts. This will be done by comparing the narratives of the above kings as told by the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler. This will be done by looking at their verbal presentations, as well as their contexts when necessary. It has

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<sup>26</sup> Northern Israel and Southern Judah

already been said above that ideology is a set of ideas, beliefs and attitudes held by a person or group within a particular socio-cultural setting. Therefore, the socio-cultural context can not be left behind. In the following chapter, the study will look at the backgrounds of the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler in more detail. In chapters III, IV, V and VI, we will look at the above-mentioned kings respectively. The final chapter will be the conclusion.



## Chapter II

# Backgrounds of the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler and their Circumstances

### 1. Introduction

It has already been established that the time of the Deuteronomist is the exilic period. The time of the exile is when Israel's land, the main economic resource had been taken away. Their religious centre, the Temple, had been destroyed. Their political institution, the kingdom, had been demolished. It is a time when the Covenant seemed to have lapsed. Their identity and their pride had been shattered. Their future was bleak. This is the context that informed the author(s) of the DH.

The post-exilic period has been identified as the time of the Chronicler. Specifically, it is towards the end of the Persian era. The post-exilic time is when Israel's main economic resource, the land, had been restored, while they still accounted to the colonial power of Persia. Their religious centre, the Temple, had been rebuilt. Their political institution, the kingdom, had been demolished even though they had a governor who still accounted to the colonial power. This is when the Covenant seemed to have been renewed. During this time a new identity was developing.. Their future, as compared to the exile, was promising. This is the context that informed the author(s) of the CH.

### 2. Purpose

In dealing with an ideological analysis, it is important to note (1) *who* is speaking, (2) *what* is s/he saying, (3) *to whom* is s/he speaking and (4) *why* is s/he saying what s/he is saying. In our case, it is the *Deuteronomist and the Chronicler* who are speaking. They are telling the Deuteronomistic/Chronistic narrative/history. They are talking to the *exilic/post-exilic audiences* respectively. The *purpose* of these writers/redactors will answer the question why were they saying what they said To repeat what has already been said, the purpose cannot be divorced from the author(s)' context. In fact, the context nurtures the purpose.

### a. Deuteronomist

The exilic community was still trying to reconcile the Zionist theology<sup>27</sup> with the exile, but to no avail. The Deuteronomist, as an exile, tried to make sense of their present situation. He<sup>28</sup> collected historiographical work relating to the Hebrew monarchy<sup>29</sup>, the folklore culture<sup>30</sup>, the history of the prophets<sup>31</sup>, the religious cult<sup>32</sup> and theological assumptions of the traditions of Deuteronomy<sup>33</sup>. With this material he used his imagination to formulate an ideological production that answered the questions that the Zionist theology could not answer, particularly why God allowed that they be taken to exile.

Brueggemann (2003:146-148) outlines three explanations of the purpose of the Deuteronomist by Martin Noth, Hans Walter Wolff and Gerard von Rad. There are other scholars like Frank Cross<sup>34</sup>, who make their contribution on the purpose of Dtr, but the paper concentrates on those who choose the exilic time for the date of DH. Noth understands the Deuteronomist (Dtr) as looking back in Israel's history. He (Dtr) then saw the nation's sustained disobedience to God as having provoked divine judgment. It was God's response to their disobedience that handed them over to the enemy.

Wolff, alternatively, understands the Dtr as looking forward, from exile to the future. The way forward is to embrace the Torah (repent) and they would be saved.

Although both elements are found in the Dtr, Noth and Wolff emphasize one aspect, either divine judgment or repentance respectively.

Von Rad, on the other hand, sees a dialectic nature in the DH. While the divine judgment features prominently, there is a conspicuous display of God's grace that delays judgment

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<sup>27</sup> Refers to an understanding that "with the transfer of the ark from the city of David to the temple that Solomon built, YHWH was said to dwell in the Zion- temple compound" (Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible: 2000: 1421). That was an assurance that Jews are invincible because the Lord dwells in Jerusalem. They will prosper forever. No nation could ever touch them.

<sup>28</sup> Given the context of the time, B.C.E., the author(s) must have been male, hence the masculine pronoun.

<sup>29</sup> See, Chapter 1 on History of Israel

<sup>30</sup> Brueggemann (2003:131).

<sup>31</sup> Fretheim, T.E. (1983:44)

<sup>32</sup> Maclaurin, E.C.B. (1959:98), asserts that "the centre of government was irrefragably abounded with the centre of worship". From pp 101-115, he treats the issue of apostasy, "the most serious sin the nation could commit". Religion is at the centre of this section.

<sup>33</sup> Brueggemann (2003:145). Quoting Martin Noth, who is the pioneer of the concept of Deuteronomistic history.

<sup>34</sup> Cross represents many scholars arguing DH was essentially written before 587 (Gerbrandt, G.E.:1986:91).

despite the nation's disobedience. These two accents are "in deep tension with each other", Brueggemann quotes von Rad as such.

All three explanations do have merit; however, Dtr's purpose can be phrased in a particular way. His purpose is to propagate his ideology. His ideology is that God is the sole ruler of the Israelites and only He, solely, should be obeyed. He (Dtr) is a theocrat. He edited a theological corpus from a theocratic perspective. To woo the exiles for his ideology, he employs a particular rhetorical approach. The approach is to emphasize divine judgment. However, Dtr is also careful not to ignore the other side of the coin and thereby misrepresent God. So, he also highlights that in fact, God, by His nature, is gracious. The fault lies with the exiles themselves. This is also a strategic reminder that they (exiles) are the chosen ones. This is also a rhetorical device. Brueggemann quotes von Rad describing this element as "undeuteronomic" (2003:147).

At this juncture we can ask the question why is he doing what he is doing, namely; emphasizing divine judgment. The context gives us a clue on this one. "To lay contextual issues alongside narrative should enable illumination of the text, and give breadth and depth to the results of one's interpretation", asserts Fretheim (1983:46).

When the "Zionist"<sup>35</sup> people landed in exile, surely, the first question was, "What went wrong?" Such a question has an implicit statement in it, namely, "so that we can correct the wrong". It is a common sense issue that before any healing should take place, diagnosis should have been done. Nobody can change without first admitting that s/he has been wrong. Fretheim, juxtaposing context and text, outlines twelve concerns, one or more of which is assumed to have been among the exiles (1983: 46-47). This essay asserts that the question "What went wrong?" is the mother of all the other concerns that Fretheim outlines. This is because, the "Zionist theology" never made enough provision for the fact that apostasy cannot be tolerated. So then, it was time to clarify this. That is the context of the Dtr, which informed his purpose. His purpose was to propagate his theocratic ideology, which made it clear that apostasy cannot be tolerated.

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<sup>35</sup> Used with the connotations of Zionist theology

## b. Chronicler

It is logical to regard the DH as the dominant ideology for the exilic community. When the Israelites were liberated from exile, they had this corpus that portrayed the history of Israel as the history of mainly apostasy and God's retribution. This mood of sadness was not compatible with the present mood of restoration elicited by liberation. To reconcile his present situation with the past, the Chronicler collected the biblical and extra-biblical sources<sup>36</sup>. With this material he used his imagination to produce an ideological historical narrative. In Sarah Japhet's words,

That the Chronicler had strong historical and theological motives in writing his work is self-evident; why else would he bother to rewrite a history of a period which was already documented? (1993:43).

His purpose, therefore, is to propagate his ideology. His ideology is that God is the sole ruler of the Israelites and only He, alone, should be obeyed. He (Chr) is a theocrat. He edited a theological corpus from his own theocratic perspective. To quote Japhet again:

The Deuteronomistic history is extant basically in its final canonical form, but at the same time the Chronicler has no hesitation in deviating from the Deuteronomistic historical and theological concepts at significant points....These facts imply a certain distance between the Chronicler and his Deuteronomistic predecessor(s), their work being viewed as a stabilized historical work, the message of which can no longer be accepted as it is (1993:27).

Rodney K. Duke lists a number of purposes proposed for the Chronicler: (1) the return of "all Israel" from exile by C.C Torey, (2) to defend post-exilic cultic institutions by E.L. Curtis, & A.A. Madsen, M.Noth and J.M. Myers, (3) to write a Davidic history in terms of its religious and cultic achievements by D.N.Freedman, (4) to defend the realization of the theocracy in the new community of Israel against the claims of the Samaritans by R.H.Pfeiffer, M.Noth and W. Rudolph, (5) to write a history of Judah and its institutions by S.R.Driver, (6) to teach religious values through history by C.F.Keil, A.C.Welch and R. Mosis, (7) to strive to maintain religious orthodoxy by J.M.Myers and (8) to interpret to the restored community the history of Israel as an eternal covenant between God and David, a covenant which demands obedience to the law by B.S.Childs (1990:48-49). All

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<sup>36</sup> See Sarah Japhet's introduction to I & II Chronicles: A Commentary (1993:14-28)

these above-mentioned theories, in one way or another can be associated with the Chronicler. However, the paper limits itself to the proposal that the Chronicler's purpose was to propagate his theocratic ideology. We can later then talk of the characteristics of the Chronicler's theocracy. Given the time that has lapsed since the history of Israel was documented by the Deuteronomist, contextual changes made the Chronicler feel compelled to sustain theocracy in a new generation. Japhet phrases it nicely when she says; "...the past is explained so that its institutions and religious principles become relevant to the present, and the ways of the present are legitimized anew by being connected to the prime source of authority..." (1993:49).

The Chronicler's approach is different from the Deuteronomist's in that he emphasizes the institutions through which God can be obeyed best, namely, the Davidic dynasty and the temple cult. He is not addressing a question of "What went wrong?" but "How to remain within the theocratic system sustainably?" This is done within a history telling that projects an image of an ever gracious God, although retribution is not ruled out in a case of sustained disobedience. In fact, Chr is clever enough, to put in place a control measure to prevent abuse of God's graciousness by indicating that apostasy is still punishable, despite God's graciousness. His audience is a people who cannot, due to historical developments, imitate the pre-exilic community. This is a context that informs the chronicler's theocratic ideology.

### 3. Ideological Characteristics

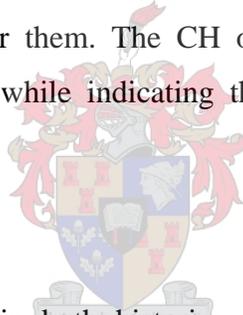
Both the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler are theocrats who preach that God is the sole ruler and only He, alone, should be obeyed. They do this by telling the history of Israel and showing that God is actively involved in this history. However, because of the time gap between their writings, they are addressing communities with different concerns and this affects their approaches. J.D.Pleins (1993) analyses historical Psalms<sup>37</sup> in a chapter titled "*So That a Later Generation Might Know*". He makes a remarkable comment about history by recounting Gustavo Gutierrez's considerations about history. He says:

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<sup>37</sup> Psalm 78 & 106 on the one hand and 105 & 136 on the other. The former he calls psalms remembering rebellion and the latter psalms remembering God's care.

...To these considerations about history, Gutierrez adds the theological claim that the biblical faith is a remembering faith, a faith rooted in history. This historical grounding is not an act of nostalgia that lacks transformative power for the present. Rather, proclamation of God's past liberating deeds - in particular, the exodus event - permits the community to reread the present in light of the past" (1993:144).

This is the power of history that Dtr and Chr discovered and utilized to propagate their theocratic ideology. Interestingly, Pleins comes to a conclusion about these psalms that has a bearing on this study. He associates Psalms 78 and 106 with the DH and Psalms 105 and 136 with the CH. His conclusion states that; " as histories of provision, care, and divine love, Psalms 105 and 136 are far removed from the histories of sin or rebellion found in Psalm 78 and 106" (1993: 149). The DH therefore is a history of sin and rebellion and retribution while indicating that God is a merciful God who wants His people to repent and then deliver them. The CH on the other hand, is a history of provision, care, and divine love while indicating that continued disobedience is still punishable.



### a. Kingship

Kingship is a prominent theme in both histories. In fact, it is a pillar of Israelite theocracy. The way the stories of the kings are told in these histories do however show a contextual function for each corpus. In dealing with the question of what went wrong, Dtr emphasizes disobedience in almost all the kings since the monarchy was established. Chr on the other hand, dealing with the question of how the institution of kingship can be relevant for his community, creates a model in David and Solomon to be followed.

#### *i. Deuteronomist*

"And the LORD said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them'" (1 Samuel 8:7). That is how Dtr introduces the institution of the monarchy. It is a rejection of God as the king of Israel. Their reason to reject God was "so that we also may be like other nations" (1 Samuel 8:20). From 1 Samuel 8:11-18, Samuel issues a

warning against the danger of asking for a king. Dtr does not approve replacing God with a human being for king. However, the institution was established so he has to accept it, for God Himself appointed the kings. He reluctantly accepts the Davidic dynasty as chosen by God but there is a condition and that is:

If you will fear the LORD and serve him and heed his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well;<sup>15</sup> but if you will not heed the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king (1 Samuel 12:14-15).

They did not heed the voice of the Lord, hence the exile. The topic of kingship in the DH is not without debate. Gerbrandt, G.E. (1986)<sup>38</sup>, discusses some of the debates on this issue. Until at least 1962, he says the traditional approach dominated this debate. He calls it the Wellhausen-Noth analysis. It is primarily based on the analysis of 1 Kings 7-12. It identifies pro-kingship (9:1-10:16) and anti-kingship (7:2-8:22; 10:17-27; 12) material in this section. The pro-kingship material must have arisen during the time of the monarchy, when there were still benefits from the monarchy. The anti-kingship material must have been from the exile and blamed the kingship for the exilic crisis. The anti-kingship material is by Dtr and the pro-kingship material is old traditional material. Dtr is anti-kingship. The subsequent supporting arguments do however differ with the Wellhausen and Noth in certain respects.

The counter-arguments to the Wellhausen-Noth argument differ among themselves to certain degrees. They range from seeing Dtr as pro-kingship to pro-Davidic dynasty while blaming individual kings for disobedience. Their primary argument is that the anti-kingship material must be from the early period, during the rise of this institution because it threatened the privileges some people had, whether economically, socially etc.

This paper has already indicated that Dtr was explaining the cause of their crisis. The idea of Dtr being anti-kingship makes sense for this paper. The experience of the exile could have been avoided if God was not replaced with a human being for a king. However, Dtr did not preach obedience without being obedient himself. If God accepted the idea of kingship, how could he oppose God's decision? He reluctantly accepted kingship and

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<sup>38</sup> See pp 18-28.

then issued warnings. Clements, R.E., is one of the subsequent supporters of the Wellhausen-Noth analysis. Gerbrandt puts his argument like this:

Clements accepts the Deuteronomistic origin of 2:2-8:22; 10:17-27;12 as proposed by Wellhausen and Noth and largely agrees with Noth that the Deuteronomist was strongly critical of kingship due to his theocratic ideal...But there was a further factor which affected the Deuteronomist' view of kingship. "For the Deuteronomist the promise of Yahweh to the house of David has introduced into the kingship a religious factor which overrides its purely institutional function (1986:30).

The conclusion is that one of the characteristics of the DH is anti-kingship. Through obedience, Dtr accepts the Davidic dynasty but will not spare it from his sharp criticism whenever the opportunity avails itself. As for Saul and the Northern kings, they are out. His exilic context framed this attitude.

### *ii. Chronicler*

To recapitulate, it was stated that the purpose of the Chronicler is to propagate his theocratic ideology. His intention was to find a solution to the question of how to serve God best in his time (his context). William Riley describes the approach that Chr adopted to contextualize theocracy clearly when he says:

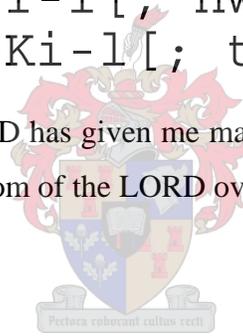
The Chronicler's historical interest, therefore, has two foci: the events of the past and his contemporary community. The precritical historical task he has set for himself is to tell past events in such a way that he is actually speaking equally about the present. The Chronicler's historiographical method involves bringing the two foci of his interest into close theological dialogue, not just to bring out isolated lessons from the past, but to discover the identity and the destiny of the post-exilic community through the lens of the pre-exilic history (1993:29).

What Riley has just said, encourages this paper to view Chr as pro-kingship, unlike Dtr who is perceived as anti-kingship. However, he is not for any kingship but the Davidic dynasty. Two factors motivate this statement. The first one is what has already been mentioned as the reason for Dtr's reluctant acceptance of the Davidic dynasty, namely, that the promise of Yahweh to the house of David has introduced into the kingship a

religious factor which overrides its purely institutional function. For Dtr, it acted as a consolation for surrender but for Chr it is a premise for a way forward. It therefore becomes even more important for Chr. The second point is the relegation of the events of 2 Samuel 7-12. For Chr it is not relevant whether the kingship was a good thing or not but the Dynasty of David can provide a solution to the problem of how to apply theocracy in a post-exilic community. It is of necessity that the Davidic dynasty be incorporated as a major element of a theocracy that can be relevant for the Chronicler's community. In short, unlike Dtr, Chr is pro-kingship, albeit only the Davidic dynasty. Chr even associates Solomon's kingdom with God's kingdom in David's speech that:

hmoål {v.Bi `rx;b.YIw: hw"+hy> yliÐ  
 !t;n"i ~ynIëB' ~yBiär: yKi... yn:ëB' -  
 lK' 'miW<sup>5</sup>  
 `lae (r"f.yI-l[; hw"ßhy> tWkïl.m;  
 aSe<sup>2</sup>Ki-l[; tb,v, <sup>a</sup>l' ynIëb.

(And of all my sons, for the LORD has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel) (1 Chronicles 28:5).



## b. Temple

Japhet asserts that "Temple worship represents the practical side of Israel's relationship with its God; by establishing and maintaining Temple ritual, the continuity and constancy of the bond between YHWH and the people was expressed" (1997:222). This is reason why the Temple, alongside kingship, is another pillar of Israelite theocracy. In both the DH and the CH, the Temple is recognized as the dwelling place of the Lord, alternatively of the Name of the Lord. However, the presentation of the temple by these historians performs different contextual functions.

### *i. Deuteronomist*

As one of the pillars of the Israelite theocracy, the Temple had to be part of Dtr's narrative history of Israel. The word temple is mentioned for either the temple of the nations or the Temple of YHWH. In Samuel-Kings, the Temple of YHWH is mentioned

mainly in two ways. Either as its construction and physical features or the abominations that took place in the Temple and its cleansing. The latter serves the contextual function that Dtr set for himself<sup>39</sup>, namely, to answer the question what went wrong as they are in exile and how to get out of the situation. In 1 Kings 8 the Temple is explicitly portrayed as the sign of the presence of God. In 1 Kings 8:6-11, the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, which was in the inner sanctuary of the house and the most holy place. Verses 10 and 11 are explicit on the presence of God when it is said:

And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

It is interesting to note that on this instance when the presence of God in the Temple is explicitly expressed, verses 46-51 ask for God's mercy when Israel is in captivity. This was a result of sin and they repented and "pray to you toward... the house that I have built for your name". Here the exilic audience is directly affected and in fact, today's language can label these verses as "pure propaganda".

An example of a scenario where the text deals with the temple of the nations is 2 Kings 10:21-27. When Jehu called the worshipers of Baal in Israel, people "entered the temple of Baal, until the temple of Baal was filled from wall to wall" (2 Kings 10:21b). When Israel asked to replace God with a human king, it would make them other nations. This is one of the instances where they assimilate other nations. In fact, Jeroboam, as a king, became the paradigm of disobedience. Dtr sometimes called apostasy "the sin of Jeroboam" and his successors (*1 Kg* 15:34; 16:19, 25-26, 31; 22:52; *2 Kg* 3:3; 10:29-31; 13:2, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24, 28).

More importantly is when Dtr presents the Temple processes as the answer to why they are in exile. It is important to note that Israel was chosen to be separate and distinct from other nations<sup>40</sup> in the view of Dtr, so that, through Israel, the nations should honour the Lord. In fact, the Temple was a national religious institution. The expression of true worship as in the Torah, entailed patriotism, national pride, individual pride and piety. It

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<sup>39</sup> The singular form of this reflexive pronoun does not necessarily assume that the author was an individual but an insignificant expression. The focus is on the doing function of the sentence. It will be used like this throughout this thesis.

<sup>40</sup> This theme will be treated below as another characteristic of theocracy

elicited a sense of national and individual security. To deviate from the Torah was to forfeit all the above-mentioned. Temple practice was one of the ways to apply the Torah. E.T Mullen (1993), in illuminating the prophetic aspects of the DH, expresses clearly what the above paragraph is trying to communicate. He says:

When it is recognized that the entire history is constructed as reflection on those events that had led to the exile and had brought about the demise of the nation and threatened the ethnic identity of Judah by dispersing its members among those nations from which it was to be separate and distinct, the narrative accounts serve as moralizing object lessons to a people searching for the ways necessary to regain, retain, and remain an ethnic, religious community and to avoid complete assimilation and dissolution among nations

Mullen continues to demonstrate by the story of King Josiah the contextual function of the DH (2 Kings 22:1-23:30). The story of King Josiah reveals the apostasy that took place in the Temple. The focus about the Temple is on the abandonment of the Torah. King Josiah's story of cleansing Israelite worship becomes a paradigm to convey a Deuteronomistic theocracy. According to Mullen, the account of the reign and reform of King Josiah is a thematic high point in the DH. The way this text illustrates the ideological character of the descriptions of Israelite religion and identity confirm the way in which the "history-like" narrative functions to recreate this national ethnic group (1993:84). The context of Dtr needed such an approach.

### *ii. Chronicler*

It has been mentioned already that the Temple was one of the pillars of Israelite theocracy. Therefore, it was imperative for Chr, in preaching theocracy, to evoke the institution of the Temple, for it is YHWH's dwelling place. In dealing with the Temple in Chronicles, Williamson H.G.M. (2004) concludes that "the future of the dynasty is made dependent upon Solomon bringing to completion the work of his father David" (2004:152). This work is the building of the Temple. In Chronicles David played a major role in preparing for the building of the Temple. For Williamson, Chr's theocracy is characterized by a desire to unite Israel as whole. He (Williamson) defends the view that "the temple in Chronicles is not a litmus test of an orthodoxy that would exclude the non-

conformist but rather a focus of unity for the people of Israel as a whole” (2004: 153). To do this, he looks for what united all Israel before any divisions that subsequently followed. With regard to the Temple, the Temple site and the design of the Temple are examples of such a tactic. By these two factors, he physically links the Temple to institutions and settings of earlier days, before the divisions of the monarchical period. The choice of the site is demonstrated in 1 Chronicles 21 (2 Samuel 24). In 1 Chronicles 26, when David was making offerings to the Lord, the Lord answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of the burnt offering. This is not told in 2 Samuel 24. At the same time, it is linked to Leviticus 9:24<sup>41</sup>. Again in 2 Chronicles 7:1, at the dedication of the Temple, “When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple”. There are other examples where the Temple site is linked to early historical events. This continuity with the early history is supposed to override recent divisions. In 1 Chronicles 28:11-19 David gave Solomon a plan that echoes the “pattern” of the tabernacle (Williamson: 2004: 153-159). There is therefore a continuation of the Moses legacy until the post-exilic time. This provides a focus for unity. Williamson’s view is *vis-à-vis* against the so-called anti-Samaritan purpose theory. According to Dyck, J.E (1998), Wellhausen is the first to make a link between the anti-Israel bias and the so-called Samaritan problem which faced the Chronicler’s community. Martin Noth is one of the people who developed Wellhausen’s anti-Israel bias into the anti-Samaritan purpose theory. Quoting Wellhausen, Dyck says, “Israel is the congregation of true worship, and the last is connected with the Temple of Jerusalem, in which of course the Samaritans have no part” (1993:33). This theory would see the Chronicler’s presentation of the Temple as a polemic against the Samaritans.

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<sup>41</sup>. Fire came out from the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

Both viewpoints have something to offer for our purpose. It was stated that Chr's purpose is to propagate his theocratic ideology. His challenge was how to serve God best in his own context. His way of presentation could therefore serve Chr at least on two areas. Firstly, by making an intense, concentrated focus on the Temple, he could give guidance on how to serve the Lord. Secondly, his work is undertaken within a context of tension among his community (from the polemic view about Samaritans), so he presents the Temple in a unifying manner (Williamson's view). In short, the unifying approach identifiable in Chr's presentation could be a constructive contribution to his context of conflicting groups. This unifying tendency in the Chronicler is corroborated by Sarah Japhet (1997:308-324), when she deals with the attitude of Chr towards the Northerners. The omission of the Northern Kingdom from the Chronicles is no indication of hatred for the Northerners. In fact, she states that "without the members of the northern tribes, the people of Israel cannot be complete" (1997:324). This is against people like von Rad who argue of hatred for the Northerners by Chr.

While dealing with the Temple, it is also important to show the interest that Chr displayed in the Temple administration and cultic practices. The challenges of his context did not allow him to ignore these issues. Still with Dyck, two divergent opinions concerning the so-called Leviticism are portrayed. For De Wette, Leviticism is related to a new priestly ideology as in the system of ideas. For von Rad, it is linked to a historical context of a conflict between the priests and the Levites over responsibilities and prerogatives in the Temple. "The Levites were not satisfied with the Aaronide domination of the cult and strove to participate in the main cultic activities just short of sacrificing on the altar", continues Dyck (1998:49)<sup>42</sup>. Given the general trends traceable among newly liberated peoples concerning struggles for recognition by fragmentary groups, this paper is more comfortable with von Rad's explanation than De Wette's. Von Rad's explanation also gives support to the unifying intention that was adopted above.

On cultic practices, the Chronicler seems to be very much involved. If we remember that we said his challenge was how to live an obedient daily life in his community, this should

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<sup>42</sup> He inserts a footnote referring to 2 Chr. 23:6 & 35:3 which refer to Levites as *vdq*

be no surprise. To have a recorded procedures program for future generations is a responsibility of any committed ideologue.

### c. The Land

Like kingship and the Temple, the land is another pillar of Israelite theocracy. However, the understandings of the relationship between people and the land is not free from the contextual influences, just like the above-discussed elements of Israelite theocracy.

#### *i. Deuteronomist*

No words can express the theological significance of the land for Dtr like this paragraph from *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1997), under the heading Deuteronomy:

It is the tangible token of God's faithfulness, the concrete expression of the covenant relationship, and the goal of Israel's wanderings where the people will find rest (12:9). But the land, like the original garden of Eden, constitutes a task for Israel. Its careful administration according to covenant law (rehearsed in chaps. 12–26), in single-hearted love and devotion to God will sustain Israel's claim to its possession and its blessings (e.g., 6:4–15; 8:11–20; 11:26–32; 28). Any deviation from God's statutes, commandments, and ordinances, and in particular the sin of idolatry that characterized the previous owners, will swiftly bring down on Israel the covenant curses, the last and worst of which is a return to Egypt (28:68). Thus the land becomes the touchstone for life or death; it is given out of God's free grace, but retained by means of obedience (1997: Logos Library System 2.1c).

The question of what went wrong that Israel is in exile found a proper meaning in this formulation of the relationship between people and the land. In fact, loss of land is the biggest punishment that cannot be justified easily in the eyes of the sufferers. The question is why some were not punished while others were so harshly punished. According to Japhet, Dtr responds by "cumulative" sin and *collective* retribution. On cumulative sin, she quotes 2 Kings 21:15: "Because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger, since the day their ancestors came out of Egypt, even to this day" (1997:159). At the bottom there is also a footnote referring to 2 Kings

23:26-27 and 2 Kings 24:3. The sons suffer for the sins of the fathers. Collective sin is the punishment of many for the sins of an individual like the king. For these reasons, the book of Kings becomes what Japhet calls “an account of destruction”. The accounts build up to the inevitable destruction of both kingdoms. In Chronicles destruction is not central.

## ii. *Chronicler*

In comparing the DH and the CH on the land issue, Sarah Japhet (1997) brings up important issues to be taken note of. She compares 1 Kings 8:34 and 2 Chr. 6:25.

(1 Kings 8:34)

lae\_r"f.yI ^åM.[; taJ;P̄x;l.  
T'êx.l;s'äw> ~yIm;êV'h; [m;äv.Ti  
`hT'a;w>

~t'(Aba]l; T't;P̄n" rv<ïa]  
hm'êd"a]h'ä-la, `~t'bove(h]w:  
(2 Chr. 6:25)

**2 Chronicles 6:25**

lae\_r"f.yI ^åM.[; taJ;P̄x;l.  
T'êx.l;s'äw> ~yIm;êV'h;-!mi [m;äv.Ti  
`hT'a;w>

~h,(yteboa]l;w> ~h,P̄l' hT't;în"-  
rv,a] hm'êd"a]h'ä-la, `~t'Abyveh]w:

In Kings it refers to the land that the Lord gave to their fathers. In Chronicles it refers to the land the Lord gave to *them* and to their fathers. The addition > ~h, P̄l' signifies that the giving of land is not a once-off event that took place during the conquest but it is an ongoing process to all the generations. Again in 2 Chr. 20:11 it is stated that

rv<ïa] ^βt.V'rUY>mi Wnveêr.g"ål.

`aAbl' Wnyle\_[' ~yliP̄m.GO ~heê-hNEhi'w>  
WnT'(v.r:Ah)

The first person common plural suffix that is used in the inheritance that the Lord gave refers to the generation of the Chronicler. The point here is that; “as far as the Chronicler is concerned, the issue of land is not as ‘problematic’ as it is for the Deuteronomist” (1997:393). Chr ignores the Exodus and the conquest and settlement and just represents a continuum from Jacob’s sons until the present. For Chr there is no threat for loss of land and the land will always be available for every generation. This worldview culminates in the refinement of divine justice. Japhet talks of “the imperative of reward and punishment” and the negation of *collective* retribution. “The imperative of reward and punishment” means that each generation is responsible for its own sins; hence Manasseh cannot be responsible for the exile but Zedekiah who ruled at that time. The collective retribution is the suffering of the rest because of an individual’s sin. Chr negates that, observes Japhet (1997: 162-163).

#### a. Other nations

Given that both Dtr and Chr mixed a lot with foreigners, it is worthwhile to ponder the conditions under which they interacted with the other nations. Dtr interacted with aliens who destroyed their Temple, dethroned their king and took their land. Reading from the book of Daniel, even to practice their religion became punishable. Under those circumstances, love for nations was unlikely.

Chr on the other hand, lived in an environment where their religion was recognized. Even their liberation was not fought for but was granted by a foreign ruler with full rights to practice their Jewish culture. Their interaction with nations is quite a different one.

##### *i. Deuteronomist*

According to Zlotnick H, “In the redactional history of the Hebrew Bible the Deuteronomist antipathy to foreigners, and particularly to foreign queens, has been associated with a deep-seated fear of idolatry through contamination” (2001: Internet). Such sentiments are found echoed in Deuteronomy 18:9 “When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you must not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations”. He tells the story of Jezebel, Ahab’s king. She brought the worship practices of Baal to the house of Ahab. King Manasseh, the most evil king,

according to the Deuteronomist, is described as “He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, following the abominable practices of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel” (2 Kings 21:2). As much as this is found in the Law, being in captivity by the nations could not have elicited love for the nations. The practices that are condemned by Dtr as ways of the nations are an indication that the perpetrators did not hate the nations but it was Dtr who is in captivity under the nations who hated them. It was also indicated above that according to Dtr, Israel was chosen to be separate and distinct from other nations.

### *ii. Chronicler*

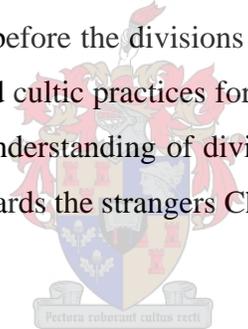
Japhet (1997) views the Chronicler as tolerant of strangers as compared to the Deuteronomist. She explores the use of the word *~yrgh* (*hagērîm*) which is used to denote alien people. However, she comes to a conclusion that in Chronicler’s context, the word refers to foreigners who were converted to Judaism and thus became full Jewish religious men. They also enjoyed full rights and privileges of being Jewish. Also, a positive attitude towards non-Jewish people can be seen in the last two verses of the whole corpus, 2 Chronicles 36: 22-23. In those verses, King Cyrus is portrayed as the man chosen by God of Israel to bring about the building of the Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. 2 Kings also ends with a positive note, the release of the Davidic descendant, Jehoiakim (2 Kings 25:27-30). Even if this is a casting of some hope, it is kept within the Jewish fold.

## **Conclusion**

The purposes of both Dtr and Chr have been discussed by presenting their background. Their purposes are seen as the same, *i.e.*, to propagate theocracy, because they are both theocrats. However, because of their different contexts, their ideologies take different forms. These differences are reflected in the way they present the history of the monarchical era. Dtr faced the question of what went wrong forcing them into exile and how to get out of this situation. His narrative style tries to answer those two aspects. On the other hand, Chr faced a question of how they can live a life that will please God in

their present situation. His narrative also is designed to address this question. Because kingship, the Temple, the land and other nations are central to the faith of the Jewish people, their contextual differences are tested against these landmarks of Jewishness. Dtr's answer to the question he faced is that apostasy is the cause. These elements are presented in a way that always brings up the disobedience of the Jewish people with their kings. Apostasy in the Temple and the cleansing of the Temple are conspicuous. The rejection of the kingship and later acceptance of the Davidic dynasty is the reflection of Dtr's attitude towards the institution of kingship. Saul and the northern kingdoms are spared from Dtr's negative attitude. In dealing with the land, Dtr's understanding of divine justice brings out the cumulative sin and collective retribution. Dtr's attitude towards alien people is hostile.

Chr's attitude towards kingship is a wholly pro-Davidic dynasty. The Unifying approach of Chr intended to bring the focus of the reader to the attachment of the king to the Temple, in order to make a link with history before the divisions of the monarchical era, to unite all the conflicting forces and to record cultic practices for the future generations. The land is not problematic for Chr and his understanding of divine justice negates both cumulative sin and collective retribution. Towards the strangers Chr is more accommodative.



## Chapter III

### **Saul: The First King of Israel**

#### Introduction

Let us picture the story of Saul in a form of a straight line from 1 Samuel 9-31; chapter 9 being point A and chapter 31 point B. Along the straight line we have a curvy line portraying Saul's status as the story progresses. This kind of an image will be used for all the next kings to be discussed so it's important to keep this mind map in mind. It will also be used to demonstrate both the Deuteronomistic and the Chronistic story lines. Along the straight story line, we have a curvy line depicting Saul's status in terms of God's favour from point A to point B.

Janzen (1994) identifies five categories of paradigms in the Old Testament (O.T); the familial paradigm, the priestly and wisdom paradigms and the royal and prophetic paradigms. For our purpose, it is the royal paradigm that is relevant. The reason is that we will be dealing only with the kings. From the royal paradigm he distinguishes two essential elements, namely, an *ideal* and *ambiguity*. An ideal king<sup>43</sup> is the one who embodies characteristics of an acceptable king. He becomes a model for kingship. A king who does not embody these characteristics becomes an antimodel. Ambiguity, on the

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<sup>43</sup> A king who conforms to the ideological suppositions & the one who does not conform is an antimodel.

other hand, characterized Israel kingship in terms of the temptation of the Israeli kings to “be like other nations” and, on the other hand the continuous hope that ultimately a monarchy under the Lord’s rule will come. In the story of Saul we find an antimodel of both the Deuteronomist and the Chronistic theocracies. Saul’s story therefore is a paradigm to foster the ideals of the theocratic ideologies of these authors.

However, our interest lies on how the influences of the contexts of these theocrats are reflected in their portrayal of King Saul.

## Deuteronomist

### DH story line

At point A Saul has God’s favour and is appointed among many people by God as the deliverer of Israel from their<sup>44</sup> enemies. His status rises until chapter twelve. At chapter thirteen it starts a downward turn until point B; his death. It forms a convex shape. Having the favour of God equals keeping the Lord’s commandments and loss of God’s favour equals deviation from God’s commandments.

Echoing Gunn and Fretheim, Brueggemann says, “It is plausible that Saul functions primarily as a foil to David and never establishes his own right in the narrative as the narrative rushes to David” (2003:135). Karl Barth in Dietrich, W and Naumann, T (2000) sees in both Saul and David surrogates for the true king who will come after them (Jesus). Some cannot even talk about Saul without mentioning David. Saul’s story is also oriented toward the tragic dimension by some; continue Dietrich and Naumann (2000:280-283). The above is just an indication of how the story of Saul is understood differently by scholars. This paper again, asserts that Saul’s story is a paradigm that reinforces the suppositions of the Deuteronomist in the DH. Now we look at the suppositions of Dtr as they are reflected in Saul.

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<sup>44</sup> The use of the plural common noun is to avoid the third person singular which specifies gender for the sake of political correctness. However, it seems these authors saw Israel more as one unit than a collection of individuals hence deviant behaviour was a big issue.

### *i. Divine justice*

Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which he commanded you. The Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever, but now your kingdom will not continue; (1 Samuel 13:13-14). This theme is repeated at strategic intervals in the form of speeches by Samuel to the nation. 1 Samuel 12 is dedicated to this message. Keeping of the Lord's commandment guaranteed the discharge of God's side of the covenant obligation. The exilic context needed an explanation why they are in exile and the sinfulness displayed in Saul demonstrates the role Israelite kings played in Israel's own demise. This formula is the manifestation of Pleins' designation of the DH: a history of sin and rebellion and retribution

### *ii. Cumulative sin*

"And the LORD said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. <sup>8</sup> Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you'" (1 Samuel 8:7-8). Again this is a theme that runs through the story of Saul. At well planned intervals, through Samuel, the Lord retells the betrayal done to Him by the Israelites (1 Samuel 10:18-19; 12:8-9 etc.).

The loss of land by the Israelites to the Babylonians was the biggest punishment Judah had ever experienced since the time they were in Egypt. People have sinned since the time of the desert wandering but never has the Lord ever been as harsh to them as the time when the Lord handed them over to the Babylonians. This needed quite a strong argument to justify it. It was not the first time that the Lord has done this to humanity but it could always be explained by saying the other nations were not chosen by God so it was no big deal. It also happened to the Northern kingdom but still it could be explained in terms of breaking away from Judah. However, when it happened to Judah, given the Zionist theology that assured them, somebody had to explain. It is against this background that Dtr comes up with an idea of cumulative sin. The sins of the Israelites

have accumulated over a period of centuries. The story of Saul reinforces this idea to settle in the people's minds that this punishment is equivalent to the period that they have betrayed the Lord.

### *iii. Collective retribution*

“So Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together on the same day.” (1 Samuel 31:6). For the sin of the individual, many died. Here the sons of Saul die because Saul sinned. His armor-bearer and all his men also die. Here we see collective retribution at play, although at a minor scale, for the Lord had somebody who will lead the Israelites according to his commandments. Not all Israel is affected in the sense of the exile but many people have been affected. The collective retribution is the justification of the punishment of all Israel because the kings have sinned.

Collective retribution is an attempt at theodicy, for the Israelites felt they have been dealt unfairly. Dtr defends God's action in giving away the land he gave to Israel.

### *iv. Kingship*

“All the people said to Samuel, ‘Pray to the LORD your God for your servants, so that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of demanding a king for ourselves’” (1 Samuel 12:19). In the discussion of kingship in chapter 2 Dtr was perceived as anti-kingship. This is debatable for Dtr supported the kingship of David. Nevertheless, we need to take into account that by the time that Dtr is doing his theodicy, it is approximately 450 years since David came to power<sup>45</sup>. He is dealing with something that is a “historical fact”<sup>46</sup>. He cannot change it but can just warn that the kingdom that they can live with, is that of David. David was better because after he has sinned, he repented again. The paper supports a statement made by Brueggemann when he says; “It is often thought that the ‘promonarchical source’ that saw the rise of kingship as an act of self-defence congruent with YHWH's intention was perhaps close to the events narrated” (2003:133). To a certain extent, an author has to be loyal to his sources and the thesis

<sup>45</sup> An approximation of 1010 B.C.E – 561 B.C.E = 449 years. It is just an approximation, no exact dates.

<sup>46</sup> In his historical sources there was a Davidic kingdom.

will then associate Dtr with the anti-kingship material<sup>47</sup>. Dtr was looking back at what could have gone wrong and noticed that it started by toppling God as a king. This might also be supplemented by the frequent reference to the exodus, the time when God was ruling Himself, as if he (Dtr) laments that time.

## Chronicler

### CH story line

Riley, W quotes Ackroyd P.R. with an interesting quotation saying:

We might have expected the Chronicler, to whom clearly the kingship of David was the only valid kingship, to omit any mention of Saul. He could leave unmentioned most of the kings of the north – they appear only as opponents of Judah or as involving Judah in sin. He could equally have ignored Saul and passed straight into the anointing of David” (1993:40).

However, Chr could not do that because Saul has a role to play in Chr’s mission of teaching to his audience.

In the CH there is no story line as it is in 1 Kings. The narrative of Saul starts at point B and ends right there. However, Saul was not just an ordinary man but a king. This makes him useful in a different way for Chr. First, Saul’s kingship joins the end of God’s personal rule and the beginning of David’s permanent kingship. Secondly, Saul appears in the genealogies to give a feeling of “all Israel”, as Japhet sees it. This also serves the previously mentioned interest: the unifying tendency.

#### i. Collective retribution

“So Saul died for his unfaithfulness; he was unfaithful to the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD; moreover, he had consulted a medium, seeking guidance, and did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse” (1 Chronicles 10:13-14).

In a footnote Japhet (1997) indicates a difference between 1 Sam.31:6 and 1 Chr. 10:6 (1997: 133).

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<sup>47</sup> Pro-kingship(9:1-10:16) and anti-kingship(7:2-8:22; 10:17-27; 12)

“So Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together on the same day” (1 Samuel 31:6).

“Thus Saul died; he and his three sons and his entire house died together” (1 Chronicles 10:6).

Chr limits the death toll only to Saul’s family while Dtr includes all men who were with him. This is the rejection of the collective retribution. According to Chr, not also all men of Saul died. Saul’s punishment is kept to his family. One is also tempted to perceive the inclusion of the sons as some loyalty to the source.

### *ii. Cumulative sin*

In the background it was stated that Chr rejects the idea of a cumulative sin. For Dtr, the idea of cumulative sin was to present a theodicy in the face a loss as great as one’s land. For Chr land was no problem as it was for Dtr. He therefore does not bother to get into the Exodus because every generation has its own sin just as the covenant promises land to every generation so the events of the ancient history have no much relevance to the post-exilic community.

### *iii. Unifying tendency*

The inclusion of the story of Saul does a big favour to the cause of Chr to display a continuity of kingship that included all Israelites. It was mentioned in chapter two that the circumstances under which Chr preached theocracy had sporadic conflicts among the community. These are issues that could not be ignored so Chr had to be tactful in his history telling to minimize such disturbances. The tactic of a continuum from the days of unity was a tool to fix this problem. David’s kingdom did not start from the vacuum of history but was linked to an ongoing chain. In turn, Saul did not just crop up bought took over from God with God’s approval. This chain link had a powerful rhetorical force for Chr’s unifying tendencies.

### *iv. Pro-kingship*

Chr was also portrayed as pro-kingship, as opposed to Dtr. The issue of continuity is linked to the one of pro-kingship although the paper divides them. Japhet (1997) combine

them so that the continuity also provides a credit for Saul's kingdom although he himself committed a big mistake. She differentiates between Saul and the kingship. She concludes that “‘the kingdom of the Lord over Israel’ signifies not only the Davidic monarchy, but the institution of monarchy as such, as of the very moment when YHWH decided to provide an earthly king for Israel” (p 409). In fact, Japhet feels that Chr perceives Saul's monarchy as predecessor of David's monarchy while Jeroboam's kingdom is a sin.

## **Conclusion**

Dtr and Chr have the same ideology, theocracy, although contextual circumstances make them to formulate the narratives differently to suit their own circumstances. Their presentation of King Saul does reflect such nuances. They both believe in divine justice, but they see its application in different ways. Dtr sees it operating in the form of cumulative sin and collective retribution, while Chr sees it in the form of “imperative reward and punishment”. They both see kingship as an integral part of the Judean life but they have different understandings on its image in the development of history. What is clear, however, is that Saul is an anti-model for both Dtr and Chr. The lesson from his story is that disobedience to the Lord leads to destruction for both Dtr and Chr.

## Chapter IV

### David: The Second King of Israel

#### Introduction

In the previous chapter we had Saul, who was portrayed as an anti-model of theocracy as understood by both Dtr and Chr. Now we move on to the second king of Israel David. David is a model of a king against whom all the subsequent kings can be judged for both these authors. The mere mention of the word exile evokes imaginations of a community stuck by serious problems. This is not supposed to mean a community released from exile is free from serious problems. The problems from the exilic period might cease but new problems for the exilic period will crop up. These different problems ferment different responses to same questions. We will be looking at how this phenomenon is reflected in the portrayal of David by the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler.

#### Deuteronomist

#### Story line

As Saul's story, David's story starts from point A to point B; 1 Samuel 16:1-1Kings 2:10 respectively. David was seen by the Lord when he was just a mere shepherd. From 1 Samuel 16:1 to 2 Samuel 2:4, David's status rises up to be the king of Judah. Still his

status moves higher that in 2 Samuel 5:3 he becomes king over all tribes of Israel. However, it was not smooth, not without challenges until the Lord gave him rest in chapter seven. God's favor was with him and it became stronger so that in 2 Samuel 7:12-16, the Lord made a covenant with David. In the previous chapter, chapter six, David is portrayed as a truly religious king by bringing the Ark of the Covenant from Baale-judah to Jerusalem where he stayed and where he prepared a place for it. The name of the ark is "the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim" (2 Samuel 6:2). *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* describes the event as follows:

David brought the ark from Baale-judah (Kiriath-jearim) to Jerusalem. The ark was marched into the city with cultic dancing, dramatizing the victorious return of the Warrior (Seow 1989). Finally the ark was placed in the newly won place. With this dramatic procession, many of Judah's theological traditions may be associated. Some of the traditions may even have grown from that significant event—traditions concerning YHWH's eternal choice of both David and Zion and traditions about Zion's inviolability in the face of enemy encroachments (1997: Logos Library System 2.1c).

David's good relationship stayed at a high level as demonstrated by his successes until he sinned in chapter eleven. He committed adultery and plotted the death of the husband of the woman with whom he committed adultery. The Lord was not impressed and consequently punished him. From chapter eleven until chapter twenty-one, David is surrounded by problems. But David was a repentant king; He was not the kind who sticks to sin even if the Lord warns him. In chapter 24, the last chapter of 2 Samuel, David angered the Lord again by taking census. The Lord punished him and later forgave him. In 2 Kings 10 he died. David's curve with the favour of the Lord goes up and down but it does not end at the bottom like Saul's. When he dies it is still high because the Lord made a covenant with him.

## Kingship

In the background of the Deuteronomist in chapter two, it was said that Dtr was anti-kingship. 1 Samuel 12 is a testimony to this idea. This is one of the critical points where the flow of the narrative comes to a standstill and a strong theological message is passed

through a speech by a character, who is Samuel in this case. However, Dtr could not reverse the kingship, for it is an institution that started no less than four centuries ago. That is also highlighted in Samuel's acceptance of the kingship in the realization that there is nothing he can do to reverse it. In 1 Samuel 12:20 he says; "Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart". In a rephrase, this could mean, the damage has already been done, there is no turning back but there is still an opportunity to win the Lord's favour, and that is to stick to His commandment and not deviate.

In his painstaking attempt to justify the Lord's action of sending the Israelites to exile, Dtr digs the foundation of kingship, the institution that is largely responsible for their demise. This feeds his theory of cumulative sin, which justifies so big a punishment. However, Dtr accepts David as a model king, for he at least repented after he had sinned and did his best most of the time to be obedient to the Lord. However, Dtr does not romanticize even David; he tells the different aspects of his kingship to show the difference between a human king and God whom they rejected as king.

From 1 Samuel 16- 1 Kings are forty chapters about David as the centre of attention, observes Gerbrandt (1986:158-160). Literally, Gerbrandt continues, the David stories are right at the centre of the history. He then charges that this heavy emphasis on David in the history requires some examination and explanation. He identifies two possible reasons why David is treated the way he is treated in the history. It is the nature of the Deuteronomist's sources and the prevailing thought in Judah. On the one hand, the sources on David were simply much more extensive than those on the other kings. On the other hand, the esteem in which David was held in Judah made it virtually necessary that the Deuteronomist include this literature in the history. He emphasizes by saying there is also truth in this when one considers David's achievements and the 400 year duration of his dynasty. People awaited another king like David to restore the Israelite kingdom. Exilic and later messianic thought built on the ideal picture of David which had developed in Judah. He then postulates that it is possible the extensive nature of the sources on David and the image of David prevalent at the time of the Deuteronomist's time of writing gave the Deuteronomist little choice but to make David the centre of his history. Gerbrandt then makes quite an exciting remark when he says:

If the above explanation were sufficient reason to explain the attention given David in the history, then it would be possible to say that the Deuteronomist might have had a somewhat different view of David than is expressed in the history, but the circumstances dictated the treatment of David in the history. This is the option that must be chosen by those who argue that the Deuteronomist himself was opposed to the institution of kingship (1986:159).

There is merit to what Gerbrandt says. If one considers what the Chronicler left out from the narrative of David, one is tempted to conclude that Dtr did intend to dent David's image as a human king versus God as the king that was toppled by the Israelites. According to Thompson J.A. (1994),

In Chronicler's thinking there was a continuity of kingship in Israel since it was grounded in God himself. If there were a change in the earthly kingship, God had the matter in hand. He could "turn the kingdom over to David" in order to rescue Israel after Saul's death (1 Chr 10:14).

Moreover, if one stops for a while to consider a time of adversity and deep crisis, one realizes that hope becomes the only thing that keeps people going. If David's dynasty could instil some hope among the exiles, then Dtr had to seize the opportunity. Two aspects will be examined concerning Dtr's telling of David's story: David's rise to absolute power and the sustenance thereof on the one hand, and the sins committed by David in the eyes of the Lord on the other.

Dtr tells the rise of David as a rise that was not unchallenged. A lot of blood was spilt for David to establish himself as the absolute king.

But his title to the throne was not undisputed. Abner took Ish-bosheth, Saul's only remaining son, over the Jordan to Mahanaim, and there crowned him as king. Then began a civil war in Israel. ... Other encounters, however, between Israel and Judah followed (2 Sam. 3:1, 6), but still success was on the side of David... and there being now no rival, David was anointed king over all Israel (4:1-12) (Easton's Bible Dictionary: 1996).

During his reign he did not have a perfectly peaceful reign until the end. The troubles cropped up in his kingdom and in his household. In his household his first son, Amnon, raped his daughter, a sister of his third son, Absalom. Later Absalom, his third son,

rebelled against David and David had to flee (Chapters 14-18). Again blood was spilt in the endeavour to restore David's power. That is not all, towards the end of his life, his fourth son, Adonijah, exalted himself and made himself king. For Dtr, David's reign was not a smooth running without hiccups, here and there.

It does not end there, David is also portrayed as one who could commit grievous sins, as demonstrated in the adultery that he committed with Uriah's wife Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11). He did not only commit adultery but also murder by plotting the death of Uriah. This is quite a serious offence but at least David regretted his sins and felt remorse. Despite all these accounts of the bad side of David, the Deuteronomist perceived David as a model for a king in Israel. He combined the royal office and the cultic office, which created a commitment of kings to the obedience to the Lord. "It is true that there are elements in the experience of David which seem foreign and even repugnant to the child of the new covenant. Yet 'he . . . served the counsel of God in his own generation' (Acts 13:36), and in that generation he stood out as a bright and shining light for the God of Israel" (*The New Bible Dictionary*: 1962). Taking into account the whole argument presented above, the context plays two different roles in the presentation of David's narrative by Dtr. First, because of the exilic situation that they find themselves in, he is anti-kingship. Secondly, because of the high esteem that David enjoyed amongst the Jewish people during the exilic time, he upholds the David as a model king for the kingship in Israel.

## Chronicler

### Story line

Unlike Saul's story, David's story has a long line starting from point A which is 1 Chronicles 10:14 to point B which is 1 Chronicles 29:28. From the onset David is a well-established king without power struggle challenges like in 2 Samuel. Conspicuous is the transporting of the ark that starts from chapter 13 and jump to chapter 15 and 16. He then plans to build the temple. The story continues to tell about David's successes. In chapter 21, opposite to 2 Samuel 24, David is incited by Satan and not by God to take a census that angered God. For the first time David is portrayed as infuriating God. *The Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* however says the intention could be more to portray David as a repentant king than to show his sinfulness. At this point the curve could have dropped

down because God is angry with David but instead Chr keeps it very high because here when David "... called upon the LORD ... he answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering" (1 Chronicles 21:26). From twenty-three to twenty-seven David enjoyed peace and established the structures that would administer at the Temple and the military and the political structure. The rest of the chapters David gave instructions concerning the Temple plans for the Temple, the offerings and sacrifices of dedication. Solomon succeeded him. Effectively, David's sinfulness is not brought to the reader's attention.

### *Unity*

The Chronicler, in narrating the story of David, has left out a lot of information. To count a few, he left out the rise of David from a shepherd to a king and starts when David is a well-established king. He left out the domestic problems of David (2 Samuel 13) and the rebellions against him (2 Samuel 14-18). He also left out most of the sins committed by David in the eyes of the Lord (e.g. 2 Samuel 11). For what Chr intended to achieve with the story of David, these details seemed irrelevant. However, he did not just omit details; he also added some stuff that is not found in Samuel-Kings. "1 Chronicles does provide us with some significant, new information concerning David not found elsewhere. Significant additions include an expanded listing of David's supporters (chap. 12); an extended psalm (16:4-42); and details of David's preparations for building the temple, of Levitical and priestly responsibilities, of instructions for musicians, gatekeepers, keepers of the treasuries, officers, judges, and other officials, and of David's last words to Solomon and the people, in which he encouraged them particularly in building the temple and in following their God (22:2-29:22a)" (The Anchor Bible Dictionary).

This paper will briefly examine the role of context in Chr's omissions and additions. In chapter two it was mentioned that the purpose of Chr is to propagate his theocracy. However, different arguments for Chr's purpose were brought forward, ranging from polemics to the northern kingdom, polemics to the Samaritans to the conflict between the

priests and the Levites. All these proposals were not rejected in this paper but were treated as contextual factors that helped to shape the presentation of the Chronistic history so that it covers these problems<sup>48</sup>. In a newly liberated nation unity is highly likely to be threatened by new claims that people make and any public figure who wants to make a positive contribution must take into account any divisive actions and deal with them in a constructive way. The omission of the northern kingdom can be seen as one of Chr's tactics to bring the people's focus to the united Israel than the divided nation. The same can be said of the omission of the divisive strifes that were experienced in the household of David. It would not serve the interests of Chr to tell about a divided house of David when his concern is to portray David as a unifying figure of Israel. Williamson and Japhet are some of the scholars that see the unifying tendency in Chr.

On the additions, the Levites are of a big interest for this paper. In chapter two Dyck was quoted quoting von Rad: "The Levites were not satisfied with the Aaronide domination of the cult and strove to participate in the main cultic activities just short of sacrificing on the altar" (1998:49)<sup>49</sup>. In the story of David the Levites play quite a prominent role. If one compares 2 Samuel 6 with the parallel story in Chronicles, one will realize that the story takes chapters 13, 15 and 16 and the Levites are very much prominent. In fact, in chapter sixteen, David appoints the religious personnel and the Levites are granted quite a prominent role. Chapter sixteen is where David himself allocates roles for the religious officers. Taking von Rad's argument in Dyck that the issue of Levites was a contextual issue, we therefore see here the context shaping Chr's approach in telling the story of David. David is portrayed in a manner that is more than just a king but a role model close to Moses. This is demonstrated in the link that is obvious in David's burnt offering in 1 Chronicles 21:26 on the one hand and Moses and Aaron's burnt offering in Leviticus 9:24 on the other.

In his unifying tendency, Chr gives David quite a substantial role in the planning of the Temple. The role that David plays in the planning of the Temple is very much substantial as compared to the role he plays in 2 Samuel in this regard. This is another instance where contextual differences are revealed. In the time of Dtr there was no Temple and

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<sup>48</sup> For more details see chapter 2.

<sup>49</sup> He inserts a footnote referring to 2 Chr. 23:6 & 35:3 which refer to Levites as  $\nu\delta\alpha$

therefore the Temple is part of a broader historical narrative. For Chr it is more than that, it is part of the ongoing history in his present situation, hence so much effort to prove that the Temple in Jerusalem is the legitimate Temple for all Israel. A quotation from Japhet summarizes the characterization of David by Chr:

Three features in particular characterize the portrayal in Chronicles: (1) the glorification of the figure of David and his kingship; (2) a lack of interest in David the man and a concentration on David as monarch (3) the association of David with the foundation of the Temple and establishment of the cult (1997: 467-468).

To conclude this section, Chr did not only omit or add to the DH, he also altered the same material some times. The two examples of this nature are 2 Samuel 5:21 and 1 Chronicles 14:12 on the one hand and 2 Samuel 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 21: 1 on the other. In the former, when David attacked the Philistines, they left their idols behind when they fled and David and his men carried them away. In Chronicles it is as “They abandoned their gods there, and at David's command they were burned”. This is the same story but just edited to give another picture. A similar thing happens with the second example. In 2 Samuel 24:1 “the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, ‘Go, count the people of Israel and Judah.’”. 1 Chronicles 21: 1 it is not the Lord who did that but Satan. It is not easy to explain this one but the chapter ends by taking the reader’s attention away from that verse to verse 26 where fire from heaven fell upon the altar of holocausts. These are attempts to keep the image of David clear of damaging information. A unifying figure should be as faultless as possible, lest the dissenters exploit his mistakes to justify dissent.

## **Conclusion**

The context of Dtr is the exile and his main concern is to explain why the Israelites are in exile and how can they avoid such a situation in the future. This concern is determined by his historical context. On the other hand Chr’s context is the post-exilic era and his main concern is how to serve the Lord in their daily life. From both of them, a theocratic

dispensation is the basis for a life that can be compatible with the demands of the Torah. In their narration of the David story, they reflect their contextual influences. Dtr is concerned with David as a man as much as he is concerned with him as a monarch. This serves his interest of revealing that human kingship cannot be perfect as the kingship that the Israelites rejected in God. This also constituted a sin which add on the sins that they accumulated over the period. Nevertheless, David is portrayed as the model king for the Israelites.

On the other hand, Chr's approach serves the interests of his unifying intention. By ignoring David as a man and focus on David as a monarch he avoids unnecessary distractions from David as the figure that bridges the rule of God with the rule of the human kings blessed by God. He also manages to make David pioneer of the Temple and its administration. The cultic rituals are reaffirmed in David's narratives.

Both corpuses have a purpose of propagating theocracy although they use different approaches by emphasizing different aspects that are relevant to their immediate situations.



## **Chapter V**

### **Solomon: The Third King of Israel**

#### **Introduction**

During the reign of Solomon the kingdom of Judah reached a peak of success that was never repeated. He was the one who was chosen among David's sons by the Lord to succeed David and build the Temple for the Lord. For the first time the two theocrats differ considerably. In Kings Samuel starts as a model but ends up being an anti-model. In Chronicles Solomon remains a model for a king in Israel. In the story of Saul they both agreed that Saul was an anti-model. In David they (Drt & Chr) both agreed that David was a model king though Dtr did not portray him as a faultless king. Now they come to different conclusions as to whether Solomon was a model or an anti-model king. As in the two previous stories of Saul and David, the essay will examine how the contextual influences affected the theocracies of the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler and how is that reflected in the way these theocrats narrate the story of Solomon.

#### **Deuteronomist**

##### **Story line**

The story of Solomon starts at 1 Kings 2:13 and end at 1 Kings 11. Like his father David, Solomon's reign starts by purging possible threats. Camp, C.V describes this situation as follows:

Although King Solomon initially shows mercy to his opponents, his approach changes after David's death. Indeed, his father's final words (2:1-9) counsel a deadly 'wisdom' (vv6, 9), the executions of general Joab and one Shimei of Benjamin. Though Solomon finds ways to rationalize these killings (2:28-46), they bear the mark of political assassination, as does the murder of Adonijah after another curious involving Abishag and Bathsheba (2:13-25) (1998:105).

But he became a wise king and he stabilized his government. He prepared to build the Temple. He then built it, built his house, furnished them and dedicated the Temple. The Lord made a covenant with him as He had made with his father. Solomon made great achievements and attained glory for himself. In the last chapter, chapter eleven, Solomon sinned in the eyes of the Lord. He worshipped the gods of his many wives. Thus, unlike his father, he failed to keep the status line before the Lord high. It took a downward turn although it did not reach the bottom like Saul's.

### *Temple*

The most important elements of Israelite theology are kingship, the Temple and the land in both the Deuteronomist theology and Chronicist theology. However, when these authors make a presentation about these elements, one can still discern what uniquely represents them. What uniquely represents them is mostly a product of their contexts. This section will be looking at the presentation of Solomon by Dtr in connection with the institution of the Temple. Sometimes these elements intersect so that one cannot talk about the other without mentioning the other. Gerbrandt describes the attitude of Dtr towards Solomon like this:

When the reason for the Deuteronomist's positive picture of Solomon is sought, it is not too hard to find. When Solomon came to the throne, Israel still offered sacrifice wherever it chose. ...For the Deuteronomist the temple was of central importance. Jerusalem was the city which Yahweh had chosen, and the temple was the place which Yahweh would put his name. By building the temple Solomon had made possible obedience to the law of Deuteronomy 12. In this Solomon had made a very significant contribution toward covenant obedience in

Israel, and had thus acted as the king should act, in keeping with the charge given to him at his installation... (1986:176-177).

Considering the fact that Dtr is a theocrat, it is no surprise that he is enthralled by a king that promotes the worship of God. This presentation so far, does not make him different from the Chronicler. For the chronicler as well, a king that promotes the worship of God was important. However, when one considers that Dtr is anti-kingship and Chr is pro-kingship, one cannot help but to expect a divergence at some point. In the previous chapters, the anti-kingship attitude of Dtr was linked to the fact that Dtr was in exile because of the disobedience of the kings. If God was not rejected, things would have been different. Chr's community had their land to themselves so his need was a factor that could keep people united and kingship was one such factor. This anti-kingship attitude of Dtr, in very subtle ways, does show up in Solomon's story and the Temple. What turns out here is what we discovered when we were dealing with the portrayal of David. It was revealed that Dtr portrayed David positively but at certain points he dented his image. In the case of Solomon we find on the one hand, the positive portrayal of Solomon did serve Dtr's interest in reinforcing hope for his audience. On the other hand the denting of the image also served his interest of revealing that a human king is not perfect and it was a mistake to replace the Lord with a human king.



1 Kings 8 is central to Dtr's message in his historical narrative in Kings. Just like he did with 1 Samuel 12 and other discourses, the flow of the story comes to a standstill and a message be given out. Knoppers (2000) delineates chapter eight very clearly into seven literary frames: 8:1-3 and 8:66, assembly and dismissal respectively; 8: 5 and 8:62-64, sacrifice; 8:14-21 and 8:55-61, blessing; 8:22 and 8:54, Solomon's stance; 8:27-30 and 8:52-53, invocation; 8:31-36 and 8:41-51, three petitions and 8:37-40, generalizing petitions. In the first invocation, 8:27-30 and the second three petitions, 8:41-51, Solomon is used to make the right impact on the immediate audience. These two sections are singled out because of their immediate relevance to the context of the author(s). This invocation (8:27-30) presents the Lord as dwelling in heaven. This accommodates the exiles who have no Temple. They can access the Lord even if there is no Temple to go to

for prayer. Solomon here serves the interest of Dtr to keep hope among his fellow exiles. Cogan, M phrases it like this:

Just as YHWH need not inhabit the House in order for Him to hear these appeals, all people, *in imitation dei*, will be able to turn to Him under all circumstances and from all locations and feel assured that they will be answered (2001:292).

Again, in the third petition (8: 46-50) of the second three petitions (8:46-50), Solomon pleads that in case the Israelites are taken into exile and then repent, the Lord must hear them from heaven. This is an assurance to the exiles that there is a solution to their problem. Also, Dtr indicates that such disaster will be an outcome of sin. In these instances Solomon is portrayed positively as interceding for his people and therefore an instrument of hope. This portrayal arouses optimism.

However, Brueggemann (2003), is suspicious of the fact “that immediately after the high theology of temple presence and assurance in chapter 8, the ‘historian’ has placed 1 Kings 9:1-9, a characteristic Deuteronomistic syllogism” (2003:150). Particularly verse 4-9, where obedience is linked to prosperity (4-5) and disobedience linked to trouble (6-9). The latter (disobedience and trouble) is longer discourse and is emphasized by Dtr. In the same chapter, Camp, C.V (1998) find an irony in 9:24 when Solomon’s wife move out from the city of David to her own house that Solomon built for her. They see this as “a movement that, in contrast to Solomon’s prayer, foreshadows the turning of his heart away from Yahweh’s house by the ‘strange women’ in chap.11” (1998:108). They call her “a quintessential foreigner, Pharaoh’s daughter” in relation to Solomon’s petition (41-43) for foreigners to be welcome in the Temple. In 2 Chronicles 8:11 it is stated as Solomon saying, “No wife of mine shall dwell in the house of David, king of Israel, for the places where the ark of the LORD has come are holy”.

This gradual rise of Dtr’s attack on Solomon culminates in chap.11 as Solomon totally follows the foreigners through his women and away from the Temple. After building the Lord’s Temple, he became the builder of high places for the gods of his many foreign wives and even worshiped there.

Even in the building stage, Camp (1998) suspects a subtle sabotage on Solomon. In 1 Kings 7:13-14, a certain Hiram is mentioned as having helped Solomon to build the

Temple. He is characterized as “a son of an Israelite widow and a man of Tyre”. Camp suspects that;

This characterization of mixed ancestry may suggest the writer’s perspective on the Temple itself: it is the product of Solomon’s treaty with the foreign king and will bear the burden of foreign worship within it (1998: 107).

Some people may argue that even Chr mentions Hiram as having helped building the Temple instead of omitting him if he blemishes Solomon’s character. However, the explanation by Keith W. Whitelam (1997) of the use of Hiram by Chr can persuade one to conclude that Chr distorted the same material for his own interest. Whitelam *explains* Chr’s use of Hiram as drawing a parallel with the construction of the tabernacle. In 1 Kings 7 Hiram’s mother is of Naphtali, while in Chronicles is of the lineage of Dan, although Dan is part of Naphtali. Whitelam then mentions Dillard (2 *Chronicles* WBC, 4–5) who believes that the Chronicler changed Hiramabi’s<sup>50</sup> descent to that of a Danite in order to draw a parallel with Oholiab and the construction of the tabernacle. He compares Solomon with Bezalel and Hiramabi with Oholiab. Also, the addition of the element *ab* to the end of his name has also been explained as making the parallel with Oholiab more explicit. Whitelam explains further when it says:

The timing of the introduction of Hiram in the Chronicler’s account draws out the parallel further since in 1 Kgs 7:13–47 he is introduced only after the completion of the temple and palace (1 Kgs 6:38–7:1) and is responsible only for the bronze work (1 Kgs 7:13–47). In the Chronicler’s account Hiram arrives at the very beginning of the building of the temple and is responsible for extensive craftwork corresponding to the timing and range of work carried out by Oholiab on the tabernacle (Logos Library System 2.1c).

In now an open attack on Solomon, Dtr tells of the Lord warning Solomon of his involvement with foreign gods. However he defied the Lord and that marked the beginning of the end of the Israelite kingdom. What is clear is that Dtr exploits the benefits that he can gain by promoting the house of David while he makes sure his conviction is not suppressed, whether explicitly or implicitly.

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<sup>50</sup> Hiram’s name in Chronicles (2 Chr 2:13; 4:16)

## Chronicler

### Story line

Solomon's government is stable from the beginning, no purge of possible threats is told. He prepared for the building of the Temple. It was then built and furnished. He then dedicated the Temple; housed the ark, blessed and prayed and made sacrifices. The Lord appeared to him again after the dedication and promised prosperity for obedience and disaster for disobedience. Then Solomon made successes for himself; political, religious and economic. There is no mention of Solomon sinning before the Lord. He kept his status line before the Lord high throughout his life.

### *The unifying tendency*

The problem with the ideologies of both the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler is that the main tenets of Israelite theology are present in both theologies. The significance of the Davidic family, divine justice, the Temple's centrality, centralization of the Temple and worship under the Davidic king etc., are concerns of both theologies.

The story of the Bible tells about the destruction of the Temple. It then picks up the story when the Israelites return from exile<sup>51</sup>. It does not tell us what was happening in Judah during the time of the exile. This might be one of the historiographical shortfalls of this narrative history. The exile was the dissolution of the theocracy that David initiated in a new form from the one of pre-monarchical times. This is the theocracy that Solomon finalized to form. Both theologians call for the revival of this theocracy but for Dtr, it is at a level where people are being convinced and reassured that it can still work. All they have to do is to realize their mistake and rectify it in order for things to be restored. For Chr, it is a matter of beginning to practice it in the most possible way.

The time of the exile seems to have brought a standstill in some of the religious activities, as the Temple was only rebuilt after the return. This is what one can deduce from the way the historical account is told in the Bible. A result could have led to divergent understandings as to how things were done before exile and conflicting propositions

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<sup>51</sup> See the books of Ezra-Nehemiah.

could have been brought to the fore in the post-exilic community. One of the urgent activities that could have been affected by this situation is worship procedures and Temple administration. This is a challenge that Dtr did not have to face but for Chr it was a practical urgent issue. The following section of this essay will look at how Chr uses Solomon to establish a stable worship and Temple administration for his generation and the post generations. To go about this mission, the Chronicler first legitimizes Solomon for the position that he is going to give him as the proper source of God's instruction. We will look at three ways how he legitimizes him. The first one is how he inherits the kingdom, the second one is how he inherits the task of building the Temple, and the third one is how he adapts the Deuteronomistic source to build the image of Solomon. Finally, we will look at how the Temple is used to ensure loyalty from the people.

According to Williamson (2004) "the Chronicler modelled the transition of rule from David to Solomon on that from Moses to Joshua at the end of Deuteronomy and beginning of Joshua..." (2004: 141). To justify his statement, Williamson makes some comparisons between David/Solomon and Moses/Joshua (pp 141-145), namely:

1. Moses was not allowed to cross the Jordan and lead the people into the Promised Land and Joshua was appointed for the task. David also was not allowed to build the Temple and the task was given to Solomon.
2. The succession of Joshua to Moses is imitated in 1 Chronicles 28:20 in the form of an address to the successor. In Joshua 1:9 it is stated that the Lord spoke to Joshua and said: "*Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go*". In 1 Chronicles 28:20 David says the same to Solomon: "*Be strong and of good courage, and act. Do not be afraid or dismayed; for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished*". There are other places where this charge is repeated for both Joshua and Solomon.
3. For both Joshua and Solomon, this charge is announced privately (Deut.31:23; 1 Chr.22:6) and "in the sight of all Israel" (Deut. 31:7; 1 Chr. 28:8).
4. In both instances the people fully accept the situation (Deut.34:9; 1 Chr 29:24).

5. The successors after their appointments are magnified by the Lord “in the sight of all Israel (Josh. 3:7; 1 Chr 29:25).

These parallels have a very strong effect in legitimizing Solomon.

In 1 Chronicles 22:9-10 God tells David that a son will be born and he is the one who will build the Temple for Him. Solomon is appointed by God even before his birth, as he is the one who will build the Temple and the peace for his reign. Also the Chronicler makes sure that the reign of David and Solomon are kept in an unbroken continuity. David starts the planning of the Temple and Solomon finishes it. Using Williamson again:

It is thus made quite clear that the extensive preparations which are such a well-known feature of the later chapters of 1 Chronicles derive from Solomon’s inability to complete the task unaided, an inability only heightened by the comprehensive nature of those preparations: they include the site of the temple (1 Chron.22:1 with 2 Chron. 3:1), initial organization of the workforce (1 Chron. 22:2, 15 with 2 Chron. 2:6, 14, 16), materials both for the buildings and furnishing (1 Chron. 18:8, 22:3,14,16; 29:2-9 with 2 Chron. 5:1); the “pattern” of the buildings, priesthood and vessels (1 Chron. 28:11-12, 13a, 13b-18) and not least the peaceful conditions which were the necessary prerequisite for building (2004:146).

Again these legitimize Solomon to be the rightful presiding officer of the worship.

The above two paragraphs have indicated how the Chronicler legitimized Solomon through his inheritance of the kingdom and his inheritance of the Temple task as the rightful candidate to be the custodian of the Israelite worship. This in turn legitimized the Jerusalem Temple and the cultic prescriptions of the Chronicles as the justified place and the justified practices. Thirdly, the Chronicler built an image for Solomon that is faultless by relegating all the personal life of Solomon that tainted his image as reported in the Deuteronomistic history. “The descriptions of Solomon’s last years as king, which included marriages to foreign women, religious transgressions and struggles against political opponents (1 Kings 11), are simply omitted” (Japhet: 1997: 479).

Solomon having been justified and in turn having justified the Temple, we look at how the Temple gains power to draw loyalty from people to the Chronicler's ideology. According to Dyck (1998), the Temple became a tool for the Chronicler's ideology to impose hegemony over the broadest audience possible. It is a trick to generate belief. The theocratic ideology of the Chronicler is distorting. The beliefs of the people are somehow being taken hold of in the interests of power. He argues that "the Chronicler provides the grease for the axle; the Second Temple, discourse and all, supplies the catch" (1998:216-217). He continues to argue that the Chronicler's intention was to portray the Temple in terms of assisting<sup>52</sup> the individual. He then asserts that the reality is the reverse thereof. It is the people that assist the Jerusalem Temple and the elite of the community to sustain their power. In his own words he says:

But looking at the same thing *in terms of its functional properties* one would have to conclude that it had the reverse effect: It was the individual who was assisting the temple to restore its fortunes in maintaining its dominant position in the community and perhaps even in extending its hegemony over the region as a whole" (1998:220).

As much as the essay would like to use some of Dyck's thinking<sup>53</sup> as to articulate the Chronicler's portrayal to face the challenges of his context, it does not share Dyck's conclusions. He even states it further by saying that in the case of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron.20:30), they prayed to the Lord for assistance. Dyck then says from the above ideological critical perspectives, that it is the people and more accurately his official representatives that assist Yahweh. The essay totally distances itself from these conclusions. All the assignment wants to do is indicate that Chr's portrayal of Solomon and consequently the Temple did have rhetorical power to address his unifying intention as propelled by the challenges of his context. The essay however agrees with Dyck when he says, "The massive effort needed to write this history suggests that something was at stake for the Chronicler and his immediate social group in making this claim" (p215). The claim is that Yahweh's kingdom, as portrayed, was the legitimate social order for all

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<sup>52</sup> He puts it in inverted commas but the essay removed the commas because it believes the building of worship does have an assisting power in people's lives.

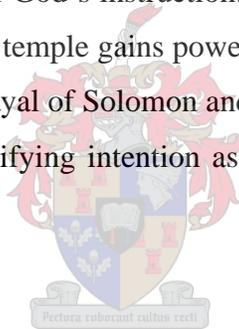
<sup>53</sup> Chapter six: *The Consequences of belief* (pp213-228).

Israel and for all time. Of course, the essay did indicate from the beginning that something was at stake, and that is the need to unify the community of his time and later generations (a contextual challenge). This motive is reflected in the way that Chr portrays Solomon and the rest of the story.

## Conclusion

The positive portrayal of Solomon did serve Dtr's interest in reinforcing hope for his audience. On the other hand the denting of the image also served his interest of revealing that a human king is not perfect and it was a mistake to replace the Lord with a human king. Dtr exploits the benefits that he can gain by promoting the house of David, while he makes sure his conviction is not suppressed, whether explicitly or implicitly.

The Chronicler, on the other hand, legitimizes Solomon for the position that he is going to give him as the proper source of God's instruction. Solomon, having been justified, in turn justified the Temple. Thus the temple gains power to draw loyalty from people to the Chronicler's ideology. Chr's portrayal of Solomon and consequently the Temple did have rhetorical power to address his unifying intention as propelled by the challenges of his context.



## Chapter VI

### Rehoboam: The Last King of a United Kingdom

#### Introduction

Rehoboam, the son of Solomon and Naamah the Ammonite (1 Kings 14:21), grandson of David, failed to keep the kingdom of Israel united, which his grandfather brought together. He lost ten of the twelve tribes to Jeroboam I, son of Nebat. Carl D. Evans summarizes the biblical narrative of Rehoboam like this:

The Deuteronomistic Historian (DH) presents the primary account of Rehoboam's reign in 1 Kgs 12:1–24 and 14:21–31. The Chronicler provides a parallel, and somewhat expanded, version in 2 Chronicles 10–12. Each of these accounts is based on sources which contained reliable historical data. The Kings account is drawn, in part, from the annals of the kings of Judah (1 Kgs 14:29), while the latter cites the chronicles of the prophet Shemaiah and Iddo the seer (2 Chr 12:15). Other unnamed sources were perhaps used as well, but it is clear that each biblical historian has stamped his own ideology on the accounts he rendered (Logos Library System 2.1c).

It is the last sentence that has the most direct bearing on our assignment's purpose. The purpose is to see how these ideologies mentioned are reflected as products of the contexts.

## Deuteronomist

### Story line

Rehoboam's story starts from 1 Kings 12: 1-24, interrupted by Jeroboam's story and resume from 14:21 through 31. It starts with the dilemma that he faced, when Israel asks him to relax his father's oppressive rule while all Israel had gathered to make him king. From the elders and the youth he got different advices, but he opted for the advice of the youth which wanted the reinforcement of Solomon's oppressive rule. Consequently Israel therefore rebelled and broke away from Jerusalem. The ten tribes formed their kingdom under Jeroboam the son of Nebat. When Rehoboam wanted to restore the kingdom with military means, the Lord intervened against the action and the ten tribes were then lost to Jeroboam. In 14:12-31 Rehoboam's wickedness in the eyes of the Lord is told. He was invaded by King Shishak of Egypt and suffered great losses. There was continual warring between him and Jeroboam until he died. The status line of Rehoboam before the Lord became very low. It could have touched the bottom like Saul's, had it not been for his grandfather David, whom the Lord promised permanent kingship.

### *Anti-kingship*

'If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever' (1 Kings 12:7), said the elders to Rehoboam. In Chronicles, the verse is rephrased as; "If you will be kind to this people and please them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever" (2 Chronicles 10:7). When referring to 1 Samuel 12:2 in comparison with the above verse of 1 Kings 12:7, Weinfeld comments like this; "It is no coincidence that the latter verse appears within the framework of an anti-monarchic polemic" (2000:517). Weinfeld's comment also applies to 1 Kings 12:7. It is no coincidence that this verse appears in an anti-kingship narrative. The essay echoes Weinfeld again and says that it is also no coincidence that this verse is rephrased the way it narratively is and that reverses the Davidic kings so much. In the previous chapters it has been indicated that the anti-kingship attitude of Dtr has to do with his context. Also, particularly in the

previous chapter on Solomon, it has been stressed that the Davidic kingdom had high importance for the Chronistic theocracy. The fact is that the kingship attitude has to do with these authors' contexts and it is reflected in the portrayal of Rehoboam. The notion of the king being a servant has a reflexive benefit of loyalty of the subjects and therefore does not necessarily downgrade the status of the king to his subjects but enhances it. Nevertheless, it entails granting some benefits for the subjects from the governance of the king. Rehoboam did not want to provide that as Solomon did not. This is a resurfacing of 1 Samuel 8: 9-18 which concludes in verse 18 by saying; "And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the LORD will not answer you in that day." So, the contextual influences on Dtr's theology now and then in the narrative. Given this background, one understands the caution that Carl D. issues about the presentation of the Deuteronomist when it says:

The DH charges that the people of Judah engaged in much religious apostasy during Rehoboam's reign (1 Kgs 14:22-24). The accusations that the people built shrines (תַּמִּיב'), sacred pillars, and sacred poles, and that cult prostitutes were in the land, are typical of the DH style and polemic and thus must be dismissed or taken with extreme caution.

Our task, however, is not to dismiss or confirm Dtr's history, but to discover his contextual influences on his presentation of Rehoboam and this quotation tells it all.

### *Cumulative sin and collective retribution*

"Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, 'Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant. <sup>12</sup> Yet for the sake of your father David I will not do it in your lifetime; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. <sup>13</sup> I will not, however, tear away the entire kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen'" (1 Kings 11:11-13). This is a conclusion of Solomon's era and at the same time an introduction of Rehoboam's era. These verses are the foundation of Rehoboam's loss of a huge part of his kingdom. Before he came to power it was already divinely decided that he would lose ten tribes. What we witness here is a predetermined judgement. Because of Solomon's

sin, Rehoboam is going to be punished. Moreover, it is not only Rehoboam that suffers but the whole nation. Japhet looks at this idea of cumulative sin (1997:158-161; 163; 165 & 215). It is when the punishment of the culprit is postponed and exercised on the culprit's offspring. Moreover, there is collective retribution which includes the community for the sin of an individual. These theories of divine justice were prompted by the exile; Dtr's context. The cumulative aspect of the narrative is the fact that Rehoboam suffers for Solomon's sins. The communal aspect is the fact that not only one person suffers but the whole of the nation for Solomon's sin alone. In short, Rehoboam is portrayed as a victim of cumulative sin. While in Chronicles he does not suffer from his father's sins, because Solomon in Chronicles is stated as being a good king who obeyed the commandment of the Lord. Rehoboam creates his own demise by being disobedient.

#### *Northern Kingdom*

The Deuteronomist wished to explain the reality of his time, of the destruction of Judah and the Temple. That is his work's starting point. For him, Israel's history during the first Commonwealth is a history of disintegration in three stages: division into two kingdoms, the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, and finally the destruction of Judah. ...Chronicler's starting point has to do with an overall religious system<sup>54</sup>. The impetus is not an immediate need to provide the believer with answers to the acute challenge posed by the destruction, but rather a general religious awareness...The qualitative difference lies in his need to explain good as well as evil. The Deuteronomist does not account for the existence of good (1997:154-155).

The story of Rehoboam is divided by the story of Jeroboam. One might feel Jeroboam's story is irrelevant when we discuss Rehoboam. However, we are looking here at how the two theocrats reflect their contextual influences in their narration of the story of Rehoboam. The fact that the story of Rehoboam interlocks Jeroboam's story is not a mere coincidence. There is a theological message embedded there. Rehoboam and his counterpart are engaged in accumulation of sins for the Israelites. The integration of Jeroboam's story in Rehoboam's story magnifies the picture of sinfulness and discredits

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<sup>54</sup> See below the section on Levites and priests

the whole institution of kingship which includes Rehoboam. The juxtaposition of two sinful kings is a literary strategy to explain the reality of Dtr's time of the destruction of Judah and the Temple, which is his work's starting point. The history of Israel is a history of sin, as far as Dtr is concerned.

## Chronicler

### Story line

The Chronicler provides an expanded version in the three chapters between 2 Chronicles 10–12. As it is told in Kings, ten tribes broke away when Rehoboam rejected their request. In Chronicles Rehoboam sent Hadoram, the task master over the forced labour to Israel and they stoned him to death. Rehoboam had to flee. The Lord stopped them when they wanted to attack Israel. Rehoboam progressed by building cities for defence, organized his family (had twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters) and he welcomed priests and Levites that Jeroboam did not want to accommodate. “He dealt wisely, and distributed some of his sons through all the districts of Judah and Benjamin, in all the fortified cities; he gave them abundant provisions, and found many wives for them” (2 Chronicles 11:23). According to the Chronicler, Rehoboam strengthened Judah and for three years he was secured for he walked in the way of David and Solomon<sup>55</sup>. Although the Chronicler admits that Rehoboam did evil by not seeking the Lord, he also asserts that “Because he humbled himself the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to destroy them completely; moreover, conditions were good in Judah” (2 Chronicles 12:12). Chr tells the story of Rehoboam the way Dtr told the story of Solomon. While Chr portrayed Solomon as an all time good king, Dtr starts by telling of the goodness of King Solomon who at the end turned into a bad king. Chr also states that Rehoboam is good and obeys the Lord in the beginning but ends up as an evil king.

### *Divine justice*

Both Dtr and Chr believe that God is actively involved in human history. In his involvement in history, God applies His justice. For Dtr, the exile was God's punishment

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<sup>55</sup> Solomon is seen as a king that obeyed the Lord in Chronicles, unlike in Kings where he was warned by the Lord but continued to sin.

while for Chr the return from exile was God's providence. Their contexts make them understand divine justice in terms of their present situations. This is highlighted in the way they narrate the story of Rehoboam. Unlike Dtr who believes in cumulative sin and communal retribution, Chr believes in what Japhet calls the imperative of reward and punishment (1997:168). The imperative of reward and punishment entails that each generation is responsible for its punishment. "The sinner is punished for his sins, the righteous man receives his due, and no one's fate is decided by his father's actions. The deeds of one generation are not 'visited on' another: any ideology of 'the sins of the fathers' or ancestral merit has no place in the book" (Japhet: 1997: 162). To put the blame of the division of the kingdom on Solomon's sinfulness works against the objectives of Chr. For Chr, Solomon is the pioneer of the Temple culture that needs not to be tainted. In fact, according to Japhet, "If we base ourselves on the history of Solomon as told in Chronicles, the people's complaint has no basis whatsoever and is merely a false provocation, an excuse for rebellion which should never have been humoured. In deed this is the situation described in the Chronicler's own account through Abijah's speech in II Chron. 13.6-7" (1993:653). However, Rehoboam's response is not easy to reconcile with the above innocence of Solomon. Rehoboam says he will make things even more difficult than his father did, which means his father did make life difficult for the Israelites<sup>56</sup>. Japhet explains it by saying "these literary and historical tensions and inconsistencies...are the inevitable results of the logic and dynamic of adapting existing material to the framework of a new historical philosophy" (1993:653). Nevertheless the Chronicler rejects the notion of cumulative sin. Rehoboam dug his own grave. Perhaps in his failure to reconcile Rehoboam's answer with Solomon's innocence, Chr still gets consolation that Dtr tells that Rehoboam was advised by Solomon's advisors but did not heed the advice. This results in disaster. Cogan (2001), in his analysis of Dtr's version of the story, states that "the account is a 'wisdom' tale written in praise of Solomon's trusted advisors...Perhaps one of the king's wise men, claims that rejection of their experienced counsel led to the break-up of the United Kingdom". Cogan continues to comment and says; "These paradigmatic characters act out a drama in which didactic exposition takes

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<sup>56</sup> Cogan mentions *corvée* as the main problem. However, he also mentions things like security considerations, selling off of Cabul to finance projects in Judah, Davidic nepotism etc., as scholarly speculation (2001: 351-352).

precedence over historical detail” (2001:351). For Chr therefore, Rehoboam was responsible for his loss while for Dtr it is the Lord who made him stiff in order to fulfil 1 Kings 11: 11-13.

Again, the principle of imperative of reward and punishment is demonstrated in 2 Chronicles 12. For his disobedience Rehoboam was punished but for his repentance he was delivered. “In keeping with his view of divine intervention, the Chronicler also reworks sources from Samuel-Kings which describe events in a neutral, objective fashion” (Japhet: 1997: 133). In 1 Kings 14:25 it is stated that “In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem”. In 2 Chronicles 12:2 there is an addition: “In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, **because they had been unfaithful to the LORD**, King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem”. The Chronicler adds that it is because they had been unfaithful that they were attacked by Shishak. Rehoboam is punished for his own sin. God intervenes immediately and punish the involved culprit. His punishment is not inherited from the previous generation or postponed for the following generation. Again in 2 Chronicles 12:12 it is stated: “Because he humbled himself the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to destroy them completely...” Here the Chronicler adds the prophet Shemaiah approaching Rehoboam and warning him for his disobediences. Rehoboam repents and the Lord immediately delivers him by turning His wrath away from Rehoboam and Shishak does not destroy him completely. When one repents, the Lord forgives and saves. Also important here is the emphasis on God being the sole cause of Rehoboam’s woes and fortunes. The Chronicler does not leave space for alluding to a human behavioural event as it is possible with the Deuteronomist’s report. In fact, Japhet asserts that in various biblical texts, the belief that God alone is responsible for whatever happens constitutes a religious principle or article of faith. It is the case with Chronicles and he also deals directly with the doer of the deed.

### *Levites and priests*

Above it was stated that the Chronicler’s starting point has to do with an overall religious system. The impetus is not an immediate need to provide the believer with answers to the acute challenge posed by the destruction, as the Deuteronomist does, but rather a general

religious awareness. This is demonstrated again in this narrative of Rehoboam. It is at a very small scale as compared to David and Solomon, but Chr makes means to squeeze it in this narrative. The squeezing can be sensed in the following phrasing by Evans:

Perhaps the only hard historical data pertaining to religion under Rehoboam are in the Chronicler's report that priests and Levites came to Judah from the kingdom of Israel when Jeroboam dismissed them and appointed non-Levitic priests (2 Chr 11:13–17). These developments would make sense, assuming that the Levites were administrative and cultic state officials, appointed by David and Solomon, who remained loyal to Rehoboam (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*: Logos Library System 2.1c).

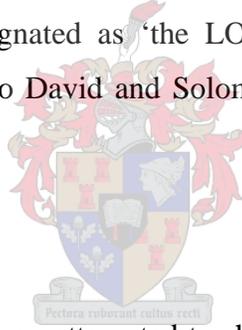
In contrast, the only religious details that Dtr gives in the reign of Rehoboam are as follows:

Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their ancestors had done. For they also built for themselves high places, pillars, and sacred poles on every high hill and under every green tree; there were also male temple prostitutes in the land. They committed all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel (1 Kings 14:22-24).

For the Deuteronomist, these details explain the destruction of Judah while the previous details of the Chronicler explain why the Jerusalem Temple is the one that represents God's will and also why the Levites are the ones who carry God's will. Johnstone (1997: 33-36) makes an intensive analysis of 2 Chronicles 11: 13-17. He looks at the theological significance of these verses. In noting the hope of "the true Israel" being instilled through the regime of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon and the grandson of David, he says:

It is very striking how this structure for the preservation of the surviving rump of the people of Israel corresponds to the presentation of Israel in the genealogical section in 1 Chronicles 2-8: the outer limits of the people are defined by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and at the heart of this people the Levites function. Even within its drastically reduced compass, the kingdom retains the outline of the authentic Israel of God and still has the potentiality of becoming the agency of God's purpose in the world (1997:34-35).

This above observation reflects clearly the intentions of the Chronicler in the manner he tells the story of Rehoboam's reign. He makes sure that the Levites and the Jerusalem Temple retain their status as the authentic agents of God's will. In verse 16 particularly, Johnstone finds theological concepts loaded with theological significance. The people, who left the northern kingdom because of its idolatry, did so 'after' the Levites. "Under the supervision of the Levites they can fulfil their obligation to God" (1997:35). They came "from all the tribes of Israel". This makes the southern kingdom to comprise of all twelve tribes of Israel. Those who followed the Levites are those who had set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel (2 Chronicles 11:16). Johnstone finds in the phrase "the LORD God of Israel" the recognition of the destiny application to the destiny of those people. When they arrive in Judah they make a sacrifice, seeking to acknowledge the prerogatives of the Lord. "By all these actions the generation of Rehoboam show their faithfulness to their national destiny as laid down by their founding fathers: the God whom they worship is now designated as 'the LORD, the God of their ancestors'" (1997:35). These ancestors refer to David and Solomon who are in turn backed by the Torah of Moses.



## Conclusion

As in the previous chapters, the essay attempted to show that the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler are theocrats who lived in different times and therefore reflect their respective contexts in their ways of retelling the history of Israel. From the characteristics of the DH we selected just a few, namely, anti-kingship, divine justice and the treatment of the northern kingdom. As it has been said before, Dtr displays his anti-kingship attitude in Rehoboam. The principle of divine justice that he developed entails cumulative sin and communal retribution. He intermingles within the story of the northern kingdom the story of the southern kingdom to amplify the picture of the sinfulness of Israel, which reinforces the principle of cumulative sin.

From the CH version we chose only the principle of the imperative of reward and punishment. For Chr, no generation has its fate determined by the sinfulness of the previous generation. Every generation reaps what it sowed. On the Levites and the priests, it becomes apparent that the Chronicler is determined to keep what Johnstone

calls “the outline of the authentic Israel of God”. The Levites, even in three verses only, elicit a strong theological message that one cannot easily ignore them. For Chr, the overall religious system is very important.

## Chapter VII Conclusion

### Introduction

The hypothesis of the thesis is that theocracy is relevant for all times. However, because contexts change, it has also to change its form to adapt to new circumstances. In this concluding chapter, this hypothesis will be applied to the present South African context. This is the goal of this chapter. However, to come to this identified goal, the chapter will take gradual steps to ultimately come to the proposed goal. The first step is to summarize the thesis so far. The contextual and ideological differences of the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler will be outlined in a tabular form, to illuminate the importance of context that the thesis has emphasized so much. The theocracies of Saul, David and Solomon will be closely examined with the intention to reinforce our own argument. A theocratic model appropriate for our own context will then be proposed. The thesis will proceed and give a motivation why theocracy is necessary for us. We will then look at how we can implement theocracy in a democratic system. Just before the conclusion, we will look at South Africa as a particular context.

### Summary of the thesis

The method to test this hypothesis is a comparison of how the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler narrate the history of Israel generally, particularly the stories of Saul, David,

Solomon and Rehoboam. These kings were chosen because in the first three kings of the Israelite monarchy is a gradual process of the development of a theocracy regarded by these authors (Dtr & Chr) as paradigmatic for Israel. Saul is important because it started with him that theocracy was mediated through a human king. In his time however, the offices of king and priest were separate and he was punished for taking a role of a priest. In David the roles come gradually together and there is no complaint about it. In fact David brought them together. Although he arranged the priestly duties, he delegated different roles to different people. Also, the promise of Yahweh to the house of David has introduced into the kingship a religious factor which overrides its purely institutional function. Solomon reinforced the combination of these offices even further. God is even talking directly to him while he talked to David through the prophet Nathan.

It is David's theocratic rule that Dtr upholds and uses to judge the subsequent kings, including Solomon. For Chr, it is David's & Solomon's theocratic reigns that he upholds and he uses them to measure whether a king is a model or an anti-model. This model is used to judge whether Rehoboam is a model or an anti-model. That makes the four kings important for this mini-thesis.

As Dtr and Chr retold the history of Israel, they formulated their theocratic perspectives in such a way they fit their respective contexts. Here below is a table that summarizes the differences in their respective contexts and perspectives due to contextual differences:

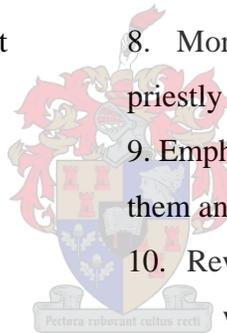
## Contextual Differences

Deuteronomist	Chronicler
1. Exilic Era	1. Post-exilic Era
2. No King	2. A governor
3. No temple	3. A Second temple
4. No Land	4. A Province of Yehud
5. Lives in Babylon	Lives in Jerusalem

## Ideological Differences

Deuteronomist	Chronicler
---------------	------------

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pro-Davidic but anti-kingship</li> <li>2. Divine justice: cumulative sin and communal retribution</li> <li>3. Emphasizes the history of sin and Retribution</li> <li>4. Explanation of the destruction of Judah &amp; Temple as starting point</li> <li>5. More separatist than unifying (anti-foreigner, anti-Northerners)</li> <li>6. At the end hope revealed within the Jewish fold, Jehoiakim</li> <li>7. More emphasis on the Sinai Covenant</li> <li>8. More emphasis on the pagan cult abominations</li> <li>9. Emphasizes the land that the Lord gave to their fathers</li> <li>10. Describes events in a neutral, objective fashion, e.g. 1 Kings 14:25</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pro-Davidic dynasty and pro-kingship</li> <li>2. Divine justice: imperative or reward and punishment</li> <li>3. Emphasizes the history of provision, care and divine love</li> <li>4. An overall religious system as a starting point</li> <li>5. Has a unifying tendency (Northern kingdom, Samaritans &amp; foreigners)</li> <li>6. At the end, hope revealed in a foreign king, Cyrus</li> <li>7. More emphasis on the Davidic covenant</li> <li>8. More emphasis on the Levitic and priestly cult</li> <li>9. Emphasizes the land the Lord gave to them and to their fathers</li> <li>10. Reworks sources from Samuel-Kings which describe events in a neutral, objective fashion, e.g. 2 Chronicles 12:2 &amp; 12</li> </ol> |
|--|--|



This is not an exhaustive list of differences but hopefully it does give the picture of the contextual influence in these ideological works.

## Saulide, Davidic and Solomonic theocracies

It is imperative for this chapter to describe these theocracies in more detail, for they are going to be utilized in the later argument for the relevance of theocracy in our time. The Rehoboamic theocracy will not be dealt with here, for it is the legacy of Solomon,

although there are circumstantial differences<sup>57</sup>. It is the Davidic-Solomonic model that became paradigmatic for Dtr and Chr and the thesis will compare it with the Saulide model.

### a. Saulide theocracy

In the first place Saul was appointed by God to be the king that would rule over Israel. In Samuel 9:17 God shows Saul to Samuel as the king-elect and the story goes like this:

rv<åa] `vyaih' hNEÜhi Whn"ë['  
 hw"åhyw: lWa+v' -ta, ha'är" laePWmv.W  
 `yMi ([;B. rcoð[.y: hz<ß ^yl,êae  
 yTir>m:åa'

(When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, “Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. He it is who shall rule over my people”.)

This is in line with the belief that God is active in human history. Of utmost importance here is to remember that Saul replaced God as the king as it is revealed in God’s response to Solomon when He says in 1 Samuel 8:7; “...for they have not rejected you, but they have *rejected me from being king over them.*” He then had to do what God has been doing, namely, to rule with justice. On top of that, he had to obey God’s command. Another important factor in Saul’s reign, which is important for this particular thesis as well, is the fact that the royal office and the priestly<sup>58</sup> office were separate. The priestly office however, had strong persuasive power and remained a prophetic voice throughout Saul’s reign. Ultimately, Saul was kicked out of office because he was seen not to obey God’s will. Saul’s gravest sin was to take the duties of a priest<sup>59</sup>. In this Saulide model of theocracy the ruler could be put under check and even be removed if he is disobedient. The removal of Saul from office brings us to what Mullen calls the “divine paradox”. Explaining it, he says; “though Yahweh neither changes his mind nor breaks his promises, he also does not tolerate disobedience to his commands” (1993: 223). This “divine paradox” makes Saul interesting for this paper and it has implications for this thesis (Will be picked up later).

<sup>57</sup> Rehoboam was weaker than Solomon and at some stage the prophet spoke against him.

<sup>58</sup> In the person of Samuel judge/prophet.

<sup>59</sup> 1 Samuel 13:8-15.

## b. Davidic theocracy

This is a theocracy that became a model for governance, according to Dtr and Chr. Like Saul, David was appointed by God. When David was called in from tending the sheep, “The LORD said, ‘Rise and anoint him; for this is the one’” (1 Samuel 16:12).

p yairo+ bAjåw> ~yIn:ßy[e hpeîy>-~[i  
 ynIëAmd>a; aWhåw> `Whae'ybiy>w:  
 xl;Ûv.YIw:  
 aWh) hz<ï-yKi( WhxePv'm. ~Wqï  
 hw"±hy> rm,aYOõw:

In David’s reign there is a movement away from the Saulide model of theocracy. The royal office gradually gained more influence in the priestly affairs. The event of the transfer of the Ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem demonstrates this gradual merging of the royal and the priestly offices clearly. In 2 Samuel 6:18 it is stated that “When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts”. The same acts of offering a burnt offering and an offering of well-being received a different reaction in Saul:

So Saul said, “Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the offerings of well-being.” And he offered the burnt offering. (1 Samuel 13:9)....

Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which he commanded you. The LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever, <sup>14</sup> but now your kingdom will not continue...” (1 Samuel 13:13-14).

In Chronicles it is taken even further. In 1 Chronicles 15:27 it is stated that “David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers; and David wore a linen ephod”. In this verse the word ephod has much significance for our discussion on the royal office and the priestly office. Terry W. Eddinger (2000) describes the ephod here below. He describes it as

An ornate sleeveless outer garment worn by the Israelite high priest. Exod. 28:6-10 describes the ephod as a garment made of fine, twisted linen decorated with

gold, blue, purple and scarlet material. Two shoulder pieces and woven belt made of the same materials complete the outfit. Affixed to the shoulder pieces were two onyx stones inscribed with the names of the sons of Israel. A breast plate made of the same materials and decorated with twelve precious stones, symbolizing the twelve tribes, was attached by golden rings to the front of the ephod (Exod. 28:15-28). A pocket in the breastplate stored the Urim and the Thummim, the lots of divination (2000: 415).

The Urim and the Thummim stored in the pocket of the breastplate of the ephod still say more about these two offices. Thomas B. Dozeman (2000) describes these stones as follows:

Most likely divining stones used by priests to inquire judgments from God. They are first mentioned in Deut. 33:8 as belonging to the Levites in general, arising from their zealous devotion to God above family. As a consequence the Levites acquire three functions: they transmit divine law to Israel, burn incense, and sacrifice on the altar. The function of conveying divine judgments through teaching may be associated with the Urim and Thummim. Priestly writers limit the use of the Urim and Thummim to the high priest (2000:1349).

In 1 Chronicles 16:4 “He appointed certain of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, to invoke, to thank, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel”. So David was quite involved in priestly affairs. One can sometimes be tempted to ask whether has it not something to do with his role in the priestly office that his sins were always pardonable while Saul’s were not. The kind of corruption he did with Uriah the Hittite in 2 Samuel 11 is the kind of behavior that cannot be tolerated from leaders. Nevertheless, the prophetic voice in the person of the prophet Nathan did now and then intervene, albeit weaker, as compared to Saul and Samuel.

### c. Solomonic theocracy

Solomon’s reign is the continuation and the reinforcement of David’s dispensation. The completion of the Temple even further strengthened Solomon’s position in Israel. In 1 Kings 8:10-12 the priests “could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD”. Instead, it was Solomon who interpreted the

message of the Lord when he said, “The LORD has said that he would dwell in thick darkness”. He blessed all the assembly of Israel. Of interest is the description of Solomon’s reign. Richard D Nelson (2000) describes it as follows:

After an account of his accession (1 Kgs. 1-2), the career of Solomon is reported positively (chs. 3-10) under the themes of wisdom, royal power and piety. The portrayal turns negative in ch.11... (2000: 770).

The chapters that portray Solomon’s career positively are introduced by 3:1-4. The focus of the essay is on 1 Kings 3:3 which says:

qr:... wybi\_a' dwIãD" tAQßxuB.  
tk,l,§l' hw"ëhy>-ta, `hmo1{v.  
bh;Ûa/Y<w:  
`ryji (q.m;W x;Beßz:m. aWhi tAmêB'B;

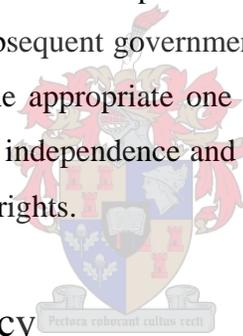
(Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David; only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places<sup>60</sup>.)

Of particular interest is the last part *ryji (q.m;W x;Beßz:m. aWhi tAmêB'B; qr:...* (...only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places). The adverb *qr:...* is translated as *only*. Many other translations translate it as *except, but or yet*. In their own ways, these words introduce an element of doubt, contrast, exclusion etc. This gives a sense that Solomon’s sacrificing at high places is contrasted, doubted or excluded from his love for the Lord. If that is the case, the question is where were the priests/prophets to call him into order as Saul was when he deviated from the path. Again, is this silence the result of Solomon’s position as part of the priestly core? From chapter 11 he is portrayed negatively but no priestly warnings against him until God Himself intervened. The prophetic voice of the priestly office seems to have been silenced.

## A Model for Our context

<sup>60</sup> According to Beth Alpert Nakhai (2000:588-9); as much as the *bāmā* (high places) were accepted by Israelites for a long time, the Deuteronomistic priestly and prophetic groups opposed this institution.

Until now, this chapter has been dealing with the biblical world. In the introduction it has been mentioned in passing that since the Exodus, the Israelites were ruled by God Himself. That was one type of theocracy. It is the one that the Deuteronomist would have loved to have but, unfortunately, the conditions were beyond his control, hence he opted for the Davidic type. During the settlement of the Promised Land, the context changed and this type of theocracy was replaced by what has been called the Saulide model. This model had the royal and the priestly offices separate and the priestly office acted as the prophetic voice against any deviation from “proper governance”. Saul’s government was pushed out of power and was replaced by David’s rule. David introduced another different kind of theocracy, which combined the royal office and the priestly office. In this dispensation, the prophetic voice of the priestly office was still operative although weaker, when compared with Saul’s era. David was followed by Solomon and the priestly office became quiet to an extent that part of the kingdom had to be wrested away from the Davidic dynasty. The subsequent governments ended in exile. Of these models, the Saulide model seems to be the appropriate one for our time. The faith community needs a model that guarantees the independence and the vibrancy that is necessary to be an effective watchdog of people’s rights.



## A Motivation for Theocracy

In our analysis of the Deuteronomist’s and the Chronicler’s ideologies, we identified the reasons why they decided to write the history of Israel the way they did. For Dtr, it was the exilic situation that he wanted to explain and at the same time offer advice for the future. For the Chronicler, the need to live a life that will please God in their present situation and a programmatic framework for the future was to be gratified. This thesis, as well has reasons why it thinks theocracy is relevant in our time as well.

The living conditions of the majority of South African people leave much to be desired. Hunger, homelessness, disease, environmental misuses etc. are conditions that should no longer be tolerated. On the other hand, some of those who are in positions of removing these conditions are corrupt people. The explanations that are sometimes given for the delays make one wonder whether they can display the same patience that they expect from the victims of these social ills. For these victims, these conditions are an epitome of

the Babylonian exilic situation that Dtr. addressed. Above all, God's creation was handed in the hands of human beings to take care thereof. It is therefore aggression against God to mishandle His creation. It is even worse to have other human beings in the conditions mentioned above, for human beings were made in the image of God. It is an insult to God therefore to subject His image in such conditions. It is the fear of God that should be the basis of taking care of God's creation. The faith community has a duty, as God fearing people, to fight against any aggression against God. It is their prophetic calling to see to it that God is honoured. God has a mission to establish His kingdom on earth. The faith community participates in this mission. For the faith community to fold hands and watch God being defied is a very great sin to commit. That calls for a *status confessionis*.

## How to implement theocracy

It has been already mentioned that for our context, a suitable model is a Saulide model. During the time of Saul Samuel displayed no interest at all in governance. All he was interested in was to protect God's interests. He anointed and fired. He had persuasive power that could not be ignored without regrettable consequences thereafter. Potentially, the faith community has that persuasive power. In a democratic political system like the South African system, the only weapon to ensure recognition is numbers of voting people. The faith community has the potential to have such persuasive power. All it needs to do is introspection and then strive to recover the confidence that its members once had in it. This is no easy task but not impossible. With a majority of voters behind its back, the faith community has the power to anoint and to fire. This is the kind of power that the business community has demonstrated to force governments to cede to their demands. This might sound like a purely human enterprise. However, God's nature is human and divine as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. As the Scripture has also indicated, human beings are also God's instruments to implement His mission. This is not to regard the faith community as faultless people. History has demonstrated that human beings are sinful creatures. But, neither are government officials, business officials, labour officials and even the so-called human rights activists. In that case, the faith community has one advantage. It has Scripture as a normative source that is accessible to any individual to

read and reflect. It is the most vulnerable to criticism than all the other powerful institutions. Vulnerability is the genuine source of power.

## South Africa as a Particular Context

In his introductory paper to *Religious Freedom in South Africa*, J.J Kritzinger (1993) presents a statistical mosaic of the religious scene in South Africa. He draws a table of different religions in South Africa. His list for 1991 goes like this: Christians 66, 4%, Hindus 1, 3 %, Muslims 1, 1 %, Judaists 1, 1, Confucianists 0, 0, Buddhists 0, 01, Other beliefs 0, 1, Nothing/ Object 29, 7 and Uncertain -. This is not a perfect picture of the real situation but it does at least gives a hint of what to speculate about our religious situation. He then admits that “in terms of census classification the *African Traditional Religions* are totally ignored, but they are certainly the second-most numerous” (1993: 2). This fact needs to be reconsidered, for there is a lot we can learn from *African Traditional Religions* (ATR’s). This is a kind of plurality we have and need to acknowledge. This plurality is situated within a democratic political dispensation. Theocracy does not necessarily have to conflict with this kind of an environment.

Because South Africa is in Africa, we need to learn from other continents and express what we have learnt in an African way. In this regard I will like to endorse D.L. Mosoma’s (1993) ideas on religion. Mosoma asserts that:

While in some societies religions are considered a source of conflict, most traditional African societies view religions as a source of bondedness. For this reason, people or groups are not denied the right to worship a deity of their choice...The motif of the *wholeness of life* is like a glue that holds religion and life together. Religion is not simply a department or compartment of life; rather, it is life (1993: 50).

He further quotes Buthelezi attesting to the significance of the idea of the “wholeness of life”. The attestation charges that in ATR’s there was no separate community of religious people, for everybody who participated in the life of the community, automatically participated in its religion. Further, there was no particular day of worship, for “the whole rhythm of daily life was a continuous liturgy that permeated such common place things as

eating, drinking, love-making etc.” Smooth coexistence and the idea of “wholeness of life” are basically two things that we need to learn from ATR’s. This is a resource we have and some societies might not have. We need to utilize it for our own benefit and export it to those who are willing to learn from other people. To see religion as a source of bondedness rather than a source of conflict can help us a lot in dealing with the plurality that we cannot deny, even if we want to. The idea of religion as a source of bondedness is a catalyst for a smooth coexistence of different religions. Because Christians and ATR’s were counted as the majority religions and they are very like to suffer from a superiority complex over other religions, the onus is on them to open their arms to other religions. Religions need to find a way to speak with one voice; at least in South Africa, where at some stage, coexistence was never an issue. The ATR’s are called ATR’s because they are different. Christians as different theological establishments and denominations but can also follow the suit and become coexistent Christianities and churches. It is only under this environment that the faith community can wield power to be a force to be reckoned with. It is also when this power has been attained that the persuasive power of Samuel’s calibre can be possessed.

## Conclusion

Theocracy is relevant for all times. Due to contextual changes, it just has to adapt to new conditions. The biblical stories of Saul, David, Solomon and Rehoboam as told by the Deuteronomist and the Chronicler are the proof of theocracy’s flexibility to changing circumstances. Above are two tables outlining the contextual differences of Dtr and Chr and the ideological differences that are the results of those contextual changes.

The major adaptive change in the theocracies of the discussed kings is the relationship between the royal office and the priestly office. Saul’s regime had the two offices totally apart. In David the offices began to move towards each other. In Solomon they were totally merged. For our times of democracy and plurality, the Saulide model is the more appropriate. Mishandling of God’s creation, particularly other human beings is the reason why theocracy is necessary. It can be implemented with out the faith community becoming part of the governing structures. All the faith community needs is the persuasive power as strong as that Samuel had over Saul to be a prophetic voice. In a

South African context where ATR's are one of the majority religions, we can learn from them how to practice religion as a source of bondedness instead of a source of conflict. Additionally, we can learn how to make the whole rhythm our of daily life a continuous liturgy that permeates common place things that we do. If we can achieve that, we can possess the kind of persuasive power that Samuel had. Unfortunately, some perceive such power for the faith community as a threat to democracy. However, Mosoma views religion as "a force to actualize the democratic vision of society". This thesis agrees with Mosoma. Democracy can only be beneficial for all humanity when it is practiced in an environment of peace. Peace is not just the absence of war, but the fulfilment of the well-being of all humanity, including our natural environment. It is the religious establishment that knows of such kind of peace. The Biblical Hebrew word *shālôm* encapsulates such a connotation of wholesome well-being. It is a common word in the religious vocabulary. It just needs to be put into use.

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