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EVALUATING CHARACTER IN THE BOOK OF  
KINGS**

## COMPARISON WITH DAVID AS A MEANS OF EVALUATING CHARACTER IN THE BOOK OF KINGS

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### INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1970s, the study of biblical narrative has devoted increasing attention to parallels and analogies.<sup>1</sup> Among the topics addressed by these studies is how such parallels contribute to the evaluation of biblical characters. Here I shall consider one facet of this broad subject. Because I wish to build my case incrementally, I

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<sup>1</sup> To mention only some of the most conspicuous studies: M. Sternberg, "Delicate Balance in the Story of the Rape of Dinah: Biblical Narrative and the Rhetoric of the Narrative Text," *Hasifrut* 4 (1973), 193–231, esp. 228–230 (Hebrew); an updated English version of this article appears in his *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), esp. 479–480, where this section appears in a shortened form (while the subject is also discussed *passim*); P. D. Miscall, "The Jacob and Joseph Stories as Analogies," *JSOT* 6 (1978), 28–40; R. P. Gordon, "David's Rise and Saul's Demise: Narrative Analogy in 1 Samuel 24–26," *Tyndale Bulletin* 31 (1979), 37–64; M. Garsiel, *The First Book of Samuel: A Literary Study of Comparative Structures, Analogies and Parallels* (Hebrew: Ramat Gan: Revivim, 1983; English: Ramat Gan: Revivim, 1985); E. L. Greenstein, "The Formation of the Biblical Narrative Corpus," *AJS Rev* 15 (1990), 151–178; R. Alter, *The World of Biblical Literature* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), Ch. 5: "Allusion and Literary Expression," 107–130; Y. Zakovitch, *Through the Looking Glass: Reflection Stories in the Bible* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1995; Hebrew), and see also his English article: "Through the Looking Glass: Reflections/Inversions of Genesis Stories in the Bible," *BibInt* 1 (1993), 139–152; G. Marquis, "Explicit Literary Allusions in Biblical Historiography" (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999; Hebrew); P. R. Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph: Criteria for Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusion," *VT* 52 (2002), 219–252; H. Shalom-Guy, "Internal and External Literary Parallels – The Gideon Cycle (Judges 6-9)" (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003; Hebrew); J. Berman, *Narrative Analogy in the Hebrew Bible: Battle Stories and their Equivalent Non-Battle Narratives* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); A. Bazak, *Parallels Meet: Literary Parallels in the Book of Samuel* (Alon Shevut: Tevunot, 2006; Hebrew); J. Berman, "Establishing Narrative Analogy in Biblical Literature: Methodological Considerations," *Beit Mikra* 53 (2008), 31–46 (Hebrew); J. Grossman, "'Dynamic Analogies' in the Book of Esther," *VT* 59 (2009), 394–414.

have chosen to use the more general term “comparison”, although I have analogy in mind as well.

My hypothesis is that comparison with David is a literary device used throughout the book of Kings as a way to express an assessment of the kings whose deeds are recounted in the book.<sup>2</sup> Three new ideas are advanced in the present paper: (1) Explicit comparisons to David are linked to literary allusions to him and constitute a single basic phenomenon, different points on a single scale. This is in contrast to the conventional view that explicit comparisons with David are a feature of the Deuteronomistic redaction, whereas allusions to him (when addressed) are a literary device quite unrelated to the comparisons. (2) Comparisons with David are taken to be a literary device employed throughout the book of Kings, including the account of Jehu’s reign. Again, the standard position is that only kings of Judah are compared to David, the founder of their dynasty. (3) A sophisticated system of inverted comparisons, which help unify the Solomon stories among themselves and with the history of Jeroboam as well, is discovered.

The phenomenon discussed here in detail can contribute to a better understanding of one of the important ways in which the book of Kings (and biblical narrative in general) judges its characters, as a significant proportion of this characterization involves allusions rather than explicit statements, and thus not every allusive evaluation is uncovered.<sup>3</sup>

The object of the present study is the book of Kings as a whole, and not the conjectural documentary sources on which it draws (such as the Succession Narrative) or different strata in the stages of its editing (such as Dtr<sup>1</sup> and Dtr<sup>2</sup>, according to the double-redaction, or DtrG, DtrP, and DtrN, according to the triple-redaction theory).<sup>4</sup> I will endeavor to present the data as it

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<sup>2</sup> In the present article I have restricted myself to kings, but other characters in the book of Kings may also be juxtaposed to David. We may recall, for example, the interesting proposal by Zakovitch (*Through the Looking Glass*, 41–42) that the episode of the Jericho lads’ cursing Elisha (2 Kgs 2:23–24) is a mirror-tale or inversion of Shimei’s curses against David (2 Sam 16), with the intention being to censure Elisha for his harsh reaction to the lads, so different from David’s noble restraint.

<sup>3</sup> For a survey of diverse means of character evaluation, listed from the most to the least explicit—see Sternberg, *Poetics*, 475–481.

<sup>4</sup> On the double-redaction theory see, in particular: F. M. Cross, “The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History”, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 274–289; R. D. Nelson, *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History* (JSOTSup, 18; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981). And on the triple-redaction theory, see, in particular: R. Smend, “Das Gesetz und die Völker: Ein Beitrag zur deuteronomistischen Redaktionsgeschichte,” H. W. Wolff (ed.), *Probleme biblischer Theologie: Gerhard von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag* (Munich: C. Kaiser,

stands in the present book of Kings. Scholars from each of the different schools may then analyze the data within the frameworks of the different redactional positions.<sup>5</sup>

Personally I prefer the single-edition theory, whose most conspicuous proponent is Martin Noth, although I have some reservations, notably with regard to Noth's view of the Deuteronomistic history as pessimistic. I think it may be simpler to explain a phenomenon that is found throughout the book by a theory that attributes its composition to a single author-editor (although he may have made use of older sources); nevertheless, it is certainly compatible with the double- and triple-redaction theories.

The several types of comparisons to David will be presented below in descending order of explicitness. First I discuss the explicit comparison with David that appears in the formulaic introduction of the kings of Judah (§1). Then I look at other explicit comparisons to David—in a formula, but not the introductory formula (§2), and not in a formula, but in the dialogue between the Lord or his emissaries and characters (§3). Then I consider allusions to David in which his name does not appear—allusions aimed at comparing (§4) or contrasting (§5) a particular king with David. In §6 I take up what seems to be an explicit reference to David in a formula; but the discussion comes here, rather than earlier, because the *comparison* is not explicit. Nevertheless, one would see the phrase

1971), 494–509 [ET: G. N. Knoppers and J. G. McConville (eds.), *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History* (SBT, 8; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 95–110]; W. Dietrich, *Prophezie und Geschichte* (FRLANT, 108; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972); T. Veijola, *Die ewige Dynastie: David und die Entstehung seiner Dynastie nach der deuteronomistischen Darstellung* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1975).

<sup>5</sup> For a comprehensive survey of the various approaches to the Deuteronomistic redaction, see Th. Römer and A. de Pury, “Deuteronomistic Historiography (DH): History of Research and Debated Issues,” A. de Pury, T. Römer and J.-D. Macchi (eds.), *Israel Constructs its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research* (JSOTSup, 306; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 24–141; Th. C. Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* (London: T & T Clark, 2005); J. M. Hutton, *The Transjordanian Palimpsest: The Overwritten Texts of Personal Exile and Transformation in the Deuteronomistic History* (BZAW, 396; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2009), Ch. 3, 79–156. See also the lively and comprehensive discussion in R. F. Person, Jr. (ed.), “In Conversation with Thomas Römer, The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction,” *JHS* 9, 17 (2009), available online at <http://www.jhsonline.org> and republished in E. Ben Zvi (ed.), *Perspectives in Hebrew Scriptures VI: Comprising the Contents of Journal of Hebrew Scriptures, vol. 9* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010), 333–86. According to Person, one of the participants, Richard Nelson, represents the dual-redaction theory, and another, Steven McKenzie, represents the “neo-Nothians,” who argue for a single edition.

“in the city of [his father] David” (part of the burial formula used for some of the kings of Judah) as favorable assessments of those kings by means of the allusion. Finally in §7, I look at inverted comparisons—seven comparisons of Solomon and Jeroboam to David—and see how they create a single structured set of references to David, with a reversal between the two figures who are compared to him. In all these cases I go beyond pointing out the fact of the comparison to cast light on how it contributes to the message of the book as a device for evaluating the monarchs, sometimes favorably and sometimes unfavorably.<sup>6</sup>

### 1. AN EXPLICIT COMPARISON WITH DAVID AS PART OF THE INTRODUCTORY FORMULA

One of the most prominent methods of evaluation in the book of Kings takes David as the standard: worthy kings are likened to him, unworthy kings are contrasted to him.<sup>7</sup> Even though David serves this function for only a few kings, he is generally defined as the standard for the assessment of kings throughout the book (chiefly those of the house of David).<sup>8</sup>

A comparison of these monarchs’ conduct with David’s appears in the introductory formula for six kings:

- Abijam: “His heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father” (1 Kgs 15:3).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The various references to David in the book of Kings (not necessarily in the context of comparison) are surveyed by G. A. Auld, *Kings Without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible’s Kings* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 132–146, but in a different way than is done here and with the inclusion of Chronicles. On the other hand, he considers only explicit references and not allusions.

<sup>7</sup> Of course we may ask how David can serve as a paragon, given the verdict that “David ... did not turn aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite” (1 Kgs 15:5)? A common solution, noting the omission of this reservation from the Septuagint, takes it as a late gloss. But this seems to be overly simplistic. Rather, it does seem that the book of Kings takes David as a model for emulation, despite his transgression, for he is human being and not an angel. (The reference to David’s failure to reprove Adonijah for his inappropriate conduct [1 Kgs 1:6] is certainly critical of him.) Provan says something slightly different in his commentary on 1 Kgs 15:5 (I. W. Provan, *1 and 2 Kings* [NIBC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995], 124).

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., von Rad: “He is the prototype of the perfectly obedient anointed, and therefore the model for all succeeding kings in Jerusalem” (G. von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy* [trans. D. Stalker; London: SCM Press, 1953], 88).

<sup>9</sup> The translation of biblical verses is based on the RSV, modified silently where necessary to make a point or parallel (except for the rendering of 1 Kgs 1:6, which is taken from the NJPS).

- Asa: “And Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as David his father had done” (1 Kgs 15:11).
- Amaziah: “And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, yet not like David his father” (2 Kgs 14:3).
- Ahaz: “And he did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord his God, as his father David had done” (2 Kgs 16:2).
- Hezekiah: “And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done” (2 Kgs 18:3).
- Josiah: “And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left” (2 Kgs 22:2).

One should append two short comments to this list, one related to Lower Criticism and the other to Higher Criticism. (1) Most scholars take the comparison with David in the description of Amaziah’s deeds in 2 Kgs 14:3 (“yet not like David his father”) to be a secondary addition.<sup>10</sup> (2) As is known, Helga Weippert takes a favorable comparison with David to be one of the hallmarks of the second stratum of the Deuteronomist redaction of the book of Kings (II S) and assigns to this group the comparisons to David of Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah, as well as that of Abijam (in the format of the northern scheme II N); but the comparison of Ahaz (as well as the verse about Amaziah, although she strips the comparison to David from it) is assigned to stratum IS 1.<sup>11</sup> In the analysis that follows I do not follow Weippert’s conjectural distinctions, which have already been seriously challenged.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, I consider the textual point and whenever I mention the comparison with Amaziah (in order to present a complete picture of the text) I shall note that it is doubtful.

These six comparisons are not a fixed formula, but reflect broad variation. First, one notices their formal division into two equal groups: three with a contrast to David (“not like David his father”) and three with a resemblance (“as his father David had done”). It is worth noting that the overlap between the form and the assessment (positive or negative) is not perfect. Four (rather than three) of the comparisons (those relating to Asa, Amaziah, Hezekiah, and Josiah) express a favorable assessment, to one degree or another.<sup>13</sup> The other two assessments (of Abijam and Ahaz) are negative.

<sup>10</sup> See in detail I. W. Provan, *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings* (BZAW, 172; Berlin/ New York: de Gruyter, 1988), 93 n. 2.

<sup>11</sup> See H. Weippert, “Die ‘deuteronomistischen’ Beurteilungen der Könige von Israel und Juda und das Problem der Redaktion der Königsbücher,” *Biblica* 53 (1972), 301–339.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, E. Cortese, “Lo schema deuteronomistico per i re di Guida e d’Israele,” *Biblica* 56 (1975), 37–52; J. Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origin of Biblical History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), esp. 316 n. 84.

<sup>13</sup> It is true that with Amaziah the comparison to David is expressed

In five of these six cases the comparison with David comes immediately after the formulaic “he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” (or, in the case of Ahaz, its opposite: “he did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord”). For Abijam there is a variant that refers to his intentions: “his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father” (1 Kgs 15:3). It is possible that this expresses a real difference and is not merely a formulaic variation.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. EXPLICIT COMPARISONS WITH DAVID IN A DIFFERENT FORMULAIC CONTEXT

Outside the introductory formula, one finds two explicit comparisons with David in a formulaic context—both with regard to his son Solomon. First, Solomon is compared to David in a formula that is far from conventional: “Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father” (1 Kgs 3:3). At the end of his reign he is contrasted to David, here too in an unconventional manner—a harsh condemnation that seems to be redundant: “His heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not wholly follow the Lord, as David his father had done” (1 Kgs 11:4–6).

These two contradictory assessments can be seen as a substitute of sorts for the introductory formula, omitted in the account of Solomon’s reign. Instead of one lukewarm assessment at the start, one finds two evaluations that are polar antitheses, one of them overwhelmingly positive at the beginning, the other intensely negative at the end. There is a deep structural link between these two evaluations, which appear in passages that have parallel themes (I have called them “Solomon and the Lord: Loyalty and the Promise of Reward” [3:1–15]; and “Solomon and the Lord: Disloyalty

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by way of contrast (if we maintain the text); but it qualifies the underlying praise rather than deprecating him: “And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, yet not like David his father; he did in all things as Joash his father had done” (2 Kgs 14:3). Asa is compared to David (1 Kgs 15:11), but a qualification follows soon thereafter: “But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was wholly true to the Lord all his days” (1 Kgs 15:14).

<sup>14</sup> My impression is that this is an intentional reference to the evaluation of Solomon (1 Kgs 11:4; see below, §2) in a passage (vv. 4–6) that refers retrospectively to Rehoboam, Solomon, and David. Noteworthy is the commentary by Samuel Laniado that “his heart” (15:3b) refers to “his father” (mentioned in v. 3a), namely, Rehoboam; see Samuel Laniado, *Keli Yaqar on the Former Prophets, 1 Kings*, Part 2, (ed. E. Bašri; Jerusalem: Mechon Haketav, 1987/8; Hebrew), 550.

and the Announcement of Punishment” [11:1–13]).<sup>15</sup> The two evaluations occupy corresponding places in the Solomon pericope (the second unit and the penultimate unit), and play on the midrash of the king’s name:<sup>16</sup> In the first and favorable evaluation, Solomon/Jedidiah (“beloved of the Lord”) loves the Lord;<sup>17</sup> in the later and negative one, Solomon’s heart, in contrast to his name, is not perfect (ולא ... שלם) with the Lord his God.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See A. Frisch, “The Narrative of Solomon’s Reign in the Book of Kings” (Ph.D. diss., Bar Ilan University, 1986; Hebrew), 36–38 and 42–44; and a shorter version: idem, “Structure and Its Significance: The Narrative of Solomon’s Reign (1 Kings 1–12.24),” *JOT* 51 (1991), 3–14, esp. 10–12.

<sup>16</sup> We attribute these two contradictory assessments to the same author-editor, who uses them to characterize two different periods in Solomon’s reign. A similar division into an initial favorable period, followed by a second and negative one, is conspicuous in the description of David’s reign in the book of Samuel—the “blessing” and the “curse” as Carlson puts it (R. A. Carlson, *David, the Chosen King: A Tradition-Historical Approach to the Second Book of Samuel* [trans. E. J. Sharpe and S. Rudman; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1964], 25ff.; see also the use of the same concepts in the description of Solomon’s reign: A. J. Soggin, “The Davidic-Solomonic Kingdom,” J. H. Hayes and J. M. Miller [eds.], *Israelite and Judaeon History* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977], 366). Differences in the religious evaluation of a king in different periods of his reign are prominent in Chronicles (notably with regard to Rehoboam, Asa, and Joash). In Kings there may be a hint of such a distinction in the report that “the Lord smote the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death” (2 Kgs 15:5), which concludes the account of Uzziah’s reign. Bat-Sheva Brosh (“Complex Royal Characters in the Book of Kings” [Ph.D. diss., Tel Aviv University, 2005; Hebrew]) suggested that there is a change, from favorable to negative, in the theological evaluations of Jeroboam (67, 69–70) and Hezekiah (see 337–370), and from unfavorable to positive in the evaluation of Ahab (70). Cohn, too, writes of Jeroboam’s “transformation from God’s chosen instrument to his despised enemy” (R. L. Cohn, “Literary Technique in the Jeroboam Narrative,” *ZAW* 97 [1985], 25). In the light of this data we cannot agree with the view of Eynikel, rejecting Weippert’s attribution of the two assessments of Solomon to the same hand (R II in her system): “Why would R II have judged Solomon positively in 1 Kings 3:2–3, and negatively to very negatively in 11:4–6 and 11:33? These texts are too contradictory to be by the same author” (E. Eynikel, *The Reform of King Josiah and the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History* [OTS, 33; Leiden: Brill, 1996], 52).

<sup>17</sup> Y. Zakovitch, “The Synonymous Word and Synonymous Name in Name-Midrashim,” *Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 2 (1977), 107 (Hebrew).

<sup>18</sup> See M. Garsiel, *Biblical Names: A Literary Study of Midrashic Derivations and Puns* (trans. Ph. Hackett; Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1991), 206, § 5.3.1 [2]. He also refers to 1 Chr 28:9 and 29:19. In these verses לב/ליב שלם is associated with שלמה as an option available to him (in contrast to the negative homily on the name in Kings [280, n. 90]).



### 3. AN EXPLICIT NON-FORMULAIC COMPARISON WITH DAVID

There are five explicit non-formulaic comparisons of a king to David, interwoven into the plot—all of them relating to Solomon or Jeroboam.<sup>19</sup> Three of the comparisons offer the king the option of being like David, along with the anticipated reward: (1) In his dream vision at Gibeon, Solomon receives the unconditional grant of great wisdom, wealth, and honor. But another gift, at the end of the vision, is conditional: “And if you will walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days” (1 Kgs 3:14). (2) The second of the three parts of the Lord’s message to Solomon, after the dedication of the Temple, contains a similar condition: “And as for you, if you will walk before Me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping My statutes and My ordinances, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel for ever, as I promised David your father” (1 Kgs 9:4–5). (3) A similar conditional promise is made to Jeroboam in the annunciatory prophecy by Ahijah the Shilonite: “And if you will hearken to all that I command you, and will walk in My ways, and do what is right in My eyes by keeping My statutes and My commandments, as David My servant did, I will be with you, and will build you a sure house, as I built for David . . .” (1 Kgs 11:38).

Two other comparisons are retrospective in nature and express disappointment with a king. One of them relates to Solomon: “Because he has forsaken Me, . . . and has not walked in My ways, doing what is right in My eyes and keeping My statutes and My ordinances, as David his father did” (1 Kgs 11:33).<sup>20</sup> The other refers to Jeroboam: “I . . . tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you; and yet you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments, and followed Me with

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<sup>19</sup> This count excludes one other comparison, stated by Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, because the focus there is not on a particular king but instead offers David’s descendants the option of being like him: “Keep with Thy servant David my father what Thou hast promised him, saying, ‘There shall never fail you a man before Me to sit upon the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me as you have walked before Me’” (1 Kgs 8:25).

<sup>20</sup> Even though the verbs are in the plural, given that the verse concludes with “as David his father did”, we may infer that the subject is Solomon, as also follows from the larger context of Ahijah’s prophecy, which explains the break-up of the kingdom as punishment for Solomon’s sin. Many scholars believe that the text here is corrupt. For a different opinion, which identifies this as a sophisticated literary device in which the surface meaning applies to Solomon but there is an allusion that expands the circle of transgressors, see A. Frisch, “Three Syntactical Discontinuities in I Reg 9–11,” *ZAW* 115 (2003), 90–91.

all his heart, doing only that which was right in My eyes” (1 Kgs 14:8). Both evaluations are spoken by Ahijah; both use the expression “doing what is right in My eyes” (לַעֲשׂוֹת הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינַי) referring to David (an expression not found in the other three comparisons considered here). These two assessments create a sort of parallel between Jeroboam and Solomon: even the man raised to royalty to supplant Solomon, because of his sin, ultimately stumbles and is judged negatively as was Solomon.

#### 4. ALLUSIONS TO DAVID BY WAY OF PARALLEL

All of the comparisons to David that have been examined thus far, despite the variety in the context, source (the Lord, a prophet, or the narrator), and goal, have something in common: they are explicit and mention David by name. Now I shall cite four cases that are implicit.

(a) The explicit comparison of Hezekiah to David, in the introductory formula to his reign (2 Kgs 18:3) is supplemented by an implicit comparison: “And the Lord was with him; wherever he went forth, he was successful” (2 Kgs 18:7). This statement echoes what was said about David at the start of his career: the second half of the verse clearly evokes “and David went forth and was successful wherever Saul sent him” (1 Sam 18:5),<sup>21</sup> while the first part of the verse is reminiscent of what one reads some nine verses later: “And David was successful in all his undertakings; for the Lord was with him” (1 Sam 18:14).<sup>22</sup> I use this example to introduce the second type of comparison, in which David is not mentioned by

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<sup>21</sup> Brosh, who briefly notes the similarity between these verses (1 Sam 18:5 and 2 Kgs 18:7), explains it as expressing an analogy between Hezekiah and Solomon, because David’s use of the verb *השכיל* in his deathbed charge to Solomon (1 Kgs 2:3) creates, she maintains, an analogy between Solomon and David. In other words, the analogy between Hezekiah and David is indirect and runs through Solomon (Solomon || David; Hezekiah || Solomon). See Brosh, “Complex Royal Characters,” 95. Despite the literary links between the descriptions of Solomon and Hezekiah (as well as Josiah) in Kings, in our case, in light of the findings presented here, we should probably see this as an analogy between Hezekiah and David as well as between Solomon and David. The latter consists chiefly of 1 Sam 18:5 and 1 Kgs 2:3: linguistically, the verses share not only the verb *השכיל* but also the locution *כל אשר*; thematically, they both express a transfer of authority by the reigning monarch (Saul to David, David to Solomon) along with an indication that the heir is acceptable to a third party (in David’s case, the people; in Solomon’s case, the Lord—if he acts in accordance with the terms of the testament).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Provan, *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings*, 117. He adds the defeat of the Philistines in battle as another element unique to David (1 Sam 16:27, 19:8; 2 Sam 8:1) and Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:8 *et passim*).

name, because the explicit reference to David in v. 3 lends support to reading v. 7 as an implicit reference to him.<sup>23</sup>

(b) All of the comparisons that have been considered thus far are made by the narrator, by the Lord, or by His emissary. One should also consider verses spoken by the characters themselves. In his prayer to the Lord, Hezekiah proclaims, “So now, O Lord our God, save us (הושיענו), I beseech thee, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that (וידעו כל... הארץ כי) Thou, O Lord, art God (אלהים) alone” (2 Kgs 19:19). This appeal calls to mind David’s proclamation before he goes out to face Goliath: “... that all the earth may know that (וידעו כל הארץ כי) there is a God (אלהים) in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord ... saves (יהושיע)” (1 Sam 17:46–47). Even closer is Hezekiah’s statement during his illness, “I have walked before Thee in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in Thy sight” (2 Kgs 20:3), to Solomon’s description of his father David’s conduct: “He walked before Thee in faithfulness ... and in uprightness of heart” (1 Kgs 3:6).<sup>24</sup> The explanation I would propose for this echo (though others may be possible) is that by the identical phrasing the author-editor of the book of Kings suggested a similarity between Hezekiah and his ancestor David, the founder of the royal line. Here one should add Cohn’s suggestion that the prophet’s words to Hezekiah, two verses later (2 Kgs 20:5), constitute an implicit comparison to David.<sup>25</sup> If so, here one has an instructive juxtaposition of two points of view—Hezekiah’s, entreat-

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<sup>23</sup> Cohn found another allusion to David in the account of Hezekiah’s reign in the representation of the Lord, in Isaiah’s prophecy of his recovery, as “the God of David your father” (2 Kgs 20:5). See R. L. Cohn, *2 Kings* (Berit Olam; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 142.

<sup>24</sup> The collocation of the root הל"ך with “before You (לפניך)” and “in faithfulness (באמת)” is found only in these two passages and in David’s deathbed charge to Solomon, which sketches out the program for the dynasty: “If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul” (1 Kings 2:4). Note that in Hezekiah’s case he is making a retrospective declaration about himself to God, whereas for Solomon this is the vocation imposed on him (and his descendants). Note too that the account of Hezekiah’s reign includes an implicit comparison between him and Solomon, which is clearly in Hezekiah’s favor: “he clung to the Lord” (2 Kgs 18:6) vis-à-vis Solomon, who “clung to [foreign women] in love” (1 Kgs 11:2) (cf. Auld, *Kings Without Privilege*, 101); “he did not turn away (סר) from following him” (2 Kgs 18:6) vis-à-vis the repeated use of the verb נטה, a synonym for סר, in 1 Kings 11 (vv. 2, 3, 4, and 9); and the domain to which the extravagant praise applies: for Solomon, the great wisdom bestowed upon him (1 Kgs 3:12), but for Hezekiah his conduct (2 Kgs 18:5). For a comprehensive discussion of superlative formulas in the book of Kings, see G. N. Knoppers, “‘There Was None Like Him’: Incomparability in the Books of Kings,” *CBQ* 54 (1992), 411–431.

<sup>25</sup> See n. 23.

ing the Lord, and that of the Lord, who begins His response with a hint of his great esteem for the king: he resembles David.

(c) In the wake of these allusions to David in the account of Hezekiah's reign one should go back to two examples earlier in the book. The first is in 1 Kings 1, where there seems to be an implicit parallel between Solomon and David. When Solomon is anointed one is told that "Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent, and anointed Solomon" (1 Kgs 1:39). The wording calls to mind the anointing of David himself: "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers" (1 Sam 16:13). Note that the expression "horn of oil" is found only in these two passages (in 1 Samuel 16 not only in the performance clause, as in 1 Kings 1, but also in the command clause in v. 1). This parallel makes a statement about the similarity between the anointing of Solomon and that of his father, who was the youngest of Jesse's sons.<sup>26</sup> The precedent of David indicates that the election falls on the one who is worthiest to rule, and not necessarily on the first-born son.<sup>27</sup> This undercuts Adonijah's main claim to the throne; or, as Solomon puts it in the next chapter, "Ask for him the kingdom also; for he is my elder brother" (1 Kgs 2:22). Here the parallel is not one of moral evaluation but of political and legal procedure. All the same it does have moral significance, because it emphasizes that Solomon is no usurper and achieves the crown legitimately.

(d) The second earlier example comes from the story of Jehu. Anointing Jehu, the young prophet proclaims: "Thus says the Lord the God of Israel, I have anointed you king (משחתִיךָ לַמֶּלֶךְ) over the people of the Lord, over Israel" (2 Kgs 9:6). Readers may hear the echo of Nathan's review of David's election: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king (משחתִיךָ לַמֶּלֶךְ) over Israel'" (2 Sam. 12:7). It bears note that the only occurrences of the collocation משחתִיךָ לַמֶּלֶךְ in the Bible refer to these two kings (twice more about Jehu: 2 Kgs 9:3 and 12). The continuation of Nathan's rebuke of David also finds its unique parallel in the story of Jehu. Thus Nathan: "I gave you your master's house (את בית אדניך), and your master's wives into your bosom" (2 Sam. 12:8); and the young prophet: "And you shall strike down the house of Ahab your master (את בית אחאב אדניך)" (2 Kgs 9:7).<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> For a different explanation see T. N. D. Mettinger, *King and Messiah: The Civil and Sacral Legitimation of the Israelite Kings* (CBOTS, 8; Lund: CWR Gleerup, 1976), 206.

<sup>27</sup> For a thorough literary and conceptual analysis of the theme of the chosen son vs. the first-born son (from Abel and Cain to Solomon and Adonijah), see A. Kariv, *The Seven Pillars of the Bible: Essays of Biblical People and Biblical Ideas* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1970), 10–16 (Hebrew).

<sup>28</sup> את בית אדניך is found only in these two verses; בית אדניך, without the accusative particle, only in Gen 44:8 and Isa 22:18.

This echo highlights the theological legitimacy of Jehu's coup, including the annihilation of Ahab's family.

### 5. ALLUSIONS TO DAVID BY WAY OF CONTRAST

An implicit comparison with David may be intended not only to point out a resemblance to him, but also in order to sharpen the difference between a particular king and the founder of the dynasty. I will look at three examples; later I will re-examine the first two from a broader perspective.

(a) In 1 Kings 1 David's oldest surviving son, Adonijah, asserts that he should inherit the throne. His status as heir presumptive is based on his being the oldest surviving brother, as reflected in what Solomon says to Bathsheba. Adonijah himself seems to allude to this right. I accept Zalewski's explanation that when he tells Bathsheba, "You know that the kingdom was mine" (1 Kgs 2:15), Adonijah is referring to his right to the throne by virtue of seniority.<sup>29</sup> But what Adonijah says explicitly, and after the fact, is noted by the narrator himself "in real time": "Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, 'I will be king.' ... He was born next after Absalom. He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest; and they followed Adonijah and helped him" (1 Kgs 1:5–7). But as a number of scholars have demonstrated, here, in what would be the appropriate location for Adonijah's assertion of his right, the narrator undercuts him, depicting him as Absalom redux, a son who rebels against his father.<sup>30</sup> What is worth noting though, is the covert, implicit parallel to David. The passage creates an impression of continuity and of loyalty to David. The two public figures who support Adonijah are among David's most veteran supporters, those who followed him in the political and geographical wilderness and were always devoted to him. Several verses later one reads that "Adonijah ... invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah" (1 Kgs 1:9) to his coronation feast. Several verses earlier one is told that David "had never scolded him, asking: 'Why did you do that?'" (1 Kgs 1:6). I believe that v. 7 conceals a sharp contrast between Adonijah and his father David: Adonijah is presented as a conspirator out to seize power, unlike his father, whose rival's military commander, Abner, rallied support for him, and to whom the people's representatives came in Hebron to offer him the

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<sup>29</sup> S. Zalewski, *Solomon's Ascension to the Throne: Studies in the Books of Kings and Chronicles* (Jerusalem: Y. Markus, 1981), 129, 140 (Hebrew).

<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., R. N. Whybray, *The Succession Narrative: A Study of II Samuel 9–20; I Kings 1 and 2* (London: SCM Press, 1968), 30–31; M. Garsiel, *The Kingdom of David: Studies in History and Inquiries in Historiography* (Tel Aviv: Don, 1975), 188–189, 194 (Hebrew); J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel, I: King David (II Sam. 9–20 & I Kings 1–2)* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1981), 348–349.

crown of Israel. Verbally, this contrast is embodied in two verses: “He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest; and they followed Adonijah and helped him” (1 Kgs 1:7); “And Abner conferred with the elders of Israel, saying, ‘For some time past you have been seeking David as king over you’” (2 Sam 3:17). The focus here is on contrasting paths to the throne; the difference between someone who conspires to seize power and someone who is deemed worthy of kingship and is offered power on a silver platter—like a true prophet who does not ask for his vocation, but has his mission imposed on him.

(b) When the Lord appears to Solomon late in his reign He informs him of his punishment: “I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days. . . . I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David My servant and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen” (1 Kgs 11:11–13). Reward and punishment are carried over from generation to generation—a basic assumption of the book of Kings (in contrast to Chronicles): through David’s merit, the punishment will be delayed until after Solomon’s death and its severity will be tempered. When it comes it will be in the time of his son—because of the father’s actions rather than the son’s.<sup>31</sup> The theological justification places great emphasis on the word “servant.” Solomon, who violated the royal covenant (“Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded you” [1 Kgs 11:11]), will be punished measure for measure: his “servant” will violate his oath to the king and supplant him on the throne. Solomon’s official is his “servant”, and his father David is “My servant.” But Solomon himself is not a servant; this signal omission emphasizes the contrast between Solomon and David. The failure to refer to Solomon here as the “servant” of the Lord is conspicuous because readers remember that, early in his reign, Solomon applied this designation to himself three times during the dream-vision at Gibeon, when he represented himself as his father’s heir (3:7, 8, 9), as well as in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple (8:28 [twice], 29, 30, 52).

(c) Above (4d) I noted the parallels between Jehu and David. Now I turn to the contrasts between them. Two consecutive verses reflect the theological complexity of assessing Jehu: “Because you have done well in carrying out what is right in My eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart. . . . But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the Lord the God of Israel with all his heart” (2 Kgs 10:30–31). This contrasts with Ahijah’s display of David as a standard of right behavior, in his rebuke of Jeroboam: “and yet you have not been like My servant David,

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<sup>31</sup> For this idea as characteristic of the book of Kings see S. Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought* (trans. A. Barber; Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1997), 156–160.

who kept My commandments, and walked after Me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in My eyes” (1 Kgs 14:8). Even if the two verses about Jehu have different sources (the first probably originating in an ancient prophetic tradition, whereas the second is an editorial addition), the author-editor set them one after the other in order to express the complex verdict on this king: Jehu accomplished his mission of uprooting the House of Ahab, but was not wholly devoted to the Lord, as had been expected. The two verses’ echo of the single verse about David encourages the readers to approach them as two facets of the same situation rather than as separate judgments.<sup>32</sup>

## 6. ALLUSIONS TO DAVID IN THE BURIAL FORMULA

I would like to open a window on a point that may stir up controversy, but which I see no reason to ignore: the burial formula that is part of the summary of a king’s reign. The normal phrasing of the burial of kings of Judah in the book of Kings is “he was buried [*or*: they buried him] in the city of David.” On four occasions, however, one encounters the variant “in the city of his father David.” This is first found concerning Solomon (1 Kgs 11:43), where it seems to be perfectly natural (although the tight syntactic link between “his father” and “David”, breaks up or at least distorts the set phrase “city of David”).<sup>33</sup> The same phrase, “in the city of his father David”, recurs with Asa (15:24), his son Jehoshaphat (22:51), and Jotham (2 Kgs 15:38).<sup>34</sup> The assessments of all three kings are explicitly favorable, to one degree or another. With Asa, the allusion detected in the death formula complements the explicit praise in the introductory formula to his reign (1 Kgs 15:11), mentioned above.<sup>35</sup> With regard to Jehoshaphat, one reads, “He walked in all

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<sup>32</sup> Rozenson deals at some length with the parallel between Jehu and David and notes other verses and details than these. His interpretation is different than mine, too: he focuses on the tension between the fulfillment of the prophet’s directive and the cruel extermination of Ahab’s family. See Y. Rozenson, “A Plotter or the ‘King of God’s People’? Jehu Compared to David,” *Megadim* 32 (2000), 69–81 (Hebrew).

<sup>33</sup> Ehrlich sensed this difficulty and suggested the conjectural emendation “in the tomb of David” (A. B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel* VII [Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1914], 243).

<sup>34</sup> On the phrase “in the city of his father David” as a judgment, see E. J. Smit, “Death and Burial Formulas in Kings and Chronicles Relating to the Kings of Judah”, in *Biblical Essays: Proceedings of the Ninth Meeting of “Die Ou Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika”* (Potchefstroom: [s.n.], 1966), 175, 176.

<sup>35</sup> This formulaic comparison of Asa to David can be added to what we read about Asa: “And he brought the votive gifts of his father into the house of the Lord and his own votive gifts, silver, and gold, and vessels” (1 Kgs 15:15). This echoes what Solomon did when the Temple was completed: “And Solomon brought the votive gifts of David his father, the silver, the gold, and the

the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the Lord” (1 Kgs 22:43)—and Asa is said to have walked in the path of David. It is true that for Jotham the situation is more complicated: “And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father Uzziah had done” (2 Kgs 15:34), and of Uzziah it is said that he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord like his father Amaziah. However, the evaluation of Amaziah is that “he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, yet not like David his father; he did in all things as Joash his father had done” (2 Kgs 14:3). Does this constitute another argument against the authenticity of the qualifying “yet not like David” applied to Amaziah?

Incidentally, an important but lesser-known traditional Jewish commentator, Samuel Laniado (sixteenth century), remarked on the significance of the phrase “his father David” with regard to Asa: “He said ‘in the city of his father David’ that he made David like his father by following in his righteous path, and even though David was not his father” (he does not make a similar comment, though, where the same phrase appears elsewhere).<sup>36</sup>

## 7. A SYSTEM OF INVERTED COMPARISONS

So far I have considered each comparison separately. But the book of Kings also contains a sophisticated and complex system of inter-linked comparisons, horizontal and vertical: horizontally—the relations among the various characters; vertically – the development and change in the assessment of the characters.

Solomon || David (§§a–b)  
 Adonijah || Absalom, Adonijah <> David (§c)  
 Solomon <> David (§d)  
 Jeroboam || David (§e)  
 Solomon || Saul (§f)  
 Jeroboam <> David (§g)

(a) In the early chapters of his reign Solomon is compared to his father David. He truly is David’s successor, as is emphasized in the concluding formula of David’s reign: “So Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father” (1 Kgs 2:12). This continuity invites readers to compare them.<sup>37</sup> Solomon himself insists on this continuity in his message to Hiram—the difference in the nature of his reign, an age of peace, unlike the wars of his father’s time, is actual-

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*vessels*, and stored them in the treasuries of *the house of the Lord*” (1 Kgs 7:51). The text itself highlights that Solomon fulfilled David’s plans, even representing the latter as the initiator of the construction of the Temple; Asa follows in the footsteps of Solomon, who followed David.

<sup>36</sup> Laniado, *Keli Yaqar*, 566.

<sup>37</sup> See Garsiel, *The First Book of Samuel*, 17–18 (Eng., 18–19).



ly a sign of continuity, in that Solomon can now bring to fruition his father's plan to build the Temple (1 Kgs 5:15–20 [RSV 1–6]).

(b) In the theological assessment, too, Solomon is compared to his father, as mentioned above. Twice the Lord offers him the option of being like David: in the vision at Gibeon, “And if you will walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days” (1 Kgs 3:14); and in the revelation after the dedication of the Temple: “And as for you, if you will walk before Me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping My statutes and My ordinances, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel for ever, as I promised David your father” (1 Kgs 9:4–5). This option is not merely theoretical. As the narrator emphasizes, Solomon did realize it: “Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father” (1 Kgs 3:3).

(c) Solomon's rival for the throne, Adonijah, is presented in 1 Kings 1 as someone whose conduct is different from that of his father, in that he actively seeks power (as noted above). Alongside this contrast there is also a resemblance between Adonijah and David's mutinous son Absalom (1 Kgs 1:5–6). This is another layer in another reversing comparison, with Absalom at its center, but I shall not consider it here.

(d) By the end of Solomon's reign the situation is entirely different. Now Solomon is depicted as disloyal to his father's path. I have already looked at one element of this, 1 Kgs 11:11–13, and the use of the word “servant” there.

(e) Solomon's punishment is that an outsider, a one-time official in his administration, rather than his flesh and blood, succeeds him. Jeroboam, too, is offered the possibility of being like David (as noted above). Ahijah says this in so many words: “And if you will hearken to all that I command you, and will walk in My ways, and do what is right in My eyes by keeping My statutes and My commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you, and will build you a sure house, as I built for David ...” (1 Kgs 11:38). In addition to the overt reference, there are linguistic echoes that direct readers back to David.<sup>38</sup> Ahijah's charge to Jeroboam supplements the hints provided by the narrator in the frame of histori-

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<sup>38</sup> In Nathan's vision, the words “I will be with you” refer to the closeness between the Lord and David (2 Sam 7:9). Even earlier, one of Saul's young men, recommending David, notes that “the Lord is with him” (1 Sam 16:18). The phrase in the previous verse, “you shall reign over all that your soul desires” (1 Kgs 11:37), repeats word for word the language used by Abner when he promises to make David king over all Israel (2 Sam 3:21). For this link see further Frisch, “The Narrative of Solomon's Reign”, 117–118, 342–343; G. N. Knoppers, *Two Nations under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993) 1, 201–203.

cal material about Jeroboam into which Ahijah's meeting with him is embedded (1 Kgs 11:26–28, 40): Jeroboam is described as an “Ephraimite” (אֶפְרַתִּי), an “able man” (גִּבּוֹר חַיִּל), and a “young man” (נָעַר), after which Solomon names him to a senior position in light of the talent he has shown. As the story continues, he is outlawed by Solomon, flees to a foreign country, and returns home only after the death of his royal persecutor (the last detail is not in 1 Kgs 11, but in the story of the dissolution of the united monarchy [1 Kgs 12:2–3]). In all of these, Jeroboam repeats elements of David's career.<sup>39</sup> I should also consider Gooding's idea that the omission, in the standard version of the Septuagint, of the reference to Jeroboam in the context of the parley in Shechem between Rehoboam and the tribes, is meant to accentuate the parallel between Jeroboam and David by eliminating any active moves on his part to achieve the crown, even after the death of the king he is supposed to succeed.<sup>40</sup>

(f) Here there is an interesting link that enhances the picture. Because Solomon no longer resembles David, but Jeroboam does, there is a parallel between Solomon and Saul. Most conspicuous, and noted by many in the past, is the symbolic rending of the cloak when Ahijah meets Jeroboam (11:29–39), echoing the fateful meeting between Samuel and Saul (1 Sam 15:27–29).<sup>41</sup> I would argue that the matter is not so simple and that there are also significant differences between the two incidents.<sup>42</sup> In any case, within the compass of the full Saul and Solomon cycles there is a closer parallel: Ahijah's prophecy, I believe, is much more like Samuel's remarks to Saul at Endor (1 Sam 28:16–19), where, as in Ahijah's prophecy, the future monarch is mentioned by name. By contrast,

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<sup>39</sup> Note that when the term אֶפְרַתִּי is applied to David (or his father) in 1 Sam 17:12, it has a different sense. But see M. Leuchter, “Jeroboam the Ephraimite,” *JBL* 125 (2006), 60–62.

<sup>40</sup> See D. W. Gooding, “The Septuagint's Rival Version of Jeroboam's Rise to Power,” *VT* 17 (1967), 185–186.

<sup>41</sup> For the similarity of the symbolic rending of the garment in the cases of Jeroboam and Saul, see, e.g., J. Gray, *I & II Kings: A Commentary* (2nd ed.; OTL, 9a; London: SCM Press, 1970), 295; E. Würthwein, *Das erste Buch der Könige. Kapitel 1-16* (ATD, 11/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 143; G. H. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984) 1, 234.

<sup>42</sup> We can note the following differences: the person to whom the symbolic action is addressed (the king; the future king); the person who tears the garment (evidently the king, and unintentionally; the prophet, intentionally); how the garment is ripped (the hem is torn off; the entire garment is torn into twelve pieces); when the kingdom will be lost (“this day”; not stated explicitly, but only “from his son's hand” [v. 35]); and the scale of the lost sovereignty (the entire kingdom; secession of the majority). For attention to some of these differences, see Leuchter, “Jeroboam the Ephraimite,” 53 n. 11.

in 1 Samuel 15, as in the prophecy to Solomon in 1 Kgs 11:11–13, the man who will replace the deposed king is not named.

(g) The next stage in the reversals is the disappointment with Jeroboam. Here Jeroboam is depicted as no longer resembling David. Ahijah states this contrast explicitly to Jeroboam's wife, as mentioned above.

These sets of parallels tighten the links between three different periods and emphasize the reversals from one to another: (1) the beginning of Solomon's reign; (2) the end of Solomon's reign and the beginning of Jeroboam's; (3) the end of Jeroboam's reign. The resemblance to David provides substance to the latent potential of the new leader, a potential of appropriate action and corresponding reward. The contrast to David expresses disappointment with him. The linkage of Solomon and Saul exemplifies the personal obligation of the monarch. It is not enough to be the "son of." You must also prove yourself by your own behavior; if you fail to do so, you will be like Saul, the king who did not establish a royal house.<sup>43</sup>

### **8. A SHORT SUMMARY: COMPARISON TO DAVID— METHODS AND OBJECTS**

David's death is recounted in 1 Kgs 2:10. As discussed above, though, this character who leaves the world at the very beginning of the book is mentioned throughout it. The founding father of the royal house of Judah is a fixed reference throughout the book.

The present study has dealt only with references that involve comparisons to him. It has advanced step by step, starting with explicit references that take him as a standard for evaluation in the opening formula of kings, other formulas and non-formulaic statements, and the declarations by the Lord and His prophets to Solomon and Jeroboam. It continued with implicit comparisons latent in linguistic echoes, noting that in some places certain elements in the passage—an explicit comparison to David or an innocent mention of his name—direct readers to make the comparison. It concluded with the ramified system of reversing parallels, in which the various comparisons that were addressed separately are linked together.

What is the objective of comparing a king to David? The present study suggests, in general terms, seven objectives:

1. to make the king's righteousness concrete ("as David his father had done"; "he walked in all the ways of David his father");
2. to qualify a positive assessment of the king ("but not like David", as in the comparison and subsequent contrast be-

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<sup>43</sup> For an extended discussion of the analogies with David in the Solomon narrative as a system of reversing parallels, see Frisch, "The Narrative of Solomon's Reign," 102–108.

- tween Jehu and David) or to express a negative evaluation of him (Solomon is not “my servant” as David was);
3. to insist on the negative side of a king’s character or deeds (Adonijah as pursuing the crown);
  4. to buttress the legitimacy of a king who came to power the way David did (the anointing of Solomon resembles that of David; the anointing of Jehu and the charge laid upon him by the prophet resemble those of David);
  5. to emphasize the reward received by the king (Hezekiah succeeds in everything and the Lord is with him, as was the case with David; a faithful house, like David’s, is an option for Jeroboam);
  6. to emphasize the idea of kingship as a personal election that depends on conduct and is not an automatic inheritance (Jeroboam || David; Solomon < > David);
  7. to tighten the links between different periods and emphasize the reversals from one to another (the system of inverted analogies).

Indeed, David king of Israel is alive and present even in a book that begins with his death.