STUDIES IN THE LANGUAGE AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF 2 SAMUEL

A Dissertation in History

by

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ABSTRACT

The following work is a collection of six essays each of which began as an investigation into the language of 2 Samuel. Out of the broad examination of the language of the book, certain lexical, grammatical and syntactical elements stood out, not only for their particular linguistic nature or function, but because the language choices they represent speak to larger thematic, narrative and historiographical concerns. While the following essays cannot comprehensively describe the language of 2 Samuel, they each make some statement about the method, intention and context of the book’s composition. In each case study, something unusual about the text—a rare lexeme, an unexpected grammatical feature—serves as a basis for further analysis. These textual “irritants” can seem insignificant alone. But each of the following studies demonstrates that these small details are all part of a larger intricate structure of the language of 2 Samuel. The results of the analyses in two of the studies have implications for how we understand the creation and function of the final chapters of 2 Samuel, the so-called “appendix” or “miscellany”. Four other studies use grammatical and lexical elements to address issues of David’s character and the choices made by the author in creating his story of David.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

4QSAM$^{a,b,c}$ FOR QUMRAN SCROLL MATERIAL, SEE F.M. CROSS, D. W. PARRY, R.J. SALEY AND E. ULRICH, QUMRAN CAVE 4 – XII, 1-2 SAMUEL. DISCOVERIES IN THE JUDEAN DESERT SERIES, XVII; OXFORD: CLARENDON, 2005.


AB ANCHOR BIBLE

AIAR W.F. ALBRIGHT INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

AnBib ANALECTA BIBLICA

AOS AMERICAN ORIENTAL SERIES

ASOR AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH

BA BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGIST

BASOR BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH

BETL BIBLIOTHECA EPHEMERIDUM THEOLOGICARUM LOVANIENSIIUM

BSOAS BULLETIN OF THE SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

BDB THE BROWN-DRIVER-BRIGGS HEBREW AND ENGLISH LEXICON

B-L HANS BAUER AND PONTUS LEANDER, HISTORISCHE GRAMATIK DER HEBRÄISCHEN SPRACHE DES ALTEN TESTAMENTES

Bib BIBLICA

BibOr BIBLICA ET ORIENTALIA

BGr CARL BROCKELMANN, GRUNDRISS DER VERGLEICHENDEN GRAMMATIK DER SEMITISCHEN SPRACHEN

BR BIBLE REVIEW

BTB BIBLICAL THEOLOGY BULLETIN

BWAT BEITRÄGE ZUR WISSENSCHAFT VOM ALTEN TESTAMENT

BZAW BEIHEFTE ZUR ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR DIE ALTTESTAMENTLICHE WISSENSCHAFT

BZABR BEIHEFTE ZUR ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR ALTORIENTALISCHE UND BIBLISCHE RECHTSGESCHICHTE

CBQ CATHOLIC BIBLICAL QUARTERLY

CBQMS CATHOLIC BIBLICAL QUARTERLY MONOGRAPH SERIES
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<td>CONJECTANEA BIBLICA OLD TESTAMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQR</td>
<td>CHURCH QUARTERLY REVIEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBib</td>
<td>ETUDES BIBLIQUES</td>
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<td>FAT</td>
<td>FORSCHUNGEN ZUM ALTEN TESTAMENT</td>
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<td>FOTL</td>
<td>THE FORMS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE</td>
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<td>G-K</td>
<td>WILHELM GESENIUS, EMIL KAUTZSCH, ARTHUR ERNEST COWLEY, HEBREW GRAMMAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>HALOT</td>
<td>THE HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>HB</td>
<td>HEBREW BIBLE</td>
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<td>HS</td>
<td>HEBREW STUDIES</td>
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<td>HSM</td>
<td>HARVARD SEMITIC MONOGRAPHS</td>
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<td>HSS</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBC</td>
<td>INTERPRETATION: A BIBLE COMMENTARY FOR TEACHING AND PREACHING</td>
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<td>IES</td>
<td>ISRAEL EXPLORATION SOCIETY</td>
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<td>PAUL JOÔON AND T. MURAOKA, A GRAMMAR OF BIBLICAL HEBREW</td>
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<td>JBL</td>
<td>JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE</td>
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<td>JBQ</td>
<td>JEWISH BIBLE QUARTERLY</td>
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<td>JNES</td>
<td>JOURNAL OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES</td>
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<td>JSOTSup</td>
<td>JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SUPPLEMENT SERIES</td>
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<td>JSS</td>
<td>JOURNAL OF SEMITIC STUDIES</td>
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<td>KOMMENTAR ZUM ALTEN TESTAMENT</td>
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<td>KeH</td>
<td>KURZGEFASSTES EXEGETISCHES HANDBUCH ZUM ALTEN TESTAMENT</td>
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<td>KURZER HAND-COMMENTAR ZUM ALTEN TESTAMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCB</td>
<td>New Century Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTG</td>
<td>Neue Theologische Grundrisse</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLA</td>
<td>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTL</td>
<td>Old Testament Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Revue Biblique</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>Die Schriften des Alten Testaments</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBL</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBLDS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBOT</td>
<td>The Sacred Books of the Old Testament</td>
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<td>SBT</td>
<td>Studies in Biblical Theology</td>
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<td>SHCANE</td>
<td>Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOTSMS</td>
<td>Society for Old Testament Study Monographs</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSN</td>
<td>Studia Semitica Neerlandica</td>
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<td>SubBi</td>
<td>Subsidia Biblica</td>
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<td>SWBA</td>
<td>Social World of Biblical Antiquity</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Lastly, I thank Matt for listening to many years of dissertation talk and only rarely complaining.
Chapter 1: The Composition of 2 Samuel

Introduction

The books of Samuel contain the story of David, from his idyllic youth and his stormy rise to power to his celebrated reign as king over all Israel. In telling the story of David, and Saul, and to some extent Solomon, the Samuel tradition provides a critical piece of Israel’s foundation narrative. The account of King David, in particular, cannot be separated from what would become the national identity of ancient Israel. While conflicting opinions exist as to whether the accounts in Samuel were intended by their authors to be an historical narrative of David, the text itself would seem to answer this question, as it puts forth an account of one of its heroic founder-figures—his rise to power, his exploits good and bad, his reign as king, his life and death. Frequently, the trouble in this debate hinges on our modern sensibility about whether a *history* should be an accurate, reliable version of events.¹ Whether or not the events of 2 Samuel are, by our standards, accurate or close to accurate, they have been presented as though they provide a history of the personal and professional life of David within the context of the foundation of Israel’s national identity.

2 Samuel is a long, coherent narrative which provides a large block of biblical text that may be studied as a whole in order to access the narrative mechanisms of its author. To study the way language elements are used throughout a given corpus, the work must be long enough to provide adequate data, but homogeneous enough to avoid confusion between sources with different characteristics or origins.² With just under 16,000 words, 2 Samuel is substantial, and provides us with considerable data as its content attests a great variety of language elements. Because the text covers a sweeping array of stories, from love and family matters

¹ I will return to this issue below in Chapter 7.
² Such criteria have been accepted and utilized in a number of related studies. C. Miller puts it succinctly: “The goal in delimiting the corpus for a linguistic study is to arrive at a body of data which is representative, reasonably extensive, and relatively homogeneous.” C. Miller, *The Representation of Speech in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: A Linguistic Analysis* (HSM 55; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 19. See also A.J. Greimas, *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 163-66. It is worth noting that Miller’s corpus comprises the material from Gen to 2 Kgs, a selection rather less homogeneous than the corpus used for this study.
to battle and spycraft, the language is rich with interesting lexemes, unique phraseology, and complex structures. Because 2 Samuel contains so many stories involving women, for example, feminine forms abound. Because many conversations are recounted, both direct and indirect speech syntax is plentiful. Because the story of David is one filled with intrigue, humor, and irony, examples of telltale puns, unusual vocabulary, and colloquial, and at times emotive, turns of phrase are numerous.

Further, in 2 Samuel we find cohesion in the content of the story itself, and the literary characteristics of much of 2 Samuel attest a singular tradition. Though we might find small inclusions of discrete material, the overwhelming bulk of the narrative is an organized, structurally sound story. In it, the topics presented include a substantial series of publically recognized events. That is, the text discusses events in the life of a king, his subjects, an army, and the political machinations therein. Because this information is unrestricted in its dissemination, (as opposed to, for example, Samuel’s birth story in 1 Sam) the composer is forced into producing a text which can survive both behind closed doors as well as in the public arena. A community, aware of the trials and tribulations of its hero-king will tolerate a narrative that spins to favor the king, but not one which overly lies about him. Therefore, the narrative, from beginning to end, however crafty its author’s intention, must be tighter and more careful than a work which deals with purely private, or mythic, information; the audience will hold matters of public record to a higher standard than personal stories.

The credibility in the eye, or ear, of the public audience of a work that has been heavily compiled and edited is hampered by exactly the kind of problem we find in 1 Sam 16 and 17. The doublets, contradictions and seams of fragmentary texts are less likely to persuade. The content of 2 Samuel, then, by its very nature, must exist within a singular tradition. The literary assessments of 2 Samuel as well as its place in the historiographic tradition of

3 B. Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 107ff., 112. This is essentially a paraphrase of Halpern’s Tiglath-Pileser Principle, see p.124ff. See also below n. 108. Put a different way, Rost remarked, “It can hardly be assumed that somebody would later have dared to expose David in this way without sound evidence.” L. Rost, *The Succession to the Throne of David* (trans. David Gunn; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982), 104. Although he is taking about dating the succession narrative, the idea is all the more true for anyone recording public events more or less contemporaneously to their occurrence. Much of the material in 2 Sam must have a kind of social credibility (not to equate with our ideas of historical accuracy, necessarily) to critique and sometimes denigrate David as it does.
ancient Israel, attest the uniformity of its narrative, even if they do not the absolute unity of its composition.

The six studies which follow derive from passages found throughout the second book of Samuel, focusing on a wide range of lexical, grammatical, and literary components. Taken together these discrete studies provide insight into the language, methods and goals of the author of David’s story—what sort of language he used and for what specific purposes. In each case study, something unusual about the text—a rare lexeme, an unexpected grammatical feature, etc.—serves as a basis for further analysis. These textual “irritants” can seem insignificant alone. But together the following studies demonstrate that these small details are part of a larger intricate structure of the language of 2 Samuel.

The topic of the first two studies is the use of the plural demonstrative pronoun אלה. In the first study, a particular syntactic construction in 2 Sam 21 is analyzed and in the second, the distribution patterns of the plural demonstrative pronoun in the narrative are investigated. The results of these linguistic analyses have implications for how we understand the relationship between different parts of the 2 Samuel narrative, including the role of the final chapters of 2 Samuel, the so-called “appendix” or “miscellany”. The third study also deals with the nature of the “appendix” and the relationship between the Samuel tradition and material from the Tetrateuch. Through a constellation of linguistic and thematic parallels, the influence of 2 Sam 21 and 2 Sam 24 on several passages from the book of Numbers is investigated. The fourth and fifth studies use grammatical and lexical elements to address issues of David’s character and the choices made by the author in creating his story David. The meaning and usage of the root יהודי in 2 Sam 18:14, the story of Absalom’s death and an unusual verb form in 2 Sam 4:10, ואוحا, in the story of Ishbaal’s death, are shown to convey apologetic characteristics in the composition of the text. The sixth study investigates imperative forms and their augments used in the Bathsheba and Tamar stories and related texts. Each of these studies can stand alone. But, the broader goal of this project is to elicit from these rather focused investigations any information which can speak to larger questions concerning the intentions of the author, what message this composition is meant to convey, and the success in conveying that message.
Source and Redaction in 2 Samuel: Early Criticism

One of the presuppositions of this study is that the vast majority of 2 Samuel represents a single narrative which is not burdened with a great deal of editorializing; many hold that 2 Samuel contains almost no material attributable to a Deuteronomistic editor. Nor is the text complicated by interwoven source strands, as is can be seen in 1 Samuel. To offer a well-known example, David is introduced to Saul in two separate and irreconcilable accounts. In 1 Sam 16, Saul, requiring solace from his affliction of evil spirit, receives David into his service as a musician and companion. Later, at the end of 1 Sam 17, Saul, impressed by seeing David’s prowess in defeating the Philistine warrior, not only asks his general Abner who this boy is, but also directly asks David to introduce himself. Even the most flexible literary gymnasts would have difficulty reconciling these two accounts. There are other doublets: Saul is rejected by Yahweh twice (1 Sam 13; 15), David joins the Philistines twice (1 Sam 21; 27), David allows Saul to live twice (1 Sam 24; 26). The nature of 1 Samuel is generally agreed upon; it is not composed of homogeneous text and shows evidence of at least two main sources running throughout. But the doublets present in the first part of Samuel do not permeate into the narrative of 2 Samuel, ceasing just near the (late) separation between the two books. The following review of scholarship on the compositional history of Samuel leads to the assertion that 2 Samuel may be treated as a whole for the purposes of investigating the nature of its language, and, by extension, what that language tells us about the kind of history writing we find in the David story. It is not necessary that one author, at one time, sat and wrote 2 Samuel from first verse to last. Indeed, as many of the works reviewed below attest, this is almost certainly not the case. However, as two centuries of modern scholarship has shown, editorial intervention is slight, compositional complexity is isolated, and our ability to address the language of the whole work is not impeded. These presuppositions are not without debate and a survey of major scholarly advances is instructive.

From very early on, biblical interpreters assumed that ancient sources were consulted during the composition of the story of the kingships of Saul and David. Much of the early biblical scholarship focused on uncovering the nature and extent of these sources. In the 1823 edition
of his survey of the Old Testament, J. G. Eichhorn saw in Samuel a long history of composition, extending from written and oral source traditions to their use by history-writing authors, to the hands of editors who gave the work its current form. A clear irritant for Eichhorn was the existence of contradictory details in the work; as a working example he expounded on the problems inherent in 1 Sam 16 and 17 in which David and Saul have two first meetings. Similarly, he took the existence of insertions or explanatory notes (e.g. 1 Sam 9:9) as an indication that the author was working with older source material and updating or defining out-of-date vocabulary or expressions. These seams in the text, and his extrapolations from them, allowed Eichhorn to propose a complex compositional history for the books of Samuel.

These same sorts of repetitions, doublets and narrative tensions, which had already exposed the fact that Samuel comprised multiple sources, were also the basis for the initial attempts to distinguish between those sources and for assigning descriptive characteristics to the various hands. In his 1864 commentary, O. Thenius continued in the tradition of Eichhorn and not only affirmed the existence of discrete narratives within the books of Samuel, but went on to categorize his version of the books’ sources.

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5 “Welche Ungereimtheiten!” Eichhorn was bothered not simply by the fact that there are two accounts of David and Saul’s first meeting, but specifically by the irreconcilability of the details given in each account. If David was Saul’s arms bearer, surely he would already be with the soldiers aligned against the Philistine warrior, for example. Eichhorn, *Einleitung*, § 477, p. 516–518. Eichhorn’s method of focusing on such inconsistencies had no doubt been honed already in the 1780 edition of his *Einleitung* in which he first presented his “Elohim” and “Jehova” documents as sources within Genesis.


7 Gramberg and de Wette had already enjoyed some success in establishing what they thought were two lengthy sources inside of Samuel. C. P. W. Gramberg, *Kritische Geschichte der Religionsideen des alten Testaments* (Berlin: Dunker and Humblot, 1929) and W.M.L. de Wette, *Lehrbuch der historish-kritischen Einleitung in die kanonischen und apokryphischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1840), 231–237. The work is conveniently available, in complete scans, from Google books, digitized from the Harvard University. Online: http://books.google.com/books?id=C10tAAAYAAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Lehrbuch+der+historisch-kritischen+Einleitung+de+Wette&source=bl&ots=xNFDa1ILKg&sig=6qdMNbCBKcHJcB5FJCMYAQfU1YWkhle-n&sa=X&ei=sZkULPNCaLsoHh0hHAAQ&ved=0CDUQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Lehrbuch%20der%20historisch-kritischen%20Einleitung%20de%20Wette&f=false

considered to be a series of internal problems: summary notices and explanatory inclusions; the telltale signs left by the Chronicler whose work borrowed from, but was not the same as, Samuel; and, importantly, the problem of twice-presented accounts of Saul’s kingship: how and why he is rejected, how David and Saul meet, how David spares Saul, and other events. The result of these observations led Thenius to divide the work into five constituent parts, each stemming from a different source tradition: the prophetically-minded history of Samuel; a popular Saul tradition; an old, written Saulid history; a history of David’s early career continuing out of the Saul sequence and including 2 Sam 1–5, part of 2 Sam 7, and 2 Sam 8; and a family-oriented, biographical history of David written by an eye-witness extending, more or less, from 2 Sam 11 to 20. Though the classification and precise chapter and verse arrangements of these narrative units would not be shared by subsequent scholars, we see already in this early work the identification of a Davidic history whose boundaries can be set and whose individual characteristics can be described. Despite the almost universal recognition of several, if not many, underlying sources within the larger Samuel tradition, even the earliest scholarship recognized in the books of Samuel a discrete David story in 2 Samuel.

In the last decades of the 19th century, scholarship focused on the further development of the differing sources within the Samuel narrative. J. Wellhausen, acknowledging the source critical evidence already established by Eichhorn and Thenius, identified two specific strands: one early source of good historical value with a favorable view of the monarchy; and one late source, though perhaps still containing historically reliable information, with a suspicious view of the monarchy. These differing attitudes towards kingship, he argued, reflected the difference between the pro-monarchic, pre-exilic life of Israel and the stateless condition of Israel in the exilic and post-exilic world. In this second stratum Wellhausen...
saw the influence of Deuteronomic theology.\textsuperscript{12} He located these competing monarchic perspectives predominantly in the narratives of 1 Samuel; Wellhausen’s source analysis of 2 Samuel reveals a different sort of composition.

Of David’s heroic acts, Wellhausen maintained that there were two particularly complimentary sources (1 Sam 16 – 2 Sam 8 and 2 Sam 9 – 1 Kgs 2 [minus 2 Sam 21–24]).\textsuperscript{13} In each of these sections, Wellhausen claimed that the information upon which the authors based their accounts is of similar value; both are historical in character, even though a pro-David bias is clear. The first David story is whole, but interrupted, whereas the second is missing its beginning. Nonetheless, he saw the second as the superior narrative. In the first work, in the sections contained in 1 Samuel, Wellhausen identified numerous interruptions and accretions to his original text (e.g. 1 Sam 17:1–18:5, 1 Sam 18:9–11, 1 Sam 19:11–24, 1 Sam 27:7–12), but identified no such problematic passages in 2 Samuel, either in the latter part of the first David work or in the second.\textsuperscript{14}

While Wellhausen was working on his version of source divisions, Budde pushed the characterization of the two strands to what perhaps seemed like a logical conclusion. He attributed the two Samuel strata to the Yahwist (J) and Elohist (E) sources from the Pentateuch.\textsuperscript{15} According to Budde, these two sources were set next to each other and their combined narrative extended throughout 1 Samuel to the beginning of 2 Samuel. On top of this combined work, he identified a Deuteronomistic editor who added and subtracted according to his agenda, and an even later redactor who added a final layer of editorial

\begin{quote}
Höhepunkt der Geschichte und die größte Segnung Jahves,” and “das jene Vorstellung [of the monarchy] nur in einer Zeit entstanden sein kann, welche Israel als Volk und Reich nicht mehr kannte…daß dieselbe… dem exilischen oder nachexilischen Judentume entstammt,” on pages 250 and 252.

Wellhausen found this influence both in form and content. On the Deuteronomistic opinion of the imperfection of the monarchy, see Wellhausen, \textit{Prolegomena}, 244–259, but see also, as an example, the identification of Deuteronomistic language in 1 Sam 7, J. Wellhausen, \textit{Der Text der Bücher Samuelis} (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1871), 67.


\end{quote}
additions and modifications.\textsuperscript{16} In his commentary on Samuel, Budde systematically apportioned the text to its corresponding source or redaction layer. His assignments are extremely meticulous, and only what he sees as patent Deuteronomistic language is ascribed to the editor. Overall, his source divisions in 2 Samuel are less fragmented than in 1 Samuel. Budde attributed almost all of the 2 Samuel material to J, excepting primarily chapter 7, a “pragmatischer Zusatz”, and he identified very few examples of redactional interruptions.\textsuperscript{17} Compared to the makeup of 1 Samuel, the rarity of these interruptions is even more striking. His source division and overall discussion of the composition of the text was highly influential for the scholars who immediately followed him.

Though he found certain unity in parts of the text, S.R. Driver’s work continued the investigation of the different elements within the Samuel composition. “Some of the narratives contained in 1–2 Samuel point forwards, or backwards, to one another, and are in other ways so connected together as to show that they are the work of one and the same writer: that is not, however, the case in all.”\textsuperscript{18} In addition to delineating between source elements in the text, Driver attempted to characterize them, often on the basis of “style and character,” and also, to some extent, according to preferential vocabulary and phraseology.\textsuperscript{19} Further, Driver aligned (though not necessarily equated) his characterizations of certain strands to Pentateuchal sources. So, for example, he identified the account of Saul’s kingship in 1 Sam 8 and 10:17–27 as pre-Deuteronomic work with “noticeable affinities with E.”\textsuperscript{20}

Doublets and the sources they must reflect were standard pieces of evidence for Driver, as they were for those before him. When he turned to 2 Samuel, however, the picture was a bit different. Driver understood 2 Samuel to comprise three narratives: an account of David’s

\textsuperscript{16}Budde’s theory is developed throughout the commentary, but he did include occasional summary statements: “Dagegen wird daran schwerlich gerüttelt warden können, dass durch das ganze erste Buch und bis in den Anfang des zweiten überall zwei Quellen neben einander benutzt und durch eine Redaktion mit einander verbunden waren, ehe Rd an die Arbeit ging.” Budde, Die Bücher Samuel, xiv.

\textsuperscript{17} The main editorial glosses or transpositions Budde identified are: 1:5, 2:10a and 2:11, perhaps 3:30 after Wellhausen, 5:4–5, 5:6b, 5:7b, 5:8b, 12:10–12, 14:25–27, 15:24. Additional manipulation of the text occurs in chapters 8 (Deuteronomistic redaction), 21, 23–24 (late additions). Budde, Die Bücher Samuel.

\textsuperscript{18} S. R. Driver, \textit{An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament} (ITL; 9th ed.; New York: Charles Scribner’s, 1899), 173. See also the attribution chart noted above in which Budde identified even fewer non-J examples in 2 Samuel, n.14.

\textsuperscript{19} For example, see Driver, \textit{Introduction}, 176–7.

\textsuperscript{20} Driver, \textit{Introduction}, 177.
public actions, prior to the account of his court history (2 Sam 1-8); a history of the events of David’s royal court (2 Sam 9-20); and an appendix (2 Sam 21-24). Driver found the conclusion of the first narrative in 2 Sam 8 through comparison with the conclusion of Saul’s regnal history in 1 Sam 14:46-51. However, even in proposing this “conclusion,” Driver conceded that “in some respects [the account of David’s public doings, i.e. 1 Sam 1-8] anticipates what follows.”

Driver noted a relative lack of Deuteronomic influence in Samuel, and this contributed to his view of the “unity of plan,” particularly in 2 Samuel, where he identified only 2 Sam 7 as reflecting some Deuteronomic thought. The rest of the material in 2 Samuel was, for him, pre-Deuteronomic. He did not ascribe the entire Samuel narrative, excluding the Deuteronomistic passages, to a single author, but he did affirm that 2 Sam 9-20 appeared to come from one hand and, though not necessary from the same writer, shared a mutual connection with 2 Sam 1-5.

C.H. Cornill, like Budde, identified his two source strata with the sources J and E and removed what he viewed as Deuteronomistic elements to a later redaction. The strand running through 1 Sam 7, 8, 10, and 12 which had been attributed to a Deuteronomistic source due to its anti-monarchic view should, according to Cornill, have been properly placed in the work of E. Although Cornill and Budde shared many views in common and relied on one another’s findings, certain details of the source division warranted some disagreement. Following the work begun by Wellhausen and especially Budde, whom he relied on especially for demonstrating J’s style and phraseology in Samuel, Cornill made sweeping attributions in Samuel to J and E. As for 2 Samuel, he affirmed the unity of composition in 2 Sam 9–20 and goes further to say that 2 Sam 1-5 and 2 Sam 9-20 were from

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24 For example, Budde assigns all of 1 Sam 1–15 to a characteristically E stratum, whereas Cornill elaborately divides verses according to an E1 and E2 scheme which includes a “Deuteronomic retouching.” C. H. Cornill, *Einleitung in die kanonischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1905), 117. It is worth noting, once again, that where these disagreements fall, and where the source divisions are the most complicated, is within 1 Samuel.
the same hand.\textsuperscript{25} In fact, Cornill goes so far as to say that the entirety of 2 Samuel derives from a single source, which he believed was J.\textsuperscript{26}

Many scholars at the beginning of the 20th century, following Budde’s work, accepted that the late, anti-monarchy stratum reflected the Elohist and that the whole work had undergone a later Deuteronomistic redaction. And so, although the details of shape and extent of the sources would continue to be disputed,\textsuperscript{27} the prevailing theory of Samuel’s composition was that two sources, already known from the Pentateuch/Hexateuch, continued into the historical books and were responsible for the doublets and other seams. Almost every example of a major breakthrough in understanding the compositional history came directly from the doubled accounts of events in 1 Samuel: 1 Sam 16/17 David’s introduction (Eichhorn), the seeming contradiction between representing Samuel as a prophet or a judge (Driver, but also Eichhorn), Saul’s ascendency to kingship 1 Sam 9–10:1–16, 11 and 1 Sam 8, 10:17–27 (Budde, also Driver). The texts that were the most difficult for Wellhausen and Budde to place (their “accretions,” “interruptions,” and “later insertions”), occurred almost entirely in


\textsuperscript{26} “So stammte denn bis auf zunächst die drei dieterischen Stücke, 7 u. 8, und vereinzelte Spuren von E in 1 und vielleicht auch in 24, ganz II Sam aus J.” Cornill, \textit{Einleitung}, 125.

\textsuperscript{27}For example, C. Steuernagel, \textit{Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Alte Testaments} (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1912), 308–340, traced the two sources, his older S\textsuperscript{a} (= Yahwistic school) and the religious mined S\textsuperscript{b} (= Elohist school), only as far as 2 Sam 8, after which a third and fourth source were responsible for the dynastic information in 2 Sam 9–20 and I Kgs 1–2, as well as supplementary material about David’s battle exploits. Paul Dhorme is one of the few scholars who divided all of 2 Sam, including chapters 9–20 into constituent J and E parts. P. Dhorme, \textit{Les Livres de Samuel} (EBib; Paris: J. Gabada & Co., 1910), 8 and \textit{passim}. Kittel was an important early dissenter and held that Samuel does not contain material which is an extension of J and E, but instead narrative forms of varying size including stories about heroes, the ark, prophets, etc. He did concede that some of the narratives have a relationship to J or E, though they are not of J or E. R. Kittel, “Das erste Buch Samuel,” in \textit{Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments} (ed. E. Kautzsch; 2 vols; 4th ed., ed. A. Bertholet; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1922), 407–408. Hölscher understood the Torah and the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings to be fundamentally interconnected: “Sie bilden, wie ihr Inhalt zeigt, in Wirklichkeit ein einziges, zusammenhängendes Werk, das erst nachträglich in neun einzelne Bücher zerlegt wurde.” G. Hölscher, \textit{Geschichtsschreibung in Israel} (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1952), 8. The basic material of Josh–Kings was a combination of the sources from the Pentateuch which continue on into the historical books. Following from this thought, he placed the Yahwist, who he believed concludes his work only in 1 Kgs 12:19, in the second half of the 9th century BCE at the earliest. Hölscher, \textit{Geschichtsschreibung}, 27 and 99. In his attributions of the historical material to sources from the Pentateuch, he assigned almost all of 2 Sam to J, save for 2 Sam 2:10a, 11; 3:2–5; 5:1–2, 6ab, 7a, 8a, 9–16; 7:1a, 2–6, 8ab, 9–10, 12–15, 17–21; 8:1ab, 2–10, 13–18. Hölscher, \textit{Geschichtsschreibung}, 26–27 and 143. For additional discussion, see also his earlier essay, G. Hölscher, “Das Buch der Könige, seine Quellen und seine Redaktion,” in \textit{Eucharisterion} (ed. Hans Schmidt and H. Gunkel; FRLANT 36; Göttingen: Vanderhoeck und Ruprecht, 1923), 158–213.
New Approaches in the 20th Century

A change in the traditional compositional understanding and new line of thought emerged in the early decades of the 20th century in the work of Hermann Gunkel, who argued that the biblical authors were dependent on material which had a long oral history. Instead of focusing on textual discrepancies which led other scholars to see source divisions, Gunkel focused on great similarities in content which led him to see a biblical text comprised of various literary types, or forms.  

H. Gressmann, greatly influenced by Gunkel’s new direction, further developed the approach and dealt with Samuel in particular. Key elements of Gressmann’s view were one, the distinct, almost isolated, nature of the small pieces of material he identified and two, the necessity that one or more late editors must be responsible for the final product. According to Gressmann, Samuel was a compilation of many discrete narratives of varying length and scope. These various independent narrative units, or strands, were all combined together by a late editor and it was these individual narratives, “Teilen,” which became the focus of his investigation. Worth noting, however, is that Gressmann’s identifies 2 Sam 13–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2 as a large Teile which he said formed a unified source. Within this section, he identified several smaller units (e.g. 2 Sam 13–14, 15–20) which he described as “Novellen.” Individual, unrelated accounts like

30 The sources of the Hexateuch are only to be found in Sam in 1 Sam 17:1–18:5, 20:1–21:1, and 2 Sam 1. Gressmann, Die älteste Geschichtsschreibung, xvii.
31 See also Caspari in this same trend. Samuel may be understood as a collection of individual narratives which each have some meaning and intent, including the large block beginning in 2 Sam 9, which Caspari believes once had an independent existence outside of its current use. W. Caspari, Die Samuelbücher (KAT 7; Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1926), 509ff.
32 Gressmann, Die älteste Geschichtsschreibung, xiv and 157ff.
33 Gressmann, Die älteste Geschichtsschreibung, xiv, 163, and 181.
legends, sagas, war stories, annals, anecdotes, and others became the fodder from which a late editor (or editors) filled out the bare framework of his history.

At just about the same time, Leonhard Rost’s highly influential work, Die Überlieferung von der Thronnachfolge Davids, isolated a “Succession Narrative,” (2 Sam 9–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2) an old story which was written to explain the succession of Solomon to David’s throne, as well as another old (perhaps older) story about the travels of the ark (1 Sam 4:1b–7:1+2 Sam 6). Rost used stylistic and thematic criteria to distinguish his narrative sources. Within his Succession Narrative, Rost found uniform stylistic and formal characteristics and saw consistency in its ideological and literary portraits. In addition to these two large narratives, Rost identified a smaller narrative unit in the report of the Ammonite War. Additionally, he treated Nathan’s oracle in 2 Sam 7 as an independent work, although he did recognize several layers of authorship within the chapter and made the case that some elements of 2 Sam 6 and 7 must have a connection to the larger Succession Narrative. Rost’s view of the compositional history of Samuel departed from previous scholarship in that the narrative units he identified were not joined together through an interweaving of multiple source strands, as Budde and others had understood their J and E Samuel narratives, but rather were placed end to end, one after the other. They were originally unrelated and of diverse origin.

While many scholars affirmed Rost’s position and adopted, for example, the terminology of the “Succession Narrative,” not everyone saw 2 Samuel in this new light. O. Eissfeldt questioned the idea of the Succession Narrative by criticizing Rost’s “literary criteria,” suspecting that Rost’s conviction for the theme of succession of David predetermined his

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34 L. Rost, Die Überlieferung von der Thronnachfolge Davids (BWAT 3/6; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1926). Citations are from the 1982 English translation. For example, see his discussion of the vocabulary and style of the ark narrative, L. Rost, Succession, 33. And for the description of the self-contained nature of the succession narrative, see Rost, Succession, 109.

35 See Chapter 7 below for discussion of the Ammonite War material.

36 Rost, Succession, Introduction. He identified 2 Sam 6:16, 20–23, 7:11b, 16 as part of the story of the royal succession of David. Almost all treatments remove 2 Sam 7 in some way from the main bulk of the Succession Narrative. For those in favor of inclusion, see D. M. Gunn, The Story of King David: Genre and Interpretation (JSOTS Sup 6; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978), and also G. Ridout, “Prose Compositional Techniques in the Succession Narrative” (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1976).
conclusions. Eissfeldt responded by returning to the Pentateuchal-source approach. He understood the work to be an interweaving of three parallel narratives from the hands of J, E, and an earlier “Lay” source (L) (or G. Fohrer’s N(omadic Source)). Eissfeldt also delineated these sources in 2 Samuel. He argued for 2 Sam 1–8 (apart from 7) as a unified whole, and where others had argued for attribution of the lists in 2 Sam 8 to a Deuteronomistic redactor, he saw the work of the L source. Eissfeldt saw 2 Sam 9–20 + 1 Kgs 1–2 as a new entity within the overall narrative, but, unlike Rost, derived this section from a source already present in the biblical text, i.e. J. After assigning material to each of his three sources, Eissfeldt further concluded, like many others, that very little of the Samuel complex comes from a Deuteronomistic redaction and that in 2 Samuel, only 2 Sam 7 should be attributed to such an editor. As for historicity, he thought that all three narratives in 1 Samuel were strongly legendary, but the narratives of L and J in 2 Samuel were truthful, originating with eyewitness accounts.

With his 1943 Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien, Noth became the champion of those such as Rost, Gressmann, and Kittel in seeing discrete sources assembled together by a later editor. He argued that the whole of Deuteronomy–Kings was written in the exilic period as a singular work, which he called the Deuteronomistic History, assembled from older materials and traditions, including the original edition of Deuteronomy, all of which this exilic author had before him. For his composition of Samuel, Noth’s Deuteronomistic Historian made extensive use of two old histories of David: the first concerned David’s rise to power (1 Sam

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37 O. Eissfeldt, Einleitung in das Alte Testament unter Einschluß der Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen (NTG; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1934), 147–149.
38 O. Eissfeldt, Die Komposition der Samuelisbücher (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1931).
40 Eissfeldt, Einleitung, 311. In the main, in Komposition der Samuelisbücher, 55, he said “Der große Abschnitt Kap. 2–8 ist nach Ausscheidung von 4,4 und Kap. 7, die sicher etwas Besonderes sind, und von wenigen anderen Versen und Versgruppen die wahrscheinlich oder vielleicht aus einer Nebenerzählung herrühren, zweifellos einheitlich.”
41 “Ebenso stellt die Hauptmasse von Kap. 9–20; 21, 1–14; Kap.24; 1 Kön 1. 2 deutlich eine literarische Einheit dar.” Eissfeldt, Komposition, 55.
42 Eissfeldt, Einleitung, 316.
43 Eissfeldt, Einleitung, 317.
16:14–2 Sam 5:25) and the second dealt with the Davidic succession (2 Sam 6–7, 9–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2).\textsuperscript{45}

Elaborating where Wellhausen had already begun to speculate, Noth argued that the anti-monarchic elements in 2 Samuel must come from the hand of his Deuteronomistic Historian because his exilic context explained the negative attitude toward kingship. Noth also relied heavily on Rost’s previous identification and characterization of the Succession Narrative in his own view of the Deuteronomistic compilation Samuel. He identified only a few places where it was necessary for his Deuteronomistic historian to alter the older source text, including the addition of formulaic introductions in 2 Sam 2:10a–11, 5:4–5; the rearrangement of material in 2 Sam 5 in order to highlight the conquest of Jerusalem; additions in 2 Sam 7:1b, 7a, 11a, 12b–13a, 22–24 to make Nathan’s prophecy conform to the perspective of the Deuteronomist; the addition of formulaic introductory and concluding announcements in 2 Sam 8:1aa, 14b as well as some rearrangement of the war catalogue; and the insertion of lists in 2 Sam 8:15–18, 20:23–26.\textsuperscript{46} Not only was Noth’s list of Deuteronomistic edits in 2 Samuel brief, but it argued for very few new additions to the source texts.

Though Noth’s study was highly successful in influencing future scholarship, it was not without critics. Artur Weiser denied the necessity of identifying a unified stratum of anti-monarchic material at all, and instead argued that there were multiple traditions behind the narratives that all shared a similar prophetic perspective. In a pre-Deuteronomistic editing, an editor from the prophetic tradition, who was at least suspicious of the monarchy, combined many diverse strands together to produce the stories almost as they appear now.\textsuperscript{47} Along with this prophetic interpretation of history the editor also made use of material belonging to a court tradition. Weiser held that there was no literary unity to these diverse stories used to compile 2 Samuel.\textsuperscript{48}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, 87.
\item Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, 54–57.
\item Weiser, The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development, 166. Weiser also argued that the intent of the narrative is to specifically demonstrate David’s legitimacy as king over both the northern and southern populations,
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Fohrer was also critical of Noth’s concept of a Deuteronomistic editor because it did not explain why this redactor was not better able to reconcile the contradictions and competing viewpoints under the aegis of an overarching agenda or theology.\textsuperscript{49} He also questioned Gressman’s view of interwoven narrative strands on the basis that it did not do enough to explain “some supplements [which] presuppose an earlier compilation of narrative complexes.”\textsuperscript{50} Fohrer developed his critiques into his own version of the stages of development of Samuel: first, independent narratives, partially popular, partially court-based, were linked together however imperfectly; next supplements were added to the basic assemblage of narratives; third, a prophetically inclined layer was added to the supplemented, basic text (similar to Weiser’s prophetic-minded layer); fourth, the entire work underwent a Deuteronomistic redaction; and finally a few additional supplements were added.\textsuperscript{51}

Within these stages, Fohrer endorsed the integrity of both the Ark Narrative and the Succession Narrative outlined previously by Rost, and described both as self-contained traditions. Similarly, he saw the story of the rise of David (1 Sam 16:14–2 Sam 5 + 2 Sam 8:1–15) as “by and large a continuous presentation, without gaps.”\textsuperscript{52} A number of doublets occur in this unit, all in 1 Samuel, and Fohrer tentatively assigns these to his pre-Deuteronomistic supplementary stratum, although he gives no specific rationale. As Rost had already described, the Succession Narrative is characterized by an emphasis on conversation and a lack of divine intervention or divine motivation for action.\textsuperscript{53} For Fohrer, this court history is realistic, as well as literarily crafted and dramatic, and its author was an eyewitness through political marriage, glory in battle and the exculpation of his suspicious exploits. See A. Weiser, “Die Legitimation des Königs David,” \textit{VT} 16 (1966), 325–54.

\textsuperscript{49} Fohrer, \textit{Introduction}.

\textsuperscript{50} Fohrer, \textit{Introduction}, 218.


\textsuperscript{52} This is to be expected, of course, as the 10\textsuperscript{th} edition of the \textit{Introduction} prepared by Fohrer, is a revision of Rost’s 8\textsuperscript{th} and 9\textsuperscript{th} editions, which are in turn revisions of E. Sellin’s orginal textbook. Nonetheless, Fohrer was cautious in this description, and the three main components of the Ark Narrative—1 Sam 4–7, 2 Sam 6 and 2 Sam 7—were independently treated and ascribed to originally unrelated backgrounds, though the entire Ark Narrative was treated together as one of the components of the most basic stratum. Ironically, the very argument, that 2 Sam 6 and 2 Sam 7 are originally independent of 1 Sam 4–7, makes me question why it should be necessary (other than by related subject matter) to include the Ark Narrative only to then explain their separate heritage. Perhaps it is more logical and requires fewer compositional steps to exclude them from the 1 Sam 4–7 tradition.

\textsuperscript{53} Rost, \textit{Succession}, 92ff.
to the events of the narrative, likely a member of the royal court, and was writing early in Solomon’s reign. Not a single verse from 2 Sam 9–20, part of his base stratum, appears in Fohrer’s enumerations of any of his four additional evolutionary layers.

Wieser’s and Fohrer’s critiques aside, and in the wake of the widespread approval of Rost’s and Noth’s contributions, Gerhard von Rad, tried to remedy the inattention paid to the dynastic promise of David. In doing so, he provided a nuanced view of the theology of the Deuteronomistic Historian, specifically with regard to his forward-looking, and, if not exactly sanguine, then at least not pessimistic view of kingship. The Deuteronomist attributed saving power to the king’s pivotal position between the people and Yahweh and because of this role, the monarchy in Israel was not a destructive institution, but rather one capable of great theological promise. In his work, von Rad very much affirmed the literary unity of the Succession Narrative which he saw extending thematically from the announcement of the queen’s barrenness in 2 Sam 6:23 and ending with the answer in 1 Kgs 1 of who will sit on the throne of David. With regard to a prophetic stratum of textual development, von Rad viewed a late (the latest stratum of this particular account) prophetic-minded recounting in the story of David’s election in 1 Sam 16. Though the Deuteronomistic Historian used prophetic predictions in his history for his own purposes, von Rad viewed the prophetic layer as a “connecting link” between the oldest accounts and the Deuteronomistic version of the history.

Also relying on Rost, H.W. Hertzberg recognized a “great source” which tells of David’s accession to the throne, and, which, he said, “now occupies the centre of II Samuel.” He recognized Rost’s identification and division of the Ark Narrative and the Succession Narrative but regarded the continuity of the account of David’s rise to power with less certainty. Though he rejected earlier notions of a continued Pentateuchal source in Samuel,

he did concede that in certain places it was possible to trace a continuous thread. Though he mostly affirmed Rost’s source divisions, Hertzberg divided up the narrative of both books of Samuel into seven (I–VII) units. 2 Samuel occupies his units V, VI and VII, accounting for almost the entire book, save one passage (2 Sam 1:1–27) which Hertzberg attaches at the end of unit IV.

Hertzberg strongly supported the basic conclusion of Rost that the question of succession to David’s throne is of utmost import and the driving force behind the narrative of his unit VI (2 Sam 9–20), but importantly here, Hertzberg admitted that the “story of the succession extends both backwards and forwards beyond chs. 9–20.” Of course, the first chapters of 1 Kings belonged with their description of Solomon’s accession to the throne, but so too belonged material from previous chapters; Hertzberg’s “traces” of the succession account found in earlier chapters included the stories of Nathan’s promise, Michal’s childlessness, and possibly material from chapters 3 and 4. In the middle of Hertzberg’s succession account was his unit VII (2 Sam 21–24), which he identified as a supplement or appendix. Of the components of the appendix, he attributed the position of the two poems in 2 Sam 22 and 23 to the “final compiler,” while suggesting that the two narratives of 2 Sam 21 and 24 were connected in an early literary tradition. Because of this connection, the compiler was barred from moving them to the Succession Narrative or the Ark Narrative and instead left them at the end, but divided them so that the first could be “as near as possible” to other material dealing with the house of Saul and so that the second as near as possible to material dealing with the building of the temple.

Deuteronomistic Redactions: The Search for “Thematic” Layers

Further complicating compositional matters, was the appearance of F.M. Cross’ proposal of two editions of the Deuteronomistic History. Cross placed the first edition of the Deuteronomistic History in the reign of Josiah and the second, those passages which presume

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60 Hertzberg, I & II Samuel, 18.
61 Hertzberg, I & II Samuel, 375–6.
62 Hertzberg, I & II Samuel, 415.
the period of exile, in c. 550. The Book of Kings offers the clearest presentation of the thematic interests of the Deuteronomists—for the first historian, punishment for the sins of Jeroboam, but eternal promise for the sake of David, and, for the second, Yahweh’s ultimate rejection of Israel—and is the work in which the two editions are most clearly delineated. But Samuel is also manipulated in this scheme. For 2 Samuel, this is evidenced in the dynastic promise of 2 Sam 7. Of further relevance to the analysis of 2 Samuel is that Cross’ dual additions placed the first edition of the Deuteronomistic History before the exile. Such a contention would affect anyone’s relative compositional timeline (a pre-deuteronomistic narrative? a (now Josianic) deuteronomistic author? an exilic author?).

Continued investigations into the creation of the Deuteronomistic History led to the theory of a legally-minded version of the History. R. Smend, using material from Joshua and Judges, isolated passages in which he identified a particularly legal concern and believed these passages to originate from a separate author whom he called DtrN(omistic). W. Dietrich followed a year later with his treatment of the topic, but his work focused on the Books of Kings. He discerned three versions of the Deuteronomistic History: DtrG, the basic stratum, dating to just after the fall of Jerusalem; DtrP, a well-integrated prophetic redaction, which he believed originated in the circle of Jeremiah c.570; and DtrN, the nomistic redaction, the final edition, dating to c. 560 and adding into the text a pro-Davidic interest. T. Veijola relied heavily on Deitrich’s division of the editions of the DtrH to provide a full breakdown of 2 Samuel according to those divisions: DtrG is essentially pro-monarchic and affirms the permanence of the Davidic dynasty; DtrP cautiously supports monarchy provided it comes with the presence of prophetic oversight; and DtrN, while conceding that David is himself the proper exemplar of a king, nonetheless, rejects monarchy as an institution. Each of

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these studies denied a pre-exilic edition of the History in general, and of 2 Samuel in particular, and were opposed to Cross’ dating of the editions.  

As they had in early scholarship (Thenius, Weiser, von Rad), the prophetic elements in Samuel would again become a topic of debate among scholars seeking to delineate the components of the text and to determine at what point those components entered it. B. Birch, who concentrated only on 1 Samuel, suggested that a complete pre-Deuteronomistic edition of 1 Sam 7–15 was produced between the second half of the 8th c. and 721 and came out of prophetic circles. This prophetic edition was later appropriated by the Deuteronomistic Historian who found little to edit because many of the edition’s themes already fit his own perspective. Whereas Weiser believed this stage to be the work of a prophetically minded editor, P.K. McCarter thought that an “intermediate” stratum comprised three main sources of old, well-known information: one, an Ark Narrative about its capture and return; two, a series of stories about Saul; and three, a narrative about David’s rise to power. The editor responsible for this “intermediate” layer worked these three sources into one history, adjusting them where necessary to incorporate his prophetic mindedness, most evident in his introduction of the prophet Samuel and characterized by its northern flavor. Budde had already seen similarities between prophetically minded material and the Elohist, and also identified the concerns with important northern cities, such as Ramah and Mizpah, as well as with prophetic election with regard to kingship, as northern ones. But, said McCarter, this editor also recognized David’s position as Yahweh’s chosen and legitimately nominated king, and this recognition pointed to a southern orientation as well. In order to make sense of this additional southern perspective, he concluded that the prophetic editor must be writing during or immediately following the fall of the northern kingdom.

McCarter preferred a pre-exilic date for the first edition of the Deuteronomistic History. Like Veijola, he saw some passages as belonging to a “prophetic” redactor, but unlike Veijola, assigned these passages to a pre-Deuteronomistic stage of development; as he saw

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68 In disagreement, see McCarter below.  
71 McCarter, I Samuel, 15.
that the monarchic material used by the Deuteronomistic Historian already existed in a “prophetically edited” form. McCarter argued for minimal intervention by the prophetic redactor whose hand he only saw in the inclusion of the story of Samuel anointing the future king (1 Sam 16), the episode near Ramah in (1 Sam 19:18–24), Samuel’s death notice (1 Sam 25:1), and the account at En-dor (1 Sam 28:3–25). This northern writer’s work, having appropriated the southern pro-Davidic dynasty attitude, was later used by the Deuteronomistic editor(s) in the larger Deuteronomistic History.

Taking a holistic, and radical, approach to the prophetically minded material, A. Campbell proposed an entire “Prophetic Record,” composed in the late 9th c. by disciples of Elisha that was written to document Yahweh’s selection and rejection of Israel’s kings through the mediation of prophets. This record, which he argued now underlies the Deuteronomistic History, was inspired by Jehu’s revolution and was, Campbell supposed, connected with the mass suppression of Baal worship of the era. But Campbell’s work is not only provocative in its treatment of the prophetic pieces of the text. He also offered a harsh critique of Veijola and others who had used the DtrN and DtrP divisions proposed by Smend and Dietrich, and implemented them “as though they were established entities.” Finally, Campbell offered a new scheme for the compositional history of Israel’s history: his “Prophetic Record” consisted of a history of Israel from pre-monarchic times (parts of Joshua and Judges) down to the time of the divided monarchy (Kings). It prepared the way for its sequel, the Deuteronomistic History with which it is now combined, and was part of a long term, constant production of Israel’s historiographic tradition.

72 McCarter, I Samuel, 22.
74 McCarter, I Samuel, 22.
76 Campbell, Prophets, 12.
77 Campbell, Prophets, 83ff, 121. Rather than editions of Israel’s history written only at critical moments—the fall of Israel, the glory of the Josianic era, the devastation of the exile, etc.—Campbell viewed the history writing process as continual and evolutionary. Another “prequel” to the Deuteronomistic History is argued for by Peckham. In a harkening back to a previous generation of scholarship, Peckham connected his Dtr1 with Pentateuchal sources. While he did not claim identical authorship, he saw this Deuteronomist’s work as a sequel to J. In establishing his
In *The Nathan Narratives* G. Jones offered a different sort of scenario in which he proposed that all of the Nathan material from Samuel was originally part of a royal prophetic archive.\(^{78}\) He argues that the original prophetic record was kept in Jerusalem, and that Nathan’s prophecy and other material about him, a Jebusite official, were used by the Deuteronomistic Historian, to transform Nathan into a zealous, Yahwistic prophet. Jones uses the Chronicler’s citation of the “words of Nathan the prophet” as a source for the history of David to bolster his case.

Part of the problem with the debate over the prophetic material is that, regardless of which material one might assign to this stratum, or to what location one wishes to attach the traditions, an underlying question of relative chronology remains. This problem is not only relevant to the proposals of prophetic redactions, but is at the heart of how we are to understand the nature of 2 Samuel; the ‘when’ cannot be separated from the ‘what’ or ‘why.’\(^{79}\) As we have seen in the vast array of scholarship, opinions can differ radically. So, for example, following Cross’s conclusion that the “exilic retouching” is limited in its scope, and mostly confined to the final chapters in Kings, McCarter enumerated only a few verses from 2 Samuel that he would consider for inclusion in a second, exilic, Deuteronomistic edition. McCarter therefore placed composition of the bulk of the narrative in a pre-exilic period.\(^{80}\)

By contrast, J. Van Seters thought the Succession Narrative, or Court History, should be dated to the post-exilic period and represented a very late incorporation of anti-monarchic material into the David story. He based his argument partly on the logic of a Deuteronomistic Historian using the Succession Narrative at all, given its portrayal of David’s negative
qualities.\textsuperscript{81} And if one does not adhere to a pre-exilic version of a Deuteronomistic History, then whether the Succession Narrative (if we can call it that) is pre- or post-Deuteronomistic is in question. For example, R. Bailey argued that it post-dates the Deuteronomistic History. Based on his evaluation of the Ammonite War complex and the Bathsheba account (2 Sam 10-12), he dismissed the unity of Rost’s larger narrative and could not see an early, whole work.\textsuperscript{82} In this lack of unity, Bailey found extensive redaction activity arguing for his late date.

A number of other recent scholars, who are troubled both by the presence of certain elements within 2 Sam 9-20, which they feel are intrusive, and by the idea that the entire “document” is pre-deuteronomistic. T. Römer’s work criticizes the homogeneity of the Samuel tradition, though his main focus in this regard is 1 Samuel. In 2 Samuel, he is mostly troubled by the “interruption” of 2 Sam 21-24 near the end of the Succession Narrative (which following 2 Sam 20 picks up again with 1 Kgs 1-2) and 2 Sam 11-12.\textsuperscript{83} Further he argued that the story of David’s rise and that of his reign were combined in the Exile, at the earliest, when this first version of the court narrative was attached to a somewhat older history of David.\textsuperscript{84} A.G. Auld also holds to a “supplement” theory and proposes that 2 Sam 9-20 + 1 Kgs 1-2 was not a source available and used by the Deuteronomist, but rather a supplement added to an earlier draft of the story of David’s reign.\textsuperscript{85} S. Frolov, concludes, rather strongly, that “a large, continuous, self-contained, and distinctive “document” underlying 2 Sam 1-1 Kgs 2 is


\textsuperscript{82} His observations about David’s penchant for politically beneficial marriages are no doubt correct, but more relevant here is that in his evaluation of the Bathsheba/Ammonite War complex, he sees the hand of the Deuteronomistic redactor hard at work in chapters 10–12. R. Bailey, \textit{David in Love and War: The Pursuit of Power in 2 Samuel 10–12} (JSOTSup 75; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 125–130. See Chapter 7 for additional discussion of the relationship between the Bathsheba and Ammonite War stories.

\textsuperscript{83} T. Römer, \textit{The So-Called Deuteronomistic History} (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 92.

\textsuperscript{84} Römer, \textit{The So-Called Deuteronomistic History}, 147.

a figment of scholars’ imagination.\textsuperscript{86} So he is not only opposed to the traditional Succession Narrative theory of composition, but also disagrees with placing any of the material in a pre-Deuteronomistic context. Instead, he would attribute the David story to a Deuteronomist—an author, not an editor.

Purpose behind the David Story

Let us also not forget the ‘why.’ What purpose does the text of 2 Samuel serve? For what reason was David’s story written, let alone edited, emended and appropriated? Not every study of Samuel attempted to retrieve the sources behind the (presumed) compilation of older pre-Deuteronomistic narrative elements and Deuteronomistic additions and edits. One important example is found in the work of R. Carlson who, while conceding the probable existence of an old pre-Deuteronomistic David epic, doubted the ability of scholarship to work with any text other than the modified, final Deuteronomistic version.\textsuperscript{87} Within this framework, Carlson argued that 2 Samuel is chiefly concerned with presenting two parallel but contrasting views of David: David under blessing in 2 Sam 2–7 and David under curse in 2 Sam 9–24. In this way Carlson rejected the assumption that a court history must end with Solomon coming to the throne. This movement away from the Succession Narrative as a source behind 2 Samuel and towards advocating textual boundaries more literary in character would be taken up again by H. Schulte in his proposal of "die David-Geschichten."\textsuperscript{88}

Carlson wished to focus on ideas in the text, not sources or compositional units. In this regard, though his conclusions were not widely accepted, his work stands at the beginning of a trend of studies which offered alternative explanations for understanding the purpose behind the Succession (or otherwise) Narrative. Where Rost had promoted Solomon’s succession as the underlying and unifying theme to the whole work, Delekat and others

\textsuperscript{88} H. Schulte, Die Entstehung der Geschichtsschreibung im Alten Israel (BZAW 128; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1972), 138. See also his discussion of the nature of the David stories, including the suggestion that the stories are centered on David and Joab as main characters, p. 176–180.}
turned this idea on its head. L. Delekat argued for an anti-David and anti-Solomon work in the text of Rost’s Succession Narrative, and suggested that, with the intention of scandalizing Solomon and upsetting support for his reign, the author composed and disseminated the inflammatory work.\textsuperscript{89} In the years following Delekat’s publication, other works, such as those of E. Würthwien and F. Langlamet, also investigated the anti-kingship, anti-David and Solomon elements in 2 Samuel.\textsuperscript{90} Flanagan also belongs to this group of scholars, and can be situated somewhat between Rost and Delekat, and Würthwien and Langlamet. He acknowledges Rost’s Succession Narrative in its final form, but also found an older source behind it, that of a regular court history of David. He therefore proposes two strata: one legitimating David as king in 2 Sam 9–10, 13–20 and another addressing Solomon’s succession with the addition of 2 Sam 11–12, 1 Kgs 1–2.\textsuperscript{91} With this redaction, a court history was transformed by a later hand into the Succession Narrative.

Two other works may be mentioned in the context of the investigation of the intent and perspective behind the succession narrative. J. Blenkinsopp’s proposal, a decade earlier than Flanagan’s Davidic court history theory but similar in many ways, centered around the idea that David, and not Solomon, was the crucial concern of the narrative.\textsuperscript{92} Specifically, Blenkinsopp removed the material that was truly interested in the succession and found at the heart of the text (2 Sam 11:2–27; 12:15b–25; 13; 14; 15–20; 1 Kgs 1–2) a unifying and recurring theme of “sin externalized in a sexual form which leads to death.”\textsuperscript{93} He went on to

\textsuperscript{89} L. Delekat, “Tendenz und Theologie der David-Salomo-Erzählung.” in Das ferne und nahe Wort. Festschrift Leonard Rost zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres am 30. November 1966 gewidmet (ed. F. Maass. BZAW 105; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1967), 22–36. The author of the narrative is critical of the route Solomon takes to the throne, when the description of the situation seems to indicate that Adonijah is the clear choice and crown prince.

\textsuperscript{90} Würthwien discussed the propagandistic nature of the Succession Narrative and suggested it was composed to protest the activities of David and Solomon. The negative original later underwent a more positive editing to take the shape in which it now appears. E. Würthwien, Die Erzählung von der Thronfolge Davids (ThSt115; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1974), 49–59, see especially 58 for editorial changes. Langlamet also discerns an anti-David and Solomon stance in the text and both he and Würthwien propose that secondary, but pre-Deuteronomistic, redactions introduced the pro-monarchic elements to the text. F. Langlamet, “Pour ou contre Salomon? La rédaction prosalomonienne en 1 Rois I-II,” \textit{RB} 83 (1976): 321–379; 481–528.


\textsuperscript{93} Blenkinsopp, “Theme and Motif,” 48.
parallel this motif with those of the Yahwist’s stories, as well as to make certain connections to royal wisdom. 94

In his *The Succession Narrative*, R.N. Whybray presented a different view of the David story in 2 Samuel which more heavily focused on the influence of wisdom tradition in the Succession Narrative. 95 While Whybray generally concurred with Rost and von Rad in terms of identification of the narrative composition, he did not affirm the nature of the text as a history. His work considered the text from the perspective of its complex literary style and even compares the work to a “novel.” 96 Whybray’s largest contribution was his comparison between the Succession Narrative and wisdom literature, but these parallels have not been fully accepted. 97 However, Whybray posited a dual function of the text; it not only was meant to convey wisdom instruction, but is was also meant to shore up political support for Solomon’s reign by demonstrating his legitimacy. This half of his analysis on the propagandistic nature of the work has met with broader acceptance. 98

In an important critique of well-accepted ideas about the Succession Narrative, D. Gunn set out to challenge Rost, concerned that Rost’s procedure was backwards—he *first* defined his theme, the succession to the throne of David, and *then* he set the textual boundaries that fit that theme. Gunn also criticized the kind of subtle, and yet rigid, distinctions that Veijola, Würthwein, Langlamet and others made. He claimed that these scholars were too interested in removing all possible tensions in the text by assigning each element to a separate source or

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94 Below in Chapter 7, I will address the related use of imperatives in 2 Sam 13 and in Gen 38 which is an example of these parallels.


redaction. Gunn not only added material to Rost’s Succession Narrative framework (2 Sam 2–4 and part of 2 Sam 5), but also denied the suggestion of a unilateral theme, succession or otherwise, and redefined the very nature of the story itself. “The purpose of the story … is entertainment,” wrote Gunn, but qualified that this kind of literature is “serious entertainment.”

Already we have seen a variety of possibilities as to the purpose of David’s story in 2 Samuel: to explain Solomon’s succession to the throne (Rost and followers), to create a “prequel” to the Deuteronomistic History (Campbell, Peckham), to extol David’s glory (Blenkinsopp, Flanagan), to protect Solomon’s reign (Vriezen, Thorton, Whybray), to entertain (Gunn). Yet others have suggested that the accounts in Samuel help to reconcile David to both the northern and southern constituencies. In this line, T. Mettinger offered an appropriately complicated sequence of appropriation and use of both northern and southern traditions about David. The end text of Samuel was not merely the result of including relevant northern stories such as the lot casting at Mizpah, he suggested, but also reflected the reappropriation of Samuel’s anointing of David by northern circles, creating a more nuanced situation at the borders of the kingdoms and the texts.

In McCarter’s treatment of 2 Samuel, his ‘why’ determines his relative chronology of composition. 1 Kings 1–2 is the critical component in the theories of those scholars who see the composition of the entire work as timed to provide apology and legitimacy for Solomon. The reasons for Solomon’s legitimacy (that David chose Solomon, that the executions of Joab and Adonijah were not brought about by Solomon’s ambition, but were previously determined by the events of David’s life, that the threats which Adonijah presents are described in careful similarity to the threats of Absalom) are constructed with full

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knowledge of and reference to the contents of David’s story. The “author of the Solomonic
apology composed his argument with reference to the earlier stories [of David]. He took up
these stories and combined them with his own composition (1 Kgs 1–2).” Thus, working
backwards, McCarter concluded that the Davidic material in 2 Samuel must be its own
composition. Because McCarter viewed the Succession Narrative as royal apology on par
with that genre in Hittite literature, the negative elements that had so troubled Weiser,
Delekat, Würthwien, Langlamet and others, are easily explained by him as part of the
original account. McCarter discussed the methodological problems with the hypotheses
presented by Würthwein and Veijola and disagreed that there is a direct path from the
presence of negative and positive elements in the account to the separation of those two sets
of elements into two separate author/redactor’s hands. Rather, the tension in the narrative
between these negative and positive elements should be seen as original to the story. Public
knowledge certainly played an important role in this type of genre; that questionable or even
damaging incidents were known in any circle required the authors to address. McCarter,
then, concluded that it is the very nature of this apology to contain a palpable narrative
tension and rejected using such tension as a criterion for aducing redactional history.

Two other treatments of Samuel as Davidic apology are found in the works of McKenzie and
Halpern. McKenzie reconstructed a biography of David based on what he believes is the
historical information present in the biblical account. Like McCarter before him,
McKenzie viewed the very presence of elements negative to David, and the subsequent

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where he relies on Thorton’s “Solomonic Apolectic in Samuel and Kings.” McCarter does not accept that this
apology necessarily be a unified work from the time of Solomon. See also Herrmann’s earlier call to compare
Nathan’s prophecy to *Königsnouvelle* in Egypt, which at the time was a boon to those wanting to find unity in 2 Sam
7. The approach was discarded, though, and the structure and sources of 2 Sam 7 continue to be debated. On a
personal note, my husband wishes to resurrect this theory, specifically the comparison between trends in demotic
literature and the David story. A. Herrmann, “Die Könignovel in Egypten und in Israel. Ein Beitrag zur
p. 57. And see also Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 49.

104 McCarter, *II Samuel*, 16. In the debate over purpose, Ishida also argued for royal apology, particularly that the
Succession Narrative is in the historiographical style of Near Eastern royal historical apology and that it was written
to defend Solomon’s legitimacy early in his reign, probably from someone in Nathan’s circle. And as for the
inclusion of negative aspects of David, Ishida held that “these scandals were still too fresh in the memory of the
general public to be concealed.” Similarly, see Halpern below. T. Ishida, *History and Historical Writing in Ancient
Israel* (SHCANE 16; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 135–6.

apologies for them, as evidence of an originally historical account. Why invent such unfavorable accusations, only to then defend against them?

In Halpern’s *David’s Secret Demons*, he contended that David’s story, written shortly after his death, was meant to glorify the Davidic dynasty and to boost Solomon’s political capital.\(^{106}\) While he maintained that 2 Samuel ultimately provides apology for David, its authenticity, and part of the rationale for dating it close to David’s reign, comes from the almost zealousness with which 2 Samuel “goes out of its way to stress David’s defects.”\(^{107}\) The nature of the narrative, adhering to the conventions of ancient Near Eastern display inscriptions and annals, was composed in such a way as to honestly relate events of David’s reign, even negative ones. At the same time, the convention allows the authors to use a kind of code, what we might call spin, to imply a king’s greatness, without any actual falsification.\(^{108}\) Although 2 Samuel excuses David for much of his antisocial behavior, it is also responsible for supplying the record of it in the first place. In this way, as we also saw in the case of McCarter’s argument, Halpern’s view of the intent of the work bears direct consequence to his relative chronology of the composition. If the text were written truly to denigrate David, no apology would be necessary. And if the text were written long after the events it relates for the purpose of glorifying an ancient dynasty, no antisocial behavior would be necessary.

Some questioned whether there even exists a single, distinct purpose behind the Succession Narrative or the entire David story of 2 Samuel. P. Ackroyd cautioned against “too narrow” readings and the overall desire to find uniformity, both in text and in intent, “where there is in reality diversity and richness.”\(^{109}\) In, what for a traditional source critic might be ironic, a

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\(^{106}\) Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, 57 and passim. For his detailed source critical analysis of Samuel, see B. Halpern, *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel* (HSM 25; Chico, Ca.: Scholars Press, 1981), 149-174. In it, he catalogues two sources in Sam, only one of which (B) can be witnessed in 2 Samuel and is completely focused on David and his story. The other (A) source ends with Saul’s death and never demonstrates the kind of fascination with David that is to be found in B.

\(^{107}\) Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, 95.

\(^{108}\) Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, 130. Halpern’s “Tiglath-Pileser Principle” suggested that the biblical text was written, and meant to be taken, according to the principle of minimal interpretation—what is the minimum action required to claim the achievement. See 124ff.

plea for recognition of this diversity and richness, Ackroyd found that strict delineation of the Succession Narrative was not warranted. Defining its compositional boundaries was unnecessary.

Considerations of Content and Literary Qualities

Ackroyd’s warning turns our attention to a different, yet not unrelated, method of engaging the text. In the beginning, critical investigation of Samuel was consumed with the pursuit of source divisions, almost for its own sake alone. In some recent scholarship, the pendulum has reached its opposite apogee, as seen in a growing number of literary treatments which explore the text as a unified narrative. Some of the works reviewed above (Blenkinsopp, Campbell, Jones) already demonstrate this shift in scholarly attention. Though they speak to issues of compositional history, the way in which they question the text demonstrates concern for literary questions, of motif, thematic continuity, plot development, and patterning. These works are not primarily interested in discerning sources behind the text, though their conclusions sometimes contribute to this endeavor. Nor are they interested in whether a section of text has priority or was an accretion, but rather they seek to address the extant entirety of the story in a meaningful way, be that for historical purposes (Jones), artistic purposes (Gunn, Alter), canonical purposes (Childs, Crenshaw), 110 or something else.

Whatever else it may be, 2 Samuel is an extraordinary piece of literature. A number of scholars have dealt with the complex literary qualities in the narrative. J. Jackson praised the succession story, the bulk of 2 Samuel, as the earliest and greatest example of Hebrew historiography. Its artistic structure, he proposed, has been imposed onto the actual event accounts, and provides them “perfect expression.” 111 C. Conroy proclaimed the self-

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contained character of 2 Sam 13–20 and found it to be a well-constructed account which demonstrated a clear narrative unity. 112 With a defined beginning and ending, centered on Absalom and David, Conroy’s investigation described intricate techniques of narration and artistic use of language. H. Hagan, in his study on deception motif stories, followed Gunn, to include earlier material in 1 and 2 Samuel into the succession story. 113 Whatever the history of the events, Hagan held that “the author has created a piece of literature out of his facts.” 114 So, for example, the folk motif of deception was employed throughout Samuel for protagonists to obtain either a woman or the kingdom and could be countered by another character in order to restore order. In this way, Hagan found that the interconnected themes and recurring configuration of plot bound the various individual stories into a literary whole. 115

The artistry of the David story has been carefully detailed by R. Polzin in the third volume of his four-part work dealing with the Deuteronomistic History, David and the Deuteronomist. He quite unabashedly “allow[ed]…the story in 2 Samuel to speak for itself.” 116 His work was essentially a reading of 2 Samuel rather than a critical monograph. Indeed this approach, though perhaps too cavalier in its dismissal of dialogue with biblical scholarship, did highlight the literary themes (hero tales, house building, sin and redemption, messengers and messages, and many more) so carefully developed within the text. Polzin catalogued word play, narrative patterning, lexical patterning, polyphony, 117 symmetry, reversals, and a host of other details of language composition and manipulation.

R. Alter, like Polzin and J.P. Fokkelman, 118 dealt with the masterful and complex interconnections within the Samuel tradition. From his perspective of Samuel as literary art

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117 Indeed, Polzin is deeply indebted to the literary theory of Mikhail Bakhtin and his school. Polzin, David and the Deuteronomist, passim, but see explicitly ix.
he must conclude that the “argument for an independent Succession Narrative…is shaky.”119 But he also maintained that the majority of the narrative shows no signs of Deuteronomistic touch-up (and in this disagreed with Polzin). W. Brueggemann, too, was primarily focused on an artistic reading, so much so that he freely admitted ignoring issues of textual problems, historical issues, and the “thicket of scholarly discussion of literary composition.”120 He claimed an urgent need for interpretation based on “the whole story.”121 

Brueggemann might have skirted this thicket a bit too much. But, it may also be the case that certain sections of 2 Samuel which had traditionally been seen as problematic insertions or nonintegrated materials, may be reconcilable within a larger narrative perspective. McCarter argued that the end of the book, 2 Sam 20–24, was “not in sequence with the narrative that precedes or follows it” and suggested that part of this section must have come from a later Deuteronomistic editing, but that the section as a whole was not part of the Deuteronomistic History.122 Already Budde suggested that these final chapters should be considered late insertions.123 And Noth referred to this section as an accumulation of additions and included a rearrangement in the war catalogue as part of the development of the work.124 And following Noth’s suggestion, McCarter compared these materials, gathered together before the account of David’s death, to those passages inserted in Deut 31–33 before the account of Moses’ death, assuming that it was customary to present a compilation of additional materials about a hero prior to his death account.125 Nonetheless, McCarter also noted, as had others,126 what he called the “curious pattern” of the structure of chapters 21–24. The two stories in 21:1–14 and 24 were first placed after one another before being interrupted by first the hero lists of 21 and 23 and then by the further insertion of the two poems in 22 and 23.127 McCarter’s view of the compositional sequence of this section is, more or less, common in

119 R. Alter, The David Story (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), xii.
120 W. Brueggemann, First and Second Samuel (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1990), 6.
121 Brueggemann, Samuel, 6.
122 McCarter, II Samuel, 16.
123 See n.17 above.
124 Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, 124–25, n. 3.
125 McCarter, II Samuel, 17.
126 For additional discussion and bibliography on see below, “Previous Interpretation of the So-Called “Appendix” (2 Sam 21–24).
127 McCarter, II Samuel, 18. Hertzberg, too, had considered the narrative sections of the appendix to be early additions, but the two poems to have been inserted in by a final compiler. See p.17 above.
commentaries and other treatments of 2 Samuel. The seeming disjointedness of these last chapters has routinely led to their exclusion from the Succession Narrative, as is clear from almost every study reviewed above. A few dissenting voices can be found. Flanagan believed that the so-called “appendix” was integral to the larger sequence, claiming that it returned attention, which had been previously centered on a completely Davidic focus in the Succession Narrative, to the critical issue of tensions between David and Saul. I myself have argued elsewhere for the cohesiveness of chapters 21-24 with much of the earlier material in 2 Samuel, not from a purely artistic perspective, but through grammatical and syntactic peculiarities found throughout the text.

K. Sacon, in his work on the literary structure of the Succession Narrative, announced his intention to address the narrative from a “synchronic and literary viewpoint.” In doing so, he attempted to analyze the Succession Narrative at what he called the paragraph level in order to evaluate the theme and purpose of the work. He concluded that the Succession Narrative served as a history, reflected the political life of the time, and, through its form, highlighted the tension between publicly advertised national expansion and privileged understanding of internal insecurity. In this work, Sacon placed himself somewhere between Blenkinsopp and Gunn on one hand and Ridout and Conroy on the other, effectively saying that he was keen on a synchronic, literary treatment, but not completely willing to forgo a foothold, however tenuous, in the linguistic data of the text.

Early commentaries already noted the change in content between the stories of 1 Samuel and those of 2 Samuel. Driver observed that Samuel began with Samuel’s birth, but ended with

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132 His language connection was the “paragraph” level, following the work of Kanji Hatano, who defined the paragraph as a “thought unit,” rather than the “meaning unit” of smaller divisions like sentences or words. Sacon, “Literary Structure,” 30.
the close of David’s public life. Von Rad also made the distinction between the “external picture,” that is the publically accessible view, of the story of David’s throne versus the “inner circle of ideas,” the private, and theological, version of events, which he identified in the royal psalms. The stories in 2 Samuel are public ones, concerned with the recording of a king’s accession to the throne and his actions once installed. The David story is largely a secular one, where Yahweh makes only cameo appearances. And in a somewhat related non-biblical vein, some have suggested that material in 2 Samuel may be considered on par with genres known from other ancient Near Eastern traditions.

To read 2 Samuel in the tradition of Near Eastern royal records, however, is not to imbue the text with modern notions of historical accuracy. Eissfeldt noted that Samuel was a composition with great narrative skill which he compared to a good historical novel. He pointed out that this “history” has been supplemented with the private conversations that abound (Amnon and Tamar, Joab and the messenger, David and the woman of Tekoa) and such additions certainly show a poet’s license. Eissfeldt’s comparison to a historical novel is applicable—he is reacting to the sense of authenticity that the narrative provides, yet recognizing that some elements are likely the work of a creative author/editor. Even studies which understand the crafting of the narrative as an artistic work add an important piece of data to the discussion here. The fact that the story is so resourcefully constructed speaks to the narrative unity of the text and possibly a compositional one as well.

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133 Driver, Introduction, 173.
135 McCarter suggests comparison to the Apology of Hattusilis, for example. McCarter, II Samuel, 9-16. See also Halpern’s discussion, for example, of 2 Sam 8 as royal display inscription. Halpern, David’s Secret Demons, 133-141.
136 Eissfeldt, Einleitung, 141.
137 That the narrative “sounds right,” of course, says nothing at all about the veracity of the story. It is easy to fall prey to this line of thought. See even W. Dever, What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It? What Archaeology Can Tell us about the Reality of Ancient Israel (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001) 268. See also S. Isser, The Sword of Goliath, David in Heroic Literature (Studies in Biblical Literature 6; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003) 103.
Some Reflections on Sources and Content

We can safely say that 1 Samuel comprises many sources, in some cases, complicatedly intertwined. Most scholars are still reliant in some way on the two-source hypothesis, and following Noth, attribute some sort of Deuteronomistic influence in the narratives comprising the “late” source. Much of the work of the last two centuries would suggest that 2 Samuel also has sources, but the bulk of the narrative demonstrates textual unity (generally discussed as the material classified under the Succession Narrative rubric, but not to the exclusion of the first half of the book). A number of studies have considered the boundaries of the Succession Narrative and, though there is no consensus on the matter, the beginning and end of the text have been expanded in myriad ways, in some cases to the full extent of 2 Samuel. 138

Further, many studies have demonstrated the relatively scant Deuteronomistic editing in 2 Samuel, with perhaps only significant work in 2 Sam 7. Some recent work, perhaps most notably Van Seters, has complicated this picture by rejecting the idea of an early, single-source Succession Narrative, and therefore disrupting any compositional steps which stem from this premise. In fact, his work, and that of other so-called “Neo-Nothians,” returns to the basic principle of an exilic Deuteronomist who composed—perhaps loosely using some older traditions—lengthy texts himself. 139 Despite the wide scholarly gap between this view and that of a historiographical, pre-deuteronomistic David source, the 2 Samuel of Van Seters is still a largely coherent singular story.

Those who have engaged in synchronic approaches to the Samuel tradition, focusing on the literary properties of the final form text, have also, perhaps even unintentionally, contributed to the question of compositional sources. They did this by establishing the pervasive literary devices and language elements which run throughout the story and by demonstrating that in frequently these elements operate successfully because of their position within the story as a

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138 See, for example, Cornill’s singular authorial attribution above.
whole (chiasm, symmetry, parallel narratives, etc.). These sorts of features can only come about through a) a talented single hand who crafts the whole sweep of text with the elements in place in the original, or b) a later author-editor who positions these elements in their correct locations by editing and manipulating older blocks of text to fit the overall artistic plan. In this way, literary approaches, despite their alleged “ahistorical” perspective, can in fact influence historical or diachronic understandings of the text.

In the series of studies which follow, and the conclusions drawn from them, I consider the story of David as king, the bulk of 2 Samuel, as a single whole. This follows in part from a traditional Succession Narrative understanding, but with additional consideration of interrelatedness of other sections of 2 Samuel to the heart of the David story. Regardless of when such a work was crafted, I am persuaded by the text itself (à la Polzin?), as well as by centuries of interpretation, that the majority of 2 Samuel is a largely unified, cohesive, but especially, deliberate narrative.

Traditional source critics looked for contradictions, inconsistencies, variations in vocabulary, doublets, repetitions, glosses, and variations in synoptic passages, to reconstruct the ancient strata of the narrative. Some even went so far as to employ differences in style, theme, and theological or political perspective. “The current trend is to move from sources to supplements.”¹⁴⁰ In most cases, these are late supplements. I have become increasingly open to the idea of a late, wide-sweeping hand at work, as an author, not only in 2 Samuel, but also in the texts outside of Samuel which seem to be connected to it as are taken up in Chapters 4 and 6. So, if source criticism is still relevant it is not because we care so much merely whether this stich or that belongs to S¹ or S². Surely we seek something more provocative. This project, though it is entangled in source critical concerns (the nature of the appendix, e.g.), it is not, per se, a source critical exercise. Though its conclusions have resonance for questions of historical reconstructions and views of historicity, it is not a work of historical criticism. Like Sacon’s blended approach, I too seek to meld two perspectives.

¹⁴⁰ R. Rezetko, Source and Revision in the Narratives of David’s Transfer of the Ark (JSOTSup (LHBOTS) 470; London: T & T Clark International, 2007), 41. Rezetko also favors a “rolling corpus” model of the compositional history of 2 Sam, including very late revisions based on the Chronicler’s accounting of parallel material, pp. 62–63.
Though he pursued a synchronic, final-form agenda, he clung to the evidence of language.141 Though I may pursue a text-based philological approach, I acknowledge such work must be located within the overarching historical scheme.142 The smallest elements may provide evidence, but they only contain such evidence because their composer was concerned for the outcome of the entire story. If we seek to understand the story of David, we can only do so by considering not only the smallest elements of language, but also the entirety of the narrative they create, because that is what their creators also considered.

141 While I credit his attempt, I am not convinced that the “paragraph” level of the text is sufficiently in the realm of hard data from language. I would not go so far as to consider his linguistic evidence in the same way we might consider basic morphology, syntax, and semantics.

142 I hope this makes me more “Albrightian” and less “divinity-schoolish.” I refer here to Halpern’s aside on the issue of philology, B. Halpern, “Erasing History: The Minimalist Assault on Ancinet Israel,” BR 11/6 (1995) 26-35. Moberly rather dramatically describes some of my intent: “One must not allow a kind of schizophrenia within the biblical exegete whereby he does his historical-critical research on one hand and his literary and theological exegesis on the other…the phoenix of a conservatism which simply studies the final text and eschews any kind of historical criticism might swiftly arise from the ashes.” R.W.L. Moberly, At the Mountain of God: Story and Theology in Exodus 32-34, (JSOTSsup 22; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), 22.
Chapter 2: The Rare Use of את אלּה in 2 Sam 21

Introduction

2 Sam 21:22

The four of these were descended from the Raphah in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his men.

In the same way that textual difficulties provided fodder for ancient exegetes, this study also began in reaction to a textual irritant. The particular syntactic arrangement of 2 Sam 21:22—the introduction by את, an unusual construct relationship, and the passive verb—is atypical and begs attention. Furthermore, the problematic expression ילדי הרפה adds to the complexities of the verse. These elements are “irritants” precisely because they challenge our lexical, grammatical and syntactic expectations. In rabbinic literature, the midrashic authors sought out these sorts of textual anomalies as foundational material for their exegetical stories. In the case presented here, the “pearl” resulting from these irritants is the recognition of a rare use of the demonstrative pronoun and the appreciation of one example of the sophisticated literary nature of 2 Samuel.

Within biblical literature, the use of את אלּה in the syntactic chain את + construct substantive + the demonstrative pronoun occurs only twice, here in 2 Sam 21:22 and in 2 Kings 6:20. Based on a contextual comparison of these two passages, this construction marks an emphatic contrast between what the subject of the construction did and what someone or something else did earlier in the narrative. In both cases, the earlier referent may be significantly earlier in the narrative, and thus only apparent through careful examination of the larger narrative context. The

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143 Comparing the synoptic verses in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles not only reveals the Chronicler’s omission at the beginning of the sentence, but also draws attention to the author’s choice of wording and syntax in 2 Samuel. The omission in 1 Chronicles of “the four of these,” is explained by the fact that the Chronicler does not have four Philistines represented in this series of anecdotes, having removed what is the first story in 2 Samuel undoubtedly due to its unflattering portrayal of David. G. N. Knoppers, I Chronicles (2 vols.; AB 12-12a; New York: Doubleday, 2003), Vol. 2, 42. In agreement, see also A. F. Campbell, 2 Samuel (FOTL VIII; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), 192.
identification of this earlier referent in the case of 2 Sam 21:22 provides a basis for unifying two ostensibly disparate sections of narrative. Additionally, because the use of this syntactic deployment of אלה is so rare, it appears to be indicative of a purposeful stylistic choice on behalf of the author.

2 Sam 21:15-22 recounts a series of brief anecdotes in which four of David’s men fell four Philistine warriors. The summary statement in 2 Sam 21:22 emphasize that these particular enemies are descended (וּלְדֵי) from the Raphah in Gath. Regardless of how precisely we are to understand רֲבֵעַת רַפָּהּ/לְדֵי רַפָּהּ (see discussion below), the four are all to be understood as nemeses of the Israelites by virtue of this moniker, and as enemies of the House of David - each represents an existential threat. In this way these brief tales are consonant with the recurring concern in 2 Samuel of David’s personal safety, the defense of his kingship, and the preservation of his line.

Three elements of the syntax are relevant to the discussion here:

1. The use of אתה to introduce the first clause
2. The construct chain ארבעת אלה, specifically אלה as nomen rectum
3. The use of the verb ילדו and the idiom to be born ל-someone, ב-someplace

The Problem of אתה as Subject Marker

The אתה at the beginning of the verse has stymied Hebrew grammarians and textual critics alike. It seems out of place in that the context makes clear that it marks a subject, a usage of אתה which is unexpected and atypical, and indeed most major grammatical treatments describe the use of אתה in

These issues are at the very heart of the nature of the “Succession Narrative” as traditionally understood by Rost and those who followed him, in that the explanation of who will sit on the throne of David is inseparable from the concern over the continuity of the Davidic kingship. Even those who went on to disagree with Rost’s theory must acknowledge some aspect of these concerns in their views of the text. Rost, Die Überlieferung. So for example, Flanagan’s suggestions that the text (his “Court History”) is interested in proving David’s legitimation of control in the north and south relies on concerns over David’s successes against his enemies both internal and external. Flanagan, “Court History or Succession Document?” Or, Fokkelman, who rejects the SN theory, still contends with these issues of Davidic preservation and enemy defeat in a number of his proposed literary themes such as “being weak/acting strong,” “father/king,” and “being whole/being divided.” Fokkelman, NAPS Vol I, 428-9.
this verse as anomalous. T. Muraoka maintains that the particle is not used for the purpose of emphasis, and that it should not precede a grammatical subject, i.e. *nota nominativi*, although this very verse is given as an example which “give[s] the impression that it was the genuine nota nominative.”145 Davidson’s grammar is also vague on this verse, highlighting the uniqueness of this syntax by commenting that normally את does not mark the subject, but can mark the direct object of a passive verb used impersonally: “But this view does not take account of…2 Sam 21:22.”146 J-M also agree that את can mark the indirect accusative with an impersonal passive, particularly a 3rd m.s. verb form, regardless of the gender and number of the object, but they too are forced to list anomalous passages: “But see Jer 36.22, 2 Sm 21.22, 2 Kg 18.30.”147 BGr is more inclined to concede that the את here marks a subject, but the verse still falls under constructions with passive verbs as an unusual and inconclusive case.148 All grammarians agree that this verse is quite exceptional and does not easily fit within the common usage parameters of את. Given the lack of an alternative explanation, it seems that we should consider the emphatic use as a possibility. I suggest here that this את serves to emphatically mark the subject and conveys a comparative (or, better, a contrasting) function. This assertion is further supported by the broader syntax, specifically its use with אלה and the comparison with another syntactical arrangement in 2 Kings as discussed below.

** אלה as *Nomen Rectum***

In the enumeration of the “four” in 2 Samuel, the number four, ארבע, is used in construct with the plural demonstrative pronoun, אלה. In the entire biblical corpus, excluding its use with כל, אלה only occurs as the second half of a construct chain three times: Exod 21:11, 2 Kgs 6:20, and here in 2 Sam 21:22. The contexts of these other examples provide a basis for understanding the use of the syntax in 2 Sam 21:22.

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147 J-M §128b.
148 BGr, §66b by Amm.2.
149 I am considering the use of אלה and כל in the expression “all of these” is almost its own structure, almost as if it were one word. The Masoretes note the closeness of the relationship between the two terms by marking almost every occurrence of the chain with a maqqef. אלה כל can be found as the subject of a verb, as in Gen 14:13, a direct object, as in Gen 15:10, and in non-verbal sentences, as in Gen 25:4.
In the account of 2 Kgs 6:8-23, the Israelites are able to pacify the marauding bands of Arameans through the cunning of Elisha. While the Israeliite king and army are in Samaria, the Aramean army surrounds Elisha in Dothan. Recognizing the peril of their situation, the attendant of Elisha is frightened. Elisha attempts to reassure the attendant by demonstrating that Yahweh’s forces are superior to those of the enemy:

2 Kgs 6:17

ויתפלל אלישע ויאמר יהוה פקח-
-נא את-
-עיני והרא יהוה את-
-עיני הנער

And Elisha prayed and he said, “Yahweh, open his eyes and let him see,” and Yahweh opened the eyes of the young man and he saw—lo!—the mountain filled with horses and chariotry of fire all around Elisha.

With his powerful prophetic mind-control, Elisha convinces the Arameans to abandon their siege of the town and travel with him to Samaria (unbeknownst to them), whereupon Elisha beseeches Yahweh:

2 Kgs 6:20

והי כשאם רואר רפתק יהוה את-
-עיניים-
-ואלישע יהוה פקח

When they entered Samaria, Elisha said, “Yahweh, open the eyes of these (people) and let them see,” and Yahweh opened their eyes and they saw—lo!—they were inside Samaria.

The significant syntax here is את-
-عينיו+-
-construct noun + plural demonstrative pronoun, the same structure employed at 2 Sam 21:22. In the Kings account, the syntax emphasizes that Elisha is now, in v. 20, requesting that the eyes of these other men be opened, in emphatic contrast to the eyes of his servant whose eyes he previously requested be opened in v.17. The syntax also reveals the disparity in the outcomes of the two parties involved. The servant of Elisha is demonstrably on the side of the successful, divinely-powered Israelites, while the other men are the vulnerable enemy forces who are at the mercy of the king of Israel. That the outcomes of these two paralleled figures are antipodal is at the heart of the semantic value of this arrangement.

In Exod 21:11, we see the emphatic contrast use of the demonstrative in a similar semantic context, albeit a slightly varied grammatical one. The phrase does not make use of את-
-אלה as in the Kings example, but the conditional nature of the sentence may explain that difference. Exod 21:2-11 (marked with the introduction of a list, את-
-אלה המפשימים, Exod 21:1), provides regulations
regarding the emancipation of first male slaves (Exod 21:2-6) and then female slaves (Exod 21:7-11). The standard practice governing the freedom of male slaves is that in the seventh year of servitude they will be set free with no value owed (Exod 21:2). This provides both a parallel with and a contrast to the regulations regarding the practice for freeing female slaves in Exod 21:7, who will not be released according to the already established circumstances of the freeing of male slaves. While the law does not mandate that a female slave will go free after six years, with no expense required of her, Exod 21:8-10 outline three scenarios which would indeed result in just such a freedom. The emphatic contrast of these three circumstances is related in Exod 21:11 with the use of the אֶלַּה syntax.

Exod 21:11
וַאֲם יִשָּׂא אֶלַּה לֵא יִעשֶה אֵלֶּה הָאֵלֶּה הָאֵלֶּה אֵלֶּה פָּרַק:
And if three of these he does not do for her, she will go free, without any money.

Like the Aramean men and Elisha’s servant in the Kings example, here male and female slaves are the parallel, but differentiated, parties. The use of the syntactic arrangement in which the demonstrative pronoun governs the construct chain again serves to cue the reader that an emphatic contrast is depicted. Exod 21:7 explains the basic contrast; the woman will not be freed as the man in the seventh year. However, Exod 21:8-10 provide the noteworthy exceptions, and, if in the case that one of these three scenarios develops (אֲם יִשָּׂא אֶלַּה), a female slave may be emancipated (חָנָם), at no cost to her, just as is the regular protocol for male slaves (יצא לחפשי חנם) in Exod 21:2). Thus the result of Exod 21:11, the “free” freedom, at the same time opposes the normative protocols for female slave freedom, and parallels the regular freedom of a comparable but contrasted group, i.e. male slaves. What we might consider the usual outcome for female slaves—some sort of spousal arrangement— is perhaps also in contrast to the relatively straightforward outcome for most male slaves.

150 That the three things referred to in v.11 are the three larger scenarios outlined in the passage is by no means an uncontested point. Most rabbinic tradition understands the three to be the three scenarios rather than the three items listed in v.10. Particularly strong support for this interpretation comes from Ibn Ezra and the Rashbam. The Ḥizquni is one notable exception, taking the three things to be the three things listed in v.10. Some modern interpreters, too, support the v.10 reading, including U. Cassuto and Noth, while others follow the rabbinic understanding. M. I. Lockshin, Rashbam’s Commentary on Exodus (BJS 310; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 226-234. U. Cassuto, A Commentary of the Book of Exodus (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1967), 267-269. M. Noth, Exodus (OTL: Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), 177-179.

151 Noth, Exodus, 179. To extrapolate a bit from the scenarios presented here, it seems that such a true freedom for the female slave is unlikely, in that, if anything, she may move from the category of property to the status of a somewhat restricted wife, but otherwise she remains bound to her master.
In the 2 Samuel account, the “אלּה + construct + את” chain serves the same functions that we see in the Kings and Exodus examples: to emphasize the “these” in question; to signal, by this emphasis, that the reader should compare the subject at hand to previously mentioned, comparable personage(s), and to differentiate the final outcomes of the subjects.\footnote{While not discussed as a use of the demonstrative in their work, W-C do describe two characteristics of the “true” demonstrative with which this proposed use is consistent. The first characteristic, that the “ז set” (which includes את) can be used for reference both forward and backward, supports the syntactic relationship here over a large span of text. (§17.3d) The second characteristic concerns contrasting pairs (by which W-C mean “this and that”). Only the true demonstrative (as opposed to the marked 3rd person independent pronoun) is used with juxtaposed pairs. (§17.3c) While the juxtaposition proposed here is not the sort of “pair” to which they are referring, the broad concept that the demonstrative is involved in pair comparison is consonant with the use described above.} The syntax of 2 Kgs 6:20 compels the reader to take note of that verse with the equivalent structure of 2 Kgs 6:17. But to what parallel does 2 Sam 21:22 refer? This question will be addressed below, though first I will offer some comment on the term ילידי הרפה.

The ילידי הרפה and the Use of the Pual in 2 Sam 21:22

In the four Philistine warrior tales which precede the summary statement in 2 Sam 21:22, three of the four enemy combatants are identified specifically as “children” or “descendants” of the Raphah. Two terms are used to express this relationship; in 2 Sam 21:16 and 21:18 we find ילידי הרפה and in 2 Sam 21:20 we find יֻלד לְרָפָה. Traditionally, the ילידי הרפה have been interpreted as the descendants of “the Raphah,” presumably referring to the Rephaim known from Gen 14:5, Deut 2:11, and elsewhere, but it is a phrase not without difficulty.\footnote{Budde enumerates the most problematic features of the phrase, including the identity of “the Raphah,” and the inclusion of the definite article. Budde, Die Bücher Samuel, 309-313, but especially 310 on these peculiarities.} Driver already attempted to deal with the curious inclusion of the definite article in the unexpected position, concluding simply that it must somehow mark a race of people.\footnote{S. R. Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), 353.} F. Willesen and R. de Vaux (citing Willesen’s slightly earlier study) suggested that it indicates a slave or consecrated person belonging to a military rank or unit.\footnote{F. Willesen, “The Yālîḏ in Hebrew Society”, \textit{ST} 12 (1958): 192-210. His follow up article, F. Willesen, “The Philistine Corps of the Scimitar from Gath”, \textit{JSS} 3 (1958): 327-335. furthers his argument and supplies a Greek derivation for “the Raphah.” See also, R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961; repr., Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 219, although De Vaux concentrates primarily on the term \textit{yalîd} and does not specifically address the definite article of “the Raphah.”} One of Willesen’s suggestions is that the Greek term,
ἅρπη, is the cognate behind the Hebrew רפה. Though C.E. L’Heureux is not convinced on this point in particular, he agrees in principle concerning the phrase’s sense of adoption by or affiliation with a group, and offers a possible connection to the Ugaritic Rapha. His “votaries of Rapha,” then, suit both the philological and contextual needs of the phrase, and this interpretation is followed in more recent works.156

Even affirming the positions of Willesen and others, that the champions in these stories are members of a class of fighting slaves, or warriors of a cult deity, or a military corps, the use of the language in 2 Sam 21:22 is peculiar. Based on Willesen’s arguments, particularly through comparison with the “y’lidē ḛayiṯ” from Gen 14:14, it does seem likely that the author refers to the warriors in 2 Sam 21:16 and 21:18 by an accepted title or designation.157 It is, however, worth taking seriously the specific usage of the pual in 2 Sam 21:22. Although L’Heureux comments: “we presume that the phrases with a passive verb are equivalent in meaning to the nominal construction,”158 given the greater syntactic structure in which the verb occurs in 2 Sam 21:22, such a presumption is premature. As is outlined below, the syntax surrounding the verbal form in 2 Sam 21:22 (which also appears in 21:20)159 serves particular grammatical functions and, by extension, delivers a thematic message regarding David and his enemies.

I take no issue with Willesen’s or L’Heureux’s understanding and translations of בְּיֵלִידֵי הָרַפֶּה. The interpretation of this phrase in the tales is less critical here than the choice of placing the verb ילדו in the pual in the summary statement of 2 Sam 21:22. In almost every other case of ילדו in the pual, it expresses an explicit father or mother relationship to the one born (cf. Gen 4:26, 10:21, 46:22, and others).

159 This fact is not insignificant; we might expect another בְּיֵלִידֵי הָרַפֶּה in 2 Sam 21:20 to go with 21:16 and 21:18, and is syntactically very similar to Gen 10:21(where literal fathers and sons are discussed).
The difference in structure between, for example, Gen 35:26 and 36:5, and 2 Sam 21:22 might suggest that the meaning in 2 Samuel is not a literal born-child, i.e. the lack of the “sons of PN” may argue for a less literal meaning of ילדו in 2 Sam 21:22.

Structure of Gen 35:26 and 36:5:
אלּה + PN + בני + relative pronoun + pual + to + object suffix + in + GN

Structure of 2 Sam 3:5 and 21:22:
+ pual + to + PN + in + GN

Even so, that fact only further requires that the syntax and meaning of 2 Sam 21:22 be examined and a satisfactory understanding reached.

To conclude on this point, it is not my intention here to solve (if Willesen/L’Heureux have not already) the interpretive matter of the “ילדיו הרפה,” but rather to demonstrate that the syntax of 2 Sam 21:22 is significant in its own right, including the verb ילדו. In fact, to agree that ילדיו הרפה is not a term for familial, physically born relations (as Willesen/L’Heureux argue) actually makes the use of the “typical” syntax for literal descendants in 2 Sam 21:22 even more striking. Perhaps most importantly, this “descendants” syntax resonates with the comparison referent which, as we will see below, does contain a literal “born” relationship. And, it is not only the permutations of the ילד root, but rather the entire grammatical structure of the verse that is relevant here.

Identifying the Referent of ארבעת אלּה

We have seen above that the use of אלּה as a nomen rectum in 2 Kgs 6:20 and Exod 21:11 serves to mark an emphatic contrast with circumstances of another party in the narrative. Similarly, in response to the same syntax in 2 Sam 21:22, we should seek out a parallel circumstance or referent to fulfill that function. The fates of these four descendants of the Raphah stands in contrast to the fate of whom?

The answer to this question appears to be the children born to David in Hebron in 2 Sam 3:5 and in Jerusalem in 2 Sam 5:14:
2 Sam 3:5

(Sons were born to David in Hebron...) ...and the sixth was Ithream to David’s wife, Eglah; these were born to David in Hebron.

2 Sam 5:14

And these are the names of the ones born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, and Nathan and Shlomo.

The most direct link between 2 Sam 21:22 and 2 Sam 3:5 and 5:14 is the use of the syntactic chain, both of which are introduced by אלה, expressing the “these born to” formula that appears in both: GN + ב +OBJ + ילד + אלה. Thematically, however, the overall contrast offered in 2 Sam 21 is that the fate of the children of David is quite different that the fate of the “children” of Raphah.

This syntagm in 2 Sam 5:14 and the text of 2 Sam 21:22 bookend the Philistine tales found in 2 Sam 5:17-25 and 21:15-22 and forms the basis for comparison between David’s successful royal progeny and the fate of the enemies of Israel. The grammatical peculiarities of 2 Sam 21:22, at the close of a series of Philistine tales, serve as narrative markers signaling the reader to recall the parallel structure in 5:14, at the opening of a series of Philistine tales. The repetition of the specific syntax cues the reader to recognize this comparison even across a significant distance of text. This emphatic contrast technique demonstrates the intentionality behind the construction of the larger narrative. Most importantly, the “born to” formula conveys the most important narrative message of 2 Samuel—the legitimacy of the House of David (i.e. David and those “born to him”) over the House of Saul and indeed over any other enemy and his children who seek to challenge David.

Even the small way in which the “born to” formula varies in 2 Sam 5:14 and 21:22 can be understood as supporting the contrast between the success of the House of David and the suppression of its enemies. David’s children are the ones born to him in Jerusalem (יהי דוד ל), and the repetition of the formula in 2 Sam 21:22 is very similar and, as we have seen above, communicates the comparison between David’s progeny and his enemies’. However in the
formula in 2 Sam 21:22 we do not find a pronominal object suffix on the preposition ל, but rather the phrase להרפה בגת. McCarter, who understands the warriors of 2 Sam 21 to belong to a cultic association, has suggested that this phrase should be taken as the full name of the deity, the “Gittite Raphah,” which he compares with Yahweh-in-Hebron or Yahweh-in-Gibeon.  

If he is correct, then this adds a further dimension to the level of contrast: the patron deity of David and his allies is superior to the Philistine god, Raphah-in-Gath.

Conclusions

Deconstruction of that original “irritant” in 2 Sam 21:22 has led to the recognition of a particular function of אלה when used in certain syntactic contexts. This function is that of emphatic contrast, and, in the 2 Samuel example, the ultimate outcomes of the “descendants” of the Raphah and the descendants of David are juxtaposed. The “four of these” Raphah-men, perhaps with their fidelity pledged to the deity in Gath, the Philistine center, stand in contrast to “these,” the children born to David in Jerusalem, his center. These Philistine warriors are all killed, defeated by the fighting men loyal to David. The ones “born to David” are safe and spared; the “lamp of Israel” (2 Sam 21:17) is not extinguished. By extension, the tales celebrate Hebron, and (especially) Jerusalem as fruitful, royal capitals, while Gath presumably awaits the same fate as its most famous sons.

160 McCarter 1984: 451. See also 1 Sam 17:45 where David explicitly fights his Philistine enemy “in the name of Yahweh Sabbaoth.” McCarter follows L’Heureux, 1976: 84. L’Heureux affirms the phrase’s sense of group affiliation, and offers a possible Ugaritic connection to hero/deity, Rapha. For additional discussion of the meaning of ילדי הרפה see Willesen 1958a and 1958b.

161 At least for the moment. Despite the tragedies that will befall some of David’s children, the preservation of his line generally speaking remains safeguarded.
Chapter 3: אֶלּה as Editorial Marker in 2 Samuel

Introduction

The study in Chapter 2 describes the use of the unmarked plural demonstrative pronoun to make an emphatic contrast. The investigation into the occurrence of אֶלּה in 2 Sam 21:22 prompted a comprehensive study of the use of the pronoun throughout 2 Samuel. In the study presented here, I will review the other occurrences of אֶלּה in 2 Samuel and in doing so will demonstrate that the distribution of the pronoun reveals compositional intentionality in a series of interrelated narrative units which are found in several different locations throughout the book. We will see that the narrative contexts marked by certain uses of אֶלּה share a constellation of features which together point to a narrative symmetry in these passages. These features include shared lexical, syntactic and thematic choices which are detailed in the description of each narrative context below. It is the abundance and combination of these elements which presents a compelling picture, rather than the significance or strength of any one of the features on its own. Further, the position and nature of these units has certain implications in the debate over the compositional history of the text of 2 Samuel, specifically with regard to the positioning of the Philistine war tales and the relationship between the texts of the Succession Narrative/Court History/Story of King David\textsuperscript{162} and its surrounding material.

The Overall Distribution Pattern of אֶלּה in 2 Sam

The following catalogue enumerates all of the ways in which 2 Samuel uses אֶלּה:

1. marked with the definite article, used as an attributive adjective with a plural noun, as in 2 Sam 3:39, 7:17, 13:21, 14:19. E.g., האנשים אֶלּה, “these men”

\textsuperscript{162} Here, I refer to the bulk of the David story at the heart of 2 Samuel, regardless of one’s particular theory of composition, e.g. Rost’s, and followers’, traditional delineation of 2 Sam 6:16, 20-23;7:11b, 16; 9-20, 1 Kgs 1-2; Van Seters’ Court History (2 Sam 2:8-4:12, 9-20); Gunn’s Story of King David (2 Sam 2-4; 9-20); McCarter’s Story of Absalom’s Revolt (2 Sam 13-20); Keys’ “Theological Biography” (2 Sam 10-20).
2. in direct questions, as in 2 Sam 16:2,\textsuperscript{163} 24:17. E.g., הָאֵלֶּה לְךָ, “What are these to you?”

3. unmarked, used pronominally as the express subject or direct object of the verb, as in 2 Sam 2:13, 3:5, 21:22, 23:17, 23:22. E.g., הָאֵלֶּה יִלְדוּ, “these were born”

4. unmarked, used pronominally as the subject of a non-verbal clause, announcing or summarizing a list, as in 2 Sam 5:14, 23:1, 23:8. E.g., הָאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת, “these are the names”

The distribution pattern of the unmarked pronoun (i.e. uses three and four) is the concern of the following investigation. The adjectival use of הָאֵלֶּה is not discussed here. As can be seen from the list above, הָאֵלֶּה is not particularly frequent in 2 Samuel; by way of gross comparison, in 2 Samuel it occurs with roughly one third the frequency with which it does in Genesis, a book with just about double the number of words. The contrast in the type of usage between 1 and 2 Samuel is also remarkable; out of 27 total occurrences of הָאֵלֶּה in 1 Samuel, only three are unmarked.

Furthermore, within 2 Samuel, the distribution of the unmarked pronoun is rather delimited. The sections below track the course of each occurrence of the unmarked, plural demonstrative pronoun in 2 Samuel (i.e. the occurrences enumerated in usage types three and four above). The collection lists each pronoun in order of its appearance in the text, eight occurrences in all, and describes the narrative context associated with it. Highlighted in each description are the language elements which create the relationships between these passages and to which we will return in the second half of this study.

**First occurrence: 2 Sam 2:13**

**Narrative Context: The Battle at Gibeon (2 Sam 2:1-32)**

(וַיָּאוֹב בֶּן-צֶרְעוֹיא וַעֲבוֹד וַעֲבָדוֹאֵל וַעֲבָדָיו וַעֲבָדוֹאֵל דְּוִד יצאו וַיֹּגְשֹׁם עָלָיוּ בֵּרְכָּת גִּבֵּון בָּאתָם וַיָּשָּׁבוּ הָאֵלֶּה עַל-הָבְרָכָּה מֵזֶה:)

(Abner and the soldiers of Ishbaal went out)…and Joab, son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David went out and they met them at the pool of Gibeon, [everyone] together, and these [servants/soldiers] sat on one side of the pool and these [servants/soldiers] sat on the other side of the pool.

In the first occurrence of the unmarked pronoun, it is used twice in a parallel structure, “these [Abner and the soldiers of Ishbaal] sat on one side of the pool, and these [Joab and the soldiers of David] sat on the other side of the pool.”\textsuperscript{164} This usage is a bit different from the rest of the

\textsuperscript{163} This example should be more properly considered along with the expression יִלְדוּ as a kind of plural variant of this question, see 2 Sam 3:24, 12:23, 18:22, 19:43.

\textsuperscript{164} This way of expressing one side and the other (מזה...מכזה) is not particularly common and it is worth noting that two other examples of it can be found in Exod 17:12 (E) and Num 22:24 (E, Balaam). Chapter 4 addresses the significance of E material in Exodus and the Balaam story to the material in the “appendix” of 2 Samuel.
examples that will be examined below. Nonetheless, the narrative context in which this אָלַל example lies contains a number of language elements and literary themes which are part of the narrative relationship we are detailing.

2 Sam 2, the context for this occurrence of the pronoun, recounts several closely related points of information. We first learn that David has been anointed in Hebron (2 Sam 2:4) and that Ishbaal has been made king in Mahanaim (2 Sam 2:8-9). Following an announcement of the regnal lengths of these two in their respective cities (2 Sam 2:10-11), we learn of the Battle at Gibeon between the Abner and Ishbaal’s men and Joab and David’s men (2 Sam 2:12-32), which includes in its dénouement the death of Asahel at the hand of Abner (2 Sam 2:23).

The relevant language elements of the narrative context marked by this occurrence of אָלַל will now be detailed. In this example, there are many parallels of content and language between 2 Sam 2 and parts of 2 Sam 21, which will become more apparent as we consider each additional example. First, there are lexical choices which stand out because of their parallels in the other passages. The battle in 2 Sam 2 takes place at Gibeon and the text emphasizes the location with the four-time repetition within the space of 13 verses. Another confrontation we will examine in 2 Sam 21 takes place with the Gibeonites. In that narrative, the gentilic is used six times in the space of nine verses. This parallel is made more significant by the fact that this gentilic occurs almost exclusively in the 2 Sam 21 account, with only two other examples in 1 Chr 12:4 and Neh 3:7 in lists of names of individuals. Another lexical correspondence between the Battle at Gibeon account and 2 Sam 21 is the inclusion of the somewhat unnecessaryיחדו in 2 Sam 2:13 to describe the confrontation at the pool. The lexeme echoes the use ofיחד in 2 Sam 21:9 to describe the simultaneous death of the seven Saulids at the hands of the Gibeonites.

In some cases the narratives marked by אָלַל contain complementary syntax. In this case, we find an expression in 2 Sam 2:1 by which David inquires of Yahweh (וישאל דוד ביהוה). This identical construction is found 1 Sam 23:2, 30:8, 2 Sam 2:1 (here), 5:19, and 5:23. This use of this syntax in 2 Sam 5 will be seen again in the narrative context of another אָלַל verse. David also seeks Yahweh’s advice at the beginning of 2 Sam 21 in the story of the Gibeonites revenge, though not with this syntactic arrangement (there with the verbויבקש and the direct objectוּאָלַל).
We will see in each of the narratives examined here that special literary elements tend to repeat themselves in multiple locations. In some cases the structural organization of tales also tends to be similar across the texts, and in other cases we find repeated forms, such as etiologies or lists. That these special elements repeat and resonate with one another across narratives suggests an intentionality behind the composition of the all of the passages we deal with here. For example, in the 2 Sam 2 narratives, much space is devoted to describing the location of the confrontation at the pool of Gibeon.\footnote{Auld calls the pool a “prominent feature” though he does not connect it literarily to some of the other water elements we will encounter in other passages. A.G. Auld, \textit{I & II Samuel} (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 372.} While this detail is not absolutely critical to the unfolding of the plot, it does provide a plot detail of a water element which we will see recurs in three of the other marked passages. 2 Sam 2:16 contains an etiology which explains the name given to the location of the Battle at Gibeon, \textit{הצֻורים}–\textit{חלקת}.\footnote{McCarter argues that the entire narrative (both the Battle at Gibeon and the death of Asahel) constitutes one unified story. He sees only this etiology as additional to the original story. McCarter, \textit{II Samuel}, 98.} The inclusion of etiologies will recur, for example, in the narratives of 2 Sam 5. In an example of similar structural organization, the finale of the battle complex in 2 Sam 2 ends with Asahel’s burial in his father’s tomb, just as Saul and his sons are buried in their ancestral tomb at the end of the Gibeonite tale in 2 Sam 21.

Whatever else concerns the author of 2 Samuel, he loves a good pun. Paranomasia is only successful in 2 Samuel because terms and roots from across, in some cases, large spans of text can be brought together in a clever way. This device is both entertaining and also a useful tool for alerting the audience to connections or contrasts that are important in some way. There are many examples of paranomasia in the passages marked by \textit{אלּה}. In the case of 2 Sam 2, word play at work is seen in the prominent, repeated mentioning of Abner (some 15 times, and frequently with the additional nomenclature, “son of Ner”). This overt emphasis echoes with another notable phrase, the unique mention of the “lamp of Israel” (\textit{נר ישראל}) in 2 Sam 21:17. In 2 Sam 2, the focus on Abner emphasizes his role in the death of Asahel, which in turn puts into motion a series of events that include Joab’s murder of Abner which causes panic in Ishbaal’s camp. Though Abner represents a threat to the security of David’s position, his failures (and death) also represent protection for David, protection frequently provided by Joab and his brothers. David plays on the “wildness” of the Zeruiah boys (2 Sam 3:39) when he contrasts himself with them;
he is soft—or weak—and they are hard (ָּשְׁכָּר). David’s men become worried that the dangers of battle could extinguish the “lamp of Israel,” when Abishai, son of Zeruiah, must protect David by killing a Philistine combatant (2 Sam 21:17). David is too weary (יִיעָף, 2 Sam 21:15), or too soft perhaps, to protect himself.

Finally we must also consider broad thematic concerns of the story of 2 Samuel which are manifest in many locations throughout the text, including in the passages discussed here. These stories or motifs often reflect the main purpose of function of the story as a whole. In the narrative of 2 Sam 2, David praises and blesses the men of Jabesh-Gilead for burying Saul. These actions of the men of Jabesh-Gilead allow a magnanimous David to demonstrate his role as king; he conveys blessing, he doles out Yahweh’s חסד, he offers reward and encouragement in the face of the death of Saul (2 Sam 2:5-7). In 2 Sam 21:12, the men of Jabesh-Gilead reappear, although here they are said to have stolen the remains of Saul and Jonathan. Regardless of this detail, their actions are crucial since again they afford David the opportunity to demonstrate his royal credentials. This time he provides proper burial, after all this time, for Saul and his sons, which in turn compels Yahweh to save the land from a lingering famine. The recurring mention of the Jabesh-Gileadites provides a link between the tales in 2 Sam 2 and 21 which emphasizes David’s qualifications as royal leader, with a specific emphasis on theological functions (burial, blessing, intercession with Yahweh).

Second Occurrence: 2 Sam 3:5
Narrative Context: The House of David Grows Stronger/The House of Saul Grows Weaker (2 Sam 3:1-5)

(Sons were born to David in Hebron…)…and the sixth was Ithream to David’s wife, Eglah; these were born to David in Hebron.

A list announcement or summary is one of the common contexts for unmarked אלה, and in 2 Sam 3:5, the plural demonstrative concludes a list of the names of David’s children born to him in his capital of Hebron. The four verses that list the names are flanked before and after with

167 The same term is used to describe the battle in 2 Sam 2 (המלחמה קשה עד) from which Abner is routed.
168 Also reiterating the blessing theme, David asks in 2 Sam 21:3 what he can do so that the Gibeonites will bless the nahala of Yahweh.
announcements that there is war (מלחמה) between the House of Saul and the House of David. In this context, then, the list of David’s progeny suggests that his house is growing and that his line is continually being secured against the threat of Saul’s house. The concern for David’s success over his enemies is an overwhelming thematic concern throughout 2 Samuel and many, if not all, of the passages marked by this use of אלה address the existence of and victory over threats to Davidic rule. Here the threat is war with the House of Saul. And combatting this threat, and relatedly the threat of perpetuation of David’s line, is the announcement of progeny born to David. In other units, we will encounter other kinds of threats, such as conflict with the Philistines. There is a broad thematic correlation between the House of Saul and the Philistines insofar as they each threaten the continuity of the David line.

**Third Occurrence: 2 Sam 5:14**

**Narrative Context: David Comes to Rule in Jerusalem and Defeats Philistines (5:13-25)**

ואלה שמות ילדו לו בירושלם שמות ושניים ושלושים: And these are the names of the ones born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, and Nathan and Shlomo.

Like 2 Sam 3:5 before it, this use of אלה is found in a summary list of David’s children. In these lists the syntax is not identical, but does have some similarity. In 2 Sam 3:5, we find the summary, “אלה ילדו לדוד בחברון,” just before a reminder of the war between the house of Saul and the house of David. Here, in 2 Sam 5:14, we have אלה announcing a list of the names of David’s children “born to him in Jerusalem” (וילדו ולירושלם).169

The way the texts are structured in 2 Sam 3 and 2 Sam 5 also shows certain similarities. The announcement in 2 Sam 5:14 immediately precedes a reminder of conflict, not with the House of Saul as above in 2 Sam 3, but with the Philistines (2 Sam 5:17). In this case too, the list of David’s progeny sits in between two announcements of the establishment of David’s kingship (5:12, 17a), just as in 2 Sam 3:5 the list sat in between the announcements of war with the House of Saul.

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169 Fokkelman calls these two lists “pairs” or “counterparts.” Fokkelman, *NAPS Vol. I*, 65, 299.
The setting of the list in 2 Sam 5:15-16 is a narrative unit which tells the story of two altercations with the Philistines (2 Sam 5:17-25), one at Baal-Perazim and one at the “bakas.” Both tales begin with the Philistines marching against David in the Valley of Rephaim, and in each story David inquires of Yahweh to find out what he should do (cf. 2 Sam 2:1 above). David is successful in both cases, and he smites the Philistines at Baal-Perazim and “from Geba to Gezer.” Table 1 below summarizes the parallel elements found in both Philistine tales.

Several details of literary style, structure and word play should be noted. The two Philistine tales in 2 Sam 5 contain several special elements—elements which are not terribly common and which recur in other relevant locations. For example, in 2 Sam 5:17, David goes down from the stronghold (מצודה); and we will see this element again in 2 Sam 23:14. A water element plays a key role in the first tale, serving as a simile in the etiology of the name Baal-Perazim (2 Sam 5:20). Already noted is the use of a water element in the tale of the Battle at Gibeon, and we will see another one mentioned in the tales of 2 Sam 23. The etiology of the place name itself is also a repeated form which we encountered in 2 Sam 2:16. Word play may also be evident in this narrative in an attempt to disparage the Philistines and their gods. David’s men carry off the Philistine gods in 2 Sam 5:21. MT 2 Sam 5:21 reads “their idols” (ﻹهیات) while 1 Chr 14:12 and LXX 2 Sam 5:21 read “their gods” (اللهات and θεοί αὐτῶν respectively). Whether the term in MT 2 Sam is primary or a later emendation, it serves a paranomastic function with another special detail in 2 Sam 21:20. The Gittite warrior, presumably a Philistine par excellence, has extra fingers and toes (אצבעות). These details taken together may be a subtle and entertaining way to comment on the abnormality or otherness of the Philistines—they are both physically and religiously deviant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philistines prepare for war?</th>
<th>Baal-Perazim Tale 5:17-21</th>
<th>Bakas Tale 5:22-25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>נטש</td>
<td>נטש</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>עמק רפהים</td>
<td>עמק רפהים</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

170 So MT. LXX and 1 Chr 14:16 have “Gibeon to Gezer.” See McCarter, II Samuel, 152 for brief survey of how commentators understand the geography here.
Table 1. Elements in the Two Philistines Tales of 2 Sam 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>David’s Response?</th>
<th>וירד אל המוצד</th>
<th>ירשהל ור ביהוה</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battle takes place where?</td>
<td>בעל פרッツים</td>
<td>بقאמים</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defeats with what verb?</td>
<td>בַּכֵּאָם</td>
<td>בַּכֵּאָם</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Elements</td>
<td>בַּכֵּאָם</td>
<td>בַּכֵּאָם</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thematically, the narrative context of this occurrence of אלּה moves from the insecurity of David’s political hold, when the Saulid threat was still real as in 2 Sam 2, to the (seeming) security of his kingship with Yahweh’s help. This occurrence of the demonstrative pronoun also marks the first of the Philistine tales; the pronoun will continue to be a marker of these tales throughout 2 Samuel.

Fourth Occurrence: 2 Sam 21:22
Narrative Context: Four Philistine War Tales (2 Sam 21:15-22)

את-ארבעה אלּה יֻלדו להרפה בידגאיבר את-ידאץ דוד ועבדיו: The four of these were descended from the Raphah in Gath and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants/soldiers.

In the next occurrence of the unmarked plural demonstrative pronoun is the unusual syntax which was addressed in Chapter 2. In that study, the emphatic contrast between the Raphah-men summarized in this verse and the sons of David from 2 Sam 3:5 and 5:14 was identified. I have already proposed that this verse is an echo of 2 Sam 3:5 in which members of another group, the descendants of David, are described as “אלּה יֻלדו.” The larger context of this verse is also critical for understanding the parallels which connect this usage with the other occurrences of the unmarked plural demonstrative in 2 Samuel. 2 Sam 21:22 is a summary statement of the verses immediately preceding it, beginning with 2 Sam 21:15. Because there are a number of intricate language elements in this section, let us look at the preceding verses in some detail.

2 Sam 21:15

וַתִּזוּד מֵלֶיתָם לְפַלְשִׁים אֲנָה-ינַשָּׁר לוֹרָד וֹרָד וַעֲבָדִי עַמָּם יִלְחוּמָו אֲנָה-פַּלְשִׁים יָרְקוּ וּרְדוּ.
And again there was war between the Philistines and Israel, and David and his men with him went down and they fought the Philistines; then David tired.171

This unit of four tales of Philistine heroes and their demise at the hands of David’s men is introduced in 2 Sam 21:15. Several lexemes recur in this narrative unit. As in 2 Sam 5:17, David “goes down” (ירד) and, as in the narrative context of 2 Sam 3:5, we read here of “war” (מלחמה), this time between the Philistines and Israel. The lexical choice in the description of David tiring (ויעף) is also meaningful. This root is not widely used, but in the Samuel tradition, it usually indicates a specific exhaustion connected to hunger.172 It is striking, then, that such a comment about David and his battle condition directly follows the account of the famine (2 Sam 21:1) which he must remediate with the deaths of the seven Saulids.

2 Sam 21:16–20

And Ishbi-benob/Dodo son of Joash173 who was among the descendants of the Raphah—the weight of his spear174 was three hundred shekels of bronze and he was girded with new/armor175—and he spoke of striking David. But Abishai son of Zeruiah helped him and he struck the Philistine and he killed him. Then the men of David swore an oath to him saying, “You will not go with us into battle again, so that you will not extinguish the lamp of Israel.” It was after this that there was battle again in Gob/Gath/Gezer176 with the Philistines. At that time, Sibbechai the Hushathite struck Saph, who was among the descendants. And there was battle again at Gob with the Philistines, and Elhanan son of Yaare-Oregim the Bethlehemite/a Jearite from Bethlehem177 struck Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. And there was battle again in Gath. There was a man of strife/a giant of a

171 McCarter reads the last two words here (and David tired) with the following verse, and reconstructs the whole selection from the LXX in which a marginal plus was dislocated to v.11 in the Greek. So, he reads here: “David became exhausted and Dodo son of Joash, one of the votaries of Rapha, captured him.” McCarter, II Samuel, 448.
172 In 1 Sam 14:28, 31, the troops are tired because Saul has forbidden them to eat and immediately devour the animals of their spoil when the battle is over. At the beginning of the story of Shimei’s attack on David, the king encounters Ziba and his asses, laden with food and drink for those in need (2 Sam 16:2). David and his men are interrupted from enjoying any of Ziba’s refreshments when Shimei begins to hurl insults and stones at them (2 Sam 16:5-6) and so they are still weary from their journey (2 Sam 16:14) at the end of the account. In 2 Sam 17:29, Shobi, Machir and Barzillai provide food, drink and supplies to David and his men who are weary from being on the run. All of these examples suggest that the term used in 2 Sam 21:15 has something to do with weariness derived, at least in part, from hunger.
173 The personal name in the MT here presents textual difficulty. It is reconstructed with a marginal correction in the LXX, currently with v.11, but which must have originally belonged with v.15-16, and with corresponding material from 4QSamα and 1Q Sam. See McCarter, II Samuel, 448 and Auld, I & II Samuel, 576.
174 MT יִקְוּנָ is a hapax. LXX reads του δόρατος αὐτου.
175 The textual difficulty in this clause is not completely resolved by any of the variant traditions. The MT “new(ness)” renders an incomplete thought. The LXX κορύνην (club) does not have a clear Hebrew tradition. 4QSamα also seems to preserve a corruption here. See McCarter, II Samuel, 448 and Auld, I & II Samuel, 576.
176 MT reads Gob, LXX Gath and 1 Chr 20:4 Gezer.
177 Most LXX versions and 1 Chr 20:5 omit בן יאריה. McCarter omits בן, taking יאריה as a gentilic, one (Kiriath-Jearim) closely associated with Bethlehem. See McCarter, II Samuel, 448. See also, J. Lust, “The Story of David and Goliath in Hebrew and Greek,” in The Story of David and Goliath: Textual and Literary Criticism (by D. Barthélemy et al.; OBO 73; Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, Freiburg: 1986), 5-18, for his discussion of the identification patterns for introducing heroes.
man and the fingers of his hands and the toes of his feet were six and six, twenty four was the number. And he was also descended from the Raphah. When he taunted Israel, Jonathan, son of Shimei, brother of David, struck him.

The continuation of the four Raphah-men tales follows (2 Sam 21:16-20) and some of the important elements of these tales are broken down in Table 2. The structural features of these four tales will be mirrored in the presentation of the tales in 2 Sam 23.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Philistine,...</th>
<th>21:15-17</th>
<th>21:18</th>
<th>21:19</th>
<th>21:20-21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battle formula</td>
<td>והרפה</td>
<td>והרפה</td>
<td>והרפה</td>
<td>והרפה</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>כבש</td>
<td>כבש</td>
<td>כבש</td>
<td>כבש</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Philistine,...</td>
<td>יטעבי</td>
<td>סף</td>
<td>סף</td>
<td>סף</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...his ancestry...</td>
<td>אשי בילד הרפה</td>
<td>ג'אש</td>
<td>ג'אש</td>
<td>ג'אש</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...and his prowess</td>
<td>ומפשקל כו נשל</td>
<td>None given</td>
<td>ארוגם</td>
<td>ארוגם</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who killed him?</td>
<td>אבסי</td>
<td>מבני</td>
<td>מבני</td>
<td>מבני</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and Family</td>
<td>בן-צור</td>
<td>החלחלי</td>
<td>בית-המלחים</td>
<td>בית-המלחים</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With what verb?</td>
<td>ויך</td>
<td>ויכהו</td>
<td>ויכהו</td>
<td>ויכהו</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Elements in the Four Philistine Tales of 2 Sam 21

This structural pattern, which is repeated in each of the four Raphah-men tales, is not only indicative of the nature of composition within this unit, but it also provides elements which operate across the larger text of 2 Samuel. One way in which we see this wide-spread activity is through paranomasia. In the tales here, we find the four-time repetition of the term הרפה and in 2 Sam 21:21, Jonathan strikes the giant, when he “taunted” the Israelites. So we see something of a pun beginning internally here. Additionally, in the two tales in 2 Sam 5, the repeated, formulaic mention that the Philistines were spread out in the Valley of Rephaim amplifies the paranomasia at work. Another pair of details, already mentioned above, in the tales of 2 Sam 5 and 2 Sam 21 may also function in this way. In 2 Sam 5:21, we learn of the particular detail, almost as an afterthought, that David and his men captured the gods or idols of

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178 MT reads מָדִין/מָדוֹן. 1 Chr 20:6 makes more sense with מָדָה.
179 For the purposes of this chart, I have used the text as it stands in the MT.
180 See also 1 Sam 17:10ff.
the Philistine forces (עצביהם). In 2 Sam 21:20, another unusual detail demands attention—the description of the polydactyl Philistine warrior. The peculiar note about his fingers and toes (אצבעות) aurally recalls the earlier note about the Philistine idols.

These four tales are concluded by the verse with which we began, 2 Sam 21:22, in which we find the fourth occurrence of the unmarked plural demonstrative, אלה.

2 Sam 21:22

את-ארבעת אלה יולדו להרפה בנת ויפלו ביד דוד וביד עבדיו: The four of these were descended from the Raphah in Gath and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants/soldiers.

“These” four of the adversaries in the preceding anecdotes “were born to the Raphah in Gath.” The repetition here of the same syntax as 2 Sam 3:5 and 5:14 ( אלה plus passive form of ילד plus -ן plus PN plus -ב plus GN) marks the closure of this section of Philistine battles.

Chapter 2 already addressed the connection between this verse and 2 Sam 3:5 and 5:14, and to the comparison of the sons of David with the four Raphah-men. Fokkelman’s suggestion that 2 Sam 21:22 is a merismus lends further support to this comparison. He observes that the verse conveys the deriding message that only the birth and death of the Raphah-men are significant parts of their existence. This message is conveyed specially through formatting the syntax in this way. It is precisely the birth and death of David’s heirs and enemies that is both of interest to the writer and emphasized by the narrative structure.

Auld argues that these four tales actually comprise two sources. The first, 2 Sam 21:15-17, and the second, 2 Sam 21:18-22, differ in content, primarily due to the presence of David in the first tale (21:15-17). This first tale is also missing from the Chronicler’s version of this material.

For Auld, this is important data; he reconstructs an original source (his “Book of the Two

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181 There is probably also something to the fact that another “giant” tradition, that of the Anakim, has a connection to Hebron, cf. Num 13:22, Josh 14:15 and Judg 1:10-20. Budde, Samuel, 310.


183 Auld, I & II Samuel, 578.
Houses”) from the synoptic material in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. Further, Auld argues that this first tale was crafted with material from 2 Sam 21:18-22 and 1 Chr 20:4-8. However, Fokkelman argues, on the basis of the literary structure, that these four tales “are governed by a tight scheme,” and that they are a mini-ring structure within the larger composition of 2 Sam 21-24. His scheme consists of six components (battle introduction, location, hero name, etc.) which are, though organized slightly differently, each represented in my Table 2. He sees the first and fourth tales as “embellished and dressed up” but that the basic scheme is still present in the middle two tales. In this way, he sees the innermost tales as a pair and the outermost as a pair and the whole passage as governed by the framework of 21:15 and 21:22. Though he does not specifically comment on whether the first tale may have originated subsequently to the last three, Fokkelman’s view of the use of language and structure in the four tales would suggest that he views them all as a unified entity.

Whether the first tale (2 Sam 21:15-17) is original to this group of four or whether it was an addition to the other three, I would argue that whoever composed 2 Sam 21:22, with its “אלה summary” of the four tales, must be responsible, not only for (at least) compiling the four Philistine tales here, but also (at least) compiling the other "אלה marked passages. Since the language elements detailed here must operate in relation to one another, all of the narratives governed by them must have been manipulated by the same hand.

Fifth Occurrence: 2 Sam 23:1
Narrative Context: Poetic Interlude—David’s Last Words (2 Sam 23:1-7)
ואלה דברי דוד האחרים נאם דוד בן-ישי ונאם הגבר הקמא על משיח אלהי יעקב וплач זמרות ישראל:

184 Though Auld might object to the term source. “…the story of David within the Book of Two Houses is not so much a “source” among others for the books of Samuel, but rather the older respected “text” on which the books of Samuel are a…narrative commentary.” A. G. Auld, “Bearing the Burden of David’s Guilt,” in Vergegenwärtigung des Alten Testaments: Beiträge zur biblischen Hermeneutik, Festschrift für Rudolf Smend zum 70. Geburtstag (ed. C. Bultmann et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2002), 69-70. For his larger discussion of the Samuel/Kings-Chronicles comparison, see A. G. Auld, Kings Without Privilege, David and Moses in the Story of the Bible’s Kings (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994).
185 Though I was unaware at the time I compiled this table, Fokkelman had already suggested that these elements be considered side-by-side. Fokkelman, NAPS Vol. III, 297-8.
186 Fokkelman, NAPS Vol. III, 294-299.
These are the last words of David, the utterance of David, son of Jesse, and the utterance of the man raised on high/God established as the anointed of the god of Jacob, and the favorite of the songs/stronghold of Israel.

The function of the demonstrative in this verse is to introduce a list, in this case the collection of David’s final words. The date and authorship of these last words trigger much debate, but one aspect of these seven verses seems to enjoy agreement among scholars: 2 Sam 23:1 bears striking similarity to the opening of the Balaam oracles and the “Sayings of Agur” in Proverbs.

**Num 24:3 and 24:15**

...the utterance of Balaam, son of Beor, and the utterance of the man whose eye is opened

**Prov 30:1**

...The words of Agur, son of Jakeh, of Massa, the utterance of the man...

Serious critical treatment of the poem (2 Sam 23:1-7) typically attributes 23:1a to an editorial addition. Certainly 23:1b is the opening of the poetic section and that 2 Sam 23:1a is an editorial statement seems logical enough. Given this, the presence of the demonstrative pronoun in this verse and the introduction of “these” last words of David should be considered secondary to the poem. Even so, we might then ask in what way “these last words” fit in with the larger sequence of passages marked by this use of the plural demonstrative pronoun. Three sets of connections are offered here.

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187 Confusion between *alef* and *ayin* here leads to slightly alternate readings. MT reads בֵּיתוֹ בְּשֵׁם, while LXX and 4QSam* read בְּשֵׁם.

188 While the MT orthography reads “songs” here, Richardson suggested that “the root should be viewed as cognate with Ugaritic *gmr* and Amorite *zmr* with the sense “to safeguard,” “to protect.”” H. N. Richardson, “The Last Words of David: Some Notes on II Samuel 23:1-7,” *JBL* 90 (1971): 257-266.

189 See McCarter, pp. 483ff. for review of major positions.


191 Richardson, “The Last Words of David”, 257-266. See especially p. 258 in which Richardson refers to 23:1a as an “editorial superscript.” McCarter begins his “Notes” with “1. The utterance of David.” McCarter, *II Samuel*, 479. Campbell calls 23:1a a “superscription” Campbell, 2 *Samuel*, p. 198. For the view that the superscript is secondary, see H. J. Stoebbe, *Das zweite Buch Samuels* (KAT VIII 2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994), 489. Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, 400, states that the introduction to the poem begins with 1b, although he does concede some discussion of the parallels between “these are the last words of David” and the last words of Moses. See also Stoebbe on this point.
The biblical verse of 2 Sam 23:6 may have an explicit or implicit connection to the anecdotes of the four warriors in 2 Sam 21:15-22. The derivation of the term בליעל בני בו ינים, the construction in which this term is commonly found,192 (cf. Deut 13:14, Jdg 19:22, 20:13, 1 Kgs 21:10, even as הב יש יים in 1 Sam 1:16), is not readily apparent. Some connection to the underworld is acknowledged by way of two separate etymologies: 1.) “place from which none arises,” that is, Hades or Sheol,193 or 2.) from the verb to swallow, that is, the swallowing abyss, the underworld.194 Either way, the situation of the בליעל בני ינים is reminiscent of the “shades” of the Rephaim. Deut 2:11 equates the Rephaim with the Anakim, who themselves are, in Num 13:22, 28, called the ילידי הענק, strikingly similar in form and content to our ילידי הרפה of 2 Sam 21.195 The בליעל, Rephaim, and Anakim all depict races of beings who are not completely natural, or who are exaggeratedly natural, but who are not within the “normal” construct of being human. The actions associated with these three groups further demonstrate their subversion of social order as understood by the biblical text. The Anakim are impediments to the Israelites’ settlement (cf. Num 13:33, Josh 11:21, and others). The Rephaim, as giants, embody the exaggerated, monstrous world (e.g. Og of Bashan and his giant bed in Deut 3:11, or the polydactyl warrior of 2 Sam 21), or, as shades, (especially royal ones, cf. Job 26, Isaiah 14:9), occupy a liminal space and represent the ultimate disruption of the monarchy, death. The בליעל defy justice (cf. Judg 19:22, 1 Kgs 21:10) and attempt to undermine the legitimacy of the monarchy (cf. 1 Sam 10:27, 2 Sam 20:1).196 These thematic associations and similar positions in the literary and theological perspectives of the biblical text may have been the impetus for connecting these seven poetic verses in some way with the other אלה passages reviewed here.197

192 Even this occurrence of בליעל בני ינים may in fact be בליעל ינים. An ellipsis here would be consistent with the “klhm at the the end of the colon and the fact that bly’l rarely stands alone.” Richardson, “Last Words”, 264, n.46, cites unpublished notes of D. N. Freedman who suggests that 22 fell out due to haplography.
195 Driver, Notes, 354 points to this similarity as well.
196 For additional thoughts on the relationships between these groups and the significance of the appearance of the Raphah-men and the بلיעל in the 2 Samuel “appendix,” see the recent work study, L. Simon, Identity and Identification: An Exegetical and Theological Study of 2 Sam 21-24 (Tesi Gregoriana. Serie Teologia, 64; Rome: Ponificia Universita Gregoriana, 2000), 202-206, 328.
197 The بلיעל and the Raphah-men of 2 Sam 21 are already in close proximity. Their compositional positions may be even more closely related if we consider that the entirety of intervening material between the stories of the four warriors and this poem is another poetic section, the lengthier psalm of 2 Sam 22.
The language of 2 Sam 23:4, easily some of the most difficult in the poem, alludes to the concern over the preservation of the monarchy, patent in 2 Sam 21:17. Two terms in 2 Sam 23:4, אור and נגה, recall the imagery of illumination found in 2 Sam 21:17, the נר ישראל. Regardless of the precise reading of verse 4, the general sense is understood by all the commentaries. David, as a righteous ruler of Israel, shines on his people like the sun and sustains them with the life giving forces of light and rain. Two of these three key words appear together in 2 Sam 22:29 where Yahweh, in his capacity as "my (David’s) lamp," illuminates (גיה) darkness. Just as Yahweh illuminates darkness, David too serves as the “lamp of Israel” that will not be extinguished. The imagery of the sun, the morning light, and the brightness of the cloudless sky recalls the lamp motif of both chapter 21 and 22, and in this way this poem in chapter 23 may be purposely correlated to this sequence because of the common trope.

Lastly, we might consider the term ברזל, which occurs three times in 2 Sam: here in 2 Sam 23:7 (ברזל עץ חנית ועץ ברזל) and twice in 2 Sam 12:31, in the description of the taking of the cities of Ammon, particularly Rabbah. Deut 3:11 tell us that King Og, a ruler of Bashan, and of Gilead, has a famous ברזל bed, which ended up in Rabbah. It is not insignificant that Deut 3:11 identifies Og as a remnant of the Rephaim. One of the Raphah-men from 2 Sam 21 carries an עץ חנית, just as Goliath does in 1 Sam 17:7; Goliath’s spear blade weighs in at 600 shekels of ברזל. The reference in the poem to iron weaponry in 23:7 recalls the same iron weaponry of the legendary warriors. But more than a just a repetition of a term, there is a constellation of information

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199 Cf. Ps 18:29.

200 אור and נגה occur together in some 10 other biblical verses. One noteworthy example is Hab 3:4. A full treatment of the psalm in Hab 3 is beyond the scope of the discussion here. However, a brief consideration yields some tentative connections. Although the tenure of the prophet Habakkuk is usually placed somewhere in the 7th c. BCE, some have placed the language and imagery of chapter three within a much older tradition. See, for example W. Irwin, “The Psalm of Habakkuk,” JNES 1 (1942): 10-40, but also more recently, Hiebert, who dates the psalm to the pre-monarchic period; T. Hiebert, The God of My Victory: The Ancient Hymn in Habakkuk 3 (HSM 38; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986). Irwin, using the imagery in 3:11, understands the “light” of 3:4 to mean the arrows of Yahweh’s arsenal and the “brightness” of 3:4 to refer to his spear, like the flashing lightening of his spear in v.11. For the textual difficulty in the first stich of 3:4, Irwin also suggests נר עשׁים. A certain combination of literary and theological motifs exists, then, in the Habakkuk psalm and it is a combination which is mirrored in David’s psalm in 2 Sam 23. For the significance of the spear see discussion following as well as n.209 below.

201 According to Deut 3:16, “part of Gilead down to the Arnon.” See also Deut 2:36-37.
associated with ברזל: the Philistines, iron weaponry, Og of Bashan, and the Transjordanian area of Rabbath Ammon and environs, including Gilead.

This geographic area plays a strategic role for both Saul and David. Saul builds his kingdom by acquiring the support of Jabesh Gilead in 1 Sam 11 and with this victory behind him, he can address his own Philistine threat in 1 Sam 13-14. David, too, builds his reputation and his realm in this area. The summary list in 2 Sam 8:12 outlines David’s successes in the region, and the events of 2 Sam 15-18 demonstrate just how critical these victories are for David’s survival. 2 Sam 17:24ff. describes David’s retreat from Absalom’s forces, and it is in Gilead, by the hand of Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbath Ammon and Barzillai the Gileadite that David’s troops receive safe haven and provisions.202

This poem, then, beginning in 2 Sam 23:1b, may have been associated with the Philistine tales of 2 Sam 21 (either in its original composition, in which case 23:1a is integral to the poem, or through later consideration, in which case 23:1a is secondary) as indicated by the confluence of several lexical choices (בליעל, ברזל), phraseology (X + ילדי), literary imagery (light terms: נגה, אור, נר), thematic concerns over David’s preservation (dangers of battle, physical sustenance). The אלּה in 2 Sam 23:1a alerts the audience that this narrative context participates with other marked passages in generating and sharing parallels of language and message.

We turn now to the final three occurrences of אלּה and Table 3 provides some data for the following discussion. It includes texts from 2 Sam 23:8-23:22: 203

202 These names seem to carry special weight in this account. The name of ברזלי הגלעדי provides unmistakable emphasis on the connection between the commodity and region in question. בן-נחש שבי, too, emphasizes a certain connection. Nahash is the Ammonite king whom Saul defeats at Jabesh Gilead and David, in his dealings in this region, must interact with Nahash’s children. It is tempting to attribute further interconnectedness between the multiple roots of חנית and the constellation of features discussed above: Iron (ברזל) is often accompanied with copper/bronze (נחשת), some 23 times in the biblical text. Isaiah’s pronouncement against Philistia includes a metaphor of unbeaten snakes (Isa 14:29), a use of חנית which is unique in Isaiah’s oracles against the nations. In Solomon’s day, 1 Kgs 4:13 reports that Ben-Geber governed in Gilead and in Bashan where great cities were walled with bars of bronze. We may consider adding חנית, perhaps to a lesser extent, to the group of features discussed above.

203 For the purposes for this table, the text of the MT is used.
Table 3. Warrior Tales from 2 Sam 23:8-22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun?</td>
<td>Opens with אלה</td>
<td>Concludes with אלה</td>
<td>Concludes with אלה</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of hero</td>
<td>ישב בשבח</td>
<td>שלמה</td>
<td>אפתח</td>
<td>בנוויה בן-אש</td>
<td>צירוה</td>
<td>ח(ת)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... his ancestry.</td>
<td>תחכמני בן דדי בן אחצי בן אги ארי הררי</td>
<td>בר-דודי בן ואחרי</td>
<td>בר-ציון ממית/באר בית-לחם</td>
<td>בר-ציון ממית/באר בית-לחם</td>
<td>בן ת scoped männ</td>
<td>בן ת scoped männ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key elements</td>
<td>Only a number of slain given</td>
<td>Use ofוור</td>
<td>ער</td>
<td>Only a number of slain given</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who he defeated...</td>
<td>שמונה פלשתים</td>
<td>פלשותים</td>
<td>פלשותים</td>
<td>פלשותים</td>
<td>שוני אריאל מבאר</td>
<td>שוני אריאל מבאר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...and with what verb?</td>
<td>חללים</td>
<td>ירח</td>
<td>Play on חללים</td>
<td>חללים</td>
<td>חללים</td>
<td>חללים</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sixth Occurrence: 2 Sam 23:8
Narrative Context: David’s Warriors (2 Sam 23:8-39, specifically 2 Sam 23:8-17)

These are the names of David’s warriors: Yosheb-basset/Jeshbaal the Tahchemonite/Hachmonite was the head of the Three (he is Adino the Ezenite, [he raised his spear] against 800 pierced ones on one occasion.

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204 The personal name presents some textual difficulty. LXX preserves Ἰσσαβαζήλ for the PN. McCarter reconstructs מ“ה as an error for מ“ה, following the patronymic given in 1 Chr 11:11 and likely confusion between בט“ן and ת. Though there are textual difficulties with the name of the first warrior in this verse, the repetition of מ“ה in 2 Sam 23:7 and here should not be ignored. Despite the well-known באל/boshet substitution, we can entertain the notion that the MT is playing on the end of David’s psalm in 23:7. The term in that verse has also proven troubling, but see the proposal of summer drought by Naéh. S. Naéh, “A New Suggestion regarding 2 Samuel XXIII 7,” VT 46 (1996): 260-265.

205 Here is another textual difficulty. What MT 2 Samuel understands as the PN “Adino the Ezenite,” 1 Chr 11:11 constructs into a proper verb and spear. McCarter suggests that the MT more closely reflects an original. McCarter, II Samuel, 489.
Beginning in 2 Sam 23:8 with “these are the names,”206 the text relates a string of tales concerning a group of David’s fighting men. The basic structure of this narrative unit is similar to that of 2 Sam 5:14-25 and 21:15-22 and, in addition to the analogous framework itself, we find a number of additional language parallels within, including lexical and paranomastic counterparts to other אלּה marked passages. The tales all have some sort of introduction to battle and make some use of the demonstrative pronoun. Three of these six tales in 2 Sam 23 are introduced by the use of אלּה. The tales devote space to carefully naming enemy warriors and Israelite heroes, and to providing genealogical information. All three units (i.e. the sections from 2 Sam 5, 21, and 23) of tales include a special element or key items that, when observed together allude to one another. For example, the geographic names in each section (2 Sam 5:17-25, 21:19 and 23:8-23:22) overlap and recall one another: וְאֶלֶךָ וּמַמֵּשׁ הַרְפָּאִים, בֵּית-לַחְמָה and the "מצודה." The root חֶרֶף is part of Eleazar’s tale in 2 Sam 23:9 and participates in the paranomastic scheme we have seen already in 2 Sam 5 and 21. And the victories (or defeats) are emphasized in each tale with particular patterns of verb use which is further detailed below.

While there are broad correlations between the tales in 2 Sam 5, 21 and 23, there are also internal parallels between the six accounts introduced in 2 Sam 23:8. The first four tales are examined first. This set of stories opens with the pronoun introducing the names of David’s warriors. The first of David’s warriors is victorious over 800 “slain.”207 Because there are textual difficulties with this verse (2 Sam 23:8), there are certain limitations to interpretation, but it is worth considering that the synoptic material in Chronicles brings this tale into strong parallel with the “raising of is sword” in 2 Sam 23:18. The enemy in 2 Sam 23:8 is not explicitly identified, and

206 On this phrase, Fokkelman comments, “I do not believe that the symmetry joining 21:22a and 23:8a is coincidental, but rather one of the signals which shows us that their units are just as much pairs as the short lists of 3:2-5 and 5:14-16. Fokkelman, NAPS Vol. III, 299.

207 Codex Vaticanus corrects to חָלָל in this verse to חָלַל, but in doing so betrays its divergence from the authentic text. McCarter notes that, for 2 Sam 10-24, Vaticanus is not reliable for accessing the Old Greek. McCarter, II Samuel, 4. That חָלָל is original seems obvious in light of the larger literary structures outlined here. The textual problems regarding the reading of the probably spurious personal name and gentilic, “Adino the Ezenite,” may also be connected with the observations here regarding the structure of the Philistine tales. See McCarter, II Samuel, 489-490, for assessment of manuscript variants, but note, while he thinks that it is “very unlikely” that the verse contains a graphic corruption of לַחָלַל, יָוָא חוּרֶה - אֵזֶןי, such a reading would fit nicely into the structure of tales presented below, particularly as it would mean that each of the two halves of the second block of material would begin with a tale of an unnamed enemy, who is defeated similarly, and with the same language. Driver seems to affirm the correctness of לא יורר but not לא חָלַל. Driver, Notes, 364. Is it the case that the recognition of a literary pattern can aid in the reconstruction of graphic confusion? If so, we might see in this example a way in which final form readings can be valuable for recovering the compositional history of a text.
this victory, identified only by the number of the slain, is concluded withחִלָּל. Each of the next two tales deals with the defeat of a Philistine enemy marked by וִיחַ. The fourth tale in this sequence includes a play on the rootחִלָּל from the first account in 2 Sam 23:8. Here, at the conclusion, we find David’s expletive חִלָּל. In this case, the word play is produced in part due to the larger structure of the narrative unit. In order to produce this type of literary device, one must assume an intentional composer is responsible for all the relevant text.

Seventh Occurrence: 2 Sam 23:17
Narrative Context: David’s Warriors (2 Sam 23:8-39, specifically 2 Sam 23:8-17)

וַיֹּאמֶר חִלָּל לְיהוָה מעַשְׂתֵּנִי הָאֱדֹמִים הַנַּחֲלִים. וַיְהַלֵּךְ בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא בְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא бְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא бְּנֵי יָשָׁבָא

וַיֹּאמֶר חִלָּל לְיהוָה מעַשְׂתֵּנִי אֶת הָאֱדֹמִים הַנַּחֲלִים, וַיֹּאמֶר חִלָּל לְיהוָה מעַשְׂתֵּנִי אֶת הָאֱדֹמִים הַנַּחֲלִים. And he said, “Yahweh forbid me that I do this; Is it the blood of the men, the ones who went with their lives? So he was not willing to drink it. These things the three warriors did.

The summation at the end of 2 Sam 23:17, “these things the three warriors did,” functions several ways. It concludes the tales of “The Three” (i.e. Yosheb/Jeshbaal, Eleazar, and Shammah) and the water-from-Bethlehem account; it structures this narrative unit by recalling the introduction of this section (2 Sam 23:8) with the repetition of the demonstrative pronoun; and it serves as an unofficial introduction to the following tales about Abishai and Benaiah (2 Sam 23:18-23).

The use ofחִלָּל in this verse also plays on the occurrence ofחִלָּל in 2 Sam 23:8 and punctuates this verse as a transition point in the block of tales. Structurally, this section is bookended by announcements containing the demonstrative pronoun; begins and ends with tales which conclude with aנֶס verb, recalling the conclusions to the tales in 2 Sam 5 and 21.

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208 The other tale in the section in which the enemy is identified only by the number of slain, Abishai’s account in 2 Sam 23:18, is also marked byחִלָּל. Of the 47 times that a biblical author uses the termחִלָּל, “spear,” an actual death results only on five occasions. Many a soldier holds a spear “in his hand”; some (mainly Saul) intend to strike down an enemy. Given the stories we do have, it would seem that this weapon can be thrown (e.g. 1 Sam 20:33) or used in close fighting (e.g. 2 Sam 2:23). Could it be that the large numbers of slain (חִלָּל) in the 2 Sam 23:8 tale (and its parallel in 1 Chr 11:11) and in the 2 Sam 23:18 tale imply a throwing method? If so, these two tales (plus their Chr parallels) could indicate the language associated with such a feat. Unlike tossing the spear in a scenario which results in no injury (1 Sam 18:11), or driving the spear so that it sticks harmlessly in the ground (1 Sam 26:7) toessenger one’s spear results in multiple casualties, the many hundredחִלָּל. Possible support may be found in the poetry of Nah 3:3, in which the flashing (due to their airborne nature?) spears result inחור חִלָּל.
Eighth Occurrence: 2 Sam 23:22  
Narrative Context: David’s Warriors (2 Sam 23:8-39, specifically 2 Sam 23:18-23)

These things Benaiah son of Yehoiada did and he had a name/reputation among the three warriors.

The last unmarked demonstrative plural pronoun of 2 Samuel concludes a small section on Abishai and Benaiah. In addition to the concluding הלא, the tales associated with these two warriors share stylistic, structural and thematic features with the warrior tales of 2 Sam 23:8-17.

2 Sam 23:18-22

Abisahai, the brother of Joab, son of Zeruiah, was head of The Three. He raised his spear over three hundred pierced and he had a name among The Three. More than The Three he was honored and he was for them a chief, but to The Three he did not attain. Benaiah, son of Yehoiada, was a great man of many deeds from Kabzeel. He killed the two of [sons of] Ariel of Moab. And he went down and he killed a lion in a pit on the day of snow. And he killed a man of Egypt, a huge man, and in the hand of the Egyptian was a spear, but he went down to him with a club, and he tore away the spear from the hand of the Egyptian, and he killed him with his spear. These things Benaiah son of Yehoiada did, and he had a name among the three warriors.

The first tale of each section begins with an account of a warrior whose specific enemy is unnamed, and only the number of slain is given in the text (2 Sam 23:8, 18). The phraseology of this victory is clear in 2 Sam 23:18 (וַיְהֵן נָעַר אֶל-חַנִיתוֹ) and, as discussed above, may have some parallel in 2 Sam 23:8. The tales in 23:8ff. begin with a “חלל” victory, followed by “נחל” victories. The same pattern appears in the Abishai and Benaiah accounts. Both sections (2 Sam 23:8-17 and 18-22) include a tale in which a באר (cistern, pit) plays a crucial role. The spears (חנית) of Abishai, and especially of Benaiah, which are mentioned prominently and repeatedly, recall those of Abner’s (in the finale to the Battle at Gibeon, 2 Sam 2:13ff.) and Goliath’s (2 Sam 21:19), and perhaps also the inclusion of this lexeme in the conclusion of the last words of David’s (2 Sam 23:7). The repeated mention of a weapon in stories about warriors is perhaps not so surprising on its own, but in combination with the many other interconnections between these

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209 McCarter reconstructs “he did not have a place” among the three, reading ולא שִׂם. McCarter, II Samuel, 491.
210 This is the last occurrence of the pronoun in the MT. The LXX, however, inserts another formulaic phrase, “these are the names of the heroes of King David,” at the beginning of 2 Sam 23:24, introducing the list of The Thirty.
211 McCarter prefers “The Thirty” here and in the next verse, with the Peshitta, to explain that Abishai was commander of the Thirty and both Abishai and Benaiah were “honored above the Thirty” but did not reach the rank of The Three. McCarter, II Samuel, 499-500.
212 Omitting MT בן with the LXX, and reading with 1 Chr 11:22.
213 LXX retains the sons here, which may have fallen out of the MT through haplography. See McCarter, II Samuel, 491.
214 1 Chr 11:23 seems to retain the correct rendering here, with איש מָדָה.
passages, this repetition takes on greater significance.²¹⁵ “Three warriors” conclude both the first group of tales (2 Sam 23:8-17) and the second group (Abishai and Benaiah, 23: 18-22).

A final thematic consideration is warranted in light of the concern for the Davidic line seen in a number of the other passages marked by אלהים which have been reviewed above. With this final pronominal signal, Benaiah’s role is highlighted. In fact, in the final three marked verses, the movement is from “David’s warriors” (2 Sam 23:8) to “The Three,” an elite group or rank among them (2 Sam 23:17) to Benaiah in particular (2 Sam 23:22). The narrowing focus on Benaiah may be crafted with an eye toward forecasting his future service, and thus his position warrants the narrative punctuation which אלהים provides. Benaiah’s story line is ultimately one (and maybe the ultimate one) of protection and preservation of the throne of David; in 1 Kgs 2, it is his assassinations which help to secure the kingdom for Solomon. Solomon’s kingship is established (כון, 1 Kgs 2:46) with Benaiah’s help and Solomon finally enjoys the fulfillment of Yahweh’s promise to establish (כון) the kingship for one of David’s offspring (2 Sam 7:12-13). Perhaps it is only a coincidental play on words that the promise stipulates the heir will build a house for Yahweh’s name (הוא יבנה-בית לשמי), Benaiah’s name evokes both an heir (בן), and, more importantly, building (בנה), and that Benaiah’s summary’s statement (2 Sam 23:22) includes the mention of his name (שם).

²¹⁵ The term אלהים seems particularly important to the Samuel tradition, occurring 30 times there. In fact, over 80% of the examples of this lexeme come from Samuel-Kings and Chronicles.
### Unit I: Two Birth List Summaries

*Set of Two Tales*

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<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; tale</th>
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<td>5:15-21</td>
<td>5:22-25</td>
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*Set of Four Tales*

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<th>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; tale</th>
<th>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; tale</th>
<th>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; tale</th>
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**Lexical Parallels/Leitwörter**

- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**

**Syntactic Parallels**

- Inquiry construction (cf. 2:1, 21:1)

**Stylistic “special” Elements**

- מздравה
- תמים

**Etiology**

- (cf. 2:16)

**Structural Elements: Concluding verbs**

- נביה
- נביה
- נביה
- נביה
- נביה
- נביה

### Unit II: Warrior List Summary

*Set of Four Tales*

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<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; tale</th>
<th>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; tale</th>
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**Lexical Parallels/Leitwörter**

- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**
- **ירד**

**Syntactic Parallels**

- לולא

**Stylistic “special” Elements**

- מצודה
- ימים

**Etiology**

- (cf. 2:16)

**Structural Elements: Concluding verbs**

- נביה
- נביה
- נביה
- נביה
- נביה

### Additional Notes

**Birth and Death Summary of Enemies**

*Set of Two Tales*

(21:22)

**Activity Summary of Benaiah**

(23:22)
**Unit I: Two Birth List Summaries**

- אֲלֵה יֵלְדוּ דוֹד (3:5)
- יִשְׂמַח שְׁמוֹת הָיוֹלֶדִים (5:14)

**Set of Two Tales**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>1st tale</th>
<th>2nd tale</th>
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<tr>
<td>5:15-21</td>
<td>5:22-25</td>
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**Set of Four Tales**

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<tr>
<th>3rd tale</th>
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**Paronomasia:**

- Birth and Death Summary of Enemies 
- Activity Summary of Benaiah

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<th>Thematic Concerns (DP=Davidic Preservation)</th>
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<tr>
<td>DP (David defends, external threat)</td>
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<td>DP (David defends, external threat)</td>
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<td>DP (warriors defend, external threat)</td>
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<td>DP (special warriors)</td>
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<td>DP (special warriors)</td>
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**Unit II: Warrior List Summary**

- אֲלֵה שְׁמוֹת הָיוֹלֶדִים (23:8)

**Set of Four Tales**

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<tr>
<th>1st tale</th>
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<th>3rd tale</th>
<th>4th tale</th>
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**Set of Two Tales**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>5th tale</th>
<th>6th tale</th>
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<tr>
<td>23:18</td>
<td>23:20-22</td>
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**Thematic Concerns**

- DP (David defends, external threat) *
- and 2:3 (internal threat), 3:5 (heirs), and 5:14 (heirs)

**Table 4. Schematic Narrative Structure of Occurrences of Unmarked יִשָּׂרַע in 2 Samuel**

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**Note:**

216 The first occurrence in 2 Sam 2:3 is not included here. It may be that its grammatical situation, as discussed above, is sufficiently different from the other examples as to warrant separation. Or, it may be the case that the narrative parallels of its context simply do not fit comfortably in this proposed framework.
Summary of Narrative Parallels

Reviewing all of the occurrences of the unmarked plural demonstrative pronoun in 2 Samuel, and evaluating the particular context of each example, has demonstrated a constellation of features which demonstrate an interconnectedness among these narrative units. The features include shared lexical, syntactic, structural and thematic choices, and an overall structure that appears to reflect a common authorial hand at work.

**Lexical**

Throughout the eight passages marked by אלה, we find a series of recurring lexemes which are used for practical narrative purposes, but also recur in such a way as to draw attention to the repetition. The pronoun itself represents one of the most important of these recurring terms, and we have seen in the investigation here how its use and placement serves to emphasize certain critical narrative unites. Other key roots or terms passed in review here include: נמה, הלה, חלל, מים, לילה, רפים, חלחול, הרפה, חרע, ימים, עצבה, אב, לפכה, מים, Shelf, נשים, חворот, מצודה. The combination of these lexical choices help demonstrate a unity of language which includes shared specific terminology and word play which relies on roots and words occurring throughout the sequence.

**Syntactic**

Two syntactic constructions are especially relevant for understanding the first part of this study. 2 Sam 21:22 serves an important function as it employs a comparative use of the pronoun אלה in the syntactic phrase “את + construct + אלה.” This rare use of the demonstrative, described fully in Chapter 2, compels the reader to appreciate the larger literary setting of 2 Sam 21:15-22, as well as to seek out a comparative referent. The syntactic arrangement “GN + ב + OBJ + ל + ילד” is recurring in the occurrences of אלה-marked tales and forms the basis for comparison between David’s successful royal progeny and the fate of the enemies of Israel. The repetition of this

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217 The orthography of some of these key terms also shares certain characteristics. Note for example that דים in 2 Sam 5:15 and הגירים of 2 Sam 23:15 are pointed in an identically defective manner. Similarly, the ילד of 2 Sam 21:20 and the ילדת of 21:22 also reflect the same internal defective vowel.
phraseology cues the reader to recognize this comparison even across a relative distance of text. Such technique reflects intentionality in the construction of the larger narrative.

**Style and Structure**

Within and across the passages, we find repeated literary devices. These features may be puns or allusions; they may be similarly structured accounts or echoes on a particular theme or topic. These literary patterns can be seen lexically in recurring terms and roots, but also stylistically in how these words are used together.

For example, paronomasia is found both within units, focused around the key terms seen above, as well as across tales. A major example is the group which functions internally within individual pericopes and also between passages throughout the book. Frequently it is a small, seemingly irrelevant detail, which is responsible for this sort of word play. So, the use of בַּרְפָּא in the second warrior tale of 2 Sam 23:9-10 recalls the larger pun of the Raphah, Rephaim, and the “taunt” of the Philistine enemy. Arguably, the idols, עָבָזִים, of 2 Sam 5:21 and the digits, אָבְצֵים, of 21:20 may also reflect the compositional plan at work.

Further, each unit of war tales operates within the similar narrative parameters, in terms of content and in terms of structure. Victories over opponents by David and his men are indicated with the roots נַכָּה and חָלָל in repeated patterns. The presentation of warriors in 2 Sam 21:15-22 and 2 Sam 23:8-22 including names and lineages, defining victories, recurring language and themes, is also structured with repeated design. In 2 Sam 23, each tale following an relates a hero who kills (חלל) an extravagant number of enemies who themselves are not identified. Each tale preceding an contains an anecdote which centers around a pit or cistern. David longs for a drink מבאר בית-לחם; Benaiah kills the lion בתוך הבאר. This particular special detail, about a

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218 This pun occurs most prominently within the so-called appendix, 2 Sam 21-24. Though not a narrative unit marked with the plural demonstrative, 2 Sam 24 also participates in this word play. In 2 Sam 24:16, Yahweh tells the angel, "ךְרַף ידך." In terms of the greater thematic concern, the census story and its conclusion with the purchase of Araunah’s threshing floor (for the building-site of the Temple) further establishes the future of the David line. 219 Contra McCarter: “We should note, however that there is no literary connection between these two units [21:15-22 and 23:8-39]...,” McCarter, *II Samuel*, p. 18.
The plural demonstrative pronoun highlights a series of narrative units which all reflect and highlight a continual concern throughout 2 Samuel—the perpetuation of the Davidic house and the elimination of impediments to that goal. The intricacy of the text, the arrangement of tales, the intention of syntax and vocabulary conspire to divulge this overwhelming concern. This concern is mitigated in different ways throughout the narrative, most successfully by the positive

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220 Lentils appear famously in Gen 25:34, but also in Ezekiel 4:9 in a list of foodstuff not dissimilar to the list in 2 Sam 17:28.
reassurance of Davidic heirs and the negative destruction of Davidic opponents. The passages each address the concern in some way:

2:3 *these* were on one side and these on the other—David faces and defeats his Saulid (internal) opponents
3:5 *these* were born to David in Hebron—his kingship will have heirs
5:14 *these* are the names born to him in Jerusalem—his kingship will have heirs
21:22 *these* are the Raphah-men who are killed off—more enemies (external) are destroyed
23:1 *these* are the last words of David—Yahweh promised a perpetual covenant and destruction of his foes
23:8 *these* are the warriors of David—his royal army will help secure his kingship
23:17 *these* things the three warriors did—the elite of his royal army will help secure his kingship
23:22 *these* things Benaiah did—Benaiah, especially, will make sure the Davidic succession is secure

These passages form the story of David in microcosm. The preservation of the Davidic line stems naturally from the production of Davidic heirs (2 Sam 3:5, 5:14). His kingship can only be secured through the destruction of external, existential threats (2 Sam 21:22). Regardless of his success in producing royal progeny or in defeating political and military enemies, the security of the Davidic throne is only ultimately assured through Yahweh (2 Sam 23:1). As David moves from a young, cavalier soldier to an established, divinely sanctioned ruler, his loyal warriors will be responsible for defending against enemies (2 Sam 23:8). Just as a particular son will eventually come to succeed David, particular warriors will be especially responsible for the continued security of the throne (2 Sam 23:17, 22).

Implications for Compositional History

The occurrences of unmarked, pronominal יהוה in 2 Samuel, combined with a constellation of related textual elements, chart a course through the book of 2 Samuel. The narrative units marked by this pronoun most prominently feature the Philistine tales and immediately related information, revealing linguistic and thematic unity. Commentators often contend that the Philistine war tales have been cut from an archival source and strewn throughout the text and “appendix” in a haphazard manner. Given the intertextual relationships between the יהוה marked units, these tales do not appear haphazard, but rather purposefully positioned and manipulated to convey certain messages about David’s character, reign, and the preservation of his House.
The narrative context of each of the Philistine battle tales in 2 Samuel is marked with an אִלּוֹ.221 As we can observe in the preceding catalogue, the Philistine altercations separate into three major pericopes in the text as it stands: 2 Sam 5:17-25; 21:15-22; 23:8-17. Not only are these three accounts connected by their common content—David’s battles with the Philistines—but they are also bound to one another by their terminology, syntax, and, strangely enough, their use of the plural demonstrative pronoun. Close examination of the relevant texts demonstrates that the particular use of the pronoun אִלּוֹ bookends one large Philistine unit, beginning with a critical list announcement in 2 Sam 5:14 and concluding with an important contrast to that in 2 Sam 21:22. Furthermore a second Philistine unit, 2 Sam 23:8-17, also coded by the pronoun אִלּוֹ shares many of the language characteristics of the first unit, suggesting a careful compositional structure to the entire text. After examining the usage patterns of the pronoun and observing the many elements of narrative symmetry between the marked passages, the use and distribution of these occurrences appears deliberate. The composer who incorporated the Philistine tales into the story of David marked the context of each altercation with a linguistic signal—the use of the unmarked plural demonstrative.222

The sophisticated literary quality of the book of 2 Samuel is difficult to deny and indeed the complexities of the narrative are widely acknowledged.223 The consensus on this subject breaks down, however, near the end of Chapter 20. Consistently referred to as a miscellany or an appendix, the final chapters of 2 Samuel contain an admittedly diverse collection of materials which, in the eyes of many interpreters, seems to be “accumulated in random fashion.”224 However, the identifiable textual patterns, demonstrated in this study, are located in narrative units which span the entirety of the work. These patterns of language, syntax, theme and literary

221 The only possible exception to this claim is that of 2 Sam 8:1-12 which, according to Halpern, likely “represents a reprise of the conflict reported in 2 Sam 5.” See Halpern, David’s Secret Demons, 144-159, 320-321.
222 This may in fact somewhat differentiate the compositional manipulation of these tales from the Philistine tales in 1 Samuel. Compare, e.g. the Philistine battle accounts of 1 Sam 13 or 23 (both Source A in Halpern’s Secret Demons). A noteworthy parallel, however, may be found in 1 Sam 16:1 where an unmarked plural demonstrative introduces a list of Philistine cities “bought” for the price of the golden mice and hemorrhoids. And, what a nice coincidence it is that the most famous Philistine tale of all (1 Sam 17) takes placeבעמק-העלה. However, ultimately the connection between the Philistine tales and the editorial marker אִלּוֹ does not provide quite enough information to distinguish between composer and compiler.
223 In addition to the review of scholarship dealing with 2 Samuel in above in Chapter 1, and in particular Conroy and Gunn, I would add additional works by Gunn: D. M. Gunn, “Traditional Composition in the “Succession Narrative””, VT 26 (1976); D. M. Gunn (ed.), Narrative and Novella in Samuel: Studies by Hugo Gressmann and Other Scholars 1906-1923, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991).
224 McCarter, Jr., II Samuel, 19.
motifs exist on a trajectory which begins early on in the book and extends well into the problematic concluding chapters. The interconnectedness of the narratives in 2 Sam 21 and 23 in particular help support the argument that the so-called appendix is less miscellaneous and more intentionally structured than it appears at first glance. So, for example, in his commentary, McCarter offers the following conclusion regarding the nature and position of the four Raphah-men foes in 2 Sam 21:15-22:

The section as a whole may derive from an ancient archive. Attempts to determine the reason for its present position will probably not succeed. It was deposited among a miscellany of unrelated items at the end of the story of Abishalom’s revolt, awaiting integration into the book. On chronological grounds it ostensibly belongs in the context of David’s Philistine wars (5:17-25), but no editor took it up and put it there, and it remains without context.225

The accounts of these four warriors certainly belong to David’s Philistine wars. And it may well be the case that the material form 2 Sam 21 did occupy at one time an integrated position within the context of 2 Sam 5.226 But to dismiss the final chapters of 2 Samuel as a collection of miscellaneous accounts as yet untreated by an editor ignores the directional clues concerning position, context and meaning which the text, as currently arranged, provides. In fact the אלּה indicator, as well as the parallel narrative elements, suggests that a very deliberate composer is responsible for the construction of the four chapter conclusion to 2 Samuel.

Postulating that each of these passages were marked by the same hand whose propensity for this usage we now assume, must mean that material in the contexts of 2 Sam 2:13, 3:5, 5:14, 21:22, and 23:1,8,17, and 22 share some sort of compositional moment in the growth of 2 Samuel. Although this study has focused on a very specific, and, perhaps otherwise minor, element of grammar, the patterns which emerged from that investigation have implication for a much larger question—that of the scope of the David story in 2 Samuel. None of the אלּה-marked verses and their narrative contexts belongs within any of the variously established boundaries of the SN/CH/SKD.227 To take one example, G. Keys recently argued that the author of her “Theological Biography” (2 Sam 10-20) was the same person who compiled from pre-existing

226 If we assume that 2 Sam 21:8-39 was moved from its original position in 2 Sam 5 (part of the story of David and his warriors taking Jerusalem), then the “comparative” function of 2 Sam 21:22 (the Raphah-men) is even more pronounced. The referent, 2 Sam (3:5 and) 5:14 (these are the names of the ones born to him in Jerusalem), still functions as the referent verse, but with 2 Sam 21 material in 2 Sam 5, several other אלּה verses echo the sentiment (verses which are now in 2 Sam 23:8, 17, and 22).
227 See n. 162.
material, the framework for this biography (i.e. 1-9 at the beginning and 21-24 at the end) and attached it to 2 Sam 10-20.\textsuperscript{228} We have already seen that none of the passages which employ our use of הָלָה occur within 2 Sam 10-20. Further, there are several passages inside of these chapters which would lend themselves to an introductory or concluding announcement with the pronoun as we do see in the catalogue presented above (e.g. 17:25-27, 18:2, 20:23-26). With respect to battle accounts specifically, 2 Sam 10-20 contains many large scale encounters, but not much individual warrior combat as described in 2 Sam 5, 21, and 23. So, in this case, the examples of unmarked הָלָה, particularly in a summary announcement formula, and the related elements linking their passages all belong to Keys’ “framework,” i.e. all the material other than the principal story of David’s life. And, where we might expect the pronoun used inside of the “biography,” it is absent.\textsuperscript{229}

To conclude, I suggest that this use of הָלָה is a kind of editorial formula or tell-tale mark of the hand that is responsible for the material in each of the passages marked by the pronoun. If any of these sections only had one common element, such as the use of הָלָה, or the repetition of a theme, or the repetition of a syntagma, or lexeme, then their connection might be rather doubtful, or at least difficult to prove. But it is the abundance of connective elements which support a conclusion of some kind of close relationship between these passages, including a common composer. They share elements, and the elements function across the text, being recalled and reused in other, related passages. But the boundaries of the text across which they function is also important to specify, and those boundaries would seem in keeping with the well accepted idea that within 2 Samuel lies a large unified core account of David’s kingship, an account which would appear untouched by the הָלָה-hand.

\textsuperscript{228} Keys does not agree with Rost that the function of the bulk of 2 Samuel is to tell the story of the succession to David’s throne. In fact, she points out several problems with the assumption of this theme, one of which is the idea that despite the purported focus on the succession, the text seems totally disinterested in the other sons of David that are ahead of Solomon in line to the throne (Chileab, Shephatiah and Ithream certainly, and possibly Shammua, Shobab and Nathan as well.) Keyes addresses the omission of this topic from the so-call succession narrative, as well as from most scholarship about the SN. G. Keys, \textit{Wages of Sin: A Reappraisal of the 'Succession Narrative' } (JSOTSup 221; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 46-8. We know about these sons from the lists in 2 Sam 3:2-5 and 5:13-16, both הָלָה passages.

\textsuperscript{229} If we include 2 Sam 9, or even 2 Sam 8, in the “core” story, the pronoun distribution is still outside this scope, including a notable absence in the text of 2 Sam 8:15-18.
Chapter 4: The Nature of the So-Called “Appendix” (2 Sam 21-24) and its Relationship to the Book of Numbers

Introduction

In a few recent studies, the so-called “appendix” (2 Sam 21-24) has been investigated anew. While cursory observations about the content of these chapters, particularly their “ring” structure, have been long noted, fuller interpretation has been lacking. Here, several of these recent studies are considered, particularly the works of Auld and his exploration of the connections between the “appendix” and the Book of Numbers. Examination of the accounts in Num 11 and 2 Sam 24 uncovers a constellation of similarities in syntax, lexicon, theme, and narrative structure, and suggesting a compositional relationship. This study suggests that the author of the Numbers material has been influenced by the accounts in Samuel and that his narrative borrows from the David tradition.

Previous Interpretation of the So-Called “Appendix” (2 Sam 21-24)

As early as Eichhorn, the idea that 2 Sam 21-24 was somehow different, misplaced or miscellaneous was already an accepted view. Though Eichhorn included the census story of 2 Sam 24 in his “Short Life of David” (=Kurzes Leben Davids or KLD)\(^{231}\) because it also appears in Chronicles, he concludes that the lists of soldiers in 2 Sam 21 and 23, and the poem in 2 Sam 22 all were later insertions into the KLD. With regard to the book in general, W.L.M. de Wette disagreed with Eichhorn’s KLD construction, and, more specifically, he understood 2 Sam 21-24 as a true appendix.\(^{232}\) A. Kuenen, too, viewed 2 Sam 21-24 as an insertion by a later editor.\(^{233}\) Wellhausen argued for the unity of 2 Sam 9-20 and 1 Kgs 1-2 and therefore had to remove 2

\(^{231}\) Eichhorn, *Einleitung*, 465.
Sam 21-24 as an out-of-place appendix. Budde also dealt with these concluding chapters by assigning their current position and content to the last two stages of his multiple-stage reconstruction of the composition of Samuel. In his recent study of the “appendix,” H. Klement makes a keen observation concerning the approach by many of the early (and later) commentators: the assumption that the text of Samuel presented a biography of David necessitated the inclusion of the death of the biography’s subject. In order to bring the end of David’s life into the “biography” of 2 Samuel, it was necessary to remove 2 Sam 21-24 which clearly did not follow the chronological story in 2 Sam 9-20.

With the advent of Noth’s theory of the Deuteronomistic History in the mid-twentieth century, thoughts about the end of the books of Samuel did not greatly change. The “appendix” was still understood to be a late insertion, now a late insertion into a large unified historical work. While much attention came to be focused on the “Göttingen” and “Harvard” schools’ modifications to Noth’s work, there were some who did not accept the idea of a wide-sweeping hand behind so many biblical books. Those who did not follow any of the emerging models of a Deuteronomistic History generally held that the individual, canonical books should be interpreted separately from one another. So, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, for example, should all be understood to have their own origins, editorial processes and their own literary autonomy. Advocates for this method of interpretation included Fohrer, Westermann, Webb, and Rosenberg.

However, the dominant model of assigning source and redaction played out to some degree in the final chapters of Samuel. Attempts were made to discern multiple strands within 2 Sam 24,

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235 Budde, *Die Bücher Samuel*, x-xii, 304.
237 Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*.
238 As hallmark works of these “schools” see, R. Smend, “Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments (Theologische Wissenschaft 1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978) and F.M. Cross, “The Themes of the Book of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History,” in *CMHE*, 274-289.
239 It is probably not a coincidence that many of these “autonomous” or “individual” book models come from the late 1970s-early 1990s—the heyday of the “me” generation.
the census story. For example, H. Schmid divides the census story from the plague story, despite
the demonstrated biblical relationship (and extra-biblical) between the two.\textsuperscript{241} The census
account is the only piece of 2 Sam 24 which Schmid considers to have a historical basis. He
further separates out the altar story as its own etiological tradition, even though he argues that the
origin of the altar is the heart of the entire account. There seems to be an issue of accuracy or
historicity behind the desire to separate “strands” of narrative. So, for example, a supernatural
element like a plague sent and ended by Yahweh, must be separated from a plausible account of
a bureaucratic census. In this regard, I must disagree. Regardless of the historicity of such an
account, I fail to see the need to posit the accretion of a series of otherwise unrelated tales.
Rather, each of the three elements (the census, the plague, even with its folktale motif of the
three choices,\textsuperscript{242} and the altar) are absolutely reliant on each other in terms of narrative integrity.

Additionally, the position of 2 Sam 24 within the larger Samuel narrative was also thought to
have been manipulated during the compositional growth of 2 Samuel. McCarter suggested that
the story of the census plague originally belonged with 2 Sam 5:6-10 or with the Ark Narrative
in 2 Sam 6\textsuperscript{243} or even possibly with 2 Sam 7. The reason for moving the story to the end of 2
Samuel, McCarter concludes, is to anticipate the building of the temple by Solomon in 1 Kings.
David’s acquisition of the threshing floor as the location of the Jerusalem altar prepares the
audience for Solomon’s work.\textsuperscript{244} For some, a theological, or perhaps political, issue that had to
be addressed was that inherent in the conclusion to this account is the fact that the altar in

 taboo concerning the numbering of people, see E. A. Speiser, “Census and Ritual Expiation in Mari and Israel,”


\textsuperscript{243} Note the only other example of the anger of Yahweh flaring (אף+חרה) and certain other structural similarities
 there.

\textsuperscript{244} See also 1 Chr 21:26-22:1 for a more explicit version of the connection between the threshing floor and the future
temple. There is a tendency to want to put narrative accounts into what seems to be a logical chronological
sequence. McCarter’s suggestion that the census be placed together with 2 Sam 5 would seem to follow this trend; it
places the count near the beginning of the new king’s reign. However, we must consider that the biblical material is
not (always) organized according to this principle. That “the arrangement of the narrative sequence is thematic, not
chronological” is certainly a likely scenario for 2 Sam 24. Halpern, \textit{David’s Secret Demons}, 336-7. The common
assumption that the final chapters of 2 Samuel are simply tacked on to the end of the David story, the result of extra
material not otherwise integrated into the narrative, both follows from and perpetuates the idea that these tales are
out of what must have been their original, logical order. This perspective is in some ways a red herring. Regardless
of their chronological position in the story of David, it is precisely the thematic and literary connections which are
relevant in the assessment of the nature of these final chapters.
Jerusalem was non-Israelite. So, W. Fuss argued that the story in 2 Sam 24 was an old account, dating from the time of David or Solomon, written as an explanation (or even apology) for why the altar of the Jerusalem temple was non-Israelite in origin. The account was necessary to associate the Jebusite site with David in a cultically acceptable way.

A great antipodal reaction to the prevailing Deuteronomistic History models, particularly those which dissect the biblical texts into many subsequent layers of growth, can be seen best in the works of the “final-form” critics. The focus of these commentators was a synchronic, literary analysis of biblical texts. The identification and interpretation of literary structures and devices, such as chiasmus, discourse techniques, parallelism and symmetry, poetic language, Leitworter, and other literary markers all became the fodder for consideration among these critics. This approach was applied to biblical texts generally by scholars such as J. Muilenburg, R. Alter, A. Berlin, and S. Bar-Efrat, and to Samuel in particular by Fokkelman, Conroy and Gunn.

For the appendix, “final form” approaches encouraged conclusions that were less concerned with separation (either separating verses into original and additional, or separating the entire story from its current location) and more concerned with integration. How do the literary elements of the “appendix” work together? And how does the “appendix” function within the entirety of the Samuel complex? Brueggemann’s study on 2 Sam 21-24 was an important example of this method of examination, and his work proceeds from two other studies which also fit generally within this genre. B. Childs approach of canonical criticism suggested to Brueggeman that the “appendix,” placed at the end of 2 Samuel, might “offer a highly reflective, theological interpretation of David’s whole career.” Secondly, Flanagan had previously argued that there was a six part chiastic structure within 2 Sam 5-8 whose paired elements serve to demonstrate a transformation in ideology from parochial chieftdom to royal, legitimate kingship. From these

245 Original to the account are 2 Sam 24:2, 4b, 8-9, 15, 17, 18, 19, 25. W. Fuss, “II Samuel 24,” ZAW 74 (1962):145-64.
two ideas, Brueggmann proposed that the six part, chiastic “ring” structure of 2 Sam 21-24 is meant to counter the six elements in Flanagan’s 2 Sam 5-8 structure. The “appendix” and its position are part of the larger plan of the story of David; 2 Sam 21-24 serve to “deconstruct” what Brueggemann calls the “high royal pretension” which the majority of the David story advances and instead to promote “an egalitarian covenantal mode of life.” In this way, the literary structure of 2 Sam 21-24, its language and content, and its physical position in the larger book all conspire to serve as an answer to or warning for the achievements of royal supremacy heralded in 2 Sam 5-8.

Fokkelman’s massive four-volume work on Samuel presents us with a curious dilemma. Though his study is stylistically and structurally based, and is therefore sympathetic to the literary elements common in the final form method of evaluation, he says that “this sequence [2 Sam 21-24] is usually rightly called an appendix vis-à-vis the rest of Samuel and that it was the right decision to locate it at the end.” The location is “right,” he determines, after identifying and rejecting a number of other locations within 2 Samuel based on chronological logic. Despite this initial assessment based largely on the same sort of linear compositional logic that the source and redaction critics applied, Fokkelman goes on to identify, describe and interpret numerous literary elements which tie together most of the content of the “appendix” in complex ways, including things like “mature literary structure” in 2 Sam 23:8-39, symmetry in 2 Sam 21:22a and 23:8a, countless chiasms, etc. But Fokkelman thinks that the narratives of 2 Sam 21 and 24, which he clearly sees as a pair, “cannot be part of the composition of ‘King David,’” because in part they are achronic, but also because they “undermine the illusion of power.” In this regard, his very literary assessment of the “appendix” is very much in line with the earlier critics focused on the source critical make-up of 2 Samuel.

Opposed to speculation on the growth of the narrative base on linear, time-bound logic, Klement’s analysis of 2 Sam 21-24 demonstrates a series of “rings-around-centers” throughout

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250 Brueggemann, “Deconstruction,” 395. He also generally agrees with Childs that the poetry of 2 Sam 22-23 act in partnership with 1 Sam 2 (Song of Hannah), and further proposes that 2 Sam 24 is meant to parallel 1 Sam 1 in their themes of petition and being heard (396-7).
252 Fokkelman, *NAPS Vol. 1*, 299.
the Samuel tradition.254 Within this set of structures, Klement attempts to identify elements of a particular ring-center group which are then paralleled with symmetrical elements in another ring-center group elsewhere in the larger narrative. While this is a productive approach, some of his identifications are more persuasive than others.255 Regardless of his individual stronger and weaker points, I am greatly sympathetic to his methodological conclusions. He argues, for example, “[r]elationships can be established between texts which are not immediately adjacent to each other, but nonetheless linked through literary allusions, e.g. key-words interconnections or repetitions.”256

Simon’s recent study on the 2 Samuel “appendix” provides an excellent overview of the diversity of opinions on how to understand the content, placement and function of these four chapters.257 Whereas other scholars debated whether the “appendix” indicts David or demonstrates that he is an ideal ruler, or where the stories of the “appendix” belong chronologically in David’s career, or why the six chiastic elements are arranged as they are, Simon organizes some of his thoughts around the hypothesis that the “appendix” is meant to modify the picture of David otherwise presented throughout Samuel,258 but in such a way as to focus on answering the question: “how Israel is meant to develop relationships with foreigners?”259 Simon describes his approach as a “welding” of both source and discourse analysis, and, in this way, I applaud his efforts. His source analysis becomes focused on the determination of “what society can be posited as the one that may have generated this kind of a text,” an enterprise that can sometimes be hampered by

254 Klement summarizes his methodological approach in his concluding section; see Klement, II Samuel 21-24, 243.
255 For example, I disagree with Klement’s suggestion of the “three double lists of the new nobility” (69). He suggests that the double lists of David’s sons (2 Sam 3 and 5), David’s ministers (2 Sam 8 and 20) and David’s warriors (2 Sam 21 and 23) create a large scale series of centers in the text, between which are a series of symmetrical chiastic structures (see diagram on 83). Based on my conclusions about the use of the plural demonstrative, for example (see Chapter 3), I see a distinction between the registers of sons and warriors and the registers of the “ministers” in 2 Sam 8 and 20. Further, in order to make the ring-center structure work for these lists, Klement must posit a four-part chiasm in 2 Sam 9-20 which is very broad and not nearly as tight (based on repeated lexemes, repeated themes, repeated plot sequence, etc.) as those he identifies between the other double lists. Proposing this weaker chiastic argument is unnecessary if the “non-ןָּהְמֶל” lists of 2 Sam 8 and 20 are removed from his scheme. Klement, II Samuel 21-24, 69-85. See also Fokkelman’s (somewhat egocentric) criticisms, J. Fokkelman, “The Samuel Composition as a Book of Life and Death,” in For and Against David: Story and History in the Books of Samuel (ed. A.G. Auld and E. Eynikel; Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 15-46.
256 Klement, II Samuel 21-24, 243.
257 Simon, Identity and Identification.
258 Simon, Identity and Identification, 49.
259 Simon, Identity and Identification, 37.
too much assumption or speculation. In his case, the inclusion of foreigners in the “appendix,” and the nature of David’s interaction with them, stems from issues of identity in the late post-exilic period.

The Relationship between 2 Sam 21 and 2 Sam 24

The “ring” structure of 2 Sam 21-24 consists of three concentric circles: 2 Sam 21:1-14 and 24:1-25 at the outside, 2 Sam 21:15-22 and 23:8-39 in the middle ring, and 2 Sam 22:1-51 and 23:1-7 at the center. Each “ring” represents a different genre; narratives at the outside, lists in the middle, and poems at the center. One objective of this study is to identify the relationship between the narrative portions of the “appendix” and narrative passages from the Book of Numbers. Therefore, we will focus on the outermost, narrative ring in more detail. Polzin refers to 2 Sam 24 as a “sequel” to 2 Sam 21, noting the parallels between their beginning and ending and, indeed, many connections between the 2 Sam 21 and 24 accounts have been noted already by Polzin, Brueggemann, Fokkelman, Campbell and others. Some of the commonly mentioned parallels are reviewed here:

1. As mentioned already, 2 Sam 21 and 24 are both prose narratives arranged around two lists or registers in 2 Sam 21 and 23, and two poetic sections in 2 Sam 22 and 23. This “ring composition” was already discussed by Driver and is frequently used by those who argue that the so-called appendix is not a haphazard left over collection of materials.

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261 Simon, Identity and Identification, 37, 327-329.
262 See, for example, Polzin, David and the Deuteronomist, 202.
264 Driver, Notes, 349-80. Nb, the ring structure is frequently observed, but rarely interpreted. Campbell mentions that despite the parallelism of the two texts, their nature as “companion pieces” does not mean that they were necessary part of a single composition. Campbell calls these chapters a “special collection,” and this terminology is fair. The texts may indeed be a “collection,” i.e. discreet selections compiled by an editor but organized in such a “special” way as to provide a message, or, theoretically, the texts may be a composition, i.e. original or known traditions that an author composed intentionally in the form of a “collection” of varying genres. But neither scenario
2. The opening of 2 Sam 24, that the anger of Yahweh flared *again* or *continued* to flare, is often taken to refer to the famine of 2 Sam 21.²⁶⁵ This reference serves to connect the openings to both stories and they are also served by a similar parallel structure which bonds their conclusions (see #3).

3. In 2 Sam 24:25, in the last words of the books of Samuel, we are told that Yahweh responded to the plea of the land (ויעתר יהוה לארץ) and this locution has been a linchpin in demonstrating the relationship between this text and that of 2 Sam 21. This syntax (עתר in the *nifal* + diety + לארץ) only occurs here and in 2 Sam 21:14. The clause does not appear in the Chronicler’s version at all, where the Gibeonite story (2 Sam 21) does not occur and in the threshing floor account in 1 Chr 21, this expression is not used. Campbell argues that the use of this phrase in both places may suggest that “whatever the age of the respective tradition, the two passages [2 Sam 21 and 24] may have been given their final shape as companion pieces around the theme of restoring God’s relationship with the land.”²⁶⁶

4. Both accounts rely heavily on what might be considered significant numbers in conveying the details of the events that transpire. In 2 Sam 21, the famine is three years. In the Philistine tales following the Gibeonite story and the spear of the Raphah-man weighs 300 shekels (2 Sam 21:16). In 2 Sam 24, David’s choices are three—a seven year famine, a three month flight or a three day pestilence (2 Sam 24:13). In emphasizing his sin, David incorporates the term מָאָד three times (2 Sam 24:10, 14). The number seven is also at play, not only in the seven year famine, but also in the 70,000 who die in the three day plague. Further, seven is paronomastically present in the three time mention of Beersheba (2 Sam 24:2, 7, 15) and in 2 Sam 21, when seven Saulide are handed over to be killed because of the oath sworn to the Gibeonites (נשבעו). Another oath appears in 2 Sam 21:17.²⁶⁷ A possible addition to this numerological play in 2 Sam 24 may be the seven forms (2 Sam 24:1, 2, 4, 9, 10) of the three different terms (מנה, פקד, ספר) used in this account for numbering the

²⁶⁶ An idea which is, perhaps, not inconsistent with Simon’s conclusion regarding themes of identity. Campbell, “2 Samuel 21-24,” 350.
²⁶⁷ Polzin discusses all of the numerical examples to this point, see n.263.
people. Another addition may be in the census results themselves. Joab’s total tally is either 1,300,000 men if we are meant to add Israel and Judah together or, if Judah is meant as a portion of Israel, then the total men of Israel are 300,000.

5. Both accounts deal with the themes of sin and redemption. Each story involves the sin of a royal house—the House of Saul in the story of the Gibeonites and the House of David in the story of the census. This commonality also reflects a general concern in 2 Samuel over these two competing Houses. In both 2 Sam 21 and 24, both David and Yahweh preform intercessory roles to resolve a threat to Israel, and do so with similar language (e.g. 21:4//24:12).

The accounts in 2 Sam 21 and 24 have other resonances as well. The structure of both accounts is similar, with key details or actions playing parallel roles. In the story of the Gibeonite revenge, a famine introduces the action. The famine is apparently caused by the failure to comply with a covenant and oath made by Joshua to the Gibeonites (Josh 9). In order to ameliorate the situation, David asks what he should do for these Gibeonites, who are not of Israelite stock. The Gibeonites ask for seven of Saul’s descendants to be hanged/exposed/dislocated/limbs broken before Yahweh in Gibeah of Saul. David obliges and later, after their deaths, gathers their remains and those of Saul and Jonathan and buries everyone in a proper interment in their family tomb in Benjamin. Yahweh responds to the plea of the land after this ritually significant act. In the story of the census, Yahweh anger flares against Israel again and he incites David to take a census of the people. David regrets his action immediately and realizes that he has sinned and acted foolishly. His punishment is a choice of three outcomes and he chooses a three day plague. In order to prevent any further destruction (the angel of Yahweh is threatening

268 On this point it is perhaps noteworthy that after the seventh occurrence in 2 Sam 24:10a, David refrains from using any of the terms again, instead saying vaguely that he has sinned greatly in that which he did (2 Sam 24:10b). Auld mentions the three terms for counting, though his point is that they parallel the three terms for David’s fault-sin, folly, and guilt. Auld, I & II Samuel, 608.
269 On this point, see Polzin, David and the Deuteronomist, 210-11.
270 Simon, Identity and Identification, 316-319, 328. In this thorough discussion of the “appendix,” Simon addresses the foreigner element, which is underrepresented in “appendix” scholarship, and attempts to tie it to establishing rules of in- and ex- elusion during the Persian period.
271 In S. Chavel’s view, the compiler of 2 Sam 21-24 added the story of David reinterring the remains of Saul and Jonathan to the story of the Gibeonites’ revenge. He argues, with this addition, the compiler transformed the narrative on psychological, political, and theological/sacral levels. The appropriate reinterment of Saul and Jonathan function on the theological/sacral level. S. Chavel, “Compositry and Creativity in 2 Samuel 21:1-14,” JBL 122 (2003): 23-52.
Jerusalem and killing people), David purchases a threshing floor from a Jebusite and builds an altar on it, offering two types of sacrifices to Yahweh. **Yahweh responds to the plea of the land** after this **ritually significant act**, and the plague is stopped.

A.G. Auld’s Study of the Connections between Numbers and Samuel

Given the occurrence of several census stories in the Book of Numbers, it should not be terribly unexpected to give consideration to a specific relationship between the census story in 2 Sam 24 and the traditions in Numbers. I will suggest here that the parallels between the Samuel “appendix” and Numbers, however, are more complex than the presence of census accounts. In fact, it is Num 11, an account of the people complaining in the wilderness, that will occupy our attention here. To frame this comparison, I proceed from a study of Auld who has begun to explore the relationship between Numbers and Samuel.

In his discussion of the book of Numbers, Auld, in his fine anti-establishment form, suggests that we separate Numbers from Exodus and Leviticus, question the traditional attributions of Tetrateuch-wide sources in the book, and seek connections with other biblical texts in an attempt to better understand the origins and relative dating of sections of the book.272 In his undertaking of these very things, Auld develops a series of connections and lines of influence between Numbers and Samuel. His methodology, he says, borrows from that of the traditional search for the Pentateuchal Yahwist. “The question of the Pentateuchal Yahwist was always a matter of exploring connections and lines of influence,” he writes.273 So, he proceeds in a similar manner, but looks outside the traditional boundaries of these connections (i.e. the Pentateuch) for fresh insight.

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Auld’s search takes him immediately to the Balaam story in Num 22-24 and its links to stories about David in 2 Samuel. He enumerates several categories of parallels (parallels such as language, theme, and key plot elements) between the Balaam account and 2 Samuel specifically, and some between the Balaam story and Samuel more broadly. The first section deals with parallels found specifically in the stories of the ass (Num 22:21-35) and the story of David’s census in 2 Sam 24. The second section addresses Balaam’s oracles (Num 24:3b-9, 15b-19) and David’s last words (2 Sam 23:1b-7). The third section looks more broadly at Num 22-24 and 2 Sam 21-24 to find some additional connections.

While it is not possible to reproduce Auld’s entire list of connections in each of these three sections, I will allow two examples to represent the character of his observations:

Balaam is permitted by the deity to go to Balak; but, when he does go, divine anger is directed at him. David is actually incited by the deity to count his people: the divine anger is the more surprising. There is no other parallel so close within the Hebrew Bible, even counting the role of the ‘satan’ in the opening of Job and the divine initiative in the Aqeda in Genesis 22.

In this observation, Auld focuses on a parallel in the plot development and meaningful element in each of the narratives. The issue of divine anger arising from a sanctioned activity is paradoxical and its place in both of these narratives stands out, demanding attention from the reader. Note that in listing this connection, Auld is not simply commenting on a mundane word or phrase which appears in both stories, but rather is focusing on a rare literary (or theological) device that is readily apparent and plays a significant role in each account.

Balaam uses for ‘vision’ in Num. 24:4,16 a form of the Aramaic verb ‘to see’ (חזה) and the title of Gad, David’s ‘seer’, is the participle of this same verb. Forms of this word are used very sparingly in the Hebrew Bible outside the book of Job, the titles of some prophetic books, and some cross-references in Chronicles. Its use in 2 Sam. 7:17 as well as 24:11 (as well as their parallels in Chronicles and in Ps. 89) shows that it is anchored in the David material; and it has been extrapolated from there to 1 Sam. 3:1. In the Pentateuch, it is found outside Numbers 24 only in Gen 15:1 (and the David and Abraham traditions have close links) and in Exod. 24:11 to which we shall return below.

In this example of another Numbers-Samuel connection, Auld focuses on the use of a particular verb and its distribution. In examining the extent of the usage of this lexeme, Auld is able to adequately show that all, or nearly all, occurrences have some direct import to his comparison

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274 Auld, “Numbers,” 244-246.
275 Auld, “Numbers,” 244.
276 Auld, “Numbers,” 246.
between the narratives of Balaam and David. He also relies in this example on related Samuel material from outside the passages under immediate consideration (i.e. 2 Sam 21-24).

These are only two examples of the almost 30 that Auld itemizes in his work. Admittedly, some observed parallels are more obvious or more persuasive than others. But, he emphasizes, and rightly, that it is the concentration of so many parallels which is the critical factor. A few might suggest a common literary heritage or language tradition, but the many and detailed parallels signal something more deliberate. In the absence of all the others, a weaker connection (e.g. the repeated use of a more common lexeme) may be insignificant. But the combination of multiple connections in language, plot, theme, and the perspectives of the text allows him to hypothesize direct compositional connections between Samuel and Numbers. He argues that these parallels are the result of influence from the Samuel tradition to the composition of (these parts of) Numbers.

The Parallels between 2 Sam 21 & 24 and Num 11

This study began as a lexical investigation into the verb שׁוט, “go about,” in 2 Sam 24:2, 8. This verb serves a key function in the census story and its use in the HB is relatively rare, making it stand out more as a possibly significant compositional element. It was from this initial observation that a constellation of parallels began to emerge between 2 Sam 24 and Num 11. Some of these connections are related to items which Auld addresses and some are additional, though even the ones that deal with the same elements do so in more detailed ways. These connections are enumerated below (see also Table 5).

Both the account of the people’s complaint in the wilderness in Num 11 and the story of David’s census in 2 Sam 24 open with the kindling of Yahweh’s anger. In the entirety of the Num 11 pericope we find the anger idiom stated three times with regard to Yahweh (Num 11:1, 11:10, and 11:33). In 2 Sam 24 it occurs only at the outset in 2 Sam 24:1. The expression comprises the

277 The reference to Exod 24:11 is developed in an argument concerning the 70 elders, which is related to Number 11, which itself is related to both Balaam and 2 Sam 21-24. See Auld, “Numbers,” 248-249, and, further, below.
verb בַּחַר and the noun אֶפֶם and, in the cases relevant here, the agent is explicitly identified as Yahweh. This combination, Yahweh (specifically, as opposed to אֱלֹהִים, for example) + בַּחַר + אֶפֶם, occurs 35 times in the HB. Of all the 35 Yahweh + בַּחַר + אֶפֶם, 2 Sam 24:1 is unique in that it utilizes the infinitive (לַחֲרֹת). Following other gods is identified overwhelmingly as the most common cause of Yahweh’s anger in these 35 expressions. In 22 of them279 going after other gods is the culprit; sometimes the other deities are specifically named (e.g. Judg 2:14, Baal and Ashtarot) and sometimes such apostasy is cited through a well-known descriptor (e.g. 2 Kgs 13:3, “sins of Jeroboam”). Of the remaining 13,280 10 are about bargaining with Yahweh or doubting his decisions, and three are about proscribed things, in the stories of Achan and Uzzah.281

In the 2 Sam 24:1 example, no obvious reason is given in the text for Yahweh’s anger. Based on the corpus of usage for this expression, what might we infer from its occurrence in 2 Sam 24? Is David denying or doubting Yahweh is some way? It is striking that the final person in the warrior register at the end of the preceding 2 Sam 23 is Uriah the Hittite.282 Not only is his foreignness highlighted by the constant use of his epithet, but his placement at the end of the list serves as a stark reminder of David’s morally questionable activities concerning Uriah and Bathsheba. Is David’s sin in this regard so great that it is on par with following after other gods? Alternatively, we look back to the story of the Gibeonites’ revenge in 2 Sam 21. Does Yahweh’s anger in 2 Sam 24:1 harken back to some proscription violation in that account, perhaps with


280 Exod 4:14, Num 11:1, 10, 33, 12:9, 32:10, 13, Josh 7:1, 2 Sam 6:7, 24:1, 1 Chr 13:10

281 In his brief essay on the “Wrath of Yahweh,” McCarthy suggests that the occurrences of wrath formulae mark significant transitions, particularly with regard to leadership, within Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History and shape “eras” within that history. (He does not address expressions outside the DtrH.) He argues that this “rhetoric of wrath” describes a cycle: anger, penalty, repentance, salvation. If we accept this point, it seems that the account of Yahweh’s wrath in 2 Sam 24 serves as a kind of model for the subsequent Deuteronomistic uses of the expression. Such a suggestion may also address why, in 2 Sam 24 we find the unique occurrence of the infinitive in the wrath expression and a more stabilized formula in other DtrH examples. McCarthy, “Wrath of Yahweh,” 102-106.

282 Note another possible parallel with Numbers. The account which immediately precedes the anger of Yahweh in Num 11:1 concerns another foreigner, Hobab the Midianite, who wishes to return to his native land (Num 10:29-32).
regard to the numerous human remains that factor rather prominently in 2 Sam 21? Even with over 30 occurrences with which to compare the 2 Sam 24 usage, it is difficult to deduce a clear cause of Yahweh’s anger. This question is explored again below with regard to parallels within the Book of Numbers.

In 2 Sam 24: 2, David tells Joab to “go about” (שׁוּט) to number the people, and in 2 Sam 24:8 we are told that Joab and his men have gone about and done this. In Num 11:8, we learn that in order to gather the manna that miraculously feeds them, the people also “go about” (שׁוּט). This root is not terribly common in the HB corpus and has only 16 verbal examples. Furthermore, it occurs in the qal with this meaning (as opposed to the homonyms “to despise” and “to row”) only in Num 11, 2 Samuel 24 and Job 1,2,5, and 9. Given this highly restricted use, the choice of the lexeme in 2 Samuel is noteworthy. Additionally, the author of 2 Sam 24 does not use √הלך in the hitpael, with which the Samuel tradition is certainly familiar. Given these circumstances, it seems constructive to give consideration to the other occurrences of the term to look for possible linkages between the passages.

We have seen that one of the ways in which 2 Sam 21 and 24 are paralleled with one another is through the use of a similar structure in the disclosure of their narrative accounts. Similarly, the order of events of the “appendix” narratives (2 Sam 21:1-14 and 2 Sam 24) and Num 11 demonstrates equivalencies in sequence. These symmetrical sequences are shown in Table 5 and some additional parallel elements are also noted:

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283 David asks to “know the number of the people” but Joab reports the numbers of men “שלי בחרב” which is somewhat different. Is this a count for military service (Joab) or for something else (David)? And this is altogether different than the accounting of the people in the censuses in Num 1:2, 49; 4:2, 22; 26:2 where we find some variation of “lift up the heads” of the people to record them (שׂאו את-ראשׁ). Should we consider this difference to be significant? Further, in the censuses of Numbers, the term for those eligible for military service is יֹצא צבא. This term is exclusive to Numbers. The phrase שולף חרב, on the other hand, used to describe those able to fight, is most frequently found in Judges (Jdg 8:10; 20:2, 15, 17, 35, 46) and describes Benjaminites and Moabites/Midianites. Should we consider this difference to be significant? Is this a regional expression? Or an official one? If the Samuel census belongs in time to the beginning of David’s career, the use of a less formalized or bureaucratized expression may be intended to reflect that chronology.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Num 11</th>
<th>2 Sam 24</th>
<th>2 Sam 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yahweh and Moses are angered</strong> (חרה + אף) Moses explains two problems to Yahweh: 1) the complaint over meat craving and 2) that Moses’ burden is too great.</td>
<td><strong>Yahweh’s anger flares</strong> (חרה + אף) Flares again/continues to (ויסף)</td>
<td>The Israelites are in trouble with the Gibeonites because of the violation of their <strong>oath</strong> (בני ישראל נשבעו לamo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moses reminds Yahweh of his <strong>oath</strong> (האומ네 אואר ושבתו לאבותינו)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yahweh numbers 70 elders for burden solution</strong> (אספה -ל-) <strong>Moses counts the people</strong> in his questioning of Yahweh’s meat solution (לאו-פָּאָה אֲלֵיקָלָה נַעֲמָה)</td>
<td><strong>David orders a census of his people,</strong> then regrets it (וַיַּלְדֵהוּ אֲלֵהֶם אָדוּם אָדָם)</td>
<td>The Saulid sons are put to death at the time of the harvest (קציר)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahweh, annoyed with Moses doubt, asks if his power can be limited (וַיֵּשֶּׁר הַיְּדִים יְהוָה)</td>
<td><strong>Prophetic Interlude:</strong> Yahweh’s spirit descends on Moses and the elders; Eldad and Medad</td>
<td><strong>Prophetic Interlude:</strong> the word of Yahweh comes to the prophet Gad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yahweh sends meat, anger and plague.</strong></td>
<td>Yahweh sends Israel a <strong>plague</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The people <strong>spread</strong> the quail out all over the camp (شهيد)</td>
<td><strong>Rizpah spreads</strong> out sackcloth so she can guard the bodies (נטה)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place name etiology</strong> (קברות -התאוה) <strong>given.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Etiology for Jerusalem altar</strong> (קברות-התחאה)</td>
<td>**Yahweh responds after David <strong>buries</strong> the Saulids (יקברו...בְּכָרִ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The place is named <strong>Кэффры</strong> after the <strong>burials</strong> of those slain in the plague.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5. Parallel Elements in “Appendix” Narratives and Num 11**
A sequence comprising the elements of Yahweh’s anger, a resulting affliction, and a concluding geographic etiology also appears in the short narrative preceding the main complaint story in Num 11. Yahweh’s anger flares (Num 11:1, החרה + אף). Yahweh sends a fire to devour the people’s camp. To resolve the crisis, the people perform a cultic act (Num 11:2, prayer) and a concluding place name etiology (Num 11:3, תבערה) is given. In Num 11:1-3 this basic structure forms the brief account and it is this structure which recurs in Num 11:4-35 and 2 Sam 24 in more thoroughly developed ways. Additionally, within this larger narrative structure, there are numerous examples of smaller-scale parallels between the “appendix” narratives and the complaint account of Num 11. These include lexical correspondences and repetitions of unusual locutions, thematic allusions, and similar character actions or dialogue.

Certain terms appear in both the appendix narratives and the complaint story in Num 11. The recurrence of terminology in two biblical stories is nothing significant by itself, to be sure. However, these lexical choices, particularly dealing with important or unusual plot or thematic elements, must be viewed in light of the overall assemblage of correspondences between these two bodies of work. And in this capacity, repetition of terminology should be noted for consideration. For example, in Num 11:12, an annoyed Moses reminds Yahweh of his oath to the people (האדמה אשר נשבעת לאבסיה). The inclusion of this phrase, though, is rather unnecessary in the context of his dialogue. Moses main points of complaint are that his burden of leadership it too great and that the circumstances of their living situation are difficult. There is no overt reason to incorporate a reminder about Yahweh’s oath to Israel’s forefathers. However, oaths play a key role in the 2 Samuel “appendix.” In the account of the Gibeonites’ revenge in 2 Sam 21, the violation of an oath (בני ישראל נשבעו להם) is the motivating factor for the entire tale. It is only because of Saul’s neglect for this promise, that David must offer seven Saulid descendants to the Gibeonites to be put to death.

In both 2 Sam 24 and Num 11 we find noticeable use of the term מאד to describe significant elements in each narrative. The anger of Yahweh is very great (مادة, Num 11:10) and the plague is too (Num 11:33). David sinned greatly and acted very foolishly
and was in such great distress (2 Sam 24:10 x2) that he must rely on the overwhelming compassion of Yahweh for help. Another example is found in Num 11:28, where the *hapax* מִבחֻרָיו occurs. This term, meaning “from his youth,” is unique, but does have a near parallel in Eccl 11:9 and 12:1 where it appears with a feminine plural ending (ברערים). The abstract plural “youth” from the root בחור (and בחור, “young man”) is an unremarkable phenomenon. However, the choice of this otherwise unattested form to convey “from his youth” over the more expected and well attested מִבָּחוֹרִים is remarkable. The presence of this usual form may be linked paronomastically to the multiple usage of the place name בָּחוֹרִים in the Samuel tradition. In Samuel this town is associated with Shimei ben Gera (2 Sam 16:15, 19:17).

Because we are interested in intertextual parallels, a further element in Shimei’s story in 2 Sam 19:22-24 is worth some consideration. The circumstance and dialogue between David and Abishai concerning Shimei are counterparts to the disagreement between Moses and Joshua in Num 11:27-29. In each account, there is a problem; Shimei has insulted David (in 2 Sam 16:5 which he refers to in 2 Sam 19:20) and Num 11:26-27 Eldad and Medad are prophesying (presumably falsely or without authority) in the camp. Both problems are affronts to the divinely sanctioned norms; Shimei has insulted “Yahweh’s anointed” (משיח יהוה, 2 Sam 19:22), and Eldad and Medad seem to be considered not suitable recipients of the divine ecstatic spirit (Num 11:26). These affronts make Abishai and Joshua, respectively, angry. They each approach their leader seeking

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284 J-M 502-3. “An abstract noun is quite often expressed by a plural, which...aims at the...manifestations of a quality or state.” See also B-L, 472.
285 This form occurs over 40 times in the HB (with different possessive endings) and is attested elsewhere in both Numbers and Samuel (Num 30:4, 17; 1 Sam 12:2, 17:33, 2 Sam 19:8).
286 Bahurim is also mentioned in 2 Sam 17:18 as the site of a well in which Jonathan and Ahimaatz hide. On this well, the wife of the well-owner spreads a cover and scattered grain over the mouth of the well to help hide the two. Here description is reminiscent of Rizpah in 2 Sam 24. She “spreads out” (ותָּการแสดง) the grain with the same verb used to describe what the people do with the quail in Num 11:32. In this example, we find a complex web of relationships between the relevant texts in Samuel and Numbers.
287 The parallel in 2 Sam 19 does not come from the “appendix” but is provided because of its curious resonances. However, there is the possibility that Shimei’s original problem with David stems from story in 2 Sam 21 of the death of the seven Saulids, which may, chronologically, belong to a position early in David’s reign. If so, the Shimei material does have a link to the “appendix” narratives. See McCarter, II Samuel, 373.
remedy (2 Sam 19:22, Num 11:28). Each leader replies harshly to rebuff the suggestion of punishment for the offending parties, with the reminder that everything comes from the will of Yahweh. David cites his capacity as king (a divinely sanctioned position) to counter Abishai’s demand for retribution (2 Sam 19:23), though on the day of the original insult, David actually articulates that the insult itself comes from Yahweh (2 Sam 16:10). Moses asks Joshua why he should be so upset on his (Moses’) account and reminds him that prophesy comes from Yahweh—would that Yahweh rest his spirit on all the people (Num 11:29).

In 2 Sam 24:1, the note that Yahweh’s anger flared again or continued to flare has long been understood as a literary marker which connects this passage with another. As discussed above, the referent is frequently thought to be 2 Sam 21. Putting aside the identification of a referent narrative for a moment, opening this narrative with the term ויסף provides a resonance with the root אסף which recurs throughout the complaint account of Num 11 (11:4 (as a hapax), 16, 24, 30, 32). The opening verse of 2 Sam 24 provides a second paranomastic correspondence with Num 11. David was incited by Yahweh to number (מנה) the people of Israel and Judah. There are many lexical choices which cover the semantic field “to count/number,” (and see more on this below), and the use of this root to mean count or number is not particularly common, occurring only about 14 times in the entire HB corpus and usually referring to an impossibility in numbering (e.g. Gen 13:16, Num 23:10, 1 Kgs 3:8). So the choice to use Melania in 2 Sam 24:1 may be an intentional indicator to take special notice. When read together with Num 11:6ff., the pun with manna (המן) seems a likely consideration. These are not examples of utilizing an equivalent lexeme, but instead are examples of a subtle, paranomastic relationship between two narratives. These narratives are separated by great canonical space, but are associated with one another through an abundance of structural and stylistic parallels.

288 Note the resonant word play in the language each uses. Abishai asks whether Shimei should not be killed for cursing Yahweh’s anointed (לא יומת שמעי כי קלל את משיח יהוה) and Joshua demands that Moses “shut them up” (כלאם).
289 Note the use here of the root קנא, the same root used in 2 Sam 21:2 to describe the zeal with which Saul wiped out the Amorites, the ancestors of the Gibeonites.
The ambiguity surrounding the renewed flaring of Yahweh’s anger in 2 Sam 24:1 is reflected in another subtle and unusual locution in Num 11:4. In the same way that the narrative of 2 Sam 24 does not clarify what the antecedent of Yahweh’s continued anger is, the narrative in Num 11 is equally vague in its explanation of the people weeping again (גם) in Num 11:4. One possible interpretation is that the weeping in 11:4 is secondary to the story in Num 11:1-3 in which the people had cried out (ירצוי) (רצעים), but note the dissimilarity of the language. In Num 11:4 the “people” who “cry” (יובים) are the בני ישראל. The root ובכה is prominent in Num 11, occurring five times in a span of 17 verses. It also appears more frequently (25 times) in the books of Samuel than any other book in the HB. In this aspect of the relationship between 2 Sam 24 and Num 11, we see a comparative literary tool: a clear allusion to an earlier referent story without any clear revelation in the narrative as to what that referent story is. The grammatical structures for conveying this allusion are different, (though we should note the shared emphasis on the root ובכה), but the function within the narrative account is the same.

Knowing numbers of people is a critical concern in both the census story of 2 Sam 24 and the complaint story in Num 11, though this concern is portrayed differently in each account. In the census story, the significance of this act is emphasized though the choice of several different lexemes to describe the action. Yahweh incites David to number the people (מנה) and David passes on this order by telling Joab to review all the people so he might know their number (เฉพדו את-העם וידעתי את מספר העם, 2 Sam 24:2). Joab does this (24:4) and reports the number of the review to David (מספר מפקד-העם, 2 Sam 24:9). Despite Joab’s adherence to this order, David becomes displeased because he counted the people (ספר, 2 Sam 24:10). Num 11 presents a different view. The act of numbering is not at issue in this account, but rather the total number of people. As such, Moses does not use any verbs for numbering in Num 11; his statement of 600,000 is framed as only nominal. In Num 11, it is the sheer vastness of the population which concerns Moses—and his, or Yahweh’s, inability to sate them all. In this case, citing the number of the

290 E. Davies admits the ambiguity over Num 11:4 and mentions the Taberah account as a possible antecedent, but also provides several emendations, following LXX which remove the problematicגם entirely. E. Davies, Numbers (NCB Commentary; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 105. Noth suggests the reference is to a Yahwistic manna story, no longer fully extant but incorporated into Exod 16 (P) by an editor. M. Noth, Numbers (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968), 91.
people facilitates Moses’ doubt in Yahweh, a serious transgression. In 2 Sam 24, the cause of David’s transgression is left somewhat in doubt, though it would appear that his heart grieves over the act of counting.

In Num 11 and 2 Sam 24, there is a moment in the narrative when a voice of reason attempts to prevail, but in each case such questioning only ends in crisis. We have already seen that Moses questions Yahweh’s ability to find enough meat to feed his large population (Num 11:21-22). Such a concern seems logical within Moses’ context, since he is struggling with the burden of providing for such a mass of complaining people. However, with this seemingly justified concern, Moses ends up stumbling into further difficulty. In his question, he unwittingly numbers the people (Num 11:21). Yahweh responds critically over Moses’ doubt, and with the promised meat sends a great plague (Num 11:33). Similarly, in 2 Sam 24:3, Joab tries to reason with David by asking why, while an increasing population is surely good, David requires to know such a thing. For whatever reason, possibly because the taboo of reckoning people is widely known, Joab tries to stop David’s census. But David, in a move rare in Samuel, is given full credit for this endeavor. 2 Sam 24:4 tells us that the “word of the king was firm” (יוֹם הַמֶּלֶךְ) and that Joab and the men went out “before the presence of the king” (לְפָנֵי המֶלֶךְ). Of course, Joab’s cautionary question is not heeded, the census will lead to crisis, and David will regret his actions (2 Sam 24:10).

Also critical to the account in Num 11 is the “craving” (אוה) that the people have for meat. It is the impetus for all of the action in the story and it delineates the account by appearing at the opening in Num 11:4 and in the etiological conclusion in 11:34. A craving also plays an important role in the story of David and the three warriors in 2 Sam 23:13-17.\textsuperscript{291} Again it is the motivation for the plot action, though in this case David does not consummate his craving by drinking the water retrieved for him by the warriors. Cravings for which the object is specifically noted in the text are rare in the HB (e.g. Deut 12:20 (also meat), Prov 23:3 (tasty things/dainties), Micah 7:1 (early figs)). Given

\textsuperscript{291} Even though this story does not come from the narrative “outer ring” of the appendix (2 Sam 21:1-14 and 2 Sam 24), it is still part of the carefully constructed conclusion to 2 Samuel and has some bearing to the discussion here.
the comparanda, David’s craving for water is especially unusual and makes the occurrence of this root and the motif of (illicit) craving a significant parallel between the “appendix” and Num 11.

Several brief images are used in 2 Sam 24 and Num 11 to color the dialogue between Moses and Yahweh and David and Yahweh. These images find correspondences in each narrative. In 2 Sam 24, the census takes Joab nine months and 20 days (2 Sam 24:8), a rather exact notation. In the Numbers complaint story, Moses, feeling unable to satisfy the demands of leadership, bemoans his problems to Yahweh, saying, “Did I conceive the whole of this people and did I bear them such that you should say to me, “Carry them in your bosom…,”(Num 11:12). The length of Joab’s census is so similar to the length of human pregnancy that the choice to use this particular simile to convey Moses’ frustration is striking. Though they seem familiar, the images of carrying an infant at the breast, of tending to a nursing infant, of “bearing” the people, are not terribly common.

Another example of corresponding images is found in the dialogues of both Moses and David with Yahweh. David’s intercession on behalf of the people in 2 Sam 24:17 portrays the innocent people as “these sheep.” Moses, also in an attempt to intercede for his people, is concerned about more literal pragmatics, and in conveying this concern makes two mistakes. He numbers his people, “I am in the midst of 600,000 people on foot,” (Num 11:21), and he doubts Yahweh’s ability to provide, “Is there sheep or cattle (enough) to be slaughtered for them?” (Num 11:22). Yahweh responds to Moses skepticism with a rare locution, “Is the hand of Yahweh getting short?” (Num 11:11). This metaphor is found only elsewhere in Isa 50:2, 59:1, where a snarky Yahweh questions whether he is powerful enough to save. So the choice of this highly

292 Auld, I & II Samuel, 607, also notes that this “curiously specific period” is “quite close to human gestation.” Also note that this verse has already been identified as having another correspondence dealing with reference to an oath, an element occurring also in 2 Sam 24.

293 Though carrying “the people” at his breast does somewhat recall the lamb of Nathan’s parable (2 Sam 12:3).

294 Note the occurrence here of the indefinite אֶלְהָה. In Chapter 3, I do not include this occurrence in the catalogue, but rather group it with use in direct questions (see Chapter 3). However, there is something of a thematic connection with its use here in that David’s plea is to save the people, the human capital crucial to the security of his kingdom.
infrequent expression may be explained by the paranomastic relationship it has with a
very particular detail in 2 Sam 21. That narrative tells us very specifically that the seven
Saulids are executed at the beginning of the harvest (קציר, 2 Sam 21:9-10) and that
Rizpah guards the bodies until the end of the harvest. The lexeme appears three times in
the space of two verses.

Fire imagery also functions in both Num 11 and 2 Sam 24. The short account in Num
11:1-3 begins with a great fire which ravages the camp and is relieved by Moses’ praying
(Num 11:2). The plague at the end of 2 Sam 24 is checked when David purchases an altar
site and performs for Yahweh the sacrifice of the whole burnt offering ( 2 Sam 24:25).
The use of this fiery image is reversed in the two accounts. In Numbers, fire serves as a
destructive element, at the opening of a narrative, to be ameliorated though cultic activity,
while in Samuel fire (the whole burnt offering) serves as the cultic activity by which a
destructive element is ameliorated at the close of a narrative.

Another shared image is that of burden. A Moses with “evil in his eyes” complains to
Yahweh that his responsibility is too onerous to bear alone (Num 11:10-15). He asks
whether he has not found favor in Yaweh’s sign that Yahweh should give him such a
burden (משׂא). This term is of note since its homonym means “utterance/oracle.” Here we
see a nice play within the account itself. The 70 elders whom Yahweh indicates to share
Moses’ burden do so by receiving part of the divine spirit which causes them to prophesy
(Num 11:25). Expanding this image to 2 Sam 24, we find the use of the very rare verbal
root נל in 2 Sam 24:12. Yahweh “holds over” David three choices as reconciliation
for his sin. This root connotes lifting something as though to bear it, or lift something as a
weight or burden. Electing to frame David’s three choices with this verb may indicate
an underlying assumption about the role of leaders (and prophets, for that matter) which
focuses on the burden of their responsibilities, and perhaps even the divinely laid burden.
Both David and Moses feel the weight of Yahweh’s expectations in these accounts and,

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295 Only elsewhere in Prov 27:3 (noun); Isa 40:15, 63:9; Lam 3:28.
296 BDB, 642.
with the proper actions, can have the opportunity to feel the easing of that weight at Yahweh’s will.

A final point of comparison between Num 11 and 2 Sam 24 is the appearance of a prophetic interlude contained within the larger narrative. In Num 11, as has been touched on already above, we find the story of the 70 elders who receive Yahweh’s spirit and the strange behavior of Eldad and Medad. In 2 Sam 24, the prophet Gad receives and reports Yahweh’s word concerning the remediation of the plague and the construction of the altar site in Jerusalem. In each case those serving in prophetic roles help address the underlying crisis. The 70 elders in Num 11 ease Moses’ burden. Gad provides David with the path out of his state of sin contracted by numbering the people and the way to his reward—new cultic territory in Yahweh’s chosen location. We will return to the role of prophesy below, especially with regard to Auld’s discussion of the “spirit of Yahweh” and the compositional connections it suggests between Numbers and the Samuel tradition.

The outline of parallels reviewed here between the complaint account in Num 11 and material from the 2 Samuel “appendix,” primarily 2 Sam 24, demonstrate numerous correspondences in language, conventional structures, imagery, and theme. Together, these elements also point to shared conceptual assumptions about the danger and consequence of numbering the people, about the causes and resolutions of the wrath of Yahweh, about the role of prophets and prophecy, and about the role of leaders in Israel.

Other Parallels between the “Appendix” Narratives and Numbers

Auld’s study on Samuel and Numbers is largely focused on Num 22-24, the Balaam story, but does reach beyond those chapters to other material in Numbers. Similarly, he looks to textual parallels throughout the Samuel tradition. Thus far, in this study, we have primarily focused on Num 11 and the 2 Samuel “appendix.” Here, as Auld does, I would
like to turn our attention to additional material in Numbers which exhibits the same sort of narrative symmetry as the account in Num 11.

The opening of the census story in 2 Sam 24 requires one further investigation. Yahweh’s anger flares against Israel again and we have already seen that commentators use this element as one way to connect 2 Sam 21 and 24 in their ring structure, encircling the poetry in 22 and 23. However, Yahweh’s anger is not mentioned in 2 Sam 21. In 2 Sam, the only other example of this expression for Yaweh’s anger (חרה + אף) is found in 2 Sam 6:7 in which Yahweh’s anger flares against Uzzah for, albeit innocently, touching the ark. However, in 2 Sam 6:7, the object of the anger is not Israel. Elsewhere in the HB, we do find examples of Yahweh’s anger flaring against Israel (Num 25:3, 32:13, Judg 2:14, 2:20, 3:8, 10:7, and 2 Kgs 13:3). In all of these examples the cause of the anger is that Israel has gone after other gods. The sole exception is Num 32:13 in which the problem seems to be that all of Israel, save Caleb and Joshua, have not been loyal to Yahweh, specifically the Reubenites and Gadites are accused of turning the hearts of the rest of the Israelites from wanting to enter the land (Num 32:6-7). Could it be that this reference in Num 32 is a better candidate for the referent to “again” in 2 Sam 24? The wording is more exact in this case and it may suggest that the problem in 2 Sam 24 is that Israel has somehow not been loyal to Yahweh, as in the Num 32 example.

We can understand the Num 32 example better when we read Num 32:12 which describes Caleb and Joshua’s exception to all the Israelites at fault. They were loyal to Yahweh, they מלאו אחרי יהוה. This exact phraseology is not all that common, occurring in only four contexts in the HB.

1. It appears three times concerning Caleb in Josh 14:8-9, 14 in the description of the allotment of Hebron to him.297

2. In Deut 1 we find another example of the loyalty expression, in this case as a retelling of Caleb’s special dispensation that we heard about in Num 32.

297 See above Chapter 2 regarding the Anakim who also appear in Josh 14:12 in this account of Caleb and Hebron.
Moses tells the people that because Caleb was loyal to Yahweh, he will enter the land, but that none of them will. Moses tells them that because they were so easily convinced of the reports that the land was filled with great cities and Anakim, Yahweh is also angry with them.

3. The only other example of this particular loyalty expression is found in 1 Kgs 11:6 in which Solomon, chastised for going after other gods (11:5), is described as doing “evil in the eyes of Yahweh like David his father.” Presumably this means: he was not loyal to Yahweh, the way David was loyal to Yahweh, and not: he was not loyal to Yahweh, just as David was not loyal to Yahweh, though the sentence is strangely ambiguous. The punishment for Solomon is that Yahweh plans to take away most of his kingdom after his death. To do this he will raise up an adversary (שׂטן) which is the same term (nb without the definite article) that appears in the Chronicler’s version of the census story (1 Chr 21:1) as the agent who incites David to count the people, rather than Yahweh.

So the consequences of disloyalty seem especially to have to do with the promise and tenure of land. Yahweh is deeply offended by the fear and mistrust that the Israelites show with regard to the settlement of the land in the Joshua/Caleb story. Yahweh has promised the procurement of the land and it is a grave misstep for the people that they fear the inhabitants (e.g. Anakim) and what the conquest might entail. Ultimately they are forbidden from entering. In Solomon’s case, land-holding is again at the fore. He has allowed all of his foreign wives to seduce him into worshipping their gods and Yahweh’s punishment for not following the covenant and laws which he commanded is that Solomon’s kingdom will be torn away from him (1 Kgs 11:11).

Let us consider the possibility that the recurrence of the flaring of Yahweh’s anger against Israel in 2 Sam 24 is a reference to (or, actually, the origin of) the flaring of his anger against Israel in Num 32. If the problem in Num 32 is that the Israelites doubted Yahweh and did not remain loyal, save for Caleb and Joshua, then we might consider that this is the problem in 2 Sam 24 as well—the cause of Yahweh’s anger that is otherwise.

298 Knoppers, 1 Chronicles, 744. And, approvingly, Auld, I & II Samuel, 604.
unexplained.299 The other most plausible alternative is that the anger against Israel was caused by their apostasy with other gods as in the each of the other examples of “Yahweh’s anger flaring against Israel” (see above). But let us continue with the Numbers parallel for a moment. Like Caleb and Joshua, David seems to be excused from the anger. Even though Yahweh uses David to undertake the census which eventually leads to the plague and the death of 70,000, David himself is unharmed. Further, David’s remorse and plea for forgiveness is ultimately granted and his reward is property—the Jebusite threshing floor, the altar which he built there, and the remission of the plague from “the land” (an important addition to the expression occurring only in 2 Sam 21:14 and 24:25). Where the cowardly generation does not get to enter the land300 and Solomon’s dynasty will lose possession over most of their territory, David gains ground, just as Caleb is granted the holding of Hebron. (Is it a coincidence that Caleb’s reward in the story is Hebron?)

A further correspondence may be explored in the account of the worship of Baal Peor in Num 25. In this account, Yahweh’s anger flares against Israel and, in order to appease the deity, he tells Moses to hang/expose/dislocate/break limbs (יקע)301 of those responsible for going after the non-Israelite, Moabite god. Seeing an apostate Israelite

299 In other words, we might consider Num 32 to be a reworking of the accounts in 2 Sam 24; its plot altered to fit an entirely different narrative context, but its themes and structures based on the Samuel story that had gone before. This activity would be akin to what Auld describes in numerous stories of Samuel and Genesis. “The writers of Genesis also reuse material from Samuel-Kings, but create more space between their narrative and the source of much of their material.” “[W]e see Genesis playing on Samuel [and] what is going on is something similarly 'midrashic’ as the variations played by the book of Ruth on both Judah and Tamar…” A.G. Auld, “Samuel and Genesis: Some Questions of John Van Seters’ ‘Yahwist,’’ in Samuel at the Threshold, Selected Works of Graeme Auld (SOTSM; Burlington, Ver.: Ashbury, 2004), 211; repr. from S.L. McKenzie and T. Römer, eds., Rethinking the Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible (BZAW 294; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 23-32. However, we should not necessarily think that the reworking stops there. The underlying assumptions (e.g. the cause of the anger) about 2 Sam 24 are reflected in how the tradent crafted Num 32. While these assumptions might not be identical to the original authors’, they provide, at least, a much closer perspective than we might gain by reading 2 Sam 24 alone.

300 Note also that the specific expression of the flaring of Yahweh’s anger toward Israel is located in a verse (Num 32:13, cf. 2 Sam 24:1) that signals the punishment of the “old generation” condemned to die in the wilderness. This is a key element in D. Olson’s overarching theme (described below) and resonates with the possibility that this theme mimics the narrative of the David story at the highest levels. In another minor example of possible influence from the Samuel tradition, note that in Num 32:13 we find two relatively rare grammatical elements: the use of the root יָשָׁע (42x in the HB) and the phrase יָשָׁע-יִשְׂרָאֵל (11x in the HB). These two elements appear together in 2 Sam 15 in the account of David’s flight from Absalom.

with a Midianite woman, Phineas takes his spear and pierces the offenders. This action stops the plague and makes expiation (כפר) for the Israelites. After the plague is over, Moses takes a census of the people, beginning with the Reubenites. Yahweh’s anger flares against Israel also in 2 Sam 24, and David then takes a census of the people. This leads to a plague which must be ameliorated, just as the famine in 2 Sam 21 must be stopped. The non-Israelite Gibeonites in 2 Sam 21 ask that the Saulids be hanged/exposed/dislocated/limbs broken (יקע), in order to make expiation (כפר). The plague in 2 Sam 24 is stopped following David’s purchase of the threshing floor from the non-Israelite Aruanah and his sacrificial offerings there. Yahweh responds to the plea for the land in both 2 Sam 21 and 24, though not in the Num 25 account.

In killing these offenders, Phineas prevents the possibility that a permanent union will ensue between Zimri, of Simeon, and Cozbi, the Midianitess. M. Sicherman suggests that such a union would be politically detrimental and would render Israel’s southern flank exposed. M. Sicherman, “The Political Side of the Zimri-Cozbi Affair,” Jewish Bible Quarterly 36/1 (2008): 22-24. In this regard the portrayals of Phineas and David are similar—each character is described as dealing with events as they unfold, but certainly the strategic and political ramifications of dealing with non-Israelites must also be considered a crucial message of the text. David has good reason to appease the Gibeonites, his close neighbors, especially since, in doing so, he is also able to rid himself of more of the Saulid line.

A stretch, perhaps: It is worth noting, that in 1 Chr 5, in the genealogy of the Reubenites (who begin the census following the Baal Peor incident), there is a note that the Reubenites waged war on the Hagrites in the days of Saul (1 Chr 5:10, 20). (The Hagrites are non-Israelite people, associated with Edomites, Ishmaelites, and Moabites in Psa 83. See also Knoppers, I Chronicles, 386.) In this note we find the expression that God responded to their plea because they trusted in him. There are very few examples of עתר in the nifal (in this meaning, contrast Prov 27:6) in the entire HB, only eight examples (Gen 25:21, 2 Sam 21:14, 24:25, Ezr 8:23, Isa 19:22, 1 Chr 5:20, 2 Chr 33:13, 19). All of these examples occur with the preposition -ל, so I am not certain that this correspondence should be taken as indicative of “late usage” rather than simply normal usage. See Campbell, “2 Samuel 21-24,” 350. Knoppers, I Chronicles, 380. In any event, the comment that God replied to the cry of the Reubenites because they trusted in him, is consistent with what we have seen above—that Yahweh’s anger is aroused when the people are disloyal, including the disloyalty of the Reubenites which we reviewed in Num 32. In the internal logic of Reubenite history, this is a lesson that they might have learned prior to their Hagrite wars. Furthermore, the contexts of each of the occurrences of עתר in the nifal are interesting. First, almost all of the examples involve foreigners or a locale outside the land: 2 Sam 21-Gibeonites, 2 Sam 24-the Jebusite altar-site, 1 Chr 5-war with Hagrites, 2 Chr 33-Manasseh in Babylon, Ezr 8-Ezra by the Ahava River, Isa 19-Egypt. Gen 25 may be somewhere in the Negev. Second, each of the examples requires a cultic or religious act to precede the divine response. Isaac prays (Gen 25), David buries bones (2 Sam 21) and sacrifices (2 Sam 24), the Reubenites cry out (1 Chr 5), Manasseh prays and humbles himself (2 Chr 33), Ezra fasts (Ezra 8) and the Egyptians have an altar, a sacred pillar, and sacrifice (Isa 19). Note the difference between the messy, physical activities of 2 Samuel and Isaiah and the abstract, cerebral actions of the Chronicler and Ezra.

Also, of course, Yahweh responds to the plea for the land in the 2 Samuel examples, where the others are all more personal. All other diachronic considerations of these passages aside, it seems to me that the usage pattern in 2 Samuel and Isaiah is more original—that Yahweh responds to a plea following highly ritualized activities—and that later authors try to make use of the expression even though their circumstances do not involve cultic paraphernalia and are furthermore in foreign locales. The examples of the Chronicler and Ezra sound almost euphemistic, as though the ritualistic nature of sacrifice or treatment of the dead no longer resonates with their understanding of connections to the divine.

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We have already noted that in both 2 Sam 21 and 24 there is a ritually significant act which corresponds with Yahweh’s response to the plight of the people and land. In 2 Sam 21, this act centers on interment of bodies and in 2 Sam 24, it involves sacrifices offered on the new altar. The Saulids who meet their death in 2 Sam 21 are killed through some rather gruesome form of impalement or dismemberment, depending on one’s precise understanding of the rare root, יָּקָע, a root which also is used in Num 25 to describe what Yahweh orders for the apostates. The bodies in 2 Sam 21 which have suffered this fate serve as the instrument by which the ritual act of burial, and some sort of appeasement to Yahweh, is accomplished. It would seem that the detail of their manner of death is an important part of their larger role in the story. In the story of Baal Peor, we find a similar use of this important detail. The plague is stopped when Phineas rushes into the inner chamber and pierces the Israelite and his foreign mistress with his spear. Though the term is not used again, Phineas seems to have followed the spirit of Yahweh’s instruction in 25:4 and “impaled” two of the offenders.

But more importantly, the details of location and manner of death have also turned this punishment into a kind of ritual act. Both Friedman and Kislev address the use of the term קַבֶּה and Friedman concludes that it must refer to the interior sanctum of the Tent of Meeting, which is why it makes sense that Phineas, a priest, can follow the offenders inside and summarily execute them. Further, the whole scene is fraught with sexual innuendo reminding us of the problem at hand, namely sexual relations with foreign women. They two, the “Israelite and his woman,” go into the “inner sanctum” illicitly. There, they are “pierced” with a “spear,” the woman perhaps in her genitalia. Their actions and their manner of death are equated with their original violation. Like the

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304 I. Kislev suggests that the use of this *hapax* is a play on “her belly” (קַבֶּה), which is itself a euphemism for female genitalia. I. Kislev, “P, Source or Redaction: The Evidence of Numbers 25.,” in T. B. Dozeman, K. Schmid, and B. Schwartz, *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research*, (FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 392, and especially the bibliography in n. 24.

305 Here reading the entire chapter synchronically despite the apparent source division between Num 25:1-5 and 6ff. While 25:6ff. may have originally been an independent P account (and see Kislev), it now functions together with 25:1-5.

sacrifices in 2 Sam 24 (and cf. the “sacrifice” of the seven Saulids in 2 Sam 21)\(^307\), there is something sacrificial about this execution. It is in direct response to a request of Yahweh (Num 25:4). It takes place in a special, divinely sanctioned location of cultic accessibility. It makes expiation for all Israel (Num 25:13). And, it results in an eternal covenant (ברית כהנת עולם, Num 25:13) of priesthood for Phineas and his descendants. In these ways Num 25 is an echo of the motifs in the Samuel “appendix.” Like David’s in 2 Sam 24, Phineas’ “sacrifice” checks the plague (Num 25:13). David, like Phineas, is the recipient of an eternal covenant (ברית עולם, 2 Sam 23:5).

The expression used to convey the ceasing of the plague is specific and has a limited distribution. Each of these instances shares the same subject מגפה. Two of these examples are in the account of the Korah rebellion (Num 17:13, 15), three are in the passages dealt with here (Num 25:8, see below, and 2 Sam 24:21, 25), one is a synoptic verse in Chronicles (1 Chr 21:22) and the last in Psa 106:30 which reiterates the events concerning Baal Peor (Num 25). The rarity of this syntax, and other parallels detailed above, help to define some connection between the language of 2 Sam 24 and that of the account of Baal Peor in Num 25.

One final correspondence is evident. In each of the pericopes under discussion, a key role is played by a non-Israelite. While Simon does draw on the inclusion of foreigners in the “appendix” for the understanding of its function, it is worth noting that very few other critical works specifically address the presence of these non-Israelite characters at all. In the pericopes under discussion here, both in 2 Samuel and in Numbers, a critical role in the plot dynamics is undertaken by a foreigner.\(^308\) These foreign elements not only serve to advance the direction of the narrative (2 Sam 21’s Gibeonites are a clear example of plot movement), but they also add a common ideological motif to each of these accounts.

The parallel between Araunah’s Jebusite threshing floor and the Egypt of Num 11

\(^307\) See K. Hanson, “When the King Crosses the Line: Royal Deviance and Restitution in Levantine Ideologies,” *BTB* 26 (1996), 15 for connections between the sacrifices of 2 Sam 24 and the death of Saul’s sons in 2 Sam 21.

\(^308\) These are: the Gibeonites in 2 Sam 21, Araunah the Jebusite in 2 Sam 24, and the foreign (Moabite/Midianite) women in Num 25. Num 11 is less overt, but Egypt as a foreign locale certainly functions as an “other” in this account. Additionally, Num 12, which seems to be related from a source critical perspective, brings attention to Moses’ Cushite wife.
demonstrates this phenomenon. The foreignness of the Jebusite site is transformed in 2 Sam 24 through David’s compliance with prophetic instruction and cultic sacrifice. What was once old and alien is now new and holy.\textsuperscript{309} Egypt, too, is the place for the old generation, the alien location of bondage. In Num 11 another transformation takes place, again through a prophetic instruction (Num 11:24) and a (perverted) sacrifice. The appearance of a nauseating overabundance of meat from Yahweh (rather than a pleasing donation through a ritual contribution from people to deity) results in a devastating blow which is irrecoverable. Part of this generation is killed off in the ongoing replacement of the old with the new, the foreign with the Israelite.\textsuperscript{310}

The Relationship between the “Appendix” and the Book of Numbers

Numbers is widely understood as a literarily composite work with a complex process of growth.\textsuperscript{311} While it largely comprises Priestly material, it also contains significant non-P material and shows the existence of Pentateuchal source strata such as J, E, and/or a redacted JE source.\textsuperscript{312} One of the reasons perspectives on the development of the book of

\textsuperscript{309} Apologies for muddling Rav Kook.
\textsuperscript{310} See also, Van Seters on the issue of the role of foreigners in his “David Saga.” He argues that the presence of so many foreigners in important positions points to several characteristics of this version of David, most obviously his disinterest in any taboo of interaction with non-Israelites. But by extension this disinterest translates to the subjugation of religious mores to the thrill of taking non-Israelite booty (presumably including women). Further David’s contrast with the foreigner Uriah highlights David’s subversion of the Deuteronomic laws of holy war. J. Van Seters, \textit{The Biblical Saga of King David} (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 352. It is a bit unclear to me from Van Seters’ work what he wants to do with the “appendix”—2 Sam 24, for example, does not appear on either his list of verses for either Dtr’s David story or the Saga. It would seem that Van Seters would put this material with the Saga, because in a footnote, he castigates another scholar for ascribing to him (VS) that 2 Sam 21-24 belongs to Dtr. \textit{The Biblical Saga}, 306, n.53. So I can only assume that he holds the opposite. In any event, the role of foreignness in the narrative “appendix” material seems to me to be well suited to his arguments about the role of non-Israelites in the David Saga. See also p. 359 for his discussion of the role of foreigners in the Saga vs. Dtr’s “messianic age-view” in which foreigners are cleansed.
\textsuperscript{311} For a summary of some recent scholarship on the composition of Numbers (and Leviticus), as well as the implications for theories of formation of the Pentateuch, see T. Römer, “De la périphérie au centre: Les livres du Lévitique et des Nombres dans le débat actuel sur le Pentateuque,” in \textit{The Books of Leviticus and Numbers} (ed. T. Römer; BETL CCXV; Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 3-34. Numerous other papers in this collection also offer additional discussion of the formation of Numbers, as well as ample bibliography. Additionally, for review of Numbers scholarship, see also R. Achenbach, \textit{Die Vollendung der Torah: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch} (BZABR 3; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), 1-36.
Numbers are, on one hand, so varied, and on the other, somewhat underrepresented in scholarship (compared to work on Genesis, for example), seems to be connected to the scholarly uncertainty regarding the extent, nature, date and function of the Priestly material in the Pentateuch. Some of the current debate around the nature of P addresses whether P is a “source” in the sense of an independent document, or more a stage, or series of stages, in a redactional process of the previously existing narrative. Some see both an original P work as well as later P supplementary additions. Part of the difficulty in pinning P down seems to be that the P source/redaction is at times minimally editorial and at other times fully creative. Though many view P as a true source, i.e. a document, the idea that the P material only supplements (perhaps in a critical way) and is an incomplete account on its own also has its proponents.

Num 11, however, on which this study has devoted considerable attention, belongs to the non-P material in Numbers and the other Numbers passages described in the comparisons above (Num 25 and 32) come from sections which retain interwoven non-P and P material. Even though Num 11 may not show evidence of redaction by a Priestly hand, its literary development may still have included several stages of growth, most obviously in the combining of the short account in Num 11:1-3 with the material in 11:4 and following. Other suggestions include the sequential additions of the 70 elders and the story of Eldad and Medad. R. Achenbach, for example, suggests three redactions for this account: first, in his “Hexateuch Redaction,” Num 11:1-3 reinterprets 11:4-34 and the

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313 See P. Guillaume, *Land and Calendar: The Priestly Document from Genesis 1 to Joshua 18* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), for recent review of scholarship concerning the nature of P.
315 Davies, *Numbers*, xlv-li.
theme of rebellion is developed; second, in his “Pentateuch Redaction,” the account of the 70 elders is added; third, in his “theocratic revision,” Eldad and Medad are added to the larger narrative. Whether we follow Achenbach’s overarching scheme of redactional growth, his identification of smaller elements within Num 11 is in keeping with consensus. I would suggest, however, that the presence of these elements, particularly the short action concerning Eldad and Medad, is more likely a result of imitation of the tropes in the 2 Samuel “appendix,” and not necessarily a result of the varying religious and political needs of successive redactors.

The fact that the Numbers passages relevant to this study show either no Priestly influence or retain a combination of non-Priestly and Priestly material is significant. If we accept the premise of Auld’s study that the details of certain stories in Numbers are “influenced” by Samuel, which the preceding discussion would support, the nature of the passages (Priestly, non-Priestly or mixed) already begins to distinguish what material in Numbers may owe its origins to the David story. Examination of other passages which are of questionable priestly or non-priestly attribution may be further clarified if this sort of Samuel influence can be demonstrated.

From the few Numbers passages addressed here, it may not be possible (or perhaps responsible) to construct a grand theory of direct compositional dependence on the David story. But it seems, in keeping with Auld’s original observations, that these accounts in Numbers demonstrate knowledge of the material from the Samuel “appendix,” especially

318 Achenbach, Die Vollendung der Tora, 203-262. Many of the concerns of Achenbach’s Hexateuch Redactor are present also in the narratives of the 2 Samuel appendix: the role of foreigners and the relationship between Israel and the nations, personal intercession (in the case of Numbers, by Moses) with Yahweh on behalf of the people; surviving Yahweh’s wrath and the reward of covenantal promise; the promised land. When Achenbach sees these concerns played out in his first redaction level Numbers passages (as much of Num 11), I must wonder whether we can see their origin in the David story rather than in the socio-political reality of the Yehud. (Or perhaps both should not be excluded, but with the David story as the more direct vehicle of transference.)


320 Our story from Num 11 comes up in Auld’s discussion. He is specifically interested in Num 11:24-30 in which Yahweh distributes some of the spirit which had been on Moses to the 70 elders gathered for the purpose. Auld’s interest here is the link between the activity of prophesying and the mention of the divine spirit. This combination is rather rare in the HB corpus. Auld, “Numbers,” 248-253.
David’s census. If we wish to be conservative, we can at least conclude that a similar contextual background informs both accounts, i.e. that שׁוט has a negative connotation, that there seems to be some connection between the anger of Yahweh and reckoning numbers of people, and that accounts of plague can be accompanied by etiological information regarding the relevant locales. Because I would further agree with Auld that the story of the census is a pre-requisite for understanding several other accounts in Samuel and beyond, I see these similarities as dependent, rather than simply developing out of a common background.

Though it has not been widely accepted in its entirety, Olson’s work on the structure of Numbers marks an important moment in changing perspectives on the book. Rather than focus on chronological or geographic markers in the text, Olson suggested that the composition of Numbers instead hinged on the themes of the two generations—the old generation who experienced the exodus, received the revelation at Sinai, but was condemned to die in the wilderness because of their rebellious nature, and the new generation who never knew Egypt and who, trusting in Yahweh, would enter the promised land. I see in this basic literary structure an echo of the Samuel tradition. The “old generation” longs for a king. They receive a “revelation” from Samuel, not only about what kingship means, but also the actual anointing of a suitable candidate. Saul becomes king but the enterprise is a failure. He defies Yahweh’s instructions (sacrifice), and the people become torn between following Saul or David. The “new generation” trusts in Yahweh’s new sovereign, David. Like Moses, David is special in Yahweh’s eyes, but not special enough. Moses will not enter the Promised Land; David will not build the temple. They governed a “new generation” but not without certain personal failures. The people, though, reap their rewards. They enter the land, led by Joshua. They enjoy the fruits of the continuation of the Davidic line under the prosperous rule of Solomon. While Olson’s approach to Numbers may not address certain particulars about

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322 Davies, Numbers, liii-liii; Kinnerim and Coats, Numbers, 10-11.

inclusion of exclusion of Priestly material, or disputes over where textual boundaries lie, it does, on a thematic level, resonate with the scenario explored here, that the composers of Numbers know the David story and use both its larger themes and its details of language to construct a companion work in the wilderness story.
Chapter 5: One Little Indian: How the Root 킵Protects (?) David’s Reputation

Introduction

In this essay and the next, two elements of language are explored, the meaning and usage of the root 킵 in 2 Sam 18:14 and a particular verbal sequence in 2 Sam 4:10. Traditional explanations and difficulties are discussed and solutions are proposed for both of the textual irritants here. Each solution has consequences for the presentation of the character of David and for the historiographical methods of the author.

Death in the Battle in the Forest of Ephraim

2 Samuel 18 recounts the story of the battle in the Forest of Ephraim. David’s captains, Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, lead the army to confront the rebel Israelite forces under David’s son, Absalom. A great slaughter ensues and the Israelites are routed. Immediately following this battle account is the story of the death of Absalom (2 Sam 18:9-15). It seems, although the text does not actually say, that his death takes place as the Israelites are in retreat from the battle. One of David’s men sees Absalom caught in the branches of a tree, famously hanging between heaven and earth. This news is reported to Joab, who takes three sticks (שבטים) and strikes Absalom in the chest (לב). 2 Sam 18:14 is careful to tell us that Absalom is still alive following this assault (ועדו חי לב אלה) and only when ten of Joab’s arms-bearers attack him is Absalom finally killed. Hanging over this tale, as it were, are the cautioning words of David in 2 Sam 18:5, “Deal gently with (or “Protect”) the boy Absalom for me.”

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324 I borrow here from Halpern’s borrowed subheading, “Ten Little Indians,” in his discussion of the deaths for which David is likely thought responsible. Though the messenger who brings word of Ishbaal’s death is not one of the victims addressed in Halpern’s discussion, I suggest that even this death is another example of one from which David is careful to distance himself. Halpern, David’s Secret Demons, 77-94.

325 See McCarter, II Samuel, 405. See already, Haupt, who suspected the root לְָּּּוּּת to cover, i.e. protect; P. Haupt, “Deal Gently with the Young Man” Journal of Biblical Literature 45 (1926): 357.
The description of Absalom’s death in 2 Samuel 18 has elicited much discussion regarding what precisely transpired in the tree and, as a result, who is responsible for his death. The carefully crafted narrative distances David from the impending death of Absalom in two ways. First, 2 Sam 18:1-4 explains that, though willing to go, David is kept from the battle by the request of his troops. Second, 2 Sam 18:5 explicitly states that David publically requested leniency for Absalom. At first glance, the unusual detail of the three sticks (which Joab drives into Absalom’s chest that do not cause his immediate death) seems to technically clear Joab of Absalom’s murder. While still recognizing Joab’s opportunism in the situation, McCarter comments that “it is clear that Joab deliberately arranged for Abishalom to die at the hands of an entire platoon, so that no individual (certainly not himself!) could be named the killer.”

This idea is furthered in the text when the Cushite messenger does not reveal the details of Joab’s actions when he reports to David (2 Sam 18:31-2).

2 Sam 18:14-15 (where Joab strikes Absalom and then the ten arms-bearers finish him off) have bothered scholars because of their seeming contradiction—if Joab struck three darts into Absalom, the ten arms bearers are not necessary for his murder. Also, in the case of other murders, or contemplated murders in the Samuel tradition, we find that perpetrators are keen to kill with the first blow and not require additional strikes; Abishai brags to David that he will not have to strike Saul twice in 1 Sam 26:8 and Joab himself does not need a second strike to ensure Amasa’s death in 2 Sam 20:10. Attempting to resolve this conflict, G.R. Driver, followed more recently by McCarter, argued that the three staffs or sticks were not something which impaled Absalom like a dart, but rather were large implements used to dislodge him from the tree. McCarter has offered an alternative rendering for this verse: “He took three sticks and struck them against Abishalom’s chest while he was still alive in the tree.” He further elaborates in his commentary: “It seems better to understand the three šēḇāṭîm of v.14 as a bunch of stout sticks

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that Joab struck (tq') against Abishalom’s chest (lēb) in order to dislodge him from the tree."329
In this interpretation, Joab does not attack Absalom’s person, but rather helps him get unstuck.
Absalom falls or is lowered to the ground, where the ten fighting men are able to strike him. This
rendering helps make sense of the note that Absalom was still alive when the ten arms-bearers
attack him. However, the following study of the usage the verbal root תקע, the verb with which
Joab attacks Absalom, demonstrates that McCarter’s interpretation is untenable. Further,
understanding the use of this verb provides its own explanation for the seeming contradiction in
verses 14 and 15.

The Root תקע

The verbal root תקע is a relatively familiar root, used most frequently in the verb for blowing
horns, but it also governs other semantic fields. The following discussion analyzes the four
semantic fields for the root תקע:

1. The most common meaning of תקע is to make a noise on an aerophone, i.e. sounding the
horn, blowing the shofar. Of the 70 attestations in the HB corpus of this root, 53 of them
represent this semantic usage, or about 76%. Several instruments are mentioned in this
usage: the שׁופר (e.g. Josh 6:4, 6:8, Judg 3:27, 6:34), the תקוע (Ezek 7:14), and the
חצצרה (Num 10:8, 10:10). Indicative verb forms are followed by the preposition -ב bound
to the type of instrument. So, for example, Judg 3:27:

ויתקע בשׁופר בהר אפרים.

Imperative forms, however, do not take the preposition. So, Jer 51:27:

תקעו שׁופר בגוים.

Additionally, the verb is used in conjunction with, not an instrument, but a type of sound or note,

329 McCarter, II Samuel, 405-7. He is followed in some recent commentaries such as T. Cartledge, 1 & 2 Samuel
(Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon, Georgia: Smyth and Helwys, 2001). Also, on the issue of the sticks:
Joab takes three sticks in his hand (יוֹתְקָעֲבִים בְׁכַפְוֹ אֶבֶשׁלֹם) and thrusts them into Absalom’s chest (לְבָשׁלֹם). The use of שׁבט is notable here. This term’s homonym, “tribe,” is far more frequently used but this term does appear
over forty times in the HB as a kind of tool, a club, a scepter, a rod. Within the Samuel tradition, aside from Joab,
only Benaiah uses a שׁבט as a weapon (2 Sam 23:21). Elsewhere, the following verbs are used to wield this particular
type of weapon: נכה, smite, (Exod 21:20),Ṛעע, utterly destroy (Num 24:17),משׁך, draw, (Judg 5:14), or רעע, break,
(Psa 2:9). Only in the case of Joab do we find it with the verb תקע. Further, it seems unusual within the context of
the story that Joab, a senior officer, would not wield a more serious weapon. Vaticanus reads darts, βελη (םשׁלחי)
which is followed by many older interpreters (Budde, Driver, and others).

330 This form is a hapax. That the term is a true nominal form and a type of wind instrument is evident from the
syntactic pattern in the verse. The use of the indicative verb followed by the preposition -ב indicates that the
following element must be the instrument sounded.

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namely the תרועה (Num 10:5, 6). When the sound is the object of the verb, no marker is used, e.g. תרועה in Num 10:6. This usage, however, seems to be a secondary one when all HB examples of this idiom are considered. In its more common phraseology, one causes a shout of תרועה with the verb רוע. Nonetheless, it does not seem like too far a stretch to see how the language could incorporate a type of sound into this semantic use of תקע.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. תקע: Blowing an Aerophone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Judg 3:27</strong>&lt;sup&gt;331&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jer 51:27</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Num 10:6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. In six instances, or about 9% of the time, תקע is part of an expression having to do with pledging oneself, demonstrated, the texts seem to suggest, with some hand gesture. Whether or not this expression is literal or metaphorical is not entirely evident from the examples. In some cases, like Job 17:3, the use can be understood figuratively, “who will clasp(?) my hand?” (מי הוא לדר תקע). In others, like Psa 47:2, a literal hand gesture is described, “strike/clap hands; raise up a shout to god with a ringing voice” (תקע כף הריעו אלהים בקול רנה). Those who pledge themselves in this way are תקעי כף (Prov 22:26). It is the opinion of Proverbs that such a gesture is undesirable—those who do it are lacking sense (Prov 17:18), vulnerable to comeuppance (Prov 22:26), or caught in their own

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331 The translations in the following tables follow JPS Tanakh, 1985.
snares (Prov 6:1). The six instances (Job 17:3; Psa 47:2; Prov 6:1; 17:18, 22:26; Nah 3:19) contain indicative, imperative and participial verb forms, and various syntactic arrangements. Due to the diversity in these examples, no clear syntactic patterns can be determined. The one element that can be noted is the occurrence of the rootUrav, to pledge, in each of the cases whereתקע+כף receives a negative treatment. In the two verses without the inclusion ofUrav, the phrase seems to literally indicate making a percussive noise with hands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>תקע: Pledging Hand Gesture</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job 17:3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psa 47:2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prov 17:18</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. תקע: Pledging Hand Gesture

3. Occurring only three times is the use of the lexeme in the context of pitching a tent. These examples (Gen 31:25x2,332 Jer 6:3) are somewhat unusual in that we would expectנטה, perhaps, as the more common provider of this semantic field.333 Apparently, this usage is meant to relate the action of striking the tent pegs into the ground rather than spreading the textile of the tent covering, which is more appropriately described with the rootנטה, to stretch. In this way this usage is certainly related to that described in the next section (pinning, thrusting) although it should be noted that the object in these cases is the tent itself and not a tent-peg. Why these two accounts, Jacob and Laban pitching their tents in the course of the story of their dispute and the image of shepherds pitching their tents in the midst of a prophecy in Jeremiah about the coming dangers, should require a tent verb to conveying striking rather than spreading is unclear.334 There is nothing

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332 Note the possible textual difficulty in the second instance here. Are we to read “his tent” for “his brothers,” or to assume that tent is implied?


334 In the case of the Jacob and Laban story, the aggressive tone that comes with usingתקע rather thanנטה does suit the tempestuous relationship between the two portrayed in the text. This is perhaps a subtle choice on the part of the composer. I thank my 2011 SBL Biblical Lexicography fellow panelists for this suggestion.
particularly remarkable about the syntactic arrangement of these examples. In Gen 31, the tents are marked for definiteness (אֹהֲלוֹ) and occur with את, while in the poetic generalization of Jer 6 we do not expect and do not find the object marker.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>תקע</th>
<th>Staking a Tent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen 31:25</td>
<td>וַיַּשְּגָהּ אֵלֶיהָ יָבֹאוּ רֹעִים וְעֶדְרֵיהֶם תָּקְעוּ עָלֶיהָ אֹהָלִים סָבִיב רָעוּ אִישׁ אֶת־יָדוֹ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jer 6:3</td>
<td>אלֹיָהָ יָבֹאוּ רֹעִים וְעֶדְרֵיהֶם תָּקְעוּ עָלֶיהָ אֹהָלִים סָבִיב רָעוּ אִישׁ אֶת־יָדוֹ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8. תקע: Staking a Tent**

4. The second most frequent semantic use of תקע with nine instances, about 13% of overall occurrences, has to do with pinning or thrusting. Each of the examples of this usage involve objects, such as a peg (יתד) or a sword (חרב), that are stuck into something (Isa 22:23, Judg 3:21). In all cases, the objects of the verb תקע become affixed to or stuck in the thing into which they are thrust. For example, in Judg 3:21, the sword, the object of תקע, enters wholly and irrecoverably into the belly of Eglon. Or, the corpse of Saul in 1 Sam 31:10 is affixed to the wall of Beth Shean to stay. Of these nine examples, eight contain finite verb forms and in one instance, Isa 22:25, the root appears in a participial form. There, it describes the nature of a peg, יתד התקוע, a struck/fixed peg.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>תקע</th>
<th>Penetrating, Affixing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judg 3:21</td>
<td>וַיִּשְׁלַח אֵהוּד אֶת־יַנְבּוֹל שְׂמֹאלוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הַחֶרֶב יְמִינוֹ וַיִּתְקָעֶהָ בְּבִטְנוֹ מֵעַל יְרֵ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judg 4:21</td>
<td>וַתִּקַּח יָעֵל אֵשֶׁת־חֶבֶר אֶת־יַתִּד הָאֹהֶל וַתָּשֶׂם אֶת־הַמַּקֶּבֶת בְּיָדָהּ וַתָּבוֹא אֵלָיו בַּלָּאט וַתִּתְקַע אֶת־הַיָּתֵד בְּרַקָּתוֹ וְהוּא־נִרְדָּם וַיָּעַף וַיָּמֹת</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judg 16:14</td>
<td>וַתְּקַעְתָּ בַּיָּתֵד וַתֹּֽעָלָה שִׁמְשֹׁן וַיִּיקַץ מִשְּׁנָתוֹ וַיִּסַּע אֶת־הַיָּתֵד הָאֶרֶג וְאֶת־הַמַּסָּכֶת</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9. **תקע**: Penetrating, Affixing

Examining the occurrences with finite forms, we find two syntactic patterns are present. The less common pattern consists of a finite verb, with no object, followed by the preposition ב (e.g. Judg 16:14). The semantic meaning of this pattern is difficult to fully realize. In the case of Judges, for example, the context deals with Delilah’s attempts to sap Samson’s strength. Sampson misleads her into trying to weave locks of his hair into her loom. Even reconstructing the uncontroversial haplography of the previous verse (Judg 16:13), the exact actions that are described here are a bit foreign to most modern readers. It appears that Delilah takes seven locks of Samson’s hair as though it were the weft and weaves it into the hanging warp threads (presumably the mention) of her loom. To batten them, i.e. to push the newly woven thread (or hair) against the previously woven threads above it, she forces the thread against the other with a tool (מסכת). This process is also called “beating up” and is done, now, with a comb-like implement called a reed. Two points are relevant in this context. First, that the weaving tool in the story is known to the author as a may be reason enough to cause the use of the verb תקע, as this is a known combination (Judg 4:21, Isa 22:23, 25). Second, the many prongs (dents) of the weaving reed penetrate the warp hanging on the loom in order to beat up the woven threads. This kind of piercing motion is very much in keeping with the semantic usage elsewhere of תקע. Syntactically, the Judges verse follows the basic pattern seen in the aerophone category above in which, as with the musical instruments, the preposition ב indicates the implement being used.

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336 If I may speculate wildly, I cannot help but wonder if the reed tool might make a sound when it beats up the weft and if that sound might be reminiscent of a horn. Certainly such a scenario would also call for the verb תקע.

337 Many English translations (NIV, NKJ, NAS) understand Delilah to make Samson’s hair “tight” with a “pin” in this verse. Even TNK translates “pinned it with a peg.” Though these translations capture the sense of the situation, the analysis of the usage patterns of תקע suggests that there is something rather more aggressive in the insertion of the reed into the loom to beat up Samson’s hair.
The far more common syntactic pattern of the thrusting group is a finite verb with a pronominal or explicitly marked direct object, followed by the preposition -ב indicating the place of impalement: Ehud took dagger from his right side and drove it in his belly, (e.g. Exod 10:19; Judg 3:21, 4:21; 2 Sam 18:14; Isa 22:23). One variation of this pattern occurs (1 Sam 31:10//1 Chr 10:10). Here the typical verb-first syntax seen above is converted to a preposed construction. So we find a marked definite object with possessive suffix followed by a perfect verb with the preposition -ב indicating the place of the action of the verb (וַיָּקַע בֵּית שְׁנֵי).

In each example of the regular syntactic pattern, the object which is receiving the action of the verb is forcibly inserted into something and become fully embedded in that place. Further, where people (or creatures) are involved, such insertion is fatal. In Judg 3:21, Ehud’s dagger is thrust inside Eglon’s belly and its firm lodging is graphically described. In Judg 4:21, Jael’s tent peg (יתד) is plunged so far into Sisera’s head that it reaches the ground. In Isa 22:23, Elyakim is likened to a peg (יתד) hammered into a wall (or possibly the ground) on which things can be hung. Not a gruesome death here, but the context still requires that the object be embedded into that which it is inserted. In Exod 10:19, we find a slight syntactic variation. Instead of indicating the place of insertion with the preposition -ב, the location is marked by the locative יָם.

Nonetheless, the semantic result is similar—a great wind hurls locusts into the sea and the verse

338 But see below.
339 Because this is a synoptic verse, I consider this only one instance of the grammatical crafting of the sentence. It is worth noting that the Chronicler changes several elements in the verse—the name of the temples, the replacement of his corpse with his skull, the loss of the mention of the wall—but the basic grammatical pattern of the sentence is the same. The preposition -ב is lost together with the wall. For the House/temple of Ashtoreth, which appears in Chronicles as a more generic “House/temple of their gods,” McCarter reads “the house of Astarte” (’הַמִּשְׁמַרְתֵּא), reconstructing it behind the LXX Άσταρτεîον) and denoting the principal goddess of Beth-Shean. McCarter, I Samuel, 441. Auld retains “Ashtaroth” in 1 Sam 31:10 as the deities worshiped in the temple in question, but also notes that nowhere else in the HB is there a Philistine connection to the worship of Ashtaroth. Auld, I & II Samuel, 349-50. Halpern argued that, because all other occurrences of this plural term occur with the definite article when they refer to the common noun, “goddesses,” the unmarked plural form in 1 Sam 31:10 should be taken as a place name. B. Halpern, “The Baal (and the Asherah) in 7th-Century Judah: Yhwh’s Retainers Retired,” in From Gods to God: Essays on the Social and Political Dynamics of Cosmologies in the Iron Age (ed. M.J. Adams; FAT 63; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2009), 63.

340 Here following the definitions and categories of A. Moshavi, Word Order in the Biblical Hebrew Finite Clause (LSAWS, 4; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010).
341 Conroy already noted the similarities between Judg 3:21 and 2 Sam 18:14, though he notes that Judg 3:21 is the only other example of יָקַע used in the same manner, including syntax, as the 2 Samuel passage. While he is right to note the parallels, here we see a more complete examination of the usage and syntactic patterns. It is significant to note, as Conroy does, that the same word play on the double meaning of יָקַע (strike and sound instrument) occurs both in Judg 3:21, 27 and in 2 Sam 18:14, 16. Conroy asks whether this parallel is a known narrative pattern, a sign of a common redactor, or merely coincidence. Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 63, n.79. On this point, see also Alter, Art, 41.
specifically comments that none remained; presumably all were drowned as the water engulfed them. Like the victims in Judges, this verb is fatal for the locusts.

Finally, we must conclude that 2 Sam 18:14 follows the same pattern of language and meaning as the account of Ehud stabbing his weapon into Eglon’s belly or Jael impaling her tent peg into Sisera’s head. The syntax follows the pattern described in this category and there is no reason to think that we should not render the meaning as we have with the other examples of this type. Joab’s sticks must forcibly enter Absalom such that they are impaled in his body. In every other example of this lexical and syntactic arrangement, such penetration is fatal.

The syntactic variant in 1 Sam 31:10//1 Chr 10:10 produces a related, but distinct semantic outcome. In this verse, Saul’s corpse is hung as a trophy on the wall of Beth Shean (in Chr 10:10, it is his head on the Temple of Dagan). As mentioned above, the marked object precedes the verb. In this example, the object of the verb is not the actual item which is inserted into another. Rather, the sense here is that the body of Saul is affixed, presumably with some unmentioned implement, on the wall, but not within its matrix. The implement, perhaps a spear or the like, is the thing to penetrate the wall and in doing so to support Saul’s corpse. The nuanced use of the verb in this case may be related to the preposed construction which links outcomes of the equipment of Saul (כליו) and his corpse. In this case, each is placed, displayed, hung even, as war trophies. Perhaps as a result of the topicalization function in the verse, the particular item responsible for the impalement can be simply implied.342

Problems in the Account of Absalom’s Death

Returning to the question of Absalom’s death, we must now consider the implications of this lexical study of תקע. The three sticks of 2 Sam 18:14 must violently enter the heart of Absalom. Examination of the semantic and syntactic patterns associated with תקע has demonstrated that the term specifically denotes penetration. That these penetrating sticks do not kill Absalom is the

342 “Complement/adjunct preposing in narrative is almost exclusively for the purpose of focusing or topicalization.” Moshavi, Word Order, 119.
remarkable thing. And, that this is such an unexpected outcome is one possible explanation for the note in 18:14b that Absalom was still alive. Were Absalom to survive this attack, such an addendum would be necessary, since we would normally assume a fatality after hearing of an attack with עתק.

The note (2 Sam 18:14b) is puzzling for another reason as well. If these verses are meant to implicate Joab, particularly to keep any suspicion from David, then why should this comment be included? Given the normal understanding of the verb explored above, the comment that Absalom was still alive either suggests an apology now for Joab, diverting responsibility from him, or is simply unbelievable. And, given his indignant reaction to hearing that Absalom had been spotted (2 Sam 18:11) and his enthusiasm to do the job (2 Sam 18:14), it seems incongruent that Joab would need assistance from ten (!) of his young arms-bearers to finish off Absalom. The presence of these ten arms-bearers of Joab (עשרה נערים נשאי כלי יואב) is likewise strange, since we have never heard of them before nor do we ever see them in action again. Only in 2 Sam 23:37 do we find another reference to an arms-bearer of Joab. The textual difficulty of this verse, however, obscures whether we are reading about one arms-bearer or many, though it seems the best reconstruction yields only one. Other examples of arms-bearers in the biblical narrative would suggest that Joab’s retinue of ten is abnormal. Abimelech has a single arms-bearer (Judg 9:54); Jonathan has a single arms-bearer (1 Sam 14:1, 6, 7, 12-14); Saul has a single arms-bearer (1 Sam 31:4, 5). Why should Joab, a seasoned warrior, have ten arms-bearers whom we have otherwise never met? The combination of the unprecedentedly large arms-bearing posse and the spreading of responsibility among them—in a passage which otherwise shows no compunction about casting Joab in a murderous light—at the very least presents some difficulty in understanding, and more likely induces some skepticism.

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343 Also the phrase (עודנו חי) is unusual, but appears identically in Gen 43:28 in the story of Joseph. Though (עודנו) appears elsewhere some 13 times in the HB, these two are the only examples of it with a true adjective.

344 The MT ketiv and the Lucianic Greek text read plural (נשאי כלי), while the MT qere, 1 Chr 11:39, and Vaticanus and other Greek versions read singular (נשא כלי). Recent commentaries prefer to retain the PN Nahrai (נחרי) in the verse, which in turn suggests a singular arms-bearer, rather than reconstructing (וחרי) which would provide a conclusion to a list of names, thus suggesting plural arms-bearers. See McCarter, II Samuel, 494 and Auld, I & II Samuel, 597-8 for additional critical information about the text and versions.

345 Jonathan’s lone arms-bearer does indeed help him to finish off the Philistines in their path. They “fall” before Jonathan, but his arms-bearer, in a unique form of the verb, נשבה, would.
One method for making sense of these difficulties is to divide the account into multiple, and somewhat conflicting, source strands. Another approach, which affirms the unity of this account, examines the language and narrative patterns present in order to understand what role the problems, or irritants, mentioned above play in the unfolding of David’s story.

First, division. Indeed, the unity in this account is not without question. Würthwein, followed by Langlamet, previously divided the narrative into a primary account which is generally anti-David, and a secondary redaction which is pro-David, and by extension anti-Joab.346 According to their hypothesis, the basic narrative concerning David’s reign and Solomon’s succession was composed by opponents to the monarchy during the reign of Solomon (Würthwein) or perhaps even David (Langlamet). Regardless of the chronology of composition, this originally anti-monarchic account was later redacted to include material more favorable to David and Solomon. In his section outlining the secondary, pro-Davidic redactions in 2 Sam 15-20, Langlamet includes 2 Sam 18:2b-4a, 10-14, and 18.347 According to Langlamet’s proposal for the growth of this account, the later editing serves to protect David’s reputation by clearly and dramatically providing a responsible party for Absalom’s death, and, necessarily, maligning Joab in the process.

Let us consider the verses which Langlamet identifies as his secondary redaction. (In addition to the pro-Davidic material, he also identifies one additional late(r) editorial comment, i.e. 2 Sam 18:18 explaining the origin of the monument of Absalom.348) He includes the dialogue between David and his troops in 18:2a-4b as secondary since it serves to excuse David from the battle, and thus from responsibility in Absalom’s death.349 But the primary problem is that Langlamet finds contradiction between the narrative provided in 2 Sam 18:10-14 and the events of 2 Sam 18:15. Joab is responsible for Absalom’s death (a fact which Langlamet asserts without comment350), yet 18:15 attributes his death to Joab’s men. Langlamet’s contention here is that the later, pro-David redactor wants to minimize the older narrative, which was more favorable to

347 See Langlamet, “Pour ou contre Salomon?” 350 for a complete list. For 2 Sam 18, Würthwein’s division is essentially the same. Würthwein, Die Erzählung von der Thronfolge Davids, 49-59.
348 Langlamet, “Pour ou contre Salomon?” 355.
349 Langlamet, “Pour ou contre Salomon?” 355.
350 Langlamet, “Pour ou contre Salomon?” 355.
Joab, without completely denying Joab’s responsibility. To resolve this seeming conflict, he must separate 2 Sam 18:10-14 from v.15.

There are difficulties with Langlamet’s treatment of this pericope. First, all of the material he assigns to the later redactor is dialogue. It is therefore natural that the text before and after the dialogue makes sense in terms of its continuity. For example, 2 Sam 18:2a lists the troop commanders, and so in v.4b it follows naturally that the king watches as the troops exit the gate. But this continuity is not necessarily a testament to the division of the (alleged) sources; rather, it stems from the nature of the type of text itself—expository narrative matches previous expository narrative. The dialogue which falls in between (2 Sam 18:2b-4a) may or may not be original, but because of its very nature as discourse, its inclusion or exclusion cannot be determined by the fact that the surrounding exposition makes sense when taken together.351

Second, much of Langlamet’s interpretation rests on what he finds as contradiction in 18:14 and 18:15. He is certainly right to point to these verses as the irritant in this account. But, as many have pointed out, they are not, strictly speaking, contradictory. One can produce a perfectly logical scenario on the basis of the information presented which accommodates both verses. As already discussed above, this is what Driver, McCarter and Conroy do when they interpret Joab’s “sticks” as means to dislodge him from the tree so that the others can kill him. Or, as Hertzberg reads, Joab’s attack symbolically marks Absalom, while the men are responsible for completing

351 So, for example: Conroy outlines a number of narrative patterns which he argues demonstrate the unity of the sub-section 2 Sam 18:1-5. These include repetitive linkages between v.1 and v.4b (thousands and hundreds) and v. 2 and v.5 (the three commanders). Additionally, within v.1-2a, Conroy argues that triple repetitions, such as the three wyqtl sentences or the triple use of הָעְשֵׁה, is even reflective of the structure of the entire sub-unit, which he sees in three parts (narrative-dialogue-narrative). And so, he also notes that the central element, the dialogue, is also constructed on its own ternary pattern (see details, p.56-7) and special repetitions, such as the use of the infinite absolute twice to emphasize this dialogue. The concluding section, v.4b-5, harkens back to v.2 with the repeated use of יָד, and v.4-5 demonstrate a clever dynamic of reversal in which the king is passive and soldiers active in v.4 and the soldiers are active and the king is passive in v.5, each with a king (subject) + wyqtl and the people (subject) + x-qtl syntax. In all of these observations Conroy rightly depicts the literary sophistication and craftsmanship of the account. However, in light of Langlamet’s hypothesis that 2 Sam 18:2b-4a is secondary, we immediately see that in fact Conroy’s arguments for the literary integrity of these verses can actually be used to separate v.2b-4a rather nicely. The point here is that because of the generic nature of v.2b-4a, i.e. a recounted dialogue in the middle of a narrative, it is not conclusive of any particular argument regarding composition. Identifying literary patterns on either side of this discourse, as well as devices used within the discourse itself. It may in fact be more useful to consider patterns that exist both inside and outside of the dialogue in this account. Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 55-58.
his murder.\footnote{Hertzberg, \textit{I & II Samuel}, 359.} Or, Joab wounded Absalom while his men simply ensured that the boy was dead.\footnote{So A. A. Anderson, \textit{2 Samuel} (WBC 11; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989), 225.} The problem with the two verses is not that they are irreconcilable based on their particular content, but rather that they are “irritating” based on the larger literary context.

Separating 18:10-14 from 18:15 does not solve the larger contextual irritants. If the point of a later redaction is to implicate Joab and excuse David, why would the note in 18:14b be necessary? To add such redactional verses specifically commenting that Joab did not kill Absalom seems counterproductive to this goal. Further, if the later redactor was obliged to keep an “old” v.15, and this is why he attempts to explain a still-living Absalom in v.14b, why does he need to add 18:10-14 at all? The “original” text, then, would have already excused David from Absalom’s murder. In this way, if the purpose of the secondary redaction is, in part, to implicate Joab, then really both 18:14 and 18:15 are problematic.

However, one of the most glaring issues which remains unresolved in Langlamet’s hypothesis is the double use of the root קַקֵּע. Separating 18:10-14 from the rest of the account means that the two occurrences of this root would fall in separate editions. This result could be explained as a deliberate choice by the redactor to enhance his addition. The author of such a later addition, say 18:10-14, might pick up on the verb used in 18:16 and purposely include the root in his added verses to help tie the old and new material together. However, given the complexity of this account, this approach does not seem fruitful. As the lexical study above demonstrated, the use of קַקֵּע in 18:14 would normally signal to the reader/listener that Joab had fatally attacked Absalom. If a redactor was bound by the information in 18:15, the use of קַקֵּע would seem to be a poor choice, requiring more explanation and adding potential confusion over the responsibility for Absalom’s death.

Though I do not ultimately find Langlamet’s division of this account persuasive, the arguments here must be taken under careful consideration. The complexity of the language of the narrative means that no single interpretation is perfectly obvious. The details of the crafting of language throughout 2 Samuel frequently produce tensions in the narrative. In this case, where Joab’s
character is greatly highlighted, we might conclude that his actions are at the same time innocent and not-so-innocent. He stabs an enemy in battle (innocent) despite a contradictory order from his commander-in-chief (not-so-innocent). He blows the horn to signal the cessation of hostilities (innocent), but he must hold back his men (掸). This is the same verb and description given to David’s “holding back” from going after Nabal (1 Sam 25:39). Just as that situation resolved to benefit David, this one does also (not-so-innocent). These tensions, or really, the ability to construe the actions of the characters in sometimes conflicting ways, are frequently exemplified precisely where our textual irritants occur.

So, we might try a second approach. Conroy has discussed how the literary organization in 2 Sam 13-20 operates at both the story and pericope levels and is marked by inclusions, keywords, refrains, and the interweaving of lexemes. Regarding the double use of числ in the account of the Battle in the Forest of Ephraim we find a paradigmatic example of Conroy’s assertion. According to his analyses of patterning and repetition, within the individual narrative, the choice of this root must be significant. The lexical analysis above has shown that 1) the use of the root with its thrusting or pinning meaning is not terribly common to begin with and 2) its utilization in the context of the battle strongly suggests a fatal attack. And, we find the reappearance of the root in the same narrative, with a play on its more recognizable usage. Given the abundance of carefully crafted language (some of which is detailed below) in the 2 Sam 18 account, it is reasonable to assume that this particular choice is significant as well.

So much of the language in 2 Sam 18 contains telltale literary devices which suggest an integrated composition. Ternary patterns are seen throughout the account of the Battle in the Forest of Ephraim, both in terms of items or actions that appear in triplicate and at the level of

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354 I borrow here from Campbell’s terminology in his discussion of the neutrality, or, perhaps better, the ambivalence of the text. It is open to both “innocent” and “not-so-innocent” interpretation. “We cannot exclude the possibility of simple straightforward commitment to David—an “innocent” interpretation. Given the continued existence of supporters of Saul…we cannot exclude the possibility of an ironic or skeptical reading—a “not-so-innocent” interpretation.” Campbell, “2 Samuel 21-24: The Enigma Factor,” 348.

355 See also Prov 13:24 for the interesting combined occurrence of числ, שבט and בן and Auld’s discussion, Auld, I & II Samuel, 543. It is also worth noting that in the story of Nabal in 1 Sam 25, we find another, relatively rare, example of a group of ten men as a military unit (1 Sam 25:5), cf. Joab’s men in 2 Sam 18:15. Conroy also notes this parallel. Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 63, n.74. These literary patterns are consistent with the assignment of the Nabal story to the “B” source in 1 Samuel, the source which seems to have more continuity with 2 Samuel. Friedman, Hidden Book, 10. See also Halpern, David’s Secret Demons on A and B sources.

356 Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 141-2.
the construction of the language used in the narrative. Conroy, especially, has enumerated a number of examples of these patterns, particularly at the sentence level. Conroy, especially, has enumerated a number of examples of these patterns, particularly at the sentence level. So, for example, he suggests that the three wyqtl sentences in the opening of the pericope (2 Sam 18:1-2) nicely parallel the three-fold division of the army and the triple repetition of יָשָׁשׁ (2 Sam 18:2). Also reminiscent of the three companies (one each under Joab, Abishai and Ittai) that David sent to meet the Israelites are the three sticks. These three military groups are responsible for ending the rebellion, a victory embodied most strongly in the death of Absalom. Ahimaaz must try three times (2 Sam 18:19, 22, 23) before receiving permission from Joab to take the news of this death to David. The watchman reports three times to the king when he sees the runners approaching (2 Sam 18:24-27) and the king responds three times. After hearing the news, David responds with three wyqtl verbs in 2 Sam 19:1.

These examples of ternary patterns contribute to a coherence and unity in the pericope of the Battle in the Forest of Ephraim. Joab’s exchange with the man who saw Absalom, in which he berates the man for not attacking Absalom on sight, is consonant with his actions to forcefully stab Absalom, with the intention of killing him, a few verses later. Our understanding of תָּקָע also addresses the concern over the seeming contradiction of v.10-14 and 15. McCarter’s rendering attempted to reconcile these verses, but his interpretation of what Joab does to Absalom in the tree cannot be upheld in light of the lexical comparisons. Instead, we must conclude that the use of the verb in v.14 is intended to convey Joab’s intent and success in inflicting Absalom with a fatal wound. (If anything, the report in v.15, that the ten arms bearers struck Absalom and he died, seems as though it could be unoriginal.)

In the case of Absalom’s death, problems in refuting a case such as the one Langlamet makes arise from the fact that many of the literary devices connect the very material which Langlamet suggests should be taken together (see n.28 above). Perhaps more productive, then, is to hypothesize a unified account and to focus on connected narrative elements which occur within Langlamet’s “addition” and outside of it. Two examples of linkages or patterns which stand out

357 Only some of which I repeat here. Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 55-75.
358 Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 55.
359 The homonym “tribes” accentuates the literary crafting of this story. The three “sticks” are like three “tribes,” or in this case military units who are responsible for defeating Absalom’s rebellion.
360 Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 67.
are the play on the double meaning of תקע and the plot point of the (mis)quotation by the man who has seen Absalom hanging. Based on the usage patterns of the root תקע, and the indication that the use of this verb is a careful compositional choice may be found in the resumptive use of the תקע in 2 Sam 18:16, this time as Joab (triumphantly?) sounds the horn. The force of the verb in 2 Sam 18:14 (especially considering its relative infrequency in this usage) is strengthened when taken together with its appearance in 2 Sam 18:16. This example is the kind of literary organization of which Conroy speaks and argues for the material in 2 Sam 18:14 and 18:16 to be taken together.

The Battle at Gibeon and the Battle in the Forest of Ephraim

Narrative structure, language choice and use of repeated theme, phrase, or syntax may indicate a compositional hand, particularly when these elements are found together in quantity. In addition to the many literary connections seen within 2 Sam 18 (especially those of Conroy discussed above), we also find that the Battle in the Forest of Ephraim has a significant number of structural parallels to the Battle of Gibeon in 2 Sam 2. The order of events, parallels in language, significant plot points emphasized with key terminology, are some of the ways in which these two combat accounts echo one another. The most explicit illustrations of these narrative equivalents are detailed in the parallel telling of the accounts below.

As has been noted, Mahanaim plays a key role in both accounts. Ishbaal’s troops go out from Mahanaim to Gibeon (2 Sam 2:12) and David’s troops go out from Mahanaim to Ephraim (2 Sam 17:27, 18:6). At the beginning of the description of the battle, in 2 Sam 2:18, the three sons of Zeruiah are mentioned by name, Joab, Abishai and Asahel. Also at the opening of the account in 2 Sam 18:2, the three commanders of David’s forces are mentioned by name, Joab, Abishai (described as “son of Zeruiah), and Ittai. The combatants pass by into their positions (עבר) (Gibeon: 2:15) and Absalom’s mule passes on from under him (עבר) (Ephraim: 18:9). At Gibeon the young men seize (חזק) each other by the head (Gibeon: 2:16) and it is Absalom’s head that is

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seized (חָסָה) by the tree (Ephraim: 18:9). A fierce battle is described using two common
elements—the root נָגָף and the phrase “on that day” (Gibeon: 2:17, Ephraim: 18:7)—and the
Israelites are routed in each case. A chase ensues (Gibeon: 2:19, Ephraim: (implied in) 18:9);
Abner kills Asahel (Gibeon: 2:23) and Joab kills Absalom (Ephraim: 18:14). In an important
example of the ternary patterns described above, Abner calls to Asahel three times hoping that
Asahel will cease his pursuit (Gibeon: 2:19-23), but ultimately Abner must kill him with a
dramatically thorough thrust of his spear. The poignant metaphor of the “devouring sword”
occurs in both accounts (Gibeon: 2:26, Ephraim: 18:8). Abner asks Joab how long he will delay
before stopping his troops (Gibeon: 2:26) and Joab does not delay in killing Absalom (Ephraim
18:14); Joab blows horn (וַיְקַעַשׁ בְּשֻׁפָּר) to halt troops in both (Gibeon: 2:28, Ephraim: 18:16);
Asahel is buried (Gibeon: 2:32) and Absalom is buried (Ephraim: 18:17).363

The Battle of Gibeon, 2 Sam 2:8ff., is typically grouped in the History of David’s Rise, together
with material from 1 Sam 16ff.364 However some have suggested that 2 Sam 2:8-4:12 should not
be understood as part of this same source and grouped rather with the 2 Samuel tradition.365
Comparing the structural and linguistic elements in 2 Sam 2 and 2 Sam 18 sheds a bit of light on
a larger source critical issue. In this case I suggest that these two battle tales located in 2 Sam 2
and 2 Sam 18 belong to the same moment of compositional growth and likely the same hand.
The interconnectedness of these two stories demonstrates the kind of repeated patterns present in
the David story.

363 Polzin recognized some of these parallel elements, but not all of them, and he does not discuss how the paralleled
elements combine to form two similar narrative structures. Polzin, David and the Deuteronomist, 179-187. Auld also
reviews the parallels briefly and generally supports Polzin’s observations. Auld, I & II Samuel, 543-4.
364 See overviews of this point see, McCarter, II Samuel, 4-16; J. Van Seters, The Biblical Saga, 16-19.
365 Gunn, The Story of King David, 66-68. J. Van Seters, “History and Historians of the Ancient Near East: The
Chapter 6: Another Little Indian: How a Volitive Verb Protects (?)

David’s Reputation

On First Hearing of a Saulid Death

1 Sam 31 and 2 Sam 1 provide the account(s) of the death of Saul. The news of this death, and especially with the additional note of the death of three of Saul’s sons (1 Sam 31:2), introduces the important question of succession. In the context of this critical issue, David’s reaction to the news is of great interest to our author and presumably the audience. The account in 2 Sam 1 not only excuses David from any possible connection to the mechanism of Saul’s death, it also affords him the opportunity to show his sorrow and piety in the face of the loss of “Yahweh’s anointed.” While we might expect David to be pleased to hear such news (and it seems reasonable to assume that the Amalekite would have expected such a reaction), David responds with lament and weeping and orders the death of the messenger who claims to have slain Saul.

This dramatic turn of events becomes relevant again in 2 Sam 4, when David learns of another death, this time that of Ishbaal. Any hope for a viable Saulid line is becoming more and more unlikely with each new death announcement, yet David again does not react favorably. Upon being presented with the head of his former rival for the kingship of Israel, David berates the two Beerothites and reminds them, and the audience, of what happened to the bearer of the news of Saul’s death. He makes it clear that these two have acted even more egregiously since Ishbaal was a “just man in his house, on his bed” (2 Sam 4:11). As David himself describes, since he was willing to kill the Amalekite in 2 Sam 1, how much more would he be willing to punish these two for murdering Ishbaal though betrayal and treachery (2 Sam 4:11-12).

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366 See Halpern, David’s Secret Demons, 22-26 on this general point and McCarter, II Samuel, 64-5 on the need to explain away David’s whereabouts but also his possession of Saul’s regalia.
367 The two brothers do not actually tell David the circumstances of Ishbaal’s death and we only receive these details in from the narrator earlier in the account (2 Sam 4:5-7, and particularly the LXX is helpful here in reconstructing the details of the assault).
Hearing of Ishbaal’s Death (2 Sam 4:9-11)

And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and he said to them, “As Yahweh lives, who redeemed my soul from every trouble! When the one who reported to me was saying, ‘Look, Saul is dead’—and he was in his eyes as one bearing (good) news—I seized him and put him to death in Ziklag—a man to whom I had to give good news. So when wicked men killed a righteous man in his house, on his bed, now will I not seek his blood from your hands and remove you from the earth?”

David’s reaction to Ishbaal’s killers is presented in one outburst in 2 Sam 4:9b-11. Though the general sense of David’s message is clear, rendering the exact choices of forms and phrasing presents some challenges, and, in particular, making a good translation of the end of 2 Sam 4:10 has been somewhat difficult. Earlier commentators attempted to render the last section of this verse, but have mostly focused their attention on rendering אִשָּׁר and the infinitive.368 I would like to focus on the forms ואֹחָזָה and ואָהָרָגָה in David’s reference to the Amalekite to better understand a subtext in his speech.

Parsing David’s Wish in 2 Sam 4:10

I propose a subtle revision to the common translation of the verbs ואֹחָזָה and ואָהָרָגָה in 2 Sam 4:10 and suggest here that their forms be understood as volitive. By making explicit these forms in how we read and think about the verse in translation, we see that the text is quietly reminding us of recurring characteristics about David. He frequently is passive, allowing others to do his dirty work for him, particularly where the death of his enemies is involved. And he routinely finds himself physically unable to have been responsible for various attacks. In this case, by expressing his wish—unfulfilled—to strike down the bearer of Saul’s death report, his speech carefully reminds us that he is not a killer.369

368 See for example, Driver, Notes, 255-6; Budde, Die Bücher Samuel, 216-7.
369 The attention to this account brought about by the particular verbs used in 2 Sam 4:10 may also serve to further a larger purpose behind the narrative—-to commend David’s behavior and to legitimize him as a sanctioned king. M.
In the context of David’s reply, both ואֹחזה and ואֹהְרגו seem to function as verbs conveying a narrative past: “I seized” the messenger and “I killed him;” many commentaries and translations reflect this sense.\(^\text{370}\) We should, however, pay attention to the lengthened form of ואֹחזה with its paragogic ה (i.e. not ואֹחז, which is extant in Jud 20:6) and preserve in translation the cohortative function.\(^\text{371}\) Should we treat both of these forms as volitives? Yes. In the case of ואֹהְרגו, the object suffix makes the form ambiguous, but the context, and the proximity to ואֹחזה, can assist us.\(^\text{372}\)

The man that brought David news of Saul’s death was, in fact, not killed by David in 2 Sam 1:15, but rather by one of his attendants. Nor did David seize him at any time. To get around this conflict, 2 Sam 4:10 is usually read somewhat evasively: David caused the news bearer to be killed; he put him to death. So, for example, McCarter translates:

the man who brought me word that Saul was dead, who thought of himself as a bearer of good news—I seized him and put him to death in Ziklag—a man to whom it would have been suitable for me to give a reward!\(^\text{373}\)

In this verse, David would then be saying that he, personally and physically, seized and killed the newsbearer in 2 Sam 1. But 2 Sam 1:15 precludes this. If we translate the volitive indicators more blatantly, however, a solution is apparent. We should appreciate the grammatical choice that the author puts into the mouth of David, and realize that the forms in 2 Sam 4:10 are significant to the overall portrayal of the king. We should therefore render the verse:

Brettler suggested, for example, in order to highlight some of the recurring ideological themes of Samuel (that David is a proper king—the legitimacy of David and the illegitimacy of Saul), the text provides an “interesting set of intersecting ‘coincidences’: an Amalekite kills Saul, the same Saul who was too weak to kill the Amalekite, Agag, while David appropriately inflicts capital punishment upon the Amalekite who inappropriately killed Saul.” Here, Brettler argued that certain narrative motifs in the text were meant to demonstrate that David was not a murderer, that he obeyed Yahweh, and was a proper royal figure—all in contrast to Saul. Similarly, by technically removing blood from David’s hands, the use of the volitive verbs further contributes to the “properness” of David. M. Brettler, The Creation of History in Ancient Israel (London: Routledge, 1995), 108-9.

\(^{370}\) See McCarter’s translation below; Auld, I & II Samuel, 388; JPS Tanakh; Alter, The David Story, 219.

\(^{371}\) It is not impossible to have a regular prefixed form (i.e. not a cohortative) with a paragogic ה, which is rendered with no change in meaning. J-M §47d describes this form as a “secondary” inverted future “having precisely the same meaning” the form without the paragogic ה. This secondary form occurs especially in Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, and see Kropat, Syntax, 75. J-M 141.

\(^{372}\) The “cohortative…is indistinguishable before suffixes.” W-C §34.1d, 565.G-K §751. Further, “an ītāl form may be taken to denote volition (i.e. may be taken as cohortative) in an environment where a cohortative would occur.” W-C §34.1d, 565.

\(^{373}\) McCarter, II Samuel, 124.
the one who reported to me ‘Saul is dead’—and he thought himself to be one bearing
good news— o, that I, myself, had seized him and killed him (but I did not, one of my
guys did)—a man to whom I should be giving the good news of a reward!

While this may seem like a small point in English translation, it speaks directly to the overall
caracter of David created by the 2 Samuel narrative, specifically with regard to his moral
vagary surrounding the deaths of various figures. Also, in this way, a clever ambiguity is also
established regarding the proposed recipient of the reward. Perhaps it should go to the attendant
who killed the Amalekite. With regard to the account in 2 Sam 1, McCarter suggested that part
of the apologetic nature of the narrative is to explain away David’s possession of Saul’s diadem
and bracelet. The text offers the explanation that the Amalekite, of his own accord, brought it to
David. But the events that transpire further protect David on this account because the Amalekite,
who could corroborate (or undermine) the story if called upon is killed.374 So the choice of
language at the end of 2 Sam 4:10 offers a crafty dual function—the author of David’s words
suggests that David was grateful both for the word of a foreign messenger and for the guy who
was willing to get rid of him after he supplied David’s cover. It is an example of the subtle, yet
overt, style which both condemns David and apologizes for him, sometimes simultaneously.

374 McCarter, II Samuel, 65.
Chapter 7: Command Style Fit for a King

Introduction

This study explores several uses of the imperative in 2 Samuel. The first investigation concerns the use of asyndetic imperatives in the account of the rape of Tamar. The literal use of the imperative chain, קומי לכי, “get up and go,” in the story (2 Sam 13:15) is unique in the HB. The use and placement of two asyndetic command chains suggests careful structural planning in the composition of the Tamar episode. In the second investigation, the use of augmented imperatives in 2 Samuel is addressed. In particular, imperatives with (relatively rare) feminine object suffixes (2 Sam 11:25 and 12:28) are discussed. The placement of these object suffixes suggests a thematic comparison between the Bathsheba incident and the capture of Rabbah. Once again, the subtle yet meaningful choices of language demonstrate the multiple messages conveyed in the text as it relates the David narrative. And finally, we look at occurrences of imperatives in 2 Samuel augmented with the particle נא, with special attention to those in the Tamar episode. I will suggest that in 2 Samuel the particle is used to introduce a command which is distasteful to the addressee or which is directly connected to something undesirable. Where “bare” imperatives occur in the Tamar episode—i.e., commands which are not necessarily distasteful to the addressee—accomplices to her abuse are revealed.

Note on Asyndetic Imperatives in the Rape of Tamar

In 2 Sam 13:11 and 13:15, two feminine singular imperatives occur with asyndetic coordination, and serve to bracket the actual moment of Tamar’s rape. First, Amnon demands that Tamar come to him, באוי שׁכבי (2 Sam 13:11). Then, following his assault in 2 Sam 13:14, he demands that she leave him, קומי לכי (2 Sam 13:15). The combination of the first two imperatives, “come” and “lie,” without a coordinating conjunction occurs only one other time in the HB, in Gen 19:34.
when the older daughter of Lot orders her younger sister to their father’s bed.375 (In fact, the use of "שָׁכַב" in the imperative at all is rather limited in the HB with only 11 examples, only 6 of which, dealing with Lot, Joseph, Ruth and Tamar, carry a sexual connotation.) In both cases, the stories detail an incestuous sexual act.376

By contrast, the two imperatives in the second case, קום לך "get up” and “go,” occur more than a dozen times in the HB with this same asyndetic coordination. What is unique about the 2 Samuel example, however, is that here alone the phrase is intended to be literal, rather than idiomatic. In other instances, the instruction “to get up and go” is always combined with a specific place or task: Paddan-Aram (Gen 28:2), leading the people (Deut 10:11), your house (1 Kgs 14:12), Zarephath (1 Kgs 17:9), Perath (Jer 13:4), Ninevah (Jon 1:2). In nine instances, it is an instruction given by Yahweh, rather than by a human character. Further, the narrative often repeats the root קומ when describing the completed action of the relevant actor (e.g.1 Kgs 14:17, 17:10, Jon 1:3). In all cases, the use of this imperative construction is idiomatic. So, for example, Yahweh tells Abram to walk the length and breadth of the land (Gen 13:17); he does not instruct Abram literally to arise from a prone position and move.377

The function of these two imperatives in 2 Sam 13:15 differs in several respects. First, no specific place is attached to the instruction. Second, the commands are given by a person, not Yahweh. Though this phenomenon does occur elsewhere (Gen 28:2, 1 Sam 9:3, Song 2:13), it is

375 In The Hidden Book in the Bible, Friedman enumerates dozens of lexical and thematic patterns and literary techniques (punning, parable, irony, etc.) which occur in J and the Court History, as well as in sections of 1 Samuel, Joshua and Judges. In his accounting of lexical items, (379-389) he details the distribution patterns of some 50 words and phrases. Though Friedman includes "שָׁכַב (with sexual connotation)” in his list of terms, he does not make note of the imperative phraseology here, which would only serve to strengthen his observations. Also, he compares the Tamar/Amnon pericope with the story of Dinah and lists many parallels in language patterns between the two. However, in the Genesis story of Dinah, there are no examples of two (or more) asyndetic imperatives as we find twice in the 2 Samuel story of Tamar. Though this is only one datum, additional comparisons of this sort may speak to Friedman’s own suggestion that his “hidden book” is actually two works (Gen-Josh 13 and Judg-1 Kgs 2). While the lexical choices in these two sections are significant and demonstrate a unifying intention, such syntactic differences may indicate stages of compositional history. Friedman, Hidden Book, passim.
376 The conclusion to the story of Sodom (Gen 19:30-38) emphasizes a recurring message of maintaining life through the seed of the father (גַּם זֶרֶעַ מִאֵיבֹנִי נַחֲרָה, Gen 19:32, 34). This theme is shared in the story of Tamar and Judah (Gen 38, and see the last section of this study below). And, of course, both Gen 19 and 38 share certain language parallels with 2 Sam 13.
377 I identify only one possible exception to the idiomatic use. Num 22:20 could be read as a literal instruction to get up from lying down since, in 22:21, Balaam is getting up in the morning after God has instructed him to קום לך the night before. In the context of 22:20, though, it seems that the instruction is the more idiomatic, “head out with [the Moabite officials].” But, see Chapter 4 above for parallels between the Balaam narrative and 2 Samuel.
not typical usage. Third, the verses immediately following the commands do not contain a repetition of the roots indicating completion of the instructions, though, admittedly, this may be simply due to plot or narrative requirements.\textsuperscript{378} Finally, this example supports a literal reading of the two imperatives, rather than understanding them as an idiom for heading out on a journey of some sort. In the Tamar narrative, we have just learned in 2 Sam 13:14 that Amnon, by unwelcomed force, has lain (with) her (וישׁכב אֹתהּ).\textsuperscript{379} In 13:15 then, Amnon, disgusted with his victim, literally orders her to get up from his bed\textsuperscript{380} and to go from his quarters. Despite some question about the rendering of the Num 22:20 example, I conclude that this literal use of asyndetic imperatives from כומ + הלק in 2 Sam 13:15 is unique in the HB.

Each of these command phrases seems relatively innocuous, perhaps because they employ such common verbal roots. But, in fact, they both are unusual choices, for the reasons described above, and because they appear in critical positions within the Tamar story. Conroy notes that Amnon is rather passive in the account until 2 Sam 13:9, but from then on each of the verbs he uses are imperatives (and one cohortative).\textsuperscript{381} The two asyndetic chains are part of this shift in the depiction of Amnon’s role and the compositional structure at the verbal level is symmetrical and carefully composed.\textsuperscript{382} Amnon’s first and last sets of double instructions (2 Sam 13:10, 17) flank the two asyndetic chains (2 Sam 13:11b, 15b) and highlight Amnon’s violation of Tamar by placing it at the center of the series of commanding verbs. The structural symmetry is complemented by opposing lexical pairs: “bring” (to Amnon) and “send” (away from Amnon) open the outer two sets; two opposites crisscross in the interior asyndetic chains—“come” and “go” and “lie (down)” and “get up.” See Table 10 below.

\textsuperscript{378} Although, note that Conroy, in his close reading of 2 Sam 13, observes what he calls a “fulness of expression” in which the execution of commands typically repeats “with slight variation” the words of the command. Conroy, \textit{Absalom, Absalom!}, 37.


\textsuperscript{380} This explains the somewhat unnecessary detail in 2 Sam 13:8 that Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, \textit{and he was lying down}, and she took the dough, etc. We were already told in 13:6 that Amnon was laying down when he asked for Tamar to come to him. By emphasizing Amnon’s position, we understand in 13:15 that he is anxious for her to get up out of his violent, incestuous bed.

\textsuperscript{381} Conroy, \textit{Absalom, Absalom!}, 30.

\textsuperscript{382} I follow here Bar-Efrat’s divisions of the “various elements upon which structural analysis may be based: (1) the verbal level; (2) the level of narrative technique; (3) the level of the narrative world; (4) the level of the conceptual content.” S. Bar-Efrat, “Some Observations on the Analysis of Structure in Biblical Narrative,” \textit{VT} 30 (1980): 154-173.
The remaining verbal pair (“let me eat” and “bolt (the door)”) does not consist of opposing lexemes. However, each of these verbs is noteworthy due to its rarity. The first verb, ואברה, is produced from a root which only occurs in 2 Samuel and once in Lam 4:10. The verbal root of the second, ונאֹל, occurs some 30 times in the HB, but only six times, in only three passages, with the connotation of locking (Judg 3:23,24; 2 Sam 13:17,18; Song 4:12x2). Even aside from the overt role of sex in this account, each of these roots, eating and locking, plays on subtle sexually suggestive meanings. The infrequency with which these roots/meanings occur suggests that they are deliberate choices on the part of the 2 Samuel author and reflect a certain level of intentionality in the crafting of the language in this narrative.

Table 10. Verbal Level Structure in 2 Sam 13:10-17

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383 Note the occurrence of בְּרֵיה-לֹה in 1 Sam 17:8. Most seem to take this as an error for בְּרֵיה-לֹה (cf. 1 Kgs 18:25, Jos 24:15). See Driver, Notes, 140. McCarter reads בּוֹרֲא, (brr, cf. 1 Chr 7:40) reflected by the LXX ἐκλέξασθε. McCarter, I Samuel, 287.

384 Auld comments, “Amnon appears instead to confirm his knowledge of the Song only by subverting it: when his love becomes hate, so the “locked garden,” there an image of the sister-and-bride (Song 4:12), becomes his quite literal door—locked against the sister he has forced.” Auld, I & II Samuel, 480. I would add to Auld’s case by suggesting an additional observation. Conroy proposes that the reason Tamar’s robe is mentioned in 2 Sam 13:18a is to “prepare” the reader in advance for the information in 13:19. Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 34. A better explanation may be that the mention of her garment parallels the appearance of the lover’s robes in Song 4:11, immediately adjacent to the use of the root נא (4:12). See also the section “A Proposed Function of the Particle נא with Imperatives in 2 Samuel” below for more discussion of the relationship between 2 Sam 13 and Song of Songs.

385 The relating of the entire food-based opening—of Tamar’s cooking preparation, of the dough (בצק, and its swelling association), of Ammon’s request to feed him from her hand—are all part of a rather earthy tale. The locking of the door bolt also may serve several metaphorical functions within Tamar’s own story (e.g. Tamar’s virginity, once secure, but now lost on the other side of the “locked” door; the Song of Songs echo of the “locked garden;” the phallic imagery of the lock itself, etc.) In fact, if we were to change Tamar’s rape into a consensual act, the whole story reads like something out of a bawdy Canterbury tale.

Augmented Imperatives in 2 Samuel

Imperatives are widespread in 2 Samuel with over 130 examples. In total, 96 forms of imperatives appear, with several more common commands occurring in the same form multiple times. As we would expect, numerous imperative forms in 2 Samuel include a supplementary element. In addition to inflections of number and gender, imperative forms may occur with paragogic ה and four examples in 2 Samuel are extant (2 Sam 3:12, 14; 14:4; 15:27). Several imperative forms also contain object suffixes. In 2 Samuel, we find five examples of these suffixes, one in the first person and four in the third (2 Sam 1:9; 11:25 x2; 12:28; 14:30). Finally, the imperative form may be augmented with the particle נא. The uses of paragogic ה and object suffixes on imperatives are explored immediately below. In the following section of this study, a possible function of the particle נא is discussed.

Generally speaking, the existence of the paragogic ה is thought to be emphatic in origin, but its appearance on forms in the HB seems to have no clear systematic usage pattern. Some suggestion is made that the paragogic ה imparts an honorific nuance to the person addressed or that its euphonic quality lends itself to frequent use by authors of poetic biblical texts. In 2 Samuel, the honorific nuance may hold, as each addressee does hold a certain status. In 2 Sam 3:12, Abner addresses David with the request of covenant making, and this offer brings with it the promise of northern loyalty to help establish David’s throne “from Dan to Beersheva.” Certainly, in this context he means to address David as a political superior. So it is remarkable then, that in 2 Sam 3:14, David addresses Ishbaal with the same grammatical feature when he asks for Michal. As king in Israel, it would not be unreasonable to use some sort of honorific (if that is indeed the nuance of the form here) when addressing Ishbaal, but if so, it is not without some irony. The wise woman of Tekoa’s request for help is directed at the king, David, and so in 2 Sam 14:4 also we find that the honorific function holds. Finally, in 15:27, David addresses Zadok the priest, in charge of the conveyance of the ark, and tells him to return with it to Jerusalem. Zadok’s priestly status would account for an honorific address.

388 J-M §48 d, explains “…it [paragogic ה] often seems to carry an honorific one, being addressed to God (Ps. 5.2), father (Gn 27:19), prophet (Nu 22.6), and priest (1Sm 14:18)…” and note that the priest example from 1 Samuel also involves a priest, Ahijah, charged with the conveyance of the ark. Some mention of the particular roots found in...
We might check this tendency by reviewing examples of imperatives in 2 Samuel which do not include a paragogic ה to see if they always occur in situations where an honorific emphasis is not demanded. Of the many imperatives occurring within 2 Samuel, those extant in a short form (i.e. not augmented with a paragogic ה) do generally follow the “honorific” pattern described above. In almost all cases, the speaker holds a superior hierarchical position and would not require nuancing his command in any way to the addressee (e.g. 2 Sam 3:16: Ishbaal to Paltiel, שָׁבָה rather than שֻׁבָּה; 2 Sam 11:8: David to Uriah, רָד rather than רְדָה; 2 Sam 15:19: David to Ittai, שָׁבָה rather than שֻׁבָּה; 2 Sam 20:6, David to Abishai, שָׁבָה rather than שֻׁבָּה). There are, however, two striking exceptions.389 Joab addresses David on two occasions (2 Sam 12:28, 19:8) using short imperative forms. Following the honorific pattern, we would expect a lengthened form given that David is hierarchically superior to Joab in at least several ways—as king, as divinely anointed, as military commander. However, the speech placed in Joab’s mouth does not make use of any grammatical indicators of addressing a superior.

Given these exceptions, it would not be prudent to claim certainty in the honorific pattern, though there does seem to be enough evidence to suggest that in 2 Samuel the use of paragogic ה generally corresponds to the relationship status between the speaker and the addressee. The examples in which Joab does not adhere to this convention occur at emotionally charged moments in the narrative when Joab takes it upon himself to speak forcefully to David. In the first case, Joab must warn his king that unless David becomes a bit more pro-active on the battlefield, the victory against Rabbah will become known as Joab’s alone (2 Sam 12:27-28). In the second case, David is shaken after the death of Absalom. Joab has harsh advice for the inconsolable king (2 Sam 19:6-8) and despite the seemingly insubordinate, as military commander. However, the speech placed in Joab’s mouth does not make use of any grammatical indicators of addressing a superior.

389 The imperative in 2 Sam 19:15, which is not lengthened, is addressed to David by the men of Judah encouraging his return after Absalom’s death. The context here, however, is not exactly direct speech, as the men are described as sending [word] to the king, rather than addressing him directly.
uncompassionate, tone, David does as Joab instructs. It is not unreasonable to think that Joab’s speech is purposefully manipulated at these junctures away from what might be an expected command form from an inferior to superior. Rather, the morphology of Joab’s commands may reflect the frustration he faces with David and not a little condescension as he demands that his king act like one.

We turn now to imperatives in 2 Samuel which occur with object suffixes. The five extant examples (2 Sam 1:9, 11:25 x2, 12:28, 14:30) are formally unremarkable. All of the object suffixes happen to be singular, one first person (2 Sam 1:9, וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְךָ), one third person masculine (2 Sam 11:25, וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְךָ), and three third person feminine (2 Sam 11:25, 12:28, 14:30). It is these feminine forms that are of interest, in part because they are less common in the HB corpus in general. In 2 Samuel the use of the third person feminine singular object suffix on verbs (not only imperatives) is heavily concentrated in chapters 11-13, where prominent female characters are featured, particularly Bathsheba and Tamar.

In two places the feminine object suffixes refer to the feminine noun, עיר, “city” (2 Sam 11:25, 12:28), and both occur within the broader context of the Bathsheba incident and its repercussions for David (2 Sam 11-12). In 2 Sam 11, David sends a messenger to Joab concerning the death of Uriah, instructing him how to craft the death of Uriah in the context of the attack on Rabbah. Upon hearing of the success of his plan, David sends another message to Joab: אל-ירע בעיניך את-דבר הזה כיה-זֹה וכזה תאכל החרב החזק מלחמתך אל-העיר והרסהו וחזקהו (2 Sam 11:25). In 2 Sam 12, in the aftermath of David’s repentance for the Uriah incident (and as a direct result of it?), David is granted victory against the Ammonites. Joab attacks Rabbah of Ammon, seizing its lower city. So that David receives the proper credit for the victory Joab sends a message to David: וניה את-העם עלי-עיר 원רה והדה פ-אלפ-ל-ת-העם-ו-城市发展 עלי (2 Sam 12:28).

390 Only 2 Sam 14:30 presents any sort of textual difficulty and, given the MT qere and the evidence from 4QSamc, it seems clear that we should read וְהָצִיתוּהָ. See McCarter, II Samuel, 343.

391 In addition to the two imperatives of 2 Sam 11:25 and 12:28, there are 10 other verbal forms with 3fs object suffix endings (2 Sam 11:4, 27; 12:3, 4, 29, 13:1, 14,15x3). In addition to the imperative in 2 Sam 14:30, there are two other verbal forms with the feminine suffix (2 Sam 3:15, concerning Michal, and 23:12, referring to a חלקה, as does 14:30).

392 Messengers, of course, play a crucial role throughout 2 Samuel. See, for example, Polzin who details the literary role of messages and messengers in his chapter, “Messengers (11:1-12:31)” in David and the Deuteronomist, 109-130.
The use of the object suffix on imperatives (והָרְסָהּ and וֹלָכְדָהּ) referring to a “city” in these two passages, provides just one of several other parallels between the two. First, both forms appear as the text of a message sent between David and Joab. Second, not only are each of these verses the dictation of a message, but the messages themselves share an important characteristic. They are both functioning as actors in a ploy: Joab in the conclusion of David’s somewhat lengthy quest for Uriah to be killed; and the messenger in Joab’s arrangement for David to take the credit for the capture of Rabbah despite Joab’s leadership of the military men responsible.393

Third, the actions resulting from each of these two messages are intertwined, in part because the messages themselves are part of a single dialogue, beginning in 2 Sam 11:6, and, then later, interrupted by an interlude on Solomon (2 Sam 11:26-12:25).394 We leave off with David’s instructions to Joab to make strong his fight against the city (וֹלָכְדָהּ, 2 Sam 11:25) and we pick up again with narration that Joab has waged a battle against Rabbat Amman (וָילָחָה, 2 Sam 12:26), followed immediately by the content of Joab’s own return message to David, “I have waged a battle in Rabbah,” (וָנָלחָה בַּרְבָּה, 2 Sam 12:27). The thrice repeated root לָחָה functions to remind us that the dialogue is continuing. Though they may be presented as part of a single dialogue, the resulting actions of these messages—the taking of Bathsheba and the taking of Rabbah—are addressed independently yet analogously. In the first case, the result of the message that Uriah is dead, and that Joab should not be distressed about sending this information to David, is that Bathsheba, upon learning this news, is able to become wife to David. He sends for her and has her “gathered” into his household (וָיָאָסַפֶּה, 2 Sam 11:27).395 In 2 Samuel, this root is typically used when describing a mustering army; indeed, Joab uses it in exactly this way in 2 Sam 12:28 in his instruction to David to muster his troops to

393 For three solid chapters (2 Sam 11-13) all we find is one ploy after another: the ruse to ensure Bathsheba’s eligibility for marriage, the maneuver to get David credit for the victory in Rabbah, Jonadab and Amnon’s plot to have Tamar, Absalom’s secret plan to dispatch Amnon.

394 Further framing the correspondence between the acquisition of Bathsheba and of Rabbah, the action of the plot in 2 Sam 11 and 12 is conveniently divided between two locales—David’s palace and Joab’s war camp. The back-and-forth of the battle messages serves to recount the story of the latter, while the actions at the palace are conveyed through a number of the usual means, including messages, but also the narrator’s exposition, Nathan’s lengthy speech, etc.

395 As Auld briefly notes, this is the only occurrence in the HB in which this verbal root takes a feminine object suffix. Given the larger discussion of the use of the feminine object suffix, this observation seems particularly significant. Auld, I & II Samuel, 459.
take the city (אֲסַפֵּה אֲלֵי הַעֹלֶם...לָכֶדּ), lest Joab accidentally capture it.\(^{396}\) In the second case, the result of Joab’s message is that David wages war on (וְיִלְכְּדָה הָּ) and captures (וְיֵילַחֵמ בָּהּ) the city (2 Sam 12:29, note the repeated use of the feminine object suffixes). Just as he adds Bathsheba to his royal house, he also collects booty from the capture of Rabbah (רַבָּה...רַבָּה מְאָם, 2 Sam 12:30). In 2 Samuel, the phrase רַבָּה מְאָם describes only two things—booty (2 Sam 8:8, 12:30) and the flocks of the rich man in Nathan’s parable (2 Sam 12:2). This choice of language suggests yet another layer of parallelism between the role of David in the Bathsheba incident (i.e. the referent of the “rich man” in the parable) and the role of David in the capture of Rabbah.

The particular images and turns of phrase found in 2 Sam 11:25 and 12:28 also provide additional, though more subjective, parallels between Bathsheba and Rabbah. For example, the instruction that Joab should not despair over “this thing” (הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, actually marked here with את) in 2 Sam 11:25 presents both an obvious and a secondary meaning. David certainly means to convey that he is not concerned over Uriah’s death (one referent for “this thing”), but David is also pleased that Bathsheba (another “thing”) has now been made available to him. The phrase את הדבר הזה occupies a prominent position in the story of David, Bathsheba and Nathan (2 Sam 11:11, 25; 12:6, 12).\(^{397}\) The very “thing” that Uriah refuses to do in 11:11—go sleep with his wife—is the exact “thing” that David recognizes allegorically in 12:6 and the “thing” that is now available to David with the message of 11:25.

In another example, David’s use of the metaphor, “the sword devours,” also functions across both the Bathsheba and Rabbah plot lines. Though David utilizes an established idiom with regard to battle, given the embeddedness of the David-Joab communication within the Bathsheba narrative, we may read some sexual innuendo into his message that “the sword devours.”\(^{398}\) Joab’s battle rids David of any impediment to Bathsheba, and allows his own sexual appetite to

\(^{396}\) Note an additional feminine object suffix on עליה in 2 Sam 12:28. Joab’s admission that the city could easily be his might make us wonder if he is not also interested in Bathsheba. And consider also, 1 Chr 20:1 in which Joab himself is clearly responsible for devastating “her” (וַיהֲרֹסָה). See also below.

\(^{397}\) The same phrase also plays a recurring role in the ploy of Joab and the wise woman to convince David to allow Absalom to return from exile (2 Sam 14:15, 20, 21).

\(^{398}\) In 2 Samuel, the expression is found also in the account of the Battle of Gibeon and the Battle in the Forest of Ephraim (2 Sam 2:26 and 18:8). See also Chapter 5 on the relationship between these two pericopes. Outside of 2 Samuel, the “devouring sword” is most associated with Jeremiah (Jer 2:30; 12:12; 46:10, 14), but appears in a handful of other texts as well.
be fulfilled. Finally, at Joab’s instructions, David captures Rabbah, and notable is the description of the transfer of the crown from the king of Rabbah (מלכם) to David. Elsewhere David’s war spoils are detailed (e.g. 2 Sam 8:7-11), but this is the only crown of which we hear and, in its description, we find yet another feminine suffix (ומשקלה ככר זהב). Perhaps this is simply an accounting of the victory over the Ammonites; David took the bejeweled crown from the conquered king. But because of the choices made by the author in providing this description, we are able to also read a veiled reference to Bathsheba. David takes a crown in a territorial acquisition. Similarly, his acquisition of Bathsheba provides a continued crown on the throne of the Davidic line.

The constellation of all of these parallels and interrelated images presents the taking of the city of Rabbah and the transfer of Bathsheba from Uriah to David as two versions of the same story, or two stories that tell the same message. David is great; he takes cities and women as he likes. It is almost humorous though, or maybe pathetic, that David cannot actually succeed at either of these victories without the devious and dangerous work of Joab. I suggest that the conspicuous use of the feminine suffixes throughout this narrative section nicely allows for the audience to not only hear the story of the military conquest of a foreign city, and the capture of a crown from

399 On this phrase, Vaticanus and others—“Milcom their king,” but see also O’Ceallaigh’s discussion of 2 Sam 12:31, in which it is asserted that “no letter of this received text needs alteration.” While this contention may seem a bit aggressive (emphasis his), I want to note the proposed reconstructed pointing of בַּמְּגֵרָה (MT) to בְּמַגְּרָה which would add yet another feminine suffix to our text. O’Ceallaigh offers, then, the reading: “And the people who were in her (the city) he brought out and set at tearing her down, even with iron crows and iron mattocks.” He further reads, “And he made them transgress against (i.e., desecrate, violate or destroy) the Molechs (בַּמָּלְבכִּים),” proposing an Aramaic plural Peal participial noun with Hebrew suffix, a hybrid which, together with the use of the root לָעָת (in the hiphil, O’Ceallaigh argues is part of a literary and pietistic agenda to demonstrate the complete devastation and humiliation of the Ammonites. G.C. O’Ceallaigh, “And So David Did To All The Cities of Ammon,” VT 12 (1962): 179-189.

400 In fact it is unusual to hear of any crown in the HB, with the term never appearing in the Pentateuch or in the Deuteronomistic History except here.

401 The connection between David’s military and sexual prowess and the need to convey both types of victories is noted by R. Schwartz: “Because as Levi-Strauss has taught us, exchanging women establishes power relations between men, David’s dominance over other men is signaled by both his military and his sexual conquests,” 144. Despite her gross over-simplification that “something as seemingly innocent as biblical historical-critical scholarship has offered “evidence” for justifying the oppression of people,” her observations about David, his power and his women are useful. Though irrelevant to the needs of the study here, I would suggest to Schwartz that the so-called guide who pointed out the “spot where David would have stood on his rooftop to be able to see Bathsheba bathing” is perhaps more to blame than the “fences, barbed wire, soldiers” and “leaders of Israel” for what she describes as her apparently epiphanic visit to the Holy Land which “made [her] Bible face a new assault, far more deadly than the results of any documentary hypothesis.” And as for her castigation that in modern Israel “scripture authorizes politics,” she might well want to consider her home state of North Carolina before taking on any foreign governments. R. M. Schwartz, “Nations and Nationalism: Adultery in the House of David,” Critical Inquiry 19 (1992): 131-150.
a foreign king, but also the resonance of David’s struggle to seize Bathsheba from a foreign, and loyal, servant.

There is also an inverse relationship between the city and Bathsheba. David tells Joab to “destroy” or “tear down” or “demolish” (הרסה) Rabbah. The acquisition of Bathsheba, on the other hand, increases David’s house, both in terms of the number of women/wives he controls and the production of a successor, thus creating his dynasty. So, for example, the contrast seen in Prov 14:1 is apt, and perhaps particularly appropriate for the story of David (and Solomon). “Wisdom,” in the form of a wise woman in the proverb, builds up a house (בנה, or a House in David’s case) and “folly” tears it down (הרס). The root הרס occurs only once in Samuel (2 Sam 11:25) in the content of David’s message to Joab in reply to the news that Uriah has been killed. In the Chronicler’s version of the David story, the root also occurs only once (1 Chr 20:1), where it appears in a clause following what is otherwise synoptic material (1 Chr 20:1//2 Sam 11:1). In the Chronicler’s account it is clear that Joab is responsible for the defeat of Rabbah and the “ruse” of 2 Samuel, in which David arrives at the last minute in order to get credit for the victory, is not part of the account. But, in both Samuel and Chronicles the authors felt that it was important to preserve the syntax such that the feminine pronominal suffix is extant in each example.

To what end does an author intertwine the stories of Bathsheba and Rabbah? Here, we have to consider conventional wisdom concerning the composition of not only 2 Sam 11-12, but also 2 Sam 10 and its Aramean campaign account. A common source critical view of this material is that of McCarter, like Rost and others before him. They understood the narratives concerning David’s Aramean and Ammonite campaigns as sourced from more-or-less contemporaneous (i.e. Davidic) annals. Rost’s argument continued by asserting that the author of the Succession Narrative took this archival account and used it to frame the Bathsheba story. McCarter, however, maintained that 11:2-12:25 comes from a non-contemporaneous prophetic hand, who presumably chose the Aramean-Ammonite War account as a frame for his story because

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402 Rost, *Die Überlieferung*, 200-1.
403 This account he considers to be sourced from a “single report of consecutive events,” and details what he views as three phases of one large conflict. He disagreed with a number of other scholars who saw no necessary historical connection between the Aramean and Ammonite conflicts. McCarter, *II Samuel*, 271. Rost, *Die Überlieferung*, 184-
“according to the tradition he knew” the Bathsheba story belonged together with the siege of Rabbah. So the answer Rost, McCarter and others might give is that these two stories are knitted together because “tradition” put them together, even if a later hand was responsible for the framing.

Alternatively, the combination of the two stories may serve to convey a message about David’s character, as suggested by Van Seters. He held that the Bathsheba account was positioned in the middle of the Ammonite War to demonstrate the contrast between David and Uriah—Uriah, a foreigner, is concerned for the rules of a holy war (not having sex, concern for the ark, dwelling in sukkot, etc.) while David is clearly violating all sorts of rules. For David, the Ammonite War is not a sacred task, but one with only political and material gains. This is supported by/supports the idea that Bathsheba and Rabbah are two ways of talking about the same thing—they are both booty, neither of them are a pious undertaking, David has done wrong (2 Sam 11:27b) in both regards. So I concur with Van Seters’ assessment and would even

91, Gunn, The Story of King David, 65. Van Seters, too, argued that the Aramean material originally had nothing to do with the Ammonite campaign and, further, the Aramean verses should be attributed to Dtr, whereas the Ammonite conflict belongs to his David Saga. Van Seters, The Biblical Saga, 287-9. Van Seters points to differences between 2 Sam 10:15-19 (Aramean) and 2 Sam 10:1-14 + 11-12 (Ammonite) as part of his argument regarding the attribution of each, but I would like to make some comment on the similarities between these stories as well. The Ammonite War description in 2 Sam 11 shares certain similar characteristics with the Ammonite War description in 2 Sam 11-12. In each case Joab is largely responsible for actual military actions and David only arrives at the tail end to claim his victory. See even McCater’s description of the multiple parts of the Aramean campaign in which 2 Sam 10:6-15 (Joab) is separated from 2 Sam 10:15-19 (David). McCarter, II Samuel, 274. In the account, David’s men are humiliated by the Ammonite king, Hanun. Their humiliation is specifically emasculating (the shaving of their beards and the tearing of their garments to expose their genitals). Below, we will return to this particular element—a gendered form of degradation—with regard to the siege of Rabbah. In that discussion, we will see that the personification of a city, like Rabbah, as female is heavily tied to a form of gendered critique against (typically) the political ruling class. It is therefore useful to note that 2 Sam 10:3 makes use of repeated feminine object suffixes referring to the city. Alone, this is fairly insignificant since the city is grammatically feminine, but taken together with the Bathsheba-Rabbah material discussed above, the feminine object suffixes here may anticipate a larger element at work in the language choices of this entire section of the text. Similar language choices can also be seen in the mention of two sets of cities critical to the narratives’ plot lines. In 2 Sam 10:12, Joab encourages Abishai and his men to be strong for the sake of the “cities of our god” (עייר אלהינו). It is not immediately clear from the narrative context exactly what his referrents may be, and probably because of this, various emendations have been suggested despite the lack of obvious textual difficulty. It seems striking, then, that two other cities are mentioned in the larger Aramean-Ammonite War complex. In 2 Sam 12:26-7, the “royal city” (עיר המלוכה) and the “water city” (עיר המים). For review of these cities, see R. Giveon who suggests that the cities refer to cities in southern Transjordan in which Yahweh cults were active. R. Giveon, “The Cities of Our God” (II Sam 10:12),” JBL 83 (1964): 415-416.

405 Van Seters, The Biblical Saga, 301.
content that the message resulting from the placement of the accounts is broader than the contrasts between David and Uriah. The interwoven account portrays David, not only in contrast to the pious foreigner Uriah, but also provides what seems to be David’s view that Bathsheba and Rabbah are equally objectified for the taking. Further, the ways in which each tale reflects the other also reveals the complexities of the relationship between David and Joab, both David’s need for Joab to act and Joab’s need to, at times, restrain from acting.407

The language used at critical junctures in 2 Sam 10-12 highlights the parallels between Bathsheba and Rabbah, especially through the repeated use of feminine object suffixes. A final note on this correspondence relates to the broader biblical tendency to personify cities as female.408 The normative phenomenon in the biblical imagination to portray the city as a personified female only strengthens the relationship between the Bathsheba story and the capture of Rabbah. Further, the personification of the city as female is often closely related to the genre of city lament, and in this case certain characteristics of this normally prophetic genre do seem to apply.409 Most importantly, Rabbah is a defeated and destroyed city, but other features are highlighted. Instead of a deity protagonist, we find David, a divinely sanctioned ruler. The breakdown of social structures and mores, common in city lament, can be seen in the adulterous and murderous interactions of David, Bathsheba, Uriah and Joab. And additional social structures—the rules of military hierarchy and responsibility—are also undermined in the actions of David, Joab and Uriah. Finally, the contrast of divinely inspired destruction and restoration are contrasted, among other places, in the death of Bathsheba’s first-born (and David’s actions surrounding his illness and death) and birth of Solomon.

407 So, David needs Joab to fight his wars and deal with Uriah, etc. But 2 Sam 12:27-8 reminds us that Joab must constantly temper his role as actor in deference to the king.
The characterization of cities as females, of defeated enemies as womanly, and, not unrelatedly, the violent language used to describe destructions and defeat of both cities and enemies, speaks to a message of social and political critique on the part of biblical authors, particularly in prophetic material.\(^{410}\) We might see some reflection of this phenomenon in the 2 Samuel as well. For example, when Joab’s language highlights the female characteristic of Rabbah, the city is portrayed as a vulnerable female figure akin to the figure of Bathsheba. In drawing our attention, through purposeful language choices, to the correspondences in the taking of Rabbah and the Bathsheba story, we can simultaneously take away two competing messages about David. The first is that David is a powerful, masculine champion figure, operating under the good will of the deity. C. Chapman argued that the conquering of a city, which is thought of and depicted in feminine terms, serves to feminize some part of the male society—a commander or king or ruling class who is defeated is like a woman.\(^{411}\) In our case, Rabbah is the female city, its defeated king—the feminized figure—is stripped of his royal crown, which is taken and put onto David, the figure responsible for such emasculation. It is David’s body which physically receives the prize in both stories; he is the quintessential opposite of a defeated city and her womanly king. Conversely, the second message is that David is almost never responsible for these manly feats himself. He is only able to take both Bathsheba and Rabbah with the help of Joab. In this way he may be seen as weak, reliant on crafty ploys,\(^{412}\) and reproached by the deity (seen most obviously in the death of Bathsheba’s first-born).

A Proposed Function of the Particle נא with Imperatives in 2 Samuel

2 Samuel attests 136 examples of imperative verb forms, 35 occurrences of the particle נא (with imperative, jussive and cohortative forms), and, of these, 15 instances where imperatives

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\(^{410}\) For review of the personification of cities as female in prophetic texts, and the convention for using violent language for cities that will be or have been destroyed, see Kelle, “Wartime Rhetoric,” 100-1. He also addresses the issue of political critique, so for example, “The prophets use female personifications of capital cities in something of a populist discourse that aims to create rhetorical, theological, and political distance between the general population and the rulers whose actions defy, in the prophets’ opinions, YHWH’s will for the community,” 108. For discussion of the portrayal of defeated enemies with feminine language or as women, see C.R. Chapman, The Gendered Language of Warfare in the Israelite-Assyrian Encounter (HSM 62; Winona Lake, Ind.; Eisenbrauns, 2004).

\(^{411}\) See note 403.

\(^{412}\) Perhaps a feminine characteristic, e.g. 2 Sam 20, the woman of Abel Beth Maacah; Gen 38, Tamar.
specifically include the particle נא.\(^{413}\) So, generally speaking, it is not uncommon for the imperative to be augmented with the particle נא. The nuance of this usage is not completely clear or systematic throughout the HB. J-M indicates that נא adds greater emphasis to the command.\(^{414}\) W-C, following Lambdin, find that the particle is meant to serve a command which is a logical consequence of the surrounding context.\(^{415}\) While this phenomenon is readily observable, it may be so broad as to almost always be arguably correct. Further, imperatives without the particle also may be understood as logical consequences of their immediate context (in 2 Samuel, e.g. 2:1, 3:14, 10:5).

Examination of the usage patterns of נא in 2 Samuel suggests an alternative, or at least more specific, function of augmenting an imperative with this particle. In 2 Samuel, נא is added to imperatives commanding something which is distasteful to the addressee or which is directly connected to something undesirable. Some examples: In 2 Sam 1:9, the Amalekite is quoting Saul’s command to him to dispatch him. In 2 Sam 7:2, David addresses Nathan imploring him to take note of the king’s house, his dwelling place, which leads directly to the revelation that Yahweh does not wish David to build a permanent dwelling for him. In 2 Sam 13:28, Absalom uses the particle in his entreaty of his men to take down Amnon, something that they are clearly nervous about doing, hence his encouragement that they should not be afraid because the order is sound. 2 Sam 17:5 has Absalom’s command to call on Hushai to seek his advice. The imperative is singular so presumably is intended for Ahithophel rather than the elders mentioned in the previous verse. Ahitohophel has just provided Absalom with his advice and plan for pursuing David, and it seems reasonable that he would be rather annoyed to receive such instruction from Absalom, particularly after we are told in 2 Sam 17:4 that the advice met with a positive response. Absalom should expect some pushback from his addressee in this case. In 2 Sam 20:16, the wise woman asks that the men, who are so intent on bringing down the city wall of Abel Beth-Maacah, stop for a moment to tell Joab that she would like to speak with him. Such a request must surely strike them as unorthodox, and even an undesirable request. Finally, in 2 Sam 24:2 David addresses Joab telling him to go around to all the tribes to conduct a census. Joab’s hesitation anticipates the problems the census will cause and highlights its undesirability.

\(^{413}\) 2 Sam 1:4, 9; 7:2; 13:7,13,17,26,28; 14:2 x2; 15:31; 17:15; 20:16; 24:2,10.
\(^{414}\) J-M §48d.
One may compare these uses with examples of an entreaty which has a positive or desired outcome, or is regarded as favorable by the addressee (e.g. 2 Sam 2:21, 3:12, 5:19, 11:18, 15:27, 19:8).

I would like to look more specifically at the occurrences of augmented imperatives in the Tamar episode (2 Sam 13:1-22). Within the Tamar episode imperatives abound (14 of them), and the particle נא occurs five times with three imperatives and two jussive forms (2 Sam 13:5, 6, 7, 13, 17). Interestingly, in all of Amnon’s directives to Tamar the particle is missing (2 Sam 13:10, 11, 15). Tamar, on the other hand, employs it when addressing him (2 Sam 13:13). And in the other instances where the particle is not used (other than any of Amnon’s speech to Tamar), two cases of the imperative without the נא follow immediately after an imperative with the particle (2 Sam 13:7, 17). Morphologically, only the example in 2 Sam 13:17 requires some comment. The imperative is plural, though the antecedent in the same verse, נער, is singular. The plural verb form may arise from the addition of המשרתו following נערו, perhaps making it seem as though there are two people attending on Amnon.416 It may refer more obliquely to multiple people who were ordered out of Amnon’s quarters in 2 Sam 13:9. Or, it may simply be an error.417 Below we will consider what, if any, connotation is imparted by the augmentation with נא in the three cases of true imperatives (not jussive forms) in the Tamar pericope.

The first example is found in 2 Sam 13:7. Here, David instructs Tamar to go to the house of Amnon and prepare food for him there. At first glance in this case, the distasteful nature of the command would seem to be known, not necessarily to Tamar, but to the audience, since we have the information of the previous verses in which Jonadab’s plan has been outlined (2 Sam 13:4-6). Could this be a play on the function of the particle נא that we see elsewhere in 2 Samuel? This story is so off-putting, that it is rather clever to augment a command which the audience knows painfully well to be contraindicated. Alternatively, it may be the case that both David and Tamar have been alerted, at least in some way, to Amnon’s intentions. In Amnon’s request to David, he suggests that Tamar make him “a couple of heart-cakes” (ותלבב לעיני שתי לבבות, 2 Sam 13:6).

416 And this term is likely necessary because, in the next verse, 13:18, it is the attendant (משרתו) who fulfills the orders of 13:17 (here the term נא is absent).
417 McCarter, II Samuel, 318. Several Greek versions have a singular imperative. McCarter calls the MT plural “apparently a simple error.”
Pope has argued that the denominative verb לָבַב, related to the terms for these “cakes,” should be taken in an erotic sense, “to arouse, or excite.”

Noegel and Rendsburg also view the root this way and in their Song of Songs review translate “entice.”

McCartor follows Pope on the interpretation of the root and therefore sees Amnon’s request as particularly suggestive. What this means for the logic of the narrative is that David, as the recipient of Amnon’s request, should really be aware that something is up. Furthermore, though 2 Sam 13:7, in which David passes on the instruction to Tamar, does not specifically mention the לָבַב, we must assume that David told her to make these arousing treats since in the next verse she is bringing her dough to knead and prepare before him. To return to the issue of the function of the particle נא in 2 Sam 13:7, then, it may indeed be the case that both David and Tamar have some idea of what Amnon is asking for and thus David’s use of an augmented imperative in instruction to Tamar indicates a distasteful command.

By 2 Sam 13:13, Tamar is definitely aware of Amnon’s intentions. He has ordered her to his bed (בואי שכבי עמי אחותי, 2 Sam 13:11). In an attempt to stop Amnon from forcing her, she pleads with

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418 M. Pope, Song of Songs (AB 7C; Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), 478-80.
420 McCarter, II Samuel, 322. “Amnon, by asking that Tamar prepare the dumplings…, is privately anticipating more than the restoration of his health.”
421 Auld also wonders if David is more aware than a superficial reading might suggest. His argument comes from a completely different direction, namely the relationship between this pericope and the poetry of the Song of Songs. He identifies several important “word links” between the two works and suggests that the writer of 2 Sam 13 must have been aware of the lines of the Song, or at least the traditional love poetry behind the Song. Auld, I & II Samuel, 478-9.
422 Ackerman also notes that David does not specifically mention the “hearty dumplings” to T. J. Ackerman, “Knowing Good and Evil: A Literary Analysis of the Court History in 2 Samuel 9-20 and 1Kings 1-2,” JBL 109, (1990): 45. Another option would be to believe that David did not specifically tell her to make לָבַב and they were, coincidentally, her idea as well as Amnon’s. While this may be a repugnant thought (if we indeed assume an erotic nature for the cakes), consider the rather intentional actions of the other Tamar in Gen 38, and see further below. Conroy denies that David could have known what Amnon was planning. Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 24, n. 18. But he does describe the way in which the narrator of the story does not provide any moral evaluation of the events described (and that this is unusual in the Absalom material.) The only such evaluations come in the speech of the characters. This observation suggests to me that the specific language of that speech, then, must be considered extremely carefully, since the author is clearly using it, perhaps to the exclusion of all else, to convey certain meaning.
423 For the suggestion that David did have some awareness of the implications of Amnon’s request, see also Jackson, “David’s Throne,” 189. “[David] seems even to have entered as accomplice into their passions and schemes…It is difficult to believe that David, the author of much subtler intrigues, would have been completely taken in by such transparent designs.” Ackerman also wonders if David’s anger in 2 Sam 13:21 is directed at Amnon because he [David] “deliberately sent Tamar to Amnon in the hope that something was developing between the two” but “the crown prince's precipitous action - terminating the relationship by expelling her from his house” foiled the plan. Ackerman, “Knowing Good and Evil,” 46.
him to ask David (דָּוִד) to give her to him, saying that David will not withhold her (לא ימנע מָם) (נָא). What is particularly distasteful about this command? Amnon, the addressee, knows that he has tricked David into encouraging Tamar to attend to him for his own nefarious ends. Not only is there great pathos in Tamar’s plea at the actual thought of allowing her father to give her to her brother, but Amnon must also be thinking about the consequences of David learning the real motive behind his original request. So the distasteful nature of this particular command is felt by all parties: Tamar’s fear of being taken by/given to her brother; Amnon’s anxiety over exposing to David his indecorous actions, and the audience’s discomfort at watching it all unfold.

The final imperative which uses the נא particle is in Amnon’s command in 2 Sam 13:16 in which he orders his attendant to get Tamar out of his chamber (שָלַחְנוּ נָא אֶת-זֶה מִעֲלֵי החוצה). If the pattern of usage suggested above holds—that is, the particle is included when the command is particularly distasteful or contraindicated—then we might conclude that Amnon’s attendant is loath to send Tamar away, perhaps even that his post allowed for him to overhear the plea of Tamar in 2 Sam 13:16. Again here the particle signals that something in the command is amiss, especially from the addressee’s perspective. That we should give the attendant such agency may be indicated by the repetition of מָלְךָ in 2 Sam 13:9 and 17. The attendant in 13:17 is presumably one of the כל-איש in 13:9 whom Amnon orders to get out מַלְכִּי. Amnon cleared the room of everyone so that he could pursue Tamar privately. The new command to now remove Tamar so aggressively must seem to the attendant to be exactly the opposite of Amnon’s original wishes. Further, Amnon must expect that the attendant would balk at an order to act so inhospitably to a daughter of the king.

The use of the particle נא in the above examples may be contrasted with “bare” imperatives in the 2 Sam 13 account. Of particular interest are the imperatives used by Jonadab and Absalom in 2 Sam 13:5 and 13:20. In each of these cases, the commands are not augmented, perhaps

424 Perhaps this difficult comment is slightly more understandable if we consider the possibility that David and Tamar had some idea of what Amnon’s plan was from the beginning, as mentioned above. For a thorough discussion of what this suggestion might mean from various biblical legal perspectives, see McCarter, II Samuel, 323-4 and Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 17-18, n.3.

425 Conroy, Absalom, Absalom!, 33, n.60 for the emphasis in this repetition—and contempt.

426 2 Sam 13:5, 9, 10, 11, 15, 20. 2 Sam 13:11 and 13:15 are Amnon’s speech to Tamar and both are examples of asyndetic imperatives discussed in the first section of this study.
suggesting that the speaker does not consider the instruction to be significantly problematic or distasteful to the addressee. In the case of 2 Sam 13:5, Jonadab is providing Amnon with direction and language for how to get David to send Tamar to his (Amnon’s) bed chamber. Given what we know about Amnon already, it is logical that such instruction would be amenable to him. In 2 Sam 13:20, Absalom instructs Tamar to keep quiet about the matter. In this case, even though such a command might seem problematic to our modern sensibilities, it is, by comparison to the much more dramatic elements of the story, a rather innocuous request.

Ironically (and regardless of whatever we may be meant to think Tamar is or is not aware of throughout the account), by making these “nice” demands, signaled by the absence of נִ Formatting, characters like Jonadab and Absalom play their own small role in victimizing Tamar.427

As has been the case in other studies in this collection, it has been instructive to consider some texts outside of the Samuel tradition which appear to have a relationship to the passages under review. Relevant to 2 Sam 13 is the account in Gen 38:1-30, where a story of another Tamar is recounted. This is the tale in which Judah, the father of Tamar’s late husband, thinking he has found a simple prostitute on the side of the road, impregnates his daughter-in-law. Tamar, who is rather crafty in this account, ensures that she receives proof of the identity of her lover by asking him for his seal and cord and his staff. Later, when Judah is told that Tamar has become pregnant through prostitution, he sentences her to death. She avoids this outcome by revealing the items which he left her in pledge and disclosing that Judah is actually the father of, what will turn out to be, her twins.

Certain similarities between this Tamar episode and that of 2 Sam 13 have been noted. Already Jacob discussed numerous passages in Genesis and 2 Samuel which he argued shared so much similar language as to be interdependent.428 More recently, several works have enumerated

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427 Conroy comments on a chiastic pattern of the narrative proposed by Ridout in which the intervention of Jonadab (2 Sam 13:3-5) is paralleled with the intervention of Absalom (13:20). Conroy views the structure as convincing in the central part of the narrative, but remarks that this parallelism of Jonadab and Absalom seems tenuous. While a full critique of Ridout’s view of the construction of the text is beyond the scope here, it is possible that the nuance carried by their unaugmented imperatives could help bolster his narrative scheme. Conroy, *Absalom, Absalom!* (19-20). G.P. Ridout, “Prose Compositional Techniques,” 50-56.

specific parallels between the two Tamar accounts, and they all speak in some way, though with some different interpretations, to this “interdependence.” Rendsburg points to the parallelism in the Hebrew consonants of the names of the principal characters in both accounts: (Judah=David), Hirah=Hiram, daughter of Shua=Bathsheba, Er=first son of David and Bathsheba (possibly נער, Onan=Amnon, Shelah=Solomon, Tamar=Tamar. He and Ho also point to the role of sheep shearing (not so common an event in the HB) as a setting for retaliation in both accounts. Of course, the two episodes share many elements of sexual misconduct, but within this broad rubric, Rendsburg points out the play between the roles of sister-in-law/brother-in-law in Genesis and half-sister/half-brother in 2 Samuel. Ho also discusses specific sexual terminology and demonstrates similar phraseology and structures in both accounts. He suggests a mirroring of the two plots with regard to the role of sexual misconduct—in Genesis the death of two sons leads to a sexual scandal and in 2 Samuel a sexual scandal leads to the death of two sons. This brief summary of the parallels of language, plot, and theme is by no means exhaustive and Rendsburg, Ho, Auld and others have compiled many additional points.

In light of these correlations in the language of the two accounts, it may be useful to also consider the use of imperatives with and without the particle נא in each story. In the Samuel

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429 Auld, “Tamar between David”; C. Ho, “The Stories of the Family Troubles of Judah and David: A Study of their Literary Links,” VT 49 (1999), 514-31; G. Rendsburg, “David and His Circle in Genesis XXXVIII,” VT 36 (1986): 438-446. See also the connections noted (and additional bibliography) in D. Carr, Reading the Fractures of Genesis, Historical and Literary Approaches (Louisville; Westminster John Knox, 1996), 249-50 and 250, n. 49. For an older and rather conservative approach to the Gen 38 account, see the article series by J.A. Emerton, “Some Problems in Genesis XXXVIII,” VT 25 (1975): 338-61; “An Examination of a Recent Structuralist Interpretation of Genesis XXXVIII,” VT 26 (1976): 79-98; “Judah and Tamar,” VT 29 (1979): 403-414. For the position of Gen 38 within the Joseph story, see E. M. Menn, Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38) in Ancient Jewish Exegesis (Leiden:Brill, 1997). 430 So, for example, “The earlier royal stories [i.e. the stories of the monarchy] were the classics on which later biblical authors [i.e. the author(s) of Gen 38] drew for language and situation,” Auld, “Tamar between David, Judah and Joseph,” 221. Or, “[W]e will have to assume…that the author of Gen. xxxviii lived during the 900s, that he was telling us a story about current events of this century, and that his readership would easily have recognized this and presumably would have delighted in this,” Rendsburg, “David and his Circle,” 441-2. 431 Noble has criticized Ho, Rendsburg and others for seeing significance in the confluence of similarities between these two accounts. His argument is that the parallels given between these two accounts are “unrelated correspondences” that only contribute to a greater understanding of either story in “a thinner way [than Noble’s thesis about correspondences between Gen 38 and the story of Joseph and his brothers].” Noble considers parallels between “type-scenes” to be a more legitimate way to analyze “significant [emphasis his] resemblances between stories.” While his type-scene analysis is perfectly respectable, his dismissal of works such as Rendsburg’s and Ho’s is too quick, in my opinion. Also, his claim that biblical authors could not support multiple intentions in any given work because such an undertaking would have been “rather too complex and subtle to be plausible” seems as weakly supported as he claims the “catalogue of resemblances between Genesis xxxviii and the so-called Succession Narrative” to be. P. Noble, “Esau, Tamar, and Joseph: Criteria for Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions,” VT 52 (2002): 219-252.
Tamar story, the particle seems reserved for particular commands which are especially provocative or distasteful as we reviewed above. And, in the Genesis Tamar story, too, the use of נָא to augment an imperative also seems to be used especially at critical moments in the narrative and with commands that may seem contraindicated to the addressee.

Imperative forms occur seven times in Gen 38:1-30 (38:8 x3, 11, 16, 24, 25) and only two of these examples is augmented with the particle נָא (38:16, 25). In the first case, Judah is speaking to Tamar and, thinking she is a prostitute, orders her to let him have sex with her (-before נא אבוא אליך.). This command is problematic on multiple counts. First, it is presumably distasteful to the addressee, Tamar, since she a) is treated like a prostitute, though she is not actually one (if we even want to assume that any “proposal” is not distasteful to an actual prostitute) and b) knows that this particular man is her father-in-law. Though she is responsible in many ways for orchestrating these events, the prospect of a sexual relationship with her father-in-law on the side of the road must surely make her ill at ease. Second, the command and the turn-of-events it initiates produces discomfort for the audience, since they, like Tamar, are aware of the characters’ identities (and this knowledge certainly makes us ill at ease).

The other occurrence of the particle נָא in the Genesis Tamar story is found in 38:25. Here the speaker is Tamar and she demands that Judah inspect the seal and cord and staff which she has kept as proof of his identity (-before נא מי החתמת והפתילים והמטה האלה הכר.). Here the command is one which seems contraindicated to the addressee. Judah has been told of the woman’s situation and has sentenced her to death. That the condemned “prostitute” argues this point, let alone demands that her judge examine the very evidence that will betray his complicity in the violation, likely comes as a shock to him, and can be seen as a command for an action which is especially problematic to him.

So, as in the 2 Sam 13 narrative, the use of the particle נָא occurs specifically with commands that are unadvised or particularly objectionable to the addressee. Elsewhere in the Gen 38 account,

432 In a nice example of intertextual wordplay, נָא is only elsewhere found in Gen 37:32, in another particularly troublesome command, when Joseph’s brothers instruct their father to recognize his garment—a garment (מִשְׁמֶר הַלְוַיָּה הָאֵלָה הַמֹּסֵת) which, as has been noted, occurs only in the Joseph story and in the 2 Sam 13 account as the royal garment that Tamar wears. See, for example, Friedman, Hidden Book, 17; McCarter, II Samuel, 325; Auld, “Tamar between David, Judah and Joseph,” 216.
unaugmented commands are used in less offensive contexts. Compare, for example, Judah’s instruction to Tamar to stay in her father’s house after the deaths of Er and Onan (Gen 38:11).

The similarities between these two accounts might be further indication that David and/or Tamar in 2 Sam 13 are somewhat aware of what is going on early in the account. Just as the Genesis Tamar is a willing participant in her sexually questionable scheme, perhaps the Samuel Tamar is as well. With this in mind, I would return to Amnon’s own commands in which the particle is absent. The particle does not occur, for example, following what we might think to be the most egregious command in this story, Amnon’s command to Tamar to “come and lie with” him in 2 Sam 13:11. Might this command not require any augmentation because the addressee, Tamar, expects it—or at the very least it is not shocking to her when she hears it?

This attitude is reflected in Tamar’s troubling statement in 2 Sam 13:16 when she claims that sending her away is a worse evil than raping her. Despite some textual difficulties, I think we may still be able to determine comparable syntax in 2 Sam 13:15 and 13:16. In both Amnon’s and Tamar’s speech we find the following elements:

1. The “hate” of Amnon and the “evil” of which Tamar speaks are both described as great (גדולה)

433 This is not to suggest the direction of influence is from Genesis to 2 Samuel, quite the contrary. As Auld and others suggest, the stories of David’s family seem to be the inspiration for the account in Gen 38 (and others). For example, Ho: “the author of Gen. xxxviii has created a new story out of material available to him from the same book and from 2 Samuel.” Ho, “Family Troubles,” 525-6. Rendsburg’s suggestion that the author of the Gen 38 story intended the account to poke fun at the Davidic royal family, and purposefully set the story in the remote past to avoid danger of retribution in the author’s own time, is warranted. Rendsburg, “David and his Circle,” 445. Ho agrees that satire may be one intention of the Gen 38 author, but concludes that the most critical purpose of the account is to provide the genealogical information about David’s ancestry, specifically that he is directly descended from Judah (“from his very seed”). Ho views this ancestral “proof” as a reaction to the kind of identity problems posed in Ezra 2:59//Neh 7:61. Ho, “Family Troubles,” 528-9. In any event, working from the material in 2 Sam, the author of Gen 38 has more room to maneuver with regard to utilizing clever plot devices, innuendo and the like. So Tamar’s premeditated craftiness in Gen 38 is likely to seem more exaggerated than any action of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13, even while her (Genesis Tamar) actions may be based in some way on those of Samuel Tamar. Relatedly, see J.A. Soggin, “Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38),” in Of Prophets’ Visions and the Wisdom of the Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray on his Seventieth Birthday (eds. H.A. McKay and D.J.A. Clines; JSOTSS 162; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 281-287. Soggin’s remark that (Genesis) Tamar is a “widow presented in the act of using a ruse in order to bring about the application of the law in her situation…and such a ruse is not without danger,” makes me wonder if the same might be true for Samuel Tamar, and if so, what precisely are we meant to think she is trying to achieve?

434 See McCarter, Il Samuel, 317-8, for textual criticism of these verses. However, the difficulties and probable reconstructions do not significantly alter the observations listed here. For example, McCarter argues to reconstruct an original מdlingה הוהנה ולא תאמר in v.16, but the parallels to v.15 remain.
2. The “great hatred” and the “great evil” are both compared to another element with a comparative structure (13:15; 13:16).

3. A double repetition of pronominal objects occurs in each verse, “the hatred [with] which he hated her,” “the love which he loved her,” “which you did with me,” “to dismiss me.”

These equivalencies in the construction of the language of these verses may imply a parallelism in their content, i.e. Amnon’s hate//Sending Tamar away is greater//worse than Amnon’s love//Raping Tamar. In this, albeit off-putting to us, scenario, Tamar seems to indicate that she is not as shocked by Amnon’s advances as we might think, or at the very least does not view her assault as the worst part of her circumstance. In this way, the Tamar of Gen 38 is comparable; her tenacity to produce her rightful heir also reveals that having sex with her father-in-law is not the worst part of her situation.

435 For more detail on the use of the word “love” in the Tamar pericope, see S. Ackerman, “The Personal Is Political: Covenantal and Affectionate Love (‘āhēb, ’ahābâ) in the Hebrew Bible,” VT 52 (2002): 454. Her thesis is that “loving” in the HB typically connotes a position of hierarchical power and that the narrator in 2 Sam 13 may be ironically emphasizing Amnon’s “love” for Tamar in order to subtly condemn his actions. Those this somewhat contradicts Conroy’s conclusion that the narrator shows little moral judgment in the account (see n. 20), her suggestion is in keeping with the deliberate and sophisticate language choices we see throughout 2 Samuel.
Chapter 8: Conclusions

Case Study Reviews

The greater the probability of a symbol’s occurrence in any given situation, the smaller will be its information content. Where we can anticipate we need not listen.

E.H. Gombrich, Art and Illusion

Each of the preceding studies stemmed from some kind of textual irritant—unusual phraseology, unexpected patterns, sharp parallelism—which begged for explanation. And each study described the nature of that irritant and attempted to discover in what larger narrative structures, patterns or themes it participated. In some cases, larger features of the text which were uncovered were able to say something about both the compositional growth of the book and the ways in which its composers carefully created and manipulated language to advance certain messages about David and his kingship. In these investigations it was the presence of something unanticipated, or something rare, or something begging attention which prompted the work. It seems to me that we must listen carefully to these unusual elements (or in one or two cases, elements for which it is normally unusual to think twice) to elicit deeper meaning within the story of David.

In the first two studies the location and function of the demonstrative pronoun אַלְבָּא was the irritant which prompted investigation. The composition of the David story utilizes both overt narratives (which we commonly discuss) and subtle language elements such as this unassuming pronoun to transmit its message. In this case, the quiet but purposeful use of אַלְבָּא, both to contrast David and his foes and to mark the Philistine war tales throughout the text, demonstrates the extent to which the author is able to manipulate his language, even making use of grammatical and literary elements that we might not immediately recognize as intentional or organizational. By directing our attention to the specific language though the use of such a signaling device, we are made to recognize the divergent outcomes of David and his enemies, as explained in the first case study presented here. With, what we might think of as, “insider” knowledge of the rare comparative אַלְבָּא syntax, we are able to read the message set out for us, not only in plot points, but in the very language itself. In this case, the message emphasizes the successful continuation
of Davidic dynasty and the defeat of those who would destroy it—a theme of the entire David
story and relevant especially in any time period when the continuation of that dynasty may be
especially threatened.

The occurrences and use of אֶלֶה discussed in the second case study may supply additional data
with which to consider the compositional history of 2 Samuel, and the relationship of different
sections of the David story with one another. That the material of the Philistine war tales (be it
either from a source or created by a Samuel author) has been carefully and intentionally placed
throughout 2 Samuel is confirmed by the repeated use of the pronoun as an editorial marker, a
kind of grammatical habit, by the hand responsible for the arrangement. When we consider
where this material occurs, we find that all of the אֶלֶה-marked passages are found before and
after, but not inside of, what is traditionally understood as the main, discrete story of David’s
reign (basically 2 Sam 10-20). The connections between the “appendix” and other parts of the 2
Samuel narrative remind us that the content of the final chapters is critically important to the
larger message of the work and should not be dismissed as an afterthought. Because the use of
אֶלֶה to mark material that is connected in some way with David’s relationship with the Philistines
only occurs in the texts surrounding the core of the story of David, we might consider how this
distribution pattern came to be. Has 2 Sam 10-20 been inserted into material which had already
been organized by the אֶלֶה-hand? Or were the Philistine war tales arranged and placed purposely
to surround the central story of the work? We traditionally view the main story as old and
propose that the small units of “supporting” material found in other parts of the Samuel tradition
were constructed around the long work in the center of 2 Samuel. But are we really unable to
discount the possibility that the discrete story is more of an insert than a foundational piece? The
analyses concerning this one element of the language cannot answer this question definitively.
But perhaps, if other elements of language are found to “surround” the heart of 2 Samuel, but not
penetrate it, the growth sequence of this material may become more evident.

The third case study presented here investigated certain relationships between the language and
content of the 2 Samuel “appendix” and the Book of Numbers. The nature of the concluding
chapters of 2 Samuel remains an irritant since no single study has provided a persuasive enough
scenario to invite consensus. The intertextual connections discussed in the study here point to a
compositional tie between 2 Samuel and Numbers, a relationship which Auld especially has
previously proposed. The linkages between these two works demonstrate some kind of influence across great canonical space. This fact alone is worth considering since it presupposes a dialogue between works in the Tetratueuch and works in the Deuteronomistic History. What does such an influence mean for understanding the development of Torah? Numbers, especially, has a complicated history and appears to contain material from diverse sources. Reacting to some of Auld’s conclusions and building on them, I view one of those sources to be material from 2 Samuel. In reproducing adapted versions of material from the David story, we see creative authorship at work in Numbers. Examples of this phenomenon are the addition of the story of Eldad and Medad as an imitation of the prophetic role in the 2 Samuel material and the “it-comes-from-Yahweh” rebuke as a repeated trope.

The investigation into the relationship between 2 Samuel and Numbers also has import for understanding the nature of the “appendix.” The final chapters of 2 Samuel, or at least certain narrative units within them, are often explained to be out of their original location. The proposed movement of these passages has led to the misconception that the content of these chapters is “miscellaneous.” Though a number of more recent works have shown that there is intentional structure to these chapters, here we have considered that the content itself is critical not only to David’s story but to the development of other texts in the HB. If this section contains such critical content, the argument that this material was left over or misplaced seems, to me, harder to make. Perhaps more importantly, if we can continue to demonstrate borrowing from “appendix” material by authors of extra-Samuel (or even extra-Deuteronomistic) texts, we may be able to determine what version of a David story was available for this kind of use and when.

We see two examples of the careful use of language to convey subtle messages about David in the fifth and sixth case studies. 2 Samuel tells big stories to be sure. But small nuances to these stories are also available to us in partially disguised language elements—elements that allow the astute reader/listener to gain additional knowledge about the characters and their activities. In the fourth study, we saw how the use of a particular root, תָּקע, functions within the narrative of Absalom’s death to reveal Joab’s desire to kill Absalom and his ultimate success in doing so. This portrayal of Joab’s character is only partially revealed through the overt reading of the text, but is enhanced when we consider that the use of תָּקע would signal to the audience a fatal attack. Further, the uses of תָּקע within the account, as well as a number of other language elements
carefully constructed by the author, affirm the unit’s integrity in spite of various attempts by some scholars to fragment the narrative.

This nuanced language is again at work in the author’s choice of the form ואֹחזָה. In this case, the author provides us with another small addition to the David apology. The crafting of this verse reassures the audience—perhaps the “insider” audience—that David has no blood on his hands in the death of the messenger. But because this message can be conveyed through such subtlety of the grammar, the verse comes across, in a more broad sense, as portraying David as a cool, tough guy—no doubt also a desirable depiction for some audience demographic. This type of story craftsmanship seems to be a hallmark of 2 Samuel—the use of language to sometimes tell two stories simultaneously, one an overt, dramatic story about David and his compatriots and another, an “insider” or literati version, sometimes apologetic, sometimes damning.

The seventh case study identified a number of imperative verb forms, and especially their augments, whose use and placement reveal more examples of meaningful language choices on the part of our author. The irritants in these examples are not necessarily unusual because of their morphology or meaning, but instead are part of certain language patterns, such as the repeated use of asyndetic imperatives or the occurrences of the particle נא, or they participate in larger literary themes, such as the metaphors provided by the conspicuous use of feminine object suffixes in the text. The verb forms in this study drew our attention, in part, to the story of Amnon and Tamar. In this story, the use of the asyndetic imperatives are one element of an intentional literary structure. And, the use of imperatives augmented with the particle נא is likewise carefully controlled in the narrative to reveal certain literary designs regarding the expectations and reactions of those characters who give and receive commands. The distribution of forms with paragogic ו and their contexts also reveal reveal the motives and frustrations of characters, particularly Joab’s in two emotionally critical situations with David. In these situations, the small elements of the language augment the overt plot of the narrative to provide another layer of meaning. So for example, Joab may seem loyal in 2 Sam 19:6-8 when he advises David to get up and speak to his people, but through the choice to describe this scene with short imperative forms, instead of a more respectful form, those on the lookout for subtle language clues might wonder whether Joab is insubordinate to the point of trouble. At the very least, this passage may provide an example where the text is sending two simultaneous messages—that of a
loyal, concerned deputy and an insubordinate, frustrated rival (?)—but this time the messages concern a person other than David. Such a case provides support that the phenomenon is a characteristic feature of the language of 2 Samuel.

The evaluation of imperatives with feminine object suffixes also demonstrated how specific elements in the crafting of language serve to advance larger messages in the narrative. In this last case study, the occurrence of so many of these relatively rare forms allowed us to find a literary similarity where the text provided a grammatical one. The similar forms produced in the narrative referring both to Bathsheba and to the city of Rabbah suggested a significant thematic similarity between the two. The prizes in each case (Bathsheba and the fruit of her womb on one hand, and the crown and booty of Ammon on the other) reaffirm David’s success in conquest and acquisition, and support both his current status as king as well as his future dynasty.

In considering all of this material together, three broader topics deserve specific mention. The first is the way in which the theme of dynastic preservation in the face of those who would oppose David is advanced, not only in the action of the story, but also in the crafting of its language. We see this concern highlighted in the comparative use of אָלָה, which emphasizes the safety of David’s progeny in contrast to the defeat of his enemies. We also see in all of the Philistine war tales marked by the pronoun the external threat to his rule and his continued success in the face of it, particularly with Yahweh’s support. I would include the studies which touch on Joab, such as that of the root תָּקע and the use of imperatives in Joab’s speech to David after Absalom’s death, because Joab’s role in the narrative is critically bound together with the success of David’s rule. 436 This is clear in a story such as the taking of Rabbah, but it is certainly visible elsewhere. It is through Joab’s help that the acquisition of Bathsheba is secured; it is under Joab’s command that the threat of Absalom is removed; it is Joab who can address the king harshly when circumstances are dire (e.g. 2 Sam 19:6-8). The theme of preserving David’s reign, and any sons who might be needed to succeed him, recurs throughout 2 Samuel. And this theme is emphasized, developed and nuanced by the careful, intentional use of particular language in key locations which alert us to deeper layers of the message.

436 Poor Joab. David repays him with violence (1 Kgs 2:5-6), but to my mind David should have given him a medal.
A second issue which a number of the collected studies touch on is that of the “appendix” (2 Sam 21-24). Most importantly we should note, following some works like that of Auld and Brueggemann, that the material in the “appendix” should not be ignored or treated as too miscellaneous to incorporate into larger syntheses of Samuel scholarship. The distribution of the war tales by the הָלָה-hand supports the contention that the content and position of the text in the final chapters are meaningful. The discussion of parallels and influence between material from the “appendix,” most prominently the census account, and Numbers points to the importance of appreciating compositional questions which extend beyond a discrete work, even when that work (such as the Deuteronomistic History) is quite large. I suspect that the influence of the David story can be seen in many texts, only some of which are routinely addressed (and some are explored here such as the relationship between 2 Sam and Gen 38).

A final topic is that of the relationship between the large, discreet story in 2 Samuel and the small units of material in the book which are not always included in this larger tale (SN/CH/SKD/TB). Though this topic is only peripherally dealt with in the course of this work, the distribution pattern of the הָלָה-marked passages may suggest a line of further inquiry. In the same way that the use of this particular pronoun does not pervade the core story of David (even where we might expect it), other unusual language features or functions may also exhibit similar distribution. Exploration of this possibility could help to better appreciate the nature and breadth/boundaries of this narrative unit within 2 Samuel.

A Short Reflection on the Nature of Historical (?) Writing in 2 Samuel

Events themselves do not typically occur in patterns.
M. Brettler, The Creation of History in Ancient Israel

Perhaps always, but especially in the last three decades, the history of ancient Israel has been a loaded topic. Scholarly and popular argument over the historicity (i.e. reliability) of the biblical account can be at times dramatic and emotional. In published works, at conferences and in social settings, anecdotes of name-calling and accusations of anti-Semitism, which certainly should not be alleged lightly, abound. The expansion of the so-called minimalist school of thought and the

437 See n. 162.
scholarly reaction to (and perhaps sometimes conversation with) it, requires that anyone working with the biblical text do so with an extra layer of responsibility and, perhaps, skepticism. Though this topic is far too large to address comprehensively, and could take us far afield of the narrowly defined studies presented here, I would like to offer a brief comment which stems from those humble elements of language examined throughout this work.

Each of the previous studies provides some opportunity to consider the issue of historical writing in the Hebrew Bible. That is to say, did the compositional processes, which brought us all of these textual “irritants,” come about with the intention of preserving a history of David? It is almost hard to believe that the investigation of such small details of pronouns and verb forms is relevant to such a big-picture question as the creation of a history of ancient Israel. But, I think that these details serve to root our big-picture speculations in something concrete. However, these details do not necessary coalesce to form a foundation on which a “reliable” history might stand. In fact, the more of these small grammatical details and language patterns I analyzed, the less certain of a “history” did I become.

This work began with the presupposition that careful examination of language, even details which seem too small to be important, would yield additional information about how the author means to present the character and actions of David and his place in the imagination of ancient Israel. That is, in addition to overt plot points, the author uses subtleties in the language to convey doubts, accusations, motivations, allegiances or betrayals of the characters. And that these subtleties are almost a kind of code that may have only been accessible to certain members of the audience. In this way the text can function on multiple levels simultaneously. At the end of this work I think this is true, and that the preceding case studies demonstrate a number of examples of this phenomenon. However, I think that this is so true, that I am in doubt as to whether an author could have meant for this work to be a “history.” Can something so full of literary devices, narrative patterns, and dexterous textual connections reflect a series of historical events which could not have possible transpired in such perfectly clever ways?

Regardless of one’s particular take on the redactions of individual verses or the attribution of passages to this-or-that editorial hand, it seems relatively safe to say that the composers of what
scholarship typically considers to be the Deuteronomistic History set out with the intention of
telling the account of Israel’s past from the time of the settlement in the land to the expulsion
from it.\textsuperscript{438} This assertion, that the intention of the text is to tell a history,\textsuperscript{439} is especially the
case, I think, when we consider the material presented in the books of Kings. However, the
narrative complexity, carefully composed structure, and literary sophistication of the language in
2 Samuel suggests to me that the composer of the David story was “telling” less and “creating”
more.\textsuperscript{440} Given the extent of literary fashioning outlined in the case studies in this work, as well
as countless additional features of craftsmanship not addressed in these studies, I find the
supposition that there is a reliable, or even partially reliable, history of events in the David story
waiting to be reconstructed if we only know how to read the narrative properly to be an uncertain
one. So as not to end on so negative a note, I will attempt to frame the issue a different way. If
the intent of the author of David’s story was the recording of a history, then the extent to which
he employed his detailed and pervasive and subtle language-craft (far beyond a mere chiasm here
and a thematic parallel there), must encourage us to define his notion of history as one which
embraces, and perhaps requires, the portrayal of life as a series of patterns, even if the patterns
are of his own making.

\textsuperscript{438} On the issue of authorial intent in this regard, see Halpern, \textit{First Historians}, 266-278.
\textsuperscript{439} To borrow Brettler’s (perhaps overly broad) definition. After reviewing a number of ways to define, or describe,
“history,” he settles on defining “historical narrative within biblical studies as ‘a narrative that presents a past.
\textsuperscript{440} Though I would not necessarily hold them to a decade-old opinion, I found an anecdote related in an essay by S.
McKenzie to be quite relevant here. “At the 1994 annual meeting of the SBL in Chicago in a special reception
honoring Frank Cross, I found myself eavesdropping on a conversation between Gary Knoppers and Robert Wilson.
They were agreeing that it was the books of Samuel they found problematic in trying to understand the
Deuteronomistic History. Imagine my surprise to learn that the trouble was not with Kings at all but with Samuel.”
S. McKenzie, “The Divided Kingdom in Deuteronomistic History,” in \textit{The Future of the Deuteronomistic History}
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