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THE END OF KINGS AS PRESAGING AN EXODUS:
THE FUNCTION OF THE JEHOIACHIN EPILOGUE (2 KGS 25:27–30)
IN LIGHT OF PARALLELS WITH THE JOSEPH STORY IN GENESIS*

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Introduction

Søren Kierkegaard has been quoted as saying, “Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.” Or to put it more popularly, as the saying goes, “Hindsight is 20-20.” While the meaning of an event may initially escape one at the time of its occurrence, in retrospect, its meaning is often grasped.¹ What is true on the individual level, in one’s attempt to understand their life, is also true for the work of the historian. Historiographical writing is an attempt to understand the meaning of history by the telling of the past in a certain way. As James Axtell has observed, the writing of the past to this end requires historians to distinguish “larger patterns, structures and meanings behind particular events and facts.”² Some have argued that patterning, or we could say some type of typology, is present in any narrative, historical or otherwise.³

The search for analogies, connections, patterns, or types is not unusual or limited to theological approaches. As von Rad has asserted:

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1. Blenkinsopp, “Biographical Patterns,” 27.
2. Axtell, “History as Imagination,” 457. Axtell goes on to note that for this “hindsight is indispensable.” Cf. Long, *Art of Biblical History*, 68–72.
3. As Cook (“‘Fiction’ and History,” 28) asserts, “Typology is loosely but intermittently present . . . in any narrative, historiographic or fictional.”

Typological thinking is in itself very far from being an esoteric form of proof which belongs only to theology. It rises out of man's [*sic*] universal effort to understand the phenomena about him on the basis of concrete analogies, an effort to which both philosophers and poets of every age have devoted themselves.⁴

Thus, we should not be surprised that biblical historiography evinces typological thinking. Biblical historiography maintained a typological perspective on history, particularly regarding significant events in salvation history.⁵

In biblical scholarship, discussions of typology usually occur in reference to the relationship between the testaments. However, some studies have also highlighted typological approaches within the Old Testament (hereafter, OT) itself.⁶ Typological thinking is particularly evident in the latter prophets and their viewing God's actions in the past as a "type" of the deliverance he is doing now or will do in the future.⁷ In understanding history typologically, past events that reveal Yahweh's resolution to deliver or bless Israel function as "types" to indicate God will act similarly in the future. As Lunde writes, "history itself is understood to be prophetic of God's ultimate purposes, which will one day be consummated historically."⁸

If typological thinking was a dominant concern of biblical historiography, then allusions to "types" in the so-called Deuteronomistic History (hereafter, DH) should not be surprising. In fact, a typological understanding of a passage may be the key to grasping its intended meaning(s). In this article, I suggest that one such passage that should be understood typologically is the concluding episode of the book of Kings, the story of Jehoiachin's release under Evil-merodach (2 Kgs 25:27–30). In

4. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology I*, 364.

5. In fact, as Lunde ("Introduction," 18) asserts, even in a theological approach "typology amounts to a perspective on history."

6. See Hummel, "Old Testament Basis," 41; von Rad, "Interpretation"; von Rad, "Typological Interpretation"; Bird, "Typological Interpretation," 41; Brettler, *Creation of History*, 48–50.

7. As Bird ("Typological Interpretation," 41) writes, "To know what YHWH *would do* [Israel] looked to *what he had already done*."

8. Lunde, "Introduction," 20.

what follows, I will draw attention to significant parallels between this pericope and the story of Joseph's emancipation and exaltation in Genesis, in order to establish that in 2 Kgs 25:27–30 the Deuteronomist⁹ (hereafter, Dtr) purposefully alludes to the story of Joseph in the Jehoiachin passage. Then, in light of this allusion, the discussion will consider what this concluding pericope of the DH said to its original audience regarding the future of Israel. Finally, I will offer some reflection on patterns in salvation history.

Interpreting the Ending of Kings

As is well known, this concluding pericope in the book of Kings, which describes the release of Jehoiachin from prison and the distinctive treatment he receives at the hands of the Babylonian king, is a crux of interpretation. Martin Noth famously resisted any positive interpretation of the event.¹⁰ Regardless of the fact that Jehoiachin's release is clearly a positive turn of events for Judah's king, Noth refused to see it as ameliorating the pessimistic outlook of the history regarding the future of Israel. Noth held that Dtr's "whole history" was explained as "a divine judgement."¹¹ There is no room for hope at the end of the book, as the judgment was seen "as something final and definitive."¹² Thus, according to Noth, in the closing pericope Dtr did not intend to stir up hope in his readers, but only intended to report "the last information that he [had] about the history of the

9. By the Deuteronomist I mean the exilic author of Joshua–2 Kings. As I have written elsewhere (in Evans, *Invasion of Sennacherib*, 25), in my judgment, recognizing Dtr as one exilic author "makes better sense of the data without multiplying assumptions. Dtr incorporated large blocks of material in some instances (especially in Samuel and Joshua), and in other instances he creatively composed narratives based on the information available to him (annals, etc.)."

10. Noth, *Deuteronomistic History*, 97–99.

11. *Ibid.*, 98.

12. *Ibid.*, 97.

Judaean monarchy as a simple fact” due to his “usual scrupulous respect for historical fact.”¹³

In my judgment, Noth’s interpretation of the function of this pericope is based on a selective reading of the History. It suffers from a myopic focus on the sins of the monarchy and overlooks promises of perpetuity to the Davidic house—perpetuity promised despite their disobedience (cf. 2 Sam 7:14–15). Furthermore, it ignores prophetic statements regarding the efficacy of repentance and God’s commitment to his people even after they disobey (e.g., 1 Kgs 6).

Gerhard von Rad rejected Noth’s reading of the pericope, emphasizing the “problem of how the word of Jahweh functioned in history.”¹⁴ While Deuteronomy did contain grave warnings and threats, as did other prophetic voices, there was also the prophetic word of a promise of salvation, which had yet to be fulfilled. Thus, von Rad viewed the end of Kings as a hopeful outlook that pointed “to a possibility with which Jahweh can resume.”¹⁵ Thus, von Rad concluded that the DH contained “a messianic *motif*,”¹⁶ as Dtr wanted his readers to expect God to fulfill his word of salvation in regards to the Davidic line. Other scholars contributed to this line of interpretation by focusing on the role of the promise to the Davidic line in 2 Sam 7 to Dtr’s theology.¹⁷ In fact, theories of multiple redaction of the history are largely based on recognition of these hopeful promises to David in contrast to the antimonarchical outlook of the latter part of the history.¹⁸ Consequently, many have viewed these final

13. Ibid., 98. So Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 330; Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 277–89; Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige*, 481–84; and Schmidt, “Deuteronomistisches Geschichtswerk,” 112. Begg (“Significance of Jehoiachin’s Release,” 54) largely supports Noth’s reading of the pericope but suggests that its function was to encourage submission to Babylon by showing the Babylonian king acting favorably.

14. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology I*, 343. Cf. von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy*, 74–91.

15. Ibid., 343.

16. Ibid., 344.

17. E.g., McCarthy, “II Samuel 7”; Brueggemann, “Kerygma,” 402.

18. See Cross, “Themes of the Book of Kings”; and Veijola, *Die ewige Dynastie*.

verses in Kings as holding out hope for the restoration of the Davidic monarchy in the future.¹⁹

This interpretation has much to commend it. The fact that the focus is on a Davidide being given a throne (כִּסֵּא) resonates with the promises of perpetuity for the Davidic dynasty. However, it is curious that there is no fulfillment notice.²⁰ One could imagine something like “this is to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Nathan, that there would always be a son of David on the throne” or perhaps something less specific but similar to the fulfillment notice found earlier in the same chapter where the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem is explicitly stated by Dtr to be “according to Yahweh’s word that he spoke by his servants the prophets” (2 Kgs 24:2).²¹

Furthermore, there is no mention of Jehoiachin having descendants with him in Babylon, and the text ends, implying the death of Jehoiachin (“all the days of his life”). This is not to suggest that the Davidic line died out with Jehoiachin—we know from elsewhere in Scripture (1 Chr 3:17–24) and Babylonian records (cf. ANET 308) that Jehoiachin did have sons who lived on after him—but they are nowhere mentioned in Kings!²² Thus, if the text really wanted to emphasize the perpetuity of the Davidic line it could have made even some passing reference to sons but it does not.

Also, while the reference to the “throne” that is given to this Davidide intimates something about the future of the Davidic monarchy, this throne is not given by Yahweh (contra 2 Sam 7:12–13), nor is the throne over his own kingdom (contra the explicit “throne of his kingdom” [כִּסֵּא מַמְלַכְתּוֹ] referenced in 2 Sam 7:13).²³ In fact, the reference to “all the days of [Jehoiachin’s] life” (כָּל יְמֵי חַיָּו) (2 Kgs 25:30) could be read as an

19. E.g., Ackroyd, *Exile and Restoration*, 79–81; Levenson, “Last Four Verses”; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 368–69; Provan, “Messiah,” 71–76.

20. Begg, “Significance of Jehoiachin’s Release,” 51, 55.

21. Wolff, “Kerygma,” 86.

22. Contra Provan (“Messiah,” 72) who finds them implied in the reference to his wives being taken as exiles. However, no sons are actually mentioned.

23. Cf. Begg, “Significance of Jehoiachin’s Release,” 55.

allusion to the promise in 1 Kgs 11:36 which refers to David having “a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name” for “all days” [כל־הימים].²⁴ However, this emphasis in 1 Kgs 11:36 on the location of the throne being *in Jerusalem* undermines the significance of the throne in 2 Kgs 25:28 as fulfilling the promises to David since it is *in Babylon*. While the reference to a throne above other kings has resonance with texts regarding the throne of the Davidide in the Psalms (e.g., Pss 2, 45, 89, 110), this throne given to Jehoiachin is still below that of the Babylonian king.²⁵ Thus, it is difficult to see a direct connection between this positive turn of events and the fulfillment of the Nathan oracle or the Royal psalms. However, I must agree with von Rad when he writes that this is “an indication of the fact that the line of David has not come to an irrevocable end.”²⁶

Other scholars have rejected both a Nothian and a von Radian reading but still assert that this closing pericope functions to give an optimistic conclusion to the book of Kings and to offer some hope for the exiles. Hans Walter Wolff has asserted that the end of the book is hopeful, but not because of the fulfillment of the promises to David, which, according to Wolff, Dtr viewed as null and void due to the disobedience of the Davidic monarchs.²⁷ Wolff suggests that the Jehoiachin pericope holds out hope for the exiles if they “return/repent” (שוב), pointing to the historical pattern in the DH of “apostasy” followed by a “turning to Yahweh” (a pattern most clearly seen in the book of Judges).²⁸ Thus, according to Wolff, in his conclusion to the DH, Dtr presents this story of Jehoiachin, not to encourage a messianic hope, but to show “God is still acting for his people.”²⁹ That is, in the conclusion to his history Dtr did not combine his idea of

24. Murray (“Of All the Years,” 262) calls this a “grotesque parody.”

25. Nelson (*First and Second Kings*, 266) reads the mention of the throne given to Jehoiachin in contrast to the throne of Solomon, and views Jehoiachin’s throne as ironic and emphasizing Jehoiachin’s powerlessness.

26. von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy*, 91.

27. Wolff, “Kerygma,” 86.

28. *Ibid.*, 88.

29. *Ibid.*, 99.

repentance/return “with any *specific* hope”—yet it is hopeful nonetheless.³⁰

Wolff convincingly demonstrates that a key message (or “kerygma”) of the DH was one of returning to Yahweh and is a valuable contribution; however, his conclusions regarding the function of the Jehoiachin story are not as convincing. In 2 Kgs 25:27–30 there is no mention of a “cry” from Jehoiachin in exile (as we find in the Judges pattern) or any “turning” or “repentance.”³¹ In my judgment, this considerably undermines Wolff’s interpretation of the Jehoiachin pericope.

Donald Murray has argued for a somewhat hopeful reading of the Jehoiachin pericope, similarly rejecting messianic or Davidic hopes being voiced therein.³² However, Murray connects this pericope with Solomon’s prayer in 1 Kgs 8, which requests that, if the people repent, God might “forgive” his people “and give them compassion before their captors, so that their captors will have compassion on them” (1 Kgs 8:50).³³ Since this concluding pericope depicts Jehoiachin’s captor having “compassion” on him, Murray suggests this is an “attenuated allusion” to Solomon’s prayer.³⁴ He notes that nothing in Solomon’s prayer suggests that repentance would lead necessarily to a restored Davidic monarchy, or a return, but merely to a better existence in exile. Thus, Murray concludes that this pericope is not concerned with kingship or a return from exile, but with the quality of life in exile and the hope for the exiles to be treated compassionately by their captors.³⁵

However, Murray does not convincingly demonstrate this supposed “resonance” with 1 Kgs 8:50. First, as already noted, the Jehoiachin episode makes no mention of repentance (שוב).

30. Ibid.

31. Others have read this story similarly to Wolff. Begg (“Significance of Jehoiachin’s Release,” 51) noticed the fact that no repentance is referenced, while Levenson (“Last Four Verses,” 359–60) did not. Cf. Murray, “Of All the Years,” 247 n. 8.

32. Murray, “Of All the Years”.

33. All quotations of Scripture in this article are my own translations.

34. Murray, “Of All the Years,” 265.

35. Ibid., 264–65.

Yet in Solomon's prayer, God will move their captors to show compassion to them only

If they change [שוב] their heart in the land where they are held captive and repent [שוב] and plead with you in the land of their captors, saying "We sinned and have done wrong and acted wickedly" and they turn [שוב] unto you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive and they pray unto you toward their land . . . (1 Kgs 8:47–48).

In these two verses, the verb שׁוּב ("to turn" or "repent") is used three times along with three separate verbs (רָשַׁע, עָוָה, חָטָא) employed to denote confessing their sins and two verbs (פָּלַל, חָנַן) for entreating God's favor in prayer. Repentance, confession, and prayer are such key elements in Solomon's prayer that their absence in the Jehoiachin episode severely undermines any putative connection between the two texts. Seeing as Murray offers no shared vocabulary to connect the Jehoiachin pericope with 1 Kgs 8:50, the supposed resonances hardly resonate at all.³⁶ Furthermore, concluding that this pericope merely depicts the captor showing mercy does not explain the high position Jehoiachin is given (a throne above all the other kings and a permanent place to eat before the high king).

Jeremy Schipper has concluded similarly that the function of the Jehoiachin episode was to present hope for a good life in exile. However, Schipper does not appeal to Solomon's prayer in 1 Kgs 8:50 but instead detects "significant resonances" between the Jehoiachin episode and the story of Mephibosheth in 2 Sam 9.³⁷ Just as Mephibosheth, the last of Saul's line, was shown mercy and given table fellowship with the new reigning monarch (David), so Jehoiachin, the supposed last in David's line, is

36. Cf. Schipper, "Significant Resonances," 523.

37. Of course, this connection has been suggested before, though others have concluded the message was concerning monarchy, while Schipper argues that it is a message concerning the quality of life in exile. See Birch, "1–2 Samuel," 1273; Hertzberg, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 300; McCarter, *II Samuel*, 261; Miscall, *I Samuel*, 22; Granowski, "Jehoiachin," 183–84; Exum, *Tragedy*, 149; Polzin, *David and the Deuteronomist*, 103–4; Ceresko, "Identity," 29–30; Sweeney, "King Manasseh," 273.

treated similarly by the new reigning monarch (Evil-merodach). Since Mephibosheth's treatment implies no resurrection to the Saulide dynasty, the Jehoiachin pericope does not give hope for a restoration of the Davidic monarchy.³⁸ Thus, Schipper concludes similarly to Murray that the Jehoiachin pericope functions to provide hope for a tolerable life in exile, without hope of a revived Davidic dynasty.³⁹

Unlike Murray, Schipper points to shared imagery and vocabulary between these two passages to argue for the legitimacy of the allusion to Mephibosheth's story. Schipper notes shared "disability" vocabulary between the two passages. In 2 Sam 9:13 Mephibosheth is described as "lame" (פסח).⁴⁰ In 2 Kgs 25:7 Zedekiah is "blinded" (עור). Since "lame" (פסח) is often paired with "blinded" (עור) in other OT texts (e.g., Exod 4:11; Lev 21:18; Deut 15:21; 2 Sam 5:6, 8; Jer 31:8; Job 29:15), Schipper sees a connection, asserting that it "suggests some overlap in the characterizations of the 'blind' Zedekiah and the 'lame' Mephibosheth."⁴¹ However, in my judgment, the putative connection of the "disability" vocabulary is unconvincing. While Mephibosheth is explicitly called "lame," Jehoiachin has no such disability. The fact that Zedekiah is blinded does not seem relevant here, especially since the word "blinded" (עור) is not found in Mephibosheth's story. The connection is unconvincing.

Schipper also notes the imagery of the "place at the king's table" that connects these passages.⁴² Mephibosheth is explicitly said to share David's table, and Jehoiachin is said to eat "before" the Babylonian king. In this regard, Schipper notes the use of the word "continually" (תמיד), which is used in both stories regarding the respective eating of Jehoiachin and Mephibosheth (2 Kgs 25:29, 30; 2 Sam 9:7, 13).⁴³ Schipper asserts that this

38. So Exum (*Tragedy*, 149) argues.

39. Schipper, "Significant Resonances," 523.

40. Ceresko suggests that this connects Mephibosheth to Zedekiah who is blinded by the Babylonians and thus also has a disability ("Identity," 29).

41. Schipper, "Significant Resonances," 524.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

connects “Jehoiachin’s and Mephibosheth’s fates through the imagery of the table.”⁴⁴

However, while this notion of the “shared table” may evoke somewhat similar imagery between the two, it must be noted that only in 2 Sam 9 is there a reference to a table (שֻׁלְחָן). In fact, the Mephibosheth story uses the word multiple times (2 Sam 9:7, 10, 13). The Jehoiachin pericope, on the other hand, does not refer to it *at all*. In fact, the shared table in Mephibosheth’s story is quite different than the situation described in 2 Kgs 25. In the latter, the Babylonian king provides food for Jehoiachin (25:30). In the former, Mephibosheth is said to eat only from what his own estate provides—David does not provide food for Mephibosheth (2 Sam 9:10). In fact, most scholars have argued that the Jehoiachin episode does not actually indicate a literal shared table with the king and that לִפְנֵי does not mean literally “in his presence” but rather indicates that the provision is granted *by* the Babylonian king.⁴⁵ In other words, the shared table imagery is not in fact present in the Jehoiachin pericope.

As far as the significance of the reference to the word “continually” (תָּמִיד) in both pericopes, this also is unconvincing, as the use of the word is not consistent between the two. In 2 Sam 9 the word is used three times.⁴⁶ First, David tells Mephibosheth “you will always (תָּמִיד) eat bread at my table” (2 Sam 9:7), then, when addressing Ziba, David asserts “Mephibosheth, your master’s grandson, will always (תָּמִיד) eat bread at my table” (2 Sam 9:10). Finally, in verse 13 the narrator notes that Mephibosheth “always (תָּמִיד) ate at the king’s table.” In each instance there is an emphasis on the eating “always” being at David’s “table.”

In the Jehoiachin pericope the narrator notes that, for the rest of Jehoiachin’s life, he “always (תָּמִיד) ate bread before him”

44. Ibid.

45. E.g., Murray (“Of All the Years,” 259) suggests that לִפְנֵי in 2 Kgs 25:29 does not literally mean “in his presence” but carries the sense of “under his superintendence, at his direction.” Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 329) translate לִפְנֵי as “by his favor.”

46. Contra Schipper (“Significant Resonances,” 524) who states that “the word ‘continually’ (תָּמִיד) is used twice,” noting 2 Sam 9:7 and 13.

(2 Kgs 25:29), a use of the word “always” quite similar to that in the Mephibosheth story, though lacking the key word “table.” Then, in 2 Kgs 25:30 the allowance given Jehoiachin is referred to as a “continual (תמיד) allowance,” which is a somewhat dissimilar use, as it is used to describe the continual nature of Jehoiachin’s allowance rather than his “always” eating at the king’s table.

While it is true that with תמיד we have an actual lexical connection between these two stories, we must keep in mind that in recounting the events of Jehoiachin’s release, some vocabulary probably could not have been avoided. That is, the use of the word “continual” (תמיד) was necessitated by the concomitant facts—Jehoiachin’s allowance from the king was ongoing. More significant is the absence of the word “table” in the Jehoiachin pericope. If an intentional allusion to the Mephibosheth story had been meant, why would Dtr not use the word “table”? In sum, in my judgment this lexical connection is not enough evidence to suggest an intentional allusion to the Mephibosheth story.

Furthermore, important differences between these two stories undermine the Mephibosheth–Jehoiachin connection. First, unlike Jehoiachin, Mephibosheth is not a prisoner. When David calls for him, he is not imprisoned but is living “at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar” (2 Sam 9:4, 5). Second, despite David’s grace shown to Mephibosheth, there is no mention of Mephibosheth having any type of exalted status analogous to Jehoiachin. He is given a place at the king’s table, but is not exalted above others, etc. Finally, while it is emphasized in Samuel that Mephibosheth was the last in Saul’s line (2 Sam 9:1, 3), there is *no reference* to Jehoiachin being the last in David’s line. Yet this is the main putative parallel that supposedly connects these passages. While it is true that there is no explicit mention of the sons of Jehoiachin, it is also clear that the author does not refer to him as the last in the Davidic line. As interesting as the connection with Mephibosheth may be, I do not see the connection being strong enough to adhere to this interpretation.

David Janzen has analyzed the Jehoiachin pericope in light of the Deuteronomistic ideology concerning the punishment of royal dynasties in the DH and concluded that the ending is purposefully ambiguous.⁴⁷ He notes: (1) dynasties in Northern Israel that “cause the people to sin”⁴⁸ are either completely destroyed, removed from power, or taken into exile, or (2) the Davidic king, Manasseh, causes the people to sin, thus making it logical that the Davidic royal house would be destroyed. However, he notes that in the DH there are exceptions to these rules, pointing to Jehu as an example. Even in the Northern kingdom Jehu was viewed as a special situation due to his elimination of Baal worship and the house of Ahab (2 Kgs 10:18–27) and was promised a dynasty of five generations for that (2 Kgs 10:30; 15:12). Thus, the case of Jehu implies that exceptions are possible. Returning to the case of the Davidic dynasty then, it seems likely that the promise of perpetuity to the house of David in 2 Sam 7 may make the Davidic line a special case as well. While it is true that God can revoke eternal covenants as is said to have done regarding the Elide (1 Sam 2:30) and Saulide houses (1 Sam 13:13), the Davidic covenant is *never* explicitly revoked. Yet the parallel to Mephibosheth could lead one to view the fate of the Davidides in line with that of the house of Saul “who were not completely wiped out, but who did not rule again.”⁴⁹

Therefore, Janzen suggests that the precedent of northern dynasties leads the reader to see the Davidic line coming to an end, since one of their own led the people to sin (Manasseh). The parallel with Mephibosheth may lead some to see the Jehoiachin pericope as indicating the end of the rule of Davidides. Yet the promises to David may suggest that, like Jehu in the North, the house of David is a special case. Thus, we could expect a future for the Davidic house.

Thus, Janzen concludes that we cannot choose between these two options regarding what Dtr intended with this closing pe-

47. Janzen, “Ambiguous Ending”.

48. *Ibid.*, 55.

49. *Ibid.*, 56.

ricope. In some way this is simply describing the current lack of consensus on the interpretation of this pericope among scholars. Janzen writes: “Writing in the exile—or possibly in the early post-exilic period—the Deuteronomist simply wishes to hedge his or her bets.”⁵⁰ Writing at a time when the jury was still out regarding the future of the Davidic monarchy, he was ambivalent.

The Allusion to the Joseph Story

Leaving aside Janzen’s conclusion of intentional ambiguity for the moment regarding the meaning of this final concluding pericope in the History, as mentioned previously, the present article detects attempts to underscore an allusion to the Joseph story from Genesis.⁵¹ This allusion is established on the basis of shared vocabulary and significant parallels in situational contexts. This thesis is further supported by the recognition of the typological tendencies of Dtr. Finally, in light of the dissimilar historical situations of Joseph and Jehoiachin, the intentional nature of the allusion is brought into relief. In my judgment, these factors taken together point to a purposeful allusion to the Joseph story on the part of the author of 2 Kings.

Shared Vocabulary

In 2 Kgs 25:27, when the Babylonian monarch releases Jehoiachin from prison, the expression used is “lift the head” (נשא ראש). The combination of נשא and ראש occurs 20 times in the OT, but the majority of the time it refers to the taking of a census (Exod 30:12; Num 1:2, 49; 4:2, 22; 26:2; 31:26, 49), which is obviously not the sense here. Elsewhere, the phrase is used to denote the opening of doors (Ps 24:7, 9), which again

50. Ibid., 58.

51. Granowski (“Jehoiachin,” 185) underscores an allusion to the Joseph narrative in this story, but rather than seeing it as functioning positively, he views it as an ironic allusion, as it compares Joseph’s “political empowerment” with Jehoiachin’s “powerlessness.” He holds that the Jehoiachin pericope also alludes to the Abraham and Mephibosheth stories.

does not apply to our context.⁵² At other times (e.g., Pss 24:7, 9; 83:3; Zech 2:4; Job 10:15) it refers metaphorically to the confidence and triumph of a raised head, as opposed to that of a bowed head, which depicts humiliation and misery.⁵³ Again, this also does not compare with the usage in Jehoiachin's case. In fact, the only occurrences of the phrase in the OT that carry the same sense as that of 2 Kgs 25 come from the Joseph story in Genesis (Gen 40:13, 19–20).⁵⁴ In Gen 40 Joseph and his fellow prisoners, the cupbearer and the baker, are in Pharaoh's prison, and the expression "lift the head" (נשא ראש) is found three times to indicate the freeing of a prisoner.⁵⁵ This is a unique lexical connection that indicates a link between the Jehoiachin pericope and the Joseph story.

Parallels in Contexts

The stories of Joseph's exaltation and Jehoiachin's elevation display significant parallels. First, both are exiles in a foreign land.⁵⁶ Second, both Joseph and Jehoiachin are *imprisoned* in exile. Here it is important to note that life in the Babylonian exile did not necessarily mean life in prison, as it is clear that most exiles were not actually incarcerated. As Noth explains, "the exiles were not 'prisoners' but represented a compulsorily transplanted subject population who were able to move about

52. Once it refers to the literal carrying of a head (Saul's) in 1 Chr 10:9.

53. Murray, "Of All the Years," 253 n. 21.

54. Harvey, "Jehoiachin and Joseph," 54; Chan, "Joseph and Jehoiachin," 570.

55. Even Murray ("Of All the Years," 253), who dismisses any actual connection with the Joseph story, notes that these instances in Genesis are "Most relevant" to the usage in 2 Kings 25, as "their context most closely resembles our present text, in that there, as here, the expression is used in connection with the release of prisoners by a sovereign." Cf. Marcus, "Lifting Up the Head," 22; and Sulzberger, *Am Ha-Aretz*, 56–58.

56. Chan ("Joseph and Jehoiachin," 571) has suggested that the reference to Judahites fleeing to Egypt to escape the Babylonians in 2 Kgs 25 further connects the Joseph story, since "Jacob and his family went down to Egypt to escape drought in Canaan." However, seeing as Jehoiachin is in Babylon, not Egypt, it is difficult to see this reference to Egypt as contributing to the allusion.

freely in their daily life.”⁵⁷ Similarly, Donner notes, “The exiles were not forced to live in inhuman conditions . . . [and] remained free and certainly should not be understood as slaves.”⁵⁸ For example, Jeremiah advises exiles to “Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce” (Jer 29:5).⁵⁹ Also, the biblical narratives of exiles in Daniel and Esther suggest that many if not most exiles were not incarcerated but lived somewhat independently.⁶⁰ Thus, the fact that Jehoiachin, like Joseph, was imprisoned is a significant parallel that further links these stories.

Third, both Joseph and Jehoiachin are released from incarceration as a result of the reigning monarch’s direct involvement (Gen 41:14; 2 Kgs 25:27).⁶¹ Fourth, both Joseph and Jehoiachin change their clothes upon their release from prison (Gen 41:14, 42; 2 Kgs 25:29). The thematic role of clothing in the Joseph narrative is well known.⁶² Joseph is given a special robe by his father (Gen 37:3), and the robe is taken by the brothers (Gen 37:23) and then used to deceive their father (Gen 37:31–32). Later Joseph again loses his robe unjustly in refusing Potiphar’s wife (Gen 37:12), and this garment is used to deceive Joseph’s master (Gen 37:15–18). Joseph eventually has

57. Noth, *History of Israel*, 296.

58. Donner, “Separate States,” 421, 433. Cf. Bright, *History of Israel*, 345.

59. Cf. Ezek 33:30–33.

60. As Ackroyd (*Exile and Restoration*, 32) writes, their situation seems to be one “of reasonable freedom, of settlement in communities—perhaps engaged in work for the Babylonians, but possibly simply engaged in normal agricultural life—of the possibility of marriage, of the ordering of their own affairs, of relative prosperity.”

61. Chan (“Joseph and Jehoiachin,” 572) has pointed out that in the Joseph narrative the baker is freed on the occasion of the Pharaoh’s birthday, which is similar to the end of Kings where the Babylonian king frees Jehoiachin at the beginning of his reign. Chan writes, “The former celebrates the first days of the king’s life, and the latter the first days of his reign.” While this is interesting, it does not seem to be an obvious parallel to me, and borders on special pleading to acknowledge.

62. Cf. Kolarcik, “Clothing and Reconciliation”; Green, “*What Profit for Us?*”.

a change of garments given to him upon his elevation by Pharaoh (Gen 41:42) and finally gives his brothers new garments (and Benjamin five garments) after their reconciliation (Gen 45:22). Given the extreme brevity of the Jehoiachin pericope in comparison to the Joseph novella, the reference to a wardrobe change is significant.⁶³ In light of the parallels with the Joseph story already highlighted in this article, the mention of Jehoiachin's change of clothing further strengthens the connection between these two stories.

Fifth, in both stories, the freed captive is given a position above all others, save the high king himself. In 2 Kgs 25:28 Jehoiachin is given a throne above all the other kings in Babylon (other than the high king), and in Gen 41:40 Joseph is given a position second only to the Pharaoh.⁶⁴ The uniqueness of this parallel strongly suggests that in the Jehoiachin pericope an allusion to the Joseph story is being made. This supposition is strengthened when one examines in detail the exact phrase in which this is communicated. In Gen 41:40 Pharaoh says:

“Only [in regards to] the throne I will be greater than you.”
 רק הכסא אגדל ממך

Similarly, in 2 Kgs 25:28 Jehoiachin is given a “throne” (כסא) above all other kings but the Babylonian high king, Evil-merodach. In other words, both references to the conferring of rank on these once-imprisoned exiles are described in terms of a

63. Ackroyd (*Exile and Restoration*, 81) has noted the significance of Jehoiachin's wardrobe change, comparing it to Zech 3 and suggesting that “A change of raiment means a change of fortune, and so the indication of divine blessing is here.” Cf. Leithart, *I & 2 Kings*, 276–77.

64. Cogan and Tadmor (*II Kings*, 330 n. 5) have noted that “the motif of the elevation of a Judaeon to a position of influence at a foreign court” was not uncommon in exilic/postexilic literature and found parallels with the stories of Esther and Daniel (also Römer, *So-Called Deuteronomistic History*, 177). Chan (“Joseph and Jehoiachin,” 570) has noted that the parallels with Daniel only work when multiple stories within the book are considered (which he views were originally independent stories). Regarding the parallels with Esther, it seems clear that her position was *not* really analogous to that of Joseph, seeing as she took her life into her hands to even approach the king (Esth 4:16).

“throne” (כסא) with only the foreign high king being above them.⁶⁵

The Author’s Typological Tendencies

An examination of the DH reveals that the typological allusion to the Joseph narrative in 2 Kgs 25:27–30 is consistent with Dtr’s typological tendencies. Assuming a unity of authorship throughout the DH, it is clear that this is not the only time Dtr alludes to other OT events in his narratives. For example, the crossing of the Jordan River in Josh 3–5 is patterned after the Israelites crossing the Reed Sea.⁶⁶ The story in Judg 19 of the Levite and his concubine clearly alludes to the story of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis.⁶⁷ The story of Saul’s rescue of Jabesh-Gilead in turn alludes to the story from Judg 19.⁶⁸ Similarly, the story of Saul’s death in 1 Sam 31 alludes to the death of the evil king Abimelech in Judg 9 (as both ask their armor bearer to kill them).⁶⁹ This shows the author’s tendency to allude to another narrative to influence the reading of his own story. Furthermore, Dtr clearly uses people as types. David is used as the model or type of the righteous king, by which all other kings in the History are judged.⁷⁰ Similarly, Jeroboam functions as the type of the evil king to which the kings of Israel are continuously

65. Interestingly, Murray (“Of All the Years,” 256) notes this parallel in his article, but in a backhanded way that rejects any notion of a real parallel being made here. He writes, “Indeed, in terms of the similar story in Gen 40–41, the rise of Jehoiachin here . . . [promises] to emulate that of Joseph himself, raised above all others in the Egyptian kingdom except the pharaoh (Gen 41:40–44)!”

66. See Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 358–59; Zakovitch, “And You Shall Tell Your Son,” 61–62. Cf. Brettler, *Creation of History*, 50.

67. The similarities between Judg 19 and Gen 19 are well known. See Block, *Judges, Ruth*, 532; Boling, *Judges*, 277–79; Jüngling, *Richter 19*, 37–59; and Lasine, “Guest and Host”.

68. Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist*.

69. Cf. Klein, *I Samuel*, 288; Gordon, *I & II Samuel*, 202; Edelman, *King Saul*, 285; Bluedorn, *Yahweh versus Baalism*, 288.

70. E.g., 1 Kgs 9:4; 11:6; 11:38; 14:8; 15:3, 11; 2 Kgs 14:3; 15:38; 18:3; 22:2.

compared.⁷¹ In sum, it is clear that Dtr had typological tendencies, and a typological allusion at the conclusion of his history is consistent with this observation.

Jehoiachin in History

The intentional nature of this allusion is more clearly brought into relief when the actual historical circumstances of Jehoiachin's exile are considered. When Jehoiachin's exilic existence and Joseph's life in Egypt are compared, it is clear that the allusion to Joseph was not coincidental. That is to say that Jehoiachin's elevation was not *so like* that of Joseph's that it was 'coincidentally' or 'inevitably' described similarly. To prove this point, a brief historical description of Jehoiachin's actual experience in exile is necessary.

Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon in 597 BC after he capitulated to Nebuchadnezzar. Jehoiachin was likely imprisoned due to charges of treason or the like (or perhaps simply to ensure the good conduct of the subjected Judeans).⁷² His release in 561 BC by Evil-merodach (Amel-Marduk) was likely due to the custom of granting amnesty to a prisoner(s) in a king's ascension year.⁷³ Jehoiachin's presence in the Babylonian exile is confirmed by cuneiform documents that list the dry and liquid rations Jehoiachin received.⁷⁴ In fact, the amount issued to Jehoiachin is twenty times the standard issue.⁷⁵ This is consistent with the biblical portrait of the favor shown to Jehoiachin in our passage. However, despite the favorable treatment that the exceptional rations suggest, his situation was still one of an exilic captive.⁷⁶ Fritz's opinion is representative:

71. E.g., 1 Kgs 15:34; 16:2, 7, 19, 26, 31; 22:52; 2 Kgs 3:3; 10:29, 31; 13:2, 6; 13:11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 28; 17:22.

72. Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 329; Fritz, *I & 2 Kings*, 425.

73. Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 329; Gray, *I & 2 Kings*, 773.

74. Cf. Gray, *I & 2 Kings*, 774; Galling, *Textbuch*, 78–79. See ANET 308.

75. Goulder, "Behold My Servant," 176. Cf. ANET 308b.

76. Murray ("Of All the Years," 259) suggests that Jehoiachin's generous food allowance meant "merely that he was made [Evil-merodach's] dependent pensioner."

With circumstances being so vague, it is not clear what his privileges granted by Evil-merodach meant in reality. They probably did not mean a decisive change of his actual conditions at court, but rather a modification of the protocol, which raised his standing as the erstwhile king of Judah among the other prisoners of royal origin.⁷⁷

While the way in which Dtr describes Jehoiachin's amnesty recalls Joseph's elevation, their actual experiences were quite different. Joseph was placed in a position of true authority, whereby he could affect national policy. Conversely, Jehoiachin's elevation is only said to be above the other "kings who were with him in Babylon" (2 Kgs 25:28).⁷⁸ Who were these kings? Scholars speculate that they were other royal prisoners⁷⁹ who were "political prisoners or hostages."⁸⁰ Cogan and Tadmor speculate that they may be the kings of Tyre, Gaza, Sidon, Arvad, and Ashdod who are mentioned in the Unger Prism.⁸¹ Even if the identity of these other kings is unknown, it is clear we are talking about other captive kings from foreign lands. While Jehoiachin doubtless had some influence in this new position, it is clear that it should not be equated with the extent of Joseph's power and influence in Egypt.⁸²

In light of the dissimilarities between Jehoiachin's and Joseph's experiences, it is obvious that the description of the former in light of the latter must have been purposeful. This is not to suggest inaccuracy or deception on the part of Dtr. As V. Phillips Long observes, "few historians or philosophers would

77. Fritz, *I & 2 Kings*, 425.

78. Granowski ("Jehoiachin," 10) describes Jehoiachin's elevation as him taking "the place reserved for the preeminent vassal, the chief puppet king."

79. Fritz, *I & 2 Kings*, 425.

80. Gray, *I & 2 Kings*, 774.

81. Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 329. Cf. ANET 308a.

82. Furthermore, Jehoiachin's benefactor, Evil-merodach, had an extremely brief regency, as he was usurped by Neriglissar only two years into his reign. Cf. Sack, "Evil-Merodach"; Begg, "Significance of Jehoiachin's Release," 55. We have no evidence that this high state of favor towards the Davidic line would have been continued under the new Babylonian king. In fact, the text says nothing about the situation continuing beyond the life of Jehoiachin.

dispute the notion that writers of history make significant contributions” to their narratives.⁸³ All historiography is selective, and Dtr perceived a similarity between the events he was narrating and the pattern of salvation history represented in Joseph’s story (for more on this see below). In other words, Dtr did not falsify history (as cuneiform documents confirm Jehoiachin’s favorable treatment) but followed standard historical procedure. Regarding such procedure, Axtell writes, “since most historical sequences or collections of facts about past events can be ‘emplotted’ in a number of different ways so as to provide different interpretations, the historian makes an *aesthetic* choice based on the perceived fit between the facts as he knows them and a number of pre-coded plots.”⁸⁴ While Axtell distilled four “archetypal” plots, namely, “romance, tragedy, comedy and satire,”⁸⁵ for the biblical historian, one should add the plot of “salvation history” to this list.⁸⁶ The Deuteronomist perceived the “fit between the facts” of Jehoiachin’s release and of Joseph’s elevation and shaped his presentation of the historical event to bring out its significance for salvation history. Indeed, it is in recognizing this role that the function of this pericope in the DH is understood.

The Function of the Jehoiachin Pericope

Obviously, my understanding of the Jehoiachin pericope, in light of the allusion to the Joseph story in Genesis, does not lead me to a Nothian understanding of its purpose. Far from merely being a pessimistic updating of the narrative, the allusion to Joseph clearly rings a positive note and sets out a more hopeful future than Noth has allowed. However, my reading of the story in light of these parallels does not lead me to endorse interpretations like

83. Long, *Art of Biblical History*, 69.

84. Axtell, “History as Imagination,” 460.

85. *Ibid.*, 460–61.

86. As Brettler (*Creation of History*, 50) observes, in the OT “typologies do not serve a literary-aesthetic role; instead, they are used to convey meaning.”

those of von Rad, Wolff, Murray, or Schipper either (though their emphasis on the positive function of the pericope is clearly an improvement on Noth's pessimism). How then does this allusion to the Joseph story function? Why would Dtr allude to the Joseph story at this point?

I would suggest that the key to understanding the allusion lies in viewing the role the Joseph story plays in salvation history.⁸⁷ The story of Joseph closes off the book of Genesis, demonstrating God's sovereignty in directing Joseph's life behind the scenes and bringing Israel and his family to Egypt. The elevation of Joseph occurs immediately before God's paradigmatic salvation—the exodus.⁸⁸ It is a means whereby God preserves his people, even though this preservation through Joseph's elevation *did not* result in the return to their land.

Therefore, in terms of their role in salvation history, parallels between the roles of the Joseph and Jehoiachin stories become apparent. Just as Joseph's elevation showed God's favor toward his people, though it did not result in a return to their homeland, so Jehoiachin's elevation showed God's sovereign action towards his people, though it did not result in a return from exile. Joseph's elevation presaged the exodus, even though years of bondage still lay ahead for the people of God. Similarly, Jehoiachin's elevation presaged the second exodus, the return from exile, even though years of exile still lay ahead for the people of God.⁸⁹

87. Chan ("Joseph and Jehoiachin," 575) similarly suggests that the parallels with Joseph's narrative are hopeful in that they convey hope for a second exodus. However, he does not view this in terms of salvation history but in terms of other "open-ended endings" in biblical literature like the endings of Genesis, Deuteronomy, and Chronicles "which not only lean into the future but also more specifically into a future that includes Israel's inhabitation in and inheritance of the land."

88. Cf. van Iersel and Weiler, *Exodus*; Zakovitch, "And You Shall Tell Your Son".

89. Granowski ("Jehoiachin," 185) has entertained the possibility that this allusion to the Joseph story may have functioned this way. He writes, "Joseph's tenure in Egypt prefaces the Egyptian enslavement of his people; yet their enslavement precedes their liberation and their entry into the promised land of Canaan. The intertextual implication . . . is, therefore, in the long range,

This view of the exile as being a second exodus is, of course, found in the prophetic books. For example, in Isa 40–55 the prophet frequently writes of God bringing the people back from exile using exodus imagery (e.g., Isa 40:3–5; 41:17–20; 42:14–16; 49:8–12; 50:1–3; 52:11–12;⁹⁰ 55:12–13). Reference is made to God making “a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse” who makes “a way in the wilderness” and gives “water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert” (43:19).⁹¹ Similarly, Jer 23:7–8 likens Yahweh’s bringing the people back from Babylon as when he “brought Israel out of the land of Egypt.” As von Rad has observed, “From such passages as these [which look for a second exodus], and many other similar ones, one sees that already within the OT the dumb facts of history had become prophetic, and had come to be viewed as prototypes to which a new and more complete redemptive act of God would correspond.”⁹²

In light of this, it is likely that Dtr would have shared a hope for a new exodus along the lines of these prophets given the well-known intertextual relationship between the book of Kings and both Isaiah and Jeremiah.⁹³ For example, 2 Kgs 18–20 and Isa 36–39 are largely verbatim parallels with only minor variations, deletions, or additions.⁹⁴ The situation is very similar with 2 Kgs 24:18–25:30 and Jer 52, as the abundance of ver-

optimistic.” However, he concludes that “an ironic interpretation” is more likely, i.e., the comparison with Joseph is ironic, as it is emphasizing Jehoiachin’s powerlessness compared to Joseph’s empowerment.

90. For the way in which Isa 52:11–12 draws on the exodus, see Brettler, *Creation of History*, 50.

91. For a discussion of the exodus theme in Isa 40–55, see Anderson, “Exodus Typology”; Barstad, *A Way in the Wilderness*, 1–7; and Zenger, “God of Exodus”.

92. von Rad, “Typological Interpretation,” 34.

93. As Provan (“Messiah,” 71) asserts, “the high level of intertextuality that exists between Kings and other OT books . . . invites us to read it in light of other books.”

94. The direction in which the borrowing went is a matter of debate. Cf. Blenkinsopp, “Hezekiah,” 107–22; Seitz, *Zion’s Final Destiny*. A helpful list of opposing arguments can be found in Childs, *Isaiah*, 106.

batim repetition makes their relationship beyond question.⁹⁵ Furthermore, Dtr's concern with Moses and the exodus tradition is evident in the way these traditions are cited in regards to David and his successors (1 Kgs 2:3; 8:9, 16, 21, 51, 53, 56; 2 Kgs 14:6; 18:4, 6, 12; 23:25). Therefore, Dtr's view of a possible hope of return from exile as analogous to the exodus should not be unexpected.

In sum, in writing Israel's history Dtr clearly underscored patterns he perceived in Israel's past. At the end of Kings we have every reason to believe that the writer viewed it entirely possible that God would again act for his people, as he had in the past. Dtr's allusion to the Joseph story expresses this hope, even if it acknowledges that the current state of affairs does not immediately undo the judgment under which the nation currently sits. Thus, this conclusion is hopeful, though it is not a naïve hope. It is a hope that acknowledges the righteous judgment of Yahweh and the oppression that at present continues.⁹⁶ Yet it is a hope that, in light of Yahweh's actions in the past, invigorates the faithful to hope for a future work of Yahweh whereby he moves once again to deliver his people.

Patterning in Salvation History

As noted at the beginning of this study, ancient historiography often viewed the past in terms of patterns and types. The retrospective position of the historiographer allowed the perception of patterns in history to which the historiographer responded by shaping the presentation of events in ways that emphasize their role in the perceived historical pattern. In fact, several studies have noted that ancient historiography often understood history as not only patterned but cyclic. For exam-

95. Various proposals have been made regarding the relationship between these passages. Cf. Person, "II Kings 24,18-25,30 and Jeremiah 52"; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 320–21.

96. As Wolff ("Kerygma," 100) writes, "By contrast, Israel must expect, even when she turns back, to remain in affliction for 'many days' . . . The return cannot be thought of as a ticket to restoration or betterment."

ple, Liverani identifies common motifs within ancient historiographical texts and found that within such texts “the characterization of time as cyclic” was common.⁹⁷ In such writings it was common for “all positive events” in their history to be located in one period and “all negative events” temporally located in another.⁹⁸ Thus, a pattern in history emerges where time moves in a cycle from bad, to good, to bad, to good, etc.⁹⁹

While it is unwise to characterize Israelite conceptions of time as static, as if in every text it were either linear or cyclic, there is clearly some cyclic thinking in biblical historiography.¹⁰⁰ Some studies have shown that biblical historiography conceived of time as both cyclic and sequential.¹⁰¹ Cyclic time functions to legitimate particular theological claims (like Yahweh as sovereign over history), and sequential time establishes cause-effect relationships (e.g., sin results in judgment, and repentance results in deliverance). The DH shows a conception of sequential time, most evident in the sequence of regnal years of the kings of Israel and Judah that cumulatively span the entire monarchial

97. Liverani, “Memorandum,” 187.

98. Ibid.

99. At a particular point within this cycle a restorer of order appears. Liverani’s examples (“Memorandum,” 187–88) include “the reforms of Urukagina, the edict of Telipinu . . . [and the edict] of Horemhab.” Of these instances, he writes, “The happy past is pushed back into a more remote past, a veritable mythical age, and its function of ideal model of a corrected situation is underscored. The phase of corruption and chaos is over, i.e. moved from the present to a nearby past, just finished; while the second stage of order and prosperity is moved ahead from the future to the present . . . [or] the immediate future.”

100. The old consensus was that Greek historiography evinced cyclical time, and contrasted Israelite linear conceptions of time have been happily abandoned. Cf. Barr, *Biblical Words*, 143–49. As Brettler (*Creation of History*, 48) asserts, “no single idea dominates either the Hebrew or the Greek historical corpus; many classical and ancient Israelite historians mix linear and cyclical depictions of historical events.”

101. E.g., in his study of the Book of Chronicles, Ben Zvi (“About Time”) has observed that there is evidence in Chronicles of conceptions of time as both cyclic and sequential. Cf. Trompf, “Notions of Historical Recurrence”.

period. However, there is also a pattern similar to Liverani's observations about cyclic time.¹⁰²

Within the DH there are clear signs of a cyclical pattern. For example, in the book of Judges we find a pattern of (1) apostasy; (2) judgment; (3) cry to Yahweh; and (4) Yahweh's provision of a deliverer.¹⁰³ This pattern is repeated time and again and extends beyond the book of Judges, though in a less rigid way.¹⁰⁴ Since human actions clearly bring a divine response in Israel's history and, even once Israel is restored, they may sin again, sequential time is potentially cyclic time. As Oscar Cullmann has observed, "within the divine plan a place is left . . . for human resistance and sin, and the mysterious 'detours' taken because of this resistance and sin—in other words, salvation-history also includes a history of disaster (*Unheilsgeschichte*)."¹⁰⁵ While judgment follows Israel's sinful actions, eventually Israel will be restored again.¹⁰⁶

The words of Dale Hughes are helpful at this point:

It must be remembered, however, that salvation-history and history are not the same. The sequential relation in salvation-history is not due to cause-effect but is due to revelation. In the scripture, the development of salvation-history depends upon a revealed interpretation of the event as well as the divine action in the event.¹⁰⁷

102. Trompf, "Notions of Historical Recurrence," 227.

103. Brettler ("Cyclical and Teleological Time," 118) goes so far as to say that "the book's author clearly believed that history repeats itself and in that sense believed in cyclical time."

104. Cf. Wolff, "Kerygma," 88. Brettler ("Cyclical and Teleological Time," 118) notes "some obvious patterns . . . in Samuel and Kings" but observes that "there is no pattern as tight as the one found *explicitly* in Judges." Elsewhere Brettler (*Creation of History*, 48) does, however, find cases of what he calls "typology." Cf. Trompf, "Notions of Historical Recurrence," 227.

105. Cullmann, *Salvation in History*, 78.

106. Ben Zvi, "About Time".

107. Hughes, "Salvation-History," 84. While salvation history and scientific history may not be uncritically equated, a biblical view of history "consists of a belief in the unity of redemptive design and action behind and above all the flux and ephemerality of empirical history" (Hummel, "Old Testament Basis," 41).

Given that divine action in the events of history change their course, despite the clear pattern, the ebb and flow of history brings consequences for Israel, and the eventual restoration does not restore Israel exactly as they were before.¹⁰⁸ While originally, in the Conquest, Israel was to completely and utterly drive out all Canaanites, following Israel's apostasy, in Judg 2:21 God declares that he will no longer drive out the Canaanites for Israel. Similarly, Israel, in sin, rejects the theocracy and demands a king like the other nations (cf. 1 Sam 12), resulting in a new situation for Israel as God chooses a king for them.¹⁰⁹ Thus, while the above-mentioned pattern of "Apostasy-Judgment-Cry-Deliverance" occurs, the deliverance is never a return to the exact state of things before the sin. In other words, biblical history is not circular, but it is spiral.

Recalling Kierkegaard's statement from the beginning of this article regarding the clarity of hindsight, from an even wider lens than that provided in the OT itself, stages in Israel's history may be viewed in retrospect as somewhat cyclic.¹¹⁰ The cycle begins as: (1) the exodus—the return from Egypt; (2) the conquest—the taking of the land; (3) the period of the judges—where Israel exists without a king and is drawn into apostasy (Baalism, etc.); (4) the monarchy—the rejection of theocracy, beginning with a non-Davidide (Saul) who showed initial success but ultimately failed; and (5) the exile.

If the return from exile begins a new cycle in Israel's history—as the prophets would have it—the new cycle could be seen as: (1) a new exodus—the return from exile; followed by (2) a new conquest—wherein Israel, the Golah community, must again take the land (despite conflict with the "people of the land" in Ezra–Nehemiah); and this is followed by (3) a new period of

108. In Wolff's words, God often "ordains a new twist to history" ("Kerygma," 88).

109. Ibid., 88.

110. Of course, long ago, G. E. Wright and Fuller (*Book of the Acts of God*, 19–20) viewed OT theology as centering on five major events: (1) the Patriarchal Promises; (2) the Exodus; (3) the Sinaitic Covenant; (4) the Conquest; and (5) the Davidic Monarchy. Cf. Hughes, "Salvation-History," 83–84.

Theocracy—corresponding to the period of the Judges, where Israel again exists without a king (the history of the early Second Temple/Intertestamental period) and is similarly drawn into apostasy (Hellenism). This is then followed by the establishment of (4) a new Monarchy in Israel with the Hasmonean dynasty of the Maccabees. This non-Davidic monarchy shows early success but ultimately fails. Thus, (5) this leaves Israel in exile yet again.

With the failure of Israel's non-Davidic monarchy, in many ways the exile continues under the Romans.¹¹¹ Here Israel awaits a king after God's own heart, another David, God's anointed one—the Messiah—who will lead his people in yet another exodus, and the final cycle and consummation of Israel's history. Awaiting this exodus, a voice is once again heard “crying in the wilderness” (Isa 40:3; Mark 1:3); John the Baptizer, signaling a new exodus more glorious than any before. This culminates in Jesus Christ taking captivity captive in the exodus (ἐξόδον), of which Jesus speaks with Moses and Elijah in the Transfiguration (Luke 9:31).

111. Cf. N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*; N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*; N. T. Wright, “Theology, History and Jesus”.

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