

# Dr. Robert Vannoy, Exodus to Exile -- Kings, Session 5, Kings and Chronicles Compared and Contrasted, Synoptic Problem Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

## 1. Abstract of Vannoy, Exodus to Exile -- Kings, Session 5, Kings and Chronicles Compared and Contrasted, Synoptic Problem, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Vannoy's lecture contrasts the books of Kings and Chronicles, highlighting their differing purposes and theological perspectives. Kings retrospectively explains the exile, while Chronicles prospectively encourages post-exilic reconstruction by emphasizing Israel's covenant relationship with God. **The lecture addresses the synoptic problem, acknowledging parallel accounts but advocating for complementary interpretations rather than contradictions.** It cautions against simplistic harmonizations and defends the historical reliability of both books, even when facing numerical discrepancies or conflicting details such as who gave which cities to whom. **The lecture also explores the Chronicler's idealization of David and touches on the balance between promise and law within the covenants.** Finally, the lecture explores the idea of a double redaction of Deuteronomistic history and highlights McConville's single author theory.

## 2. 27 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Vannoy, Exodus to Exile -- Kings, Session 5 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Historical Books → Exodus to Exile).



Vannoy\_ExtoExileK\_  
Session05.mp3

### 3. Briefing Document: Vannoy, Exodus to Exile -- Kings, Session 5, Kings and Chronicles Compared and Contrasted, Synoptic Problem

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided lecture excerpts, focusing on the comparison of Kings and Chronicles, synoptic problems, and related theological considerations:

#### Briefing Document: Kings and Chronicles - Purpose, Theology, and Synoptic Issues

##### I. Overview

This lecture excerpt primarily contrasts the books of Kings and Chronicles, examining their differing purposes, theological perspectives, and the "synoptic problems" that arise from parallel accounts. It also delves into how to approach apparent discrepancies between the books, emphasizing the importance of avoiding overly simplistic harmonizations and maintaining a high view of Scripture. The lecture touches on the nature of the covenants and also briefly considers the redaction of the Deuteronomistic History and the problem of dischronologization.

##### II. Key Themes and Ideas

- **Differing Purposes & Theological Perspectives:**
- **Kings:** Primarily retrospective. It explains to the exiles the *reason* for their exile, focusing on the Sinai Covenant and the consequences of disobedience. While a prospect of hope exists, it's secondary. Kings demonstrates how the Mosaic covenant resulted in the exile. "Kings is basically retrospective; that is, it looks back explaining to the people in exile the reason for their condition."
- **Chronicles:** Primarily prospective. It encourages the returning exiles in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah to rebuild their society and temple on a firm foundation based on Israel's past, emphasizing the Davidic Covenant. Chronicles focuses on things that are "sound and valid in Israel's past as furnishing a reliable basis for the task of reconstructing which lay ahead."
- Chronicles emphasizes Judah, Jerusalem, the temple, Davidic lineage, kings, and the Zadok priesthood. It focuses on the kingship of David and his successors, evident from the extensive genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9, specifically the focus on Judah and the house of David. "The primary interest is the kingship of David

and his successors. This is clear from the very beginning as seen in the genealogical materials found 1 Chronicles 1-9."

- Chronicles gives little attention to the Northern Kingdom and omits the account of its fall. The reign of David is extensively covered, but the account omits David's family affairs and the great sin of David. Chronicles presents David as "the example par excellence of the true theocratic king," as a type of Christ.
- **Retribution Theology:** Both books emphasize a "Retribution Theology," where sin leads to judgment and obedience to prosperity. This reinforces the Mosaic Covenant for the post-exilic community.
- **Covenant Emphasis:** While Kings emphasizes the Sinai Covenant and Chronicles emphasizes the Davidic Covenant, neither book *excludes* the other covenant. Curses in the Sinai Covenant demonstrate the covenant is in effect. "Curses do not annul the Sinai Covenant; they are the implementations of its sanctions."
- **Synoptic Problems (Parallel Accounts):**
  - Kings and Chronicles have much material in parallel accounts, but with variations. These variations can include omissions, differing arrangements, and even apparent conflicts.
  - The approach should be to see these passages as *complementary* rather than *contradictory*. Interpretations should account for *all* data, acknowledging potential textual corruption during transmission.
  - **Example:** The case of Solomon giving cities to Hiram (1 Kings 9:11) versus Hiram giving cities to Solomon (2 Chronicles 8:2). A possible resolution is that Solomon initially gave the cities as collateral for debt and later recovered them. "It seems to me he gave the 20 towns to Hiram at one point because he owes him money he couldn't pay, but later when he was able to repay it he got the towns back."
- **Dealing with Apparent Discrepancies:**
  - Avoid simplistic harmonizations that can do "more damage than good."
  - It's acceptable to leave some difficulties unresolved if there is insufficient information. "If you don't have the information to solve it you leave it stand as a problem. If you don't have enough information to solve it, admit you don't. We leave it unresolved. There's nothing wrong with that."

- The Chronicler idealizes David, omitting negative details (like the Bathsheba incident), not to change history, but to present a specific perspective. The different perspectives in Kings and Chronicles are like the different perspectives in the Gospel accounts.
- Trust the eyewitnesses, even when there are conflicts because, as the example from Norman Geisler shows, seemingly contradictory reports can both be true.
- **Avoiding Dangerous Methodologies:**
  - Avoid the "slippery slope" of arbitrarily distinguishing between parts of Scripture considered historically reliable and unreliable. Such an approach can lead to a gradual erosion of truth.
  - Be cautious of the suggestion that biblical writers might use factual errors to bolster theological purposes (alluded to in Ray Dillard's article). It is important not to accept historical error in the biblical narrative. "Even though Ray raises legitimate questions in his article, there are some difficult problems there, and even though the answers to his questions may not be readily apparent, it seems to me he offers a methodologically dangerous position to suggest that the writers of biblical history may have the liberty to utilize factual errors in order to bolster their theological purpose."
- **McConville's Analysis of Deuteronomistic History:**
  - The lecture briefly touches on McConville's critique of the dual-redaction theory of Deuteronomistic history (Kings). McConville argues for a single author who presents a consistent theme from the beginning: that the kingship is flawed and will lead to exile, and that even the reforms are disappointing.
  - The book of Kings raises the question of whether any king can provide permanent salvation, given human sinfulness and the inability to meet God's standards.
  - This sets a backdrop for the prophets, who anticipate a future God-man king who will fulfill the Davidic ideal.

### **III. Implications and Conclusion**

The lecture emphasizes a balanced approach to studying Kings and Chronicles. It advocates for recognizing the distinct purposes and theological emphases of each book while acknowledging and grappling with the challenges posed by synoptic problems. Most importantly, it warns against methodological approaches that compromise the historical credibility of Scripture. Understanding the nature and emphasis of each book of the Old Testament allows one to approach each book with greater insight and appreciation.

## 4. Study Guide: Vannoy, Exodus to Exile -- Kings, Session 5, Kings and Chronicles Compared and Contrasted, Synoptic Problem

### Kings and Chronicles: A Comparative Study Guide

#### I. Key Concepts and Themes

- **Retrospective vs. Prospective History:** Understand Kings as primarily looking back to explain the exile, while Chronicles looks forward to provide a foundation for the post-exilic community.
- **Theological Perspective:** Kings emphasizes the Sinai Covenant (Mosaic Law) and the reasons for judgment, while Chronicles highlights the Davidic Covenant and the importance of temple worship and the Davidic dynasty.
- **Retribution Theology:** Grasp the concept that obedience to God brings blessings, and disobedience brings judgment, a central theme in both books, particularly as emphasized in Chronicles.
- **Synoptic Problem:** Recognize the existence of parallel accounts between Kings and Chronicles, as well as Samuel, which may include discrepancies and varying perspectives.
- **Harmonization vs. Contradiction:** Be able to approach discrepancies with a balanced perspective, seeking complementary interpretations while acknowledging the possibility of textual corruption or differing perspectives.
- **Idealization of David:** Note how Chronicles presents David as an idealized theocratic king, a type of Christ, often omitting negative aspects of his reign.
- **Deuteronomistic History:** Understand the theory of a dual redaction (Josiah and exile) and McConville's counter-argument for a single author highlighting flaws in kingship leading to exile from the beginning.
- **Dischronologization:** Understand the concept of dischronologization and how it is distinguished from chronological error.
- **Slippery Slope:** Understand the problems of arbitrarily judging which parts of Scripture are reliable and which are not.

#### II. Study Questions

### Quiz (Short Answer)

1. What is the primary purpose of the book of Kings, and how does it differ from the purpose of Chronicles?
2. Explain the concept of "Retribution Theology" as it appears in Chronicles, and how it is intended to affect the post-exilic community.
3. What is the significance of the Chronicler's focus on Judah, Jerusalem, the temple, the Davidic line, and the priesthood?
4. How does Chronicles portray David differently from Samuel-Kings, and why is this significant?
5. What are some potential sources of discrepancies between Kings and Chronicles, and what is a balanced approach to interpreting these differences?
6. Explain the "synoptic problem" as it relates to Kings and Chronicles, and give an example.
7. What does the text suggest about the relationship of the Sinai and Davidic Covenants in Kings and Chronicles?
8. Explain the conflict between 1 Kings 9:11 and 2 Chronicles 8:2 and how the texts may be harmonized.
9. Briefly summarize McConville's critique of the dual redaction theory of Deuteronomistic history.
10. What is dischronologization, and how does it relate to the historicity of scripture?

### Answer Key

1. Kings primarily looks back to explain the exile as a consequence of disobedience to the Sinai covenant, while Chronicles looks forward to encourage reconstruction based on the Davidic covenant.
2. "Retribution Theology" is the idea that obedience brings blessings and disobedience brings judgment. This was intended to encourage wholehearted devotion to the Mosaic law in the post-exilic community.
3. This focus emphasizes the true glory of the Hebrew nation as found in its covenant relationship with God, particularly through worship in the temple, the divinely ordained priesthood, and the Davidic dynasty.

4. Chronicles idealizes David, omitting negative aspects like the Bathsheba incident, presenting him as a type of Christ and a model theocratic king.
5. Discrepancies can arise from textual corruption, differing perspectives, or a focus on different aspects of the same event. A balanced approach seeks to harmonize the accounts while acknowledging limitations.
6. The "synoptic problem" refers to the parallel accounts between Kings and Chronicles that sometimes contain discrepancies or differing arrangements of material. An example is the account of the cities given by Solomon to Hiram (1 Kings 9:11 vs. 2 Chron. 8:2).
7. Both books combine emphases on the Abrahamic, Davidic, and Sinai Covenants, giving prominence to different aspects. Kings has more emphasis on the Sinai Covenant and Chronicles on the Davidic.
8. 1 Kings 9:11 says Solomon gave cities to Hiram, while 2 Chronicles 8:2 says Hiram gave cities to Solomon. One possible harmonization is that Solomon initially gave the cities as collateral for debt but later recovered them when his gold reserves increased.
9. McConville argues that the flaws in kingship leading to exile are apparent from the beginning of Kings. He suggests that it was written by a single author.
10. Dischronologization is a literary device where events are not presented in chronological order. It is distinguished from chronological error when the text implies an erroneous time sequence of events.

## Essay Questions

1. Compare and contrast the theological perspectives of Kings and Chronicles. How do their differing purposes shape their portrayals of Israel's history?
2. Discuss the synoptic problem between Kings and Chronicles, providing specific examples. What principles should guide the interpretation of these discrepancies?
3. Analyze the Chronicler's portrayal of David. How does it reflect the author's purpose and theological perspective?



4. Evaluate the dual redaction theory of Deuteronomistic history. How does McConville's argument challenge this theory, and what implications does this have for understanding the book of Kings?
5. Explore the concept of "Retribution Theology" in the Old Testament. How is it presented in Kings and Chronicles, and what are its implications for understanding God's relationship with Israel?

### III. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Davidic Covenant:** God's promise to David that his line would endure forever and that his descendant would establish an everlasting kingdom.
- **Deuteronomistic History:** The books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, seen as a unified work written from a Deuteronomic perspective.
- **Dischronologization:** The act of arranging events out of chronological order for a specific literary or theological purpose.
- **Exile:** The period in Israel's history when the elite and other segments of the population were deported to Babylon.
- **Retribution Theology:** The belief that God rewards obedience and punishes disobedience.
- **Sinai Covenant (Mosaic Law):** The covenant established between God and Israel at Mount Sinai, characterized by laws and commandments.
- **Synoptic Problem:** The question of how to explain the similarities and differences between parallel accounts in the Old Testament (Kings and Chronicles).
- **Theocratic King:** A king who rules under the authority of God, often seen as God's representative on earth.
- **Dual Redaction:** The theory that the Deuteronomistic history was written in two stages, once during the reign of Josiah, and once during the Exile.

## 5. FAQs on Vannoy, Exodus to Exile -- Kings, Session 5, Kings and Chronicles Compared and Contrasted, Synoptic Problem, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on Kings and Chronicles

- **What is the primary difference in purpose between the books of Kings and Chronicles?**
- Kings primarily looks back to explain the reasons for the exile, emphasizing the sins that led to judgment, while still holding out a hope for the restoration of the Davidic house. Chronicles, written after the exile, looks forward, focusing on aspects of Israel's history that provide a foundation for the returning exiles to rebuild their nation, particularly the temple worship, the Davidic line, and the role of the priesthood. Chronicles emphasizes the covenant relationship to God as the basis for the task of reconstructing which lay ahead, showcasing what was sound and valid in Israel's past.
- **How does Chronicles emphasize the Davidic line and temple worship compared to Kings?**
- Chronicles places a strong emphasis on the Davidic line and temple worship by dedicating significant portions of its narrative to David's reign and preparations for the temple. Genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9 give special attention to the tribe of Judah, from which David came. The reign of David is extensively covered in 1 Chronicles 10-29, focusing on his military success and religious activities related to Jerusalem and the temple, omitting the account of David's sin with Bathsheba. The Chronicler presents David as an ideal theocratic king, a type of the future Messiah. Kings does address these themes but with less prominence, as its primary focus is on explaining the exile.

- **What is "Retribution Theology" as it relates to Kings and Chronicles?**
- "Retribution Theology" is the concept that obedience to God brings prosperity and peace, while sin leads to judgment. This idea, rooted in the Mosaic covenant, is prominent in both Kings and Chronicles. Chronicles uses this concept to encourage post-exilic Israel to wholeheartedly devote themselves to the Lord and adhere to the Mosaic law's ritual requirements, aiming to reestablish the covenant community and receive God's blessings. The lecturer suggests that both Kings and Chronicles combine emphases on the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants as well as on the Sinai covenant.
- **How should we approach seemingly conflicting accounts between Kings and Chronicles?**
- When encountering apparent conflicts between Kings and Chronicles, it's important to consider them as complementary accounts rather than outright contradictions. Interpretations should account for all available data without forcing simplistic harmonizations. Acknowledge the possibility of textual corruption during transmission. Recognize that each book may emphasize different aspects of the same event or period from different perspectives. This approach maintains the historical credibility of both books and recognizes the validity of differing viewpoints.
- **Can you provide an example of a potential conflict between Kings and Chronicles and a possible resolution?**
- One example is the differing accounts of Solomon giving cities to Hiram in 1 Kings 9:11 and Hiram giving cities to Solomon in 2 Chronicles 8:2. A possible resolution suggests that Solomon initially gave the cities to Hiram as collateral for debt related to materials like cedar, pine, and gold. Later, when Solomon's gold reserves increased, he repaid the debt and reclaimed the cities. While not explicitly stated, this interpretation reconciles both accounts without assuming error in either.

- **How does the Chronicler "idealize" David, and is this problematic?**
- The Chronicler "idealizes" David by focusing on his positive attributes, such as his military victories and religious leadership, while omitting the negative aspects, such as his sin with Bathsheba. This is not necessarily problematic. Rather, it is a valid, yet different, perspective. The Chronicler doesn't change history; he strategically leaves information out. David is presented as a type of Christ, an ideal theocratic king.
- **What is "dischronologization," and why is it important when studying biblical texts?**
- "Dischronologization" refers to the arrangement of material in a non-chronological order. The lecturer raises concerns about a position that biblical writers might utilize factual errors to bolster their theological purpose, suggesting it could lead to accepting historical error in the biblical narrative. It's important to distinguish between an ambiguous dischronologization, where no specific time sequence is indicated and thus no distortion occurs, and an erroneous one, where material is rearranged with a false indication of time sequence. It is crucial to maintain a commitment to the historical accuracy of Scripture when interpreting such passages.
- **What is the theory of the dual redaction of Deuteronomistic history, and how does McConville challenge it?**
- The theory of the dual redaction of Deuteronomistic history posits that the book of Kings underwent two revisions. The original version, written around the time of Josiah, was optimistic. A second edition, written during the exile, emphasized negative aspects and the reasons for the exile. McConville challenges this theory, arguing for a single author who, from the beginning, hinted at the flaws of the kingship and its inevitable path to exile. McConville argues that Kings raises the question of whether any human king can bring lasting salvation, given the inherent inability of humans to live up to God's standards.