

# 'What Share Do We Have in David ...?' – Ben Sira's Perspectives on 1 Kings 12<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. 1 Kings 12 in Modern Research

The story about the division of Solomon's kingdom into two parts upon his death, and the subsequent reign of Rehoboam over Judah and Jeroboam over Israel in 1 Kings 12 has been a key text of recent studies in Old Testament literature. Mainly, eight issues are under discussion.

1. In addition to the usual differences between the Masoretic text and the Septuagint, most manuscripts of the Old Greek text (except the Hexaplaric recension) list an extensive alternative following v. 24, in contrast to what has been narrated before (3 Kings 12:24a–z). The origin of this Old Greek version in 3 Kings 12:24a–z, the history of its composition and its relation to the Masoretic text are still controversial. The question whether 3 Kings 12:24a–z is a midrash on the basis of a source more or less identical with the *Vorlage* of MT<sup>2</sup> or whether it represents an earlier pre-masoretic version of 1 Kings 12\*,<sup>3</sup> is still pending.
2. The form-critical differences between a.) the story of Rehoboam and the people (vv. 1–20), b.) the story of Shemaiah, the man of God (vv. 21–24), c.) the different notes on Jeroboam's constructional and cultural measures (vv. 25–33) and d.) the narrator's

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<sup>1</sup> For the compilation of this essay the following editions of Ben Sira were used: Beentjes (1997); Calduch-Benages/Ferrer/Liesen (2003); Vattioni (1968) and Ziegler (1980). With regard to the numeration, the Hebrew text follows the edition of Beentjes, the Greek text the edition of Ziegler; for the problem of varying numerations cf. Reiterer (2003).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Talshir (1993), 260, 277ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schenker (1996), 236.

comments (vv. 15, 19, 30) suggest that 1 Kings 12 does not represent a literary unit.<sup>4</sup>

3. Due to apparent deuteronomistic additions in v. 15b and v. 30, the extent of pre-deuteronomistic and post-deuteronomistic elements in 1 Kings 12 as well as its interrelation with the pre-deuteronomistic, deuteronomistic, and post-deuteronomistic description of the kings of Israel and Judah needs to be verified. This clarification is part of the literary and redaction-historical interrelation of 1 Kings 12 with the texts on statue labour in 2 Sam. 20:24 as well as in 1 Kings 5, of 1 Kings 12 with the narratives on Ahija of Shilo in 1 Kings 11; 13–14, and of 1 Kings 12:16 with the David tradition (cf. 2 Sam. 20:1).<sup>5</sup>
4. 1 Kings 12:28 corresponds clearly to Exod. 32:4, 8. In this regard, the question arises whether one comprehensive editorial revision might have influenced all books from Exodus to Kings. This assumption calls for a further look at the redaction-history of both, the Pentateuch and the *Deuteronomistic History*.<sup>6</sup> As 1 Kings 12 describes events in Shechem, Penuel, Bethel and Dan, our inquiry also seeks to explain the interrelation of 1 Kings 12 with the Shechem passages in Genesis 34, Judges 9 and Joshua 24, the Penuel passages in Gen. 32:23ff. and Judg. 8:8ff., the Bethel passages in Gen. 28:10ff., Genesis 35, Hosea and Amos<sup>7</sup> as well as the Dan passages in Judges 17–18.
5. Based on terminology, style and its overall tendency, the story of Shemaiah in 1 Kings 12:21–24 shows a close connection to another Shemaiah-Rehoboam narrative in the *Sondergut* of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 12).<sup>8</sup> This leads us to the question of an alleged interrelation between 1–2 Kings and 1–2 Chronicles which cannot be explained simply by assuming one common original basis or a dependence of one book upon the other. Instead, recent discussions emphasize differentiated and mutual influences between 1–2 Kings and 1–2 Chronicles.<sup>9</sup>

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4 For the literary-historical discussion of the last ten years I exemplarily refer to Pfeiffer (1999), 26ff.; Becker (2000), 210ff.; Koenen (2003), 39ff.; Gomes (2006), 17ff.; Köhlmoos (2006), 154ff.; Pakkala (2008), 501ff.

5 Cf. esp. Becker (2000), 217ff.

6 Cf. esp. van Seters (1994), 290ff., 460; Berlejung (1998), 351ff.; Schmitt (2000), 235ff.; Köhlmoos (2006), 185ff.; Pakkala (2008), 519ff.

7 Cf. Pfeiffer (1999), 65ff.; Koenen (2003), 169ff.; Gomes (2006), 141ff.

8 Cf. further 3 Kings 12:24o, where the report of symbolic action narrated in 1 Kings 11:29–31 is not ascribed to Ahija, but to Shemaiah; cf. Talshir (1993), 105, 228ff.; Schenker (1996), 203ff., 225ff.

9 Cf. for 1 Kings 12:1–20 exemplarily Köhlmoos (2006), 158f.

6. The motif of "the day that Ephraim departed from Judah" in Isa. 7:17 prompts to inquire the interrelation of Kings and Isaiah in general and the redaction history of Isaiah in particular (cf. the parallel between Isaiah 36–39 and 2 Kings 18–20). Depending on the literary-historical classification of Isa. 7:17, an answer to the latter question brought forward in this article does not necessarily suggest that 1 Kings 12 is older than Isa. 7:17.
7. A central topic is the character and the value of 1 Kings 12 as a source for the history of Israel<sup>10</sup> and the cult of Yhwh, especially the history of the Exodus-credo and the Yhwh-sanctuaries in Dan and Bethel.<sup>11</sup> Does 1 Kings 12 contain reliable information on the early history of the kings, may it be in the main part, in vv. 1–20, or within the notes of vv. 25–29? Alternatively, does 1 Kings 12 represent a fictional aetiology on the two states, edited throughout the times?<sup>12</sup> Does the note in v. 19, which describes that the house of Israel broke away from the house of David עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, refer inevitably to the formation of the narrative in vv. 1–20 before the decline of Israel in 722 BCE? If it does not, does this chapter then reflect the sharp differences between Samaria and Judah as they occurred in the Persian and Hellenistic period?
8. A last question concerns the reception history of 1 Kings 12 in Jewish writings from the Hellenistic-Roman period. Flavius Josephus (37–100 CE) offers an extensive paraphrase of 1 Kings 12 with own comments on the nature of leadership and a long speech by Jeroboam meant as an explanation of 1 Kings 12:26, 28.<sup>13</sup>

Yet, as early as the beginning of the 2nd century BCE, the teacher of wisdom Ben Sira remembers 1 Kings 12 in his 'Praise of the Fathers' (Sir 44–50). This text will be the focus of my essay in which I would like to show how and with which intent Ben Sira reads 1 Kings 12.

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<sup>10</sup> This applies to the narrated time, i.e. the last third of the 10th century BCE, and to the assumed time of the narrators, which in contemporary research is assumed to comprise roughly 700 years, considering both the earliest text-elements and the latest additions dating to the Hellenistic era.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Berlejung (1998), 326ff.; Pfeiffer (1999), 26ff.; Pakkala (2002), 86ff.; Koenen (2003), 43ff., 165ff.; Köhlmoos (2006); Gomes (2006); Pakkala (2008), 521ff.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Becker (2000), 227; Köhlmoos (2006), 158ff.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Ant., VIII:8, 1–4 (= VIII § 213–229); see for this text Begg (1993), 15ff., 30ff.

## 2. The Composition of the Portrait of Solomon in Ben Sira 47:12–25

Ben Sira is the first biblical author who connects the Torah and the historiographical, the priestly, and the prophetic traditions of Israel extensively with the wisdom tradition and updates them whilst interpreting them at the same time. On the background of a large gallery filled with heroes of Israel's history beginning with Enoch and ending with the high priest Simon<sup>14</sup> (Sir 44–50), Ben Sira draws his picture of Solomon (47:12–25).<sup>15</sup> This passage has partly remained intact due to the Hebrew manuscript B (H<sup>B</sup>). Gaps and v. 16 which is missing in the Hebrew text can be reconstructed with the help of the Greek (G) and Syriac (Syr) versions.<sup>16</sup>

The portrait of Solomon is clearly structured (cf. the table in the appendix). The first section (A) consists of three bicola (vv. 12–13). It describes Solomon as David's successor (v. 12) who reigned at a time of peace granted by God (v. 13a–b) and built "a sanctuary forever" for God (v. 13c–d).<sup>17</sup> The second section (B) is split into two parts (B and B', vv. 14a–18b and vv. 18c–21). Each part consists of five bicola and represents an anastrophe. In direct speech,<sup>18</sup> the entire second section consists of Solomon's praise (vv. 14a–18b), followed by a distinct criticism of Solomon (vv. 18c–21). Both parts (B and B') conclude with a preview of Israel's fate (v. 18b and respectively v. 21b). The third section (C) consists of three bicola (vv. 23a–f), just like the first section (A). However, this section offers a preview of Solomon's death and upcoming succession to the throne (v. 23a–b). This part is then dedicated to Rehoboam and Jeroboam (v. 23c–d, e–f). Two bicola which summarize the history of the Northern kingdom (vv. 23g–25a) lead to Elijah's portrait

14 It is Simon II. (218–192 BCE), cf. 3 Macc. 2:1; Josephus, Ant. XII:4, 10 (= XII § 224); Mulder (2003); Schmitt (2004), 885f.

15 Already in his general prologue to the 'Praise of the Fathers', Ben Sira includes allusions to Solomon (cf. 44:3–5 versus 47:13a–b, 14–17).

16 V. 16a can be reconstructed according to G (εἰς νῆσους πόρρω ἀφίκετο τὸ ὄνομά σου, cf. Isa. 66:19); v. 16b according to Syr (ܠܥܠܡܝܢ ܠܥܠܡܝܢ, cf. 1 Reg 5:14; 10:24): עד חיים עד חיים רחוקים הגיע שמך ויבואו לשמעך. For the reconstructed Hebrew text and the translation see the appendix.

17 Grammatically it is also possible, to understand 'God' himself as the subject of the edification of the temple in Sir 47:13b–c (cf. Ps. 78:69, Mulder [2003], 85). Nevertheless, the construction in G and the parallels in 2 Sam. 7:13, 1 Kings 5:19 and 1 Chron. 22:10 speak in favour of the interpretation of 'Solomon' as the subject. To the deliberate use of words of Ben Sira in 47:13, whereby Exod. 15:17 and Gen. 28:12f. are supplementarily integrated in the recurrence of 1 Kings 8, cf. Hayward (2002), 194f.

18 Cf. Sir 46:2; 48:4; 50:5. Syr underscores this by mentioning Solomon's name explicitly.

in 48:1–14(15–16).<sup>19</sup> By means of this composition Ben Sira offers a recurrence to the events listed twice (v. 21 and respectively in vv. 23–25) in 1 Kings 12. A repeated promise of a dynastic succession to David's throne drawing on 2 Sam. 7:11–16 (cf. Ps. 89:4, 20–30, 34–37)<sup>20</sup> separates the two recursive elements in v. 22, a composition evocative of Josh. 21:45 and its parallels, in which God promises his loyalty with the people.<sup>21</sup> At least, the first two bicola of v. 22 concern future events.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, they are probably not linked to 1 Kings 11:13 (32, 36). They might, thence, more likely represent a messianic commentary here. Isa. 11:1, 10–11, could be the background.<sup>23</sup>

### 3. Ben Sira's first Resumption of 1 Kings 12 in Sir 47:21

In his first resumption of 1 Kings 12 in 47:21, Ben Sira assumes that the division of Israel into two kingdoms (שבטים) is a negative consequence of Solomon's devotion to foreign women (Sir 47:19–20). Ben Sira's terminology and the motif are derived from 1 Kings 11. He, however, does neither copy the motif of the worship of foreign Gods nor the motif of the erection of foreign cultic places by Solomon. Ben Sira's criticism does not accuse Solomon of breaking the covenant as outlined by deuteronomic redactors (1 Kings 11:11).<sup>24</sup> He primarily criticizes Solomon's sexual ethics, without pointing to Solomon as a negative example of the mixed marriages portrayed in Neh. 13:26. Corresponding to Ben Sira's statements on the relation between man and woman in 23:16ff. (G), 25:2 (G), 25:21 and 26:1ff., Solomon's behaviour appears to be a sign of foolishness. At this point Ben Sira is very close to Prov. 31:1–3, a passage criticizing Solomon indirectly:

19 Cf. Skehan/Di Lella (1987), 529ff., and van Peursen (2007), 409ff., consider v. 23a as the beginning of the Elijah-portrait already.

20 Cf. further Ps. 94:14; 1 Kings 8:57; 2 Kings 21:14; Pietsch (2003), 172–174.

21 Josh. 23:14, 1 Sam. 3:19, 1 Kings 8:56; 2 Kings 10:10; Tob. 14:4 (S). G translates more freely (καὶ οὐ μὴ διαφθεῖρη ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων αὐτοῦ) and therewith dissociates the close connection between Sir 47:22 and the row of God's promises.

22 So does the Greek translation, which in contrast to H<sup>B</sup> (וְיָרַד ... בְּחַיֵּי) concentrates the promise on the descendants of God's chosen *one* (ἐκλεκτοῦ αὐτοῦ) and the *one* who loved God (τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντος αὐτόν). Peters (1913), 408; Eberharter (1925), 153, and Mulder (2003), 85f., also interpret v. 22e–f future (... יָמֵי).

23 Cf. Isa. 11:1, 10 with Sir 47:22f (שָׁמַר, conj.; G: ρίξαν), and Isa. 11:11 with Sir 47:22e (πῶς, conj.; G: κατάλειμμα, Sir 44:17), cf. also Ps. 132:17; Segal (1958), 326. For a messianic interpretation of v. 22 cf. Peters (1913), 404ff.; Skehan/Di Lella (1987), 528; Marböck (1995), 132; Corley (2006), 304ff., who still consider this verse original, and Song of Sol. 17:4; 4Q174 Frags. 1 I, 21, 2:10ff.; 4Q252 V,2ff.

24 Against Brown (2002), 215f.

“The words of Lemuel, king of Massa, with which his mother instructed him: What, my son? What, son of my womb? / What, son of my vows? Do not give your strength to women, / or your ways to those who destroy king.”<sup>25</sup>

The historio-theological interpretation of ‘God’s wrath’, which the deuteronomistic author of 1 Kings 11:9 ascribes to Solomon himself, is modified by Ben Sira in the sense that Solomon has drawn God’s wrath towards his own descendants (47:20c–d, cf. 2 Kings 13:3; 23:26; 24:20).<sup>26</sup> The lament upon Solomon’s bed (47:20d) does not refer to the lament for the people who feel suppressed by Solomon’s son Rehoboam (cf. 1 Kings 12:14).<sup>27</sup> Instead, the lament in 47:20d parallels v. 20c and thus refers to the descendants of Solomon and the dissolution of the Davidic-Solomonic kingdom, which for Ben Sira already indicates the catastrophe of 587 BCE and the lament over the downfall of Jerusalem (cf. Lam. 1:22). In G, the lament refers to Solomon’s foolishness (ἄφροσύνη), therefore, the relation between the foolish Solomon and his foolish descendants (v. 23c) is underscored (v. 23c) even clearer than in H<sup>B</sup>. According to Syr, the ‘sons of the sons’ of Solomon will lament on their couch because of their father’s iniquity (ܠܕܘܢܐ).

A second point of Ben Sira’s criticism concerns Solomon’s accumulation of wealth (v. 18c–d).<sup>28</sup> Thence, the *young* Solomon’s joyful praise of wisdom (vv. 14–18b, cf. 1 Kings 3:7–12) conflicts with the *older* Solomon’s foolishness (vv. 18c–21, cf. 1 Kings 11:4).<sup>29</sup> Ben Sira’s yardstick is the Law of the King in Deut. 17:14–20.<sup>30</sup> Deut. 17:17 offers exactly this combination of motifs ‘heap of wealth’ and ‘polygamy’. On the background of the deuteronomic ‘Law of the King’, we can implicitly deduce the fact that Solomon did not study the Torah (cf. Deut. 17:18–19). For Ben Sira, however, the characteristic of a wise man is the obedience

25 For the text-critical problems of Prov. 31:1–3 cf. the apparatus of the BHS and Murphy (1998), 239f.

26 For Ben Sira’s use of the motif of the divine wrath as cipher for God’s judgement cf. 1:22 (G); 5:7; 7:16; 16:6; 18:24 (G); 33/36:11 (G); 36:7 (H = 33:8 G); 39:27–28; 45:19; 48:10; Witte (2008a), 176ff.

27 Cf. Skehan/Di Lella (1987), 528.

28 Cf. also Bar. 3:16–17; Sir 8:2; 13:24, and for this interpretation of Sir 47:18c cf. Smend (1906), 85 (translation-part); Peters (1913), 407; Hamp (1952), 130; Skehan/Di Lella (1987), 528; Beentjes (2006), 139. In contrast, G understands the gathering of gold and silver as a collection in the name of God for the edification of the temple (cf. 1 Kings 5:20) and therefore appreciates Solomon’s wealth (cf. 1 Kings 3:13; 10:27; 2 Chron. 1:15; 9:27). In G, the criticism of Solomon begins only in v. 19; cf. Ryssel (1900), 461; Lee (1986), 17, 214–215; Peterca (1988), 460; Sauer (2000), 323.

29 Cf. Josephus, Ant. VIII:7, 5 (= VIII § 194).

30 Cf. Beentjes (2006), 138–141.

to the Torah.<sup>31</sup> Under this circumstance, we have to assume that Ben Sira's praise of Solomon has to be readjusted according to this new perspective. He consequently holds that Solomon has stained his כבוד / δόξα (v. 20). Consequently, Solomon is not just a negative example of Ben Sira's warning in 33:23 [30:31] ("Be supreme over all of your works / and do not put a stain upon your glory"), but also stands in sharp contrast to Abraham. For Abraham did not stain his כבוד as Ben Sira describes explicitly in 44:19–20. We cannot understand the loss of the undivided reign against the background of 1 Kings 11 and 12 alone. We likewise need to consider a historical verification of the implicit sanctions outlined in the deuteronomic 'Law of the King' (Deut. 17:20):

"[...] that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel."

Unfortunately, the beginning of Ben Sira 47:21a has not survived in any of the Hebrew manuscripts. G confirms all remaining pieces in H<sup>B</sup>. However, it updates the new political units in a negative manner, evocating a divided τύραννις.<sup>32</sup> This, of course, does not contribute to the reconstruction of the Hebrew version of v. 21a. Instead, Syr underlines the dissolution of Solomon's kingdom by the term **حلل** (Ethpe., "to be divided", cf. Gen. 10:25). If the conjecture **להיות העם** is correct,<sup>33</sup> Ben Sira emphasizes the separation of the *one* people in his interpretation in 1 Kings 12. V. 23d clearly speaks of *one* people which justifies this interpretation. Here, Ben Sira proves to examine 1 Kings 12 closely, stressing the opposition of king and people in the main part (vv. 3–19). Like Chronicles, Ben Sira adheres to the ideal of the *one* people of Israel. In v. 21b, the qualification stating the "kingdom of violence (ממלכת חמס) deriving from Ephraim" forms a sharp contrast to the initial note, which informs us that Solomon reigned at a time of tranquillity (בימי שלום in v. 13, cf. 1 Kings 5:4, 18; 1 Chron. 22:9). This opposition is more distinct in G, because the theme of peace (εἰρήνη) forms an essential aspect of the Greek portrait of Solomon (cf. vv. 13a, 16b). However, G mitigates the characterisation of Ephraim, when he calls Ephraim a "disobedient kingdom" (βασίλεια ἀπειθής). According to Syr, the house of Ephraim is the source of "a pagan kingdom" (ܟܠܗܘܢܐ ܟܠܗܘܢܐ ܟܠܗܘܢܐ, cf. Sir 16:6 [H<sup>A</sup>]; Isa. 10,6). The term ממלכה stems from 1 Kings 12:26. The terminology ממלכת חמס, however, is unique. Ben Sira himself might have inserted this term.

31 Sir 1:26 (G); 6:37; 19:20 (G); 32:15ff.

32 For τύραννις in the sense of a despotic or cruel reign cf. 4 Macc. 1:11; 8:15; 9:30; 11:24; Wisd. of Sol. 14:21.

33 Cf. Vattioni (1968), 259.

#### 4. Ben Sira's second Resumption of 1 Kings 12 in Sir 47:23, 24–25

In the note, explicitly dedicated to Rehoboam und Jeroboam (vv. 23, 24–25), Ben Sira explains the dissolution of the state's unity as a consequence of Rehoboam's foolishness. It is not clear, especially if we consider the gap in H<sup>B</sup>, whether v. 23a–b already presents this line of thought.<sup>34</sup> Vattioni reads קצין ("prince", cf. 48:15f.) at the end of the bicolon in a neutral way whereas Smend suggested מנון ("übermütig", i.e. insolent, cf. Prov. 29:21).<sup>35</sup> Reading מנון fits well within the context but considering the background of Ben Sira's use of words, this reading must be considered uncertain.

The *scopus* of v. 23 is enlightened in the following colon. Here, Ben Sira paraphrases the name רחבעם ("broad in people") with the word-play רחב אולת ("broad in folly").<sup>36</sup> Rehoboam, "lacking in understanding" (חסר בינה)<sup>37</sup> stands in sharp contrast to his father Solomon, David's "clever son" (v. 12)<sup>38</sup>, who once covered the earth with his "understanding" (רחב בינה cj., v. 15)<sup>39</sup>. Ben Sira, however, does not excuse Solomon

- 34 With regard to v. 23 nearly every commentator offers another conjecture. Smend (1906), 54 (text-part), 86 (translation-part); Hamp (1952), 131, and Beentjes (1997) read מיואש ("in despair", cf. Eccles. 2:20) and understand v. 23a as a statement about the old Solomon; similarly Ryssel (1900), 462, מיועש ("abgelebt", cf. Ps. 31:10); Peters (1913), 408, מיושש ("betagt"); Segal (1958), 327ff., מושש ("in error", cf. Job 19:4). Vattioni (1968), 259, reads משריש, which according to Job 5:3 can be understood as "taking root" and can then be related to the descendants of Solomon (cf. v. 22e–f). Sauer (2000), 324, translates "entwurzelt" (i.e. משריש) which does not fit in this context (cf. v. 22f.). G probably already had a corrupted *Vorlage* or did not understand it and uses the standard formula known from the Books of the Kings, Solomon rested with his fathers (μετὰ τῶν πατέρων [αὐτοῦ], cf. 3 Kings 11:43; 12:24a; 14:31; 15:8 etc.).
- 35 Vattioni (1968), 259; Smend (1906), 54 (text-part), 86 (translation-part); Peters (1913), 408; Hamp (1952), 131. With ἐκ τοῦ ἀπέριστατος G refers to דרע, which Segal (1958), 327ff., takes as a basis for his reconstruction (דרע רד "a weak descendant").
- 36 G does not include this word-play and already mentions the people in v. 23c: λαοῦ ἀφροσύνη.
- 37 Cf. also the expression חסר לב in Sir 6:20; Prov. 6:32; 7:7; 9:4, 16; 10:13; 11:12; 12:11; 15:21; 17:18; 24:30; 11QPs<sup>a</sup> XVIII:5.
- 38 The literary background is 1 Kings 5:21 (cf. 1 Kings 2:3; Jer. 23:5). For the exchange of Solomon's designation in 1 Kings 5:21 as a חכם בן חכם for the formulation בן משכל בן cf. Prov. 10:1 *versus* Prov. 10:5. According to the Syriac version of 47:12, Solomon is a "powerful king" (ܘܫܝܚܘܬܗ ܗܘܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ), cf. the relationship for v. 19a in Syr ("and you gave your strength [ܘܫܝܚܘܬܗ] to women").
- 39 Cf. 1 Kings 5:9: Solomon as a man "rich of understanding" (רחב לב) with Segal (1958), 326ff.; Vattioni (1968), 259, and Sauer (2000), 322. In contrast, Smend (1906), 54 (text-part), 85 (translation-part) reads according to G (ܗܘ ܢܫܘܬܘܢ ܥܘܣܘ) גופשך, but without changing the subject like Ryssel (1900), 461, reads בחבתך (cf. Syr and 1 Kings 5:9). Concrete examples of this wisdom of Solomon are his songs, sentences and rid-



but also holds him responsible for the division of Israel into two separate states. Solomon left behind a foolish son. Hence, he was not able to fulfil his obligations as a father, which Ben Sira inculcates in his advices for education continuously.<sup>40</sup> What Ben Sira generally expressed as an admonishment in his speech about children's education in 30:1ff. (G/H<sup>B</sup>) had become historically certified:

"Discipline your son and make his yoke heavy, / so that you may not be offended by his shamelessness (אולת / ἀσχημοσύνη)" (30:13).<sup>41</sup>

Here, we can see how Ben Sira reads 1 Kings 12:1–20 with only a few words against the background of wisdom. This enables him to capture the style of 1 Kings 12:1–20 as a wisdom story quite well.<sup>42</sup>

In v. 23d, we find a typical shift of accent, compared to 1 Kings 12:1–20:

"Rehoboam, who through his counsel caused the people to riot."

Ben Sira takes the key word "counsel" (עצה, βουλή) from 1 Kings 12.<sup>43</sup> It is new that he omits the *theologoumenon* of "God's predestination" (המעם יהוה סבה, μεταστροφή παρὰ κυρίου, 1 Kings 12:15),<sup>44</sup> like the Greek version in 3 Kings 12:24s–t.<sup>45</sup> He further does not speak of an independent downfall (פשע) of Israel from the בית דוד (1 Kings 12:19)<sup>46</sup>, but of the people's rebellion caused by Rehoboam. In an ironical reversal of his name, Rehoboam does not make wide the people but destroys its solidarity. On this account, the responsibility for the downfall of the kingdom is further shifted to the king. Ben Sira's term פרע (*Hifil*) does

dles, with which Ben Sira possibly alludes to the triad of the three canonical works of Solomon (Song of Sol., Prov., Eccles., cf. Goshen-Gottstein [2002], 250). This interpretation is evident in the Syriac version of Sir 47:17, according to which Solomon "explains (ܘܥܒܕ) sayings of wisdom in a book". This could be a mistake of the Hebrew text, cf. van Peursen (2007), 19f., but fits well with the image of Solomon in Syr. Therefore, an emendation of the Syriac text is not necessary.

40 Cf. Sir 3:11; 11:28; 41:7. To the difference in G see n. 35.

41 Cf. also 7:23–24; 41:5ff. Against this background the irony is to be considered: seeing as Solomon made – against the deuteronomic 'Law of the King' (Deut. 17:16; cf. Becker [2000], 222) – Israel's yoke heavy (1 Kings 12:4, 10, 14; cf. 5:27; 9:15), but not the yoke of his son, which had a fatal consequence.

42 For 1 Kings 12:1–20 as a sapiential narrative cf. the use of the root עץ (vv. 8, 9, 13, 14, 28) and the contrast between the old and the young counselors (Job 12:12; 32:6–7; Prov. 5:13; 15:1–2; Eccles. 10:16); also Becker (2000), 217, and the article of Alexander Rofé in this congress volume.

43 Cf. 1 Kings 12:8, 13.

44 The word μεταστροφή is only certified here in the LXX and dependent upon 3 Kings 12:15 in 2 Chron. 10:15 LXX (cf. still Job 37,12 [α']) and is also rarely used in the pagan Old Greek, cf. Plato, Resp. 525c5; 532b7; Chrysipp, Fragm. moralia, 221:1.

45 Cf. Talshir (1993), 156, 255ff.

46 3 Kings 12a–z has neither equivalent for 1 Kings 12:19 (MT) nor for 3 Kings 12:19 (LXX), too; cf. Talshir (1993), 156; Schenker (1996), 228.

not come from 1 Kings 12, but it is found in Exod. 32:25. There, פרע describes Israel's lack of restraint caused by Aaron while Moses stayed at Sinai (Exod. 32:1). If we acknowledge the direct literary link between 1 Kings 12:28 and Exod. 32:4, 8, we can assume that the *sôfer* Ben Sira falls back on Exodus 32 for his *relecture* of the Rehoboam-story (1 Kings 12:1–20).<sup>47</sup> This means that Ben Sira stronger parallels Rehoboam's and Jeroboam's fault than 1 Kings 12 does. It can also not be excluded that Ben Sira had Exod. 5:4 in mind, a passage in which the modern exegesis has sometimes seen a parallel to 1 Kings 12.<sup>48</sup> As we can also find in other places of his work, Ben Sira connects different passages from the Hebrew Bible with the help of selective quotations of key words, as it is typical for single pesharim from Qumran and for the later exegesis of the midrash.<sup>49</sup> Ben Sira uses the term פרע precisely. This becomes evident against the background of two other passages in his work. In 46:7, Ben Sira refers to the story of the scouts (Numbers 13–14) and praises Joshua and Caleb for their resistance against the rebel assembly (פרע קהל). Again, Ben Sira does not back up the term פרע by the original in Num. 14:6–10. The actual key to understand Sir 47:23 is found in the aphorism in 10:3 (H<sup>A</sup>):

“A wanton (פרוע) king destroys the city.”<sup>50</sup>

What Ben Sira describes as a general observation on a possibly precise historical background in 10:3,<sup>51</sup> actually happened after Solomon's death – and might happen again. The strong emphasis on Rehoboam's responsibility corresponds to the judgement regarding this king in the Greek variant of 1 Kings 12:16 in 3 Kings 12:24t:

οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὐκ εἰς ἄρχοντα οὐδὲ εἰς ἡγούμενον.

“for this person is not for a ruler or for a leader.”<sup>52</sup>

The interpretation of the following stichos (Sir 47:23e–f) becomes difficult because H<sup>B</sup> is quite damaged on the one hand but on the other hand contains the sentence עד אשר קם אל יהי לו זכר as a headline in con-

47 However, compare both, the variant to 1 Kings 14:22, in which – like in G, 3 Kings 12:24a and 2 Chron. 12:14 – Rehoboam mentioned in v. 21 is the subject of the sin and not Judah, and the tendency to excuse Rehoboam in 2 Chron. 13:7.

48 Exod. 5:4–5 uses the word פרע – possibly in deliberate assonance to פרעה. To the parallelisation of Exodus 5 and 1 Kings 12 cf. van Seters (1994), 71.

49 Cf. concerning the portrait of Solomon: esp. Peterca (1988), 457ff., and Hayward (2002), 194f.

50 G: βασιλεὺς ἀπαίδευτος ἀπολεῖ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ, cf. 2 Chron. 28:19; Sir 10:8–9; Prov. 29:18.

51 Cf. Sir 47:23c *versus* Prov. 28:16. Finally, the phonetic assonance of פרע and אמרים could also stand in the background of Ben Sira's choice of words.

52 Concerning the origin of this sentence in 3 Kings 12:24t cf. Talshir (1993), 130f., 256.

trast to G. In addition, this stichos is longer than the other stichoi in the 'Praise of the Fathers'. This version of H<sup>B</sup> might be derived from a gloss. The wish **אל יהי לו זכר** proves the assumption that the name **ירבעם** **בן-נבט** was added at an earlier stage of the textual transmission (before the production of G).<sup>53</sup> Insofar as the **זכר** represents a main motif throughout the 'Praise of the Fathers', Jeroboam's non-remembrance marks him as a villain. On the level of the 'Praise of the Fathers', Jeroboam resembles the negative counterpart of Moses (Sir 45:1),<sup>54</sup> the judges (46:11), Josiah (49:1) and Nehemiah (49:13) whose remembrance is a blessing to posterity. Ben Sira remains very close to the deuteronomistic evaluation of Jeroboam's character. The key word **זכר** succeeds to put Josiah (49:1) in opposition to Jeroboam (47:23) which adheres to deuteronomistic categories (cf. 1 Kings 12:31ff. *versus* 2 Kings 23:15ff.).

Ben Sira illustrates this explicitly in the next colon (v. 23f) when he refers to Jeroboam as a sinner and as Israel's enticer (cf. 1 Kings 14:16). Ben Sira does not explain what the "sin of Jeroboam"<sup>55</sup> consists of. He restricts himself to a formula-like repetition of 1 Kings 12:30a in v. 23f-g and thus connects it with a preview on people being exiled from the Northern kingdom as it is told in 2 Kings 17 (Sir 47:24a-25).<sup>56</sup> Using the term **נדה** (*Hifil*) in v. 24a, Ben Sira participates in a formula for the banishment of Israel from the Book of Jeremiah<sup>57</sup> and interprets 1 Kings 13:34 and 2 Kings 17:18, 21ff. correctly. In v. 25 **רעה התמנךר**),<sup>58</sup> Ben Sira adheres to the phraseology in 2 Kings 17:17b. The term **מכשול** in v. 23g<sup>59</sup> which does not appear in 1 Kings 12:30 and the structure of his portrait of Solomon in 47:12-25 (cf. the appendix) demonstrate that Ben Sira remembers Jeroboam's installation of the images of the bulls in Dan and Bethel as well as his construction of sanctuaries on the high

53 Cf. Skehan/Di Lella (1987), 530ff. Syr has no equivalent of **קם אשר קם**. Van Peursen (2007), 327f., holds this for originally.

54 Cf. Witte (2001), 161ff.

55 Cf. 1 Kings 14:16; 15:30; 16:31; 2 Kings 3:3; 10:31; 13:2, 6; 15:9, 18, 24; 17:22.

56 Subject of **להדיחם** (v. 24a) is still Jeroboam, because **נדה** *Hifil* has an active resp. causative meaning (cf. G ἄσποσῆσαι, and Peters [1913], 405; Eberharter [1925], 153; Skehan/Di Lella [1987], 529). However, Ryssel (1900), 462; Smend (1906), 86 (translation-part), and Sauer (2000), 324, translate **להדיחם** as a passive.

57 See Jer. 8:3; 16:15; 23:2f, 8; 24:9; 27:10, 15; 29:14, 18; 32:37; 40:12; 43:5; 46:28; cf. also Deut. 30:1.

58 The subject is very likely to be Ephraim, so unequivocal G (ἐξέληττον). Against that Syr relates v. 25a to Jeroboam as perpetrator ("causing them to go into exile from their place / and he multiplied their sins greatly"). The note has a special sharpness because Ben Sira uses the word **רעה**, which is proved 31 times in the Hebrew fragments, in the context for the 'Praise of the Fathers' only in 47:25.

59 Cf. Ezek. 14:3f., 7; 44:12; 1QS II:12; 4Q372 f.8:7; 4Q428 f.10:9. For the translation in G (ὄδος ἀμαρτίας) cf. Sir 21:10 (G); Ps. 1:1 LXX; 145:9 LXX.

places corresponding to 1 Kings 12:28, 31 and 2 Kings 10:29 (cf. 2 Chron. 13:8; Tob. 1:5 [S]). Therefore, the bicolon in v. 23e–f (C.3) corresponds with the bicolon 13c–d (A.3) which talks about Solomon's erection of the temple in Jerusalem.

The following bicolon (vv. 24b–25a) gives a further reason for the downfall of the Northern kingdom. We find it first in the reference to Israel's growing sin, for which Ephraim himself is asked to take responsibility.<sup>60</sup> Ben Sira has compiled the history of the Northern kingdom in just three bicola. We find a comparable condensation of the history in 4QMMT C 19, which is the only non-biblical text found in Qumran to mention "Jeroboam" (4Q398 Frag. 11–13:2).<sup>61</sup> Like the deuteronomistic theology, Ben Sira views the history of the Northern kingdom as a history of sin, from the beginning till the end. Elijah's appearance, Ben Sira remembers in his next passage on the 'Praise of the Fathers' (48:1–14), could not change Israel's sin:

"But for all of this, the people did not repent / nor did they refrain from their sin, until they were torn from their land / and scattered throughout all the earth. And though but a few were left to Judah / there yet remained a ruler from the house of David." (48:15, cf. Deut. 28:63f.)

In comparison to H<sup>B</sup>, Sir 48:15–16 shows characteristic differences in G because of the translator's new historical and cultural situation. According to G, not a small remnant is left for Judah (H<sup>B</sup>) but one very small people (ὁ λαὸς ὀλιγοστός) that survives; a ruler does not remain for the house of David (לְבֵית דָּוִד), but *in* the house of David (ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ). In line with 47:24, 48:16b states that some of them (i.e. the kings) multiplied sins (ἐπλήθυναν ἁμαρτίας), whilst H<sup>B</sup> says that they "committed astonishing wrongs" (לְפַיִתוֹת מַעַל). The Greek version of v. 25b has an additional colon, which informs about God's retribution that is sure to come (ἕως ἐκδίκησις ἔλθῃ ἐπ' αὐτούς).<sup>62</sup> It puts a further emphasis unto the relation between the note about the history of the Northern kingdom and Elijah's portrait (cf. 48:7b [G]) and corresponds to the ten-

60 With regard to the contents G correctly offers plural-suffixes here, cf. Peters (1913), 409.

61 For the mentioning of Jeroboam beyond the canonical books cf. also VitProph 18:3 (cf. 1 Kings 14:7–14); 19:1 (cf. 1 Kings 13:1–32) and 2 Baruch 62:1–2 (cf. Lied [2008], 88–89); for the "Jeroboam-coins" cf. p. 106.

62 As a translation back into Hebrew shows, the colon could be either the deployed beginning of 47:23 or a doublet to 48:1: cf. עַד אֲשֶׁר נִקְּמָה יְבוּא עֲלֵיהֶם. עַד אֲשֶׁר נִקְּמָה עַד אֲשֶׁר נִקְּמָה (48:1a). Beyond that, G shows another order of the stichoi in vv. 23f–25a than does H<sup>B</sup>: v. 23g (H<sup>B</sup>) corresponds to v. 23f (G), v. 23h (H<sup>B</sup>) corresponds to v. 24b (G), v. 24b (H<sup>B</sup>) corresponds to v. 25a (G), cf. Reiterer (2003), 232f. H<sup>B</sup> represents probably the original sequence of the stichoi, cf. Skehan/Di Lella (1987), 531.

dency of the Greek *Sira* version which stresses especially God's righteousness.<sup>63</sup>

If we take a look at 1 Kings 12, it is striking that Ben Sira emphasizes the active role of the king, as we have seen in the passage about Rehoboam. Whilst in 1 Kings 12 Jeroboam remains in the background, and the people play an important role to raise him to the throne, Jeroboam stands up himself in Ben Sira (קט, 47:23e). With this word (קוט, *Hifil*) Ben Sira takes up the notes concerning the occurrence of Solomon's adversaries in 1 Kings 11:14, 23, especially the note about Jeroboam's revolt in 11:26, and then moves on immediately to 1 Kings 12:25–30. Ben Sira shares this emphasis of Jeroboam's self-contained action with the Greek parallel version in 3 Kings 12:24 (cf. v. 24d–f, 24o).

## 5. Ben Sira's Image of an Ideal Ruler

The strong focus of the events in 1 Kings 12 on the two kings Rehoboam und Jeroboam is due to the structured 'Praise of the Fathers' as a view on history, orientated to look at a single person, which has its model in the genre of an encomium.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, there is an entirely critical attitude against kingship throughout the Book of Ben Sira (cf. 10:3, 8ff.).<sup>65</sup> Continuing the deuteronomistic assessments of the kings, only David, Hezekiah and Josiah receive a positive judgement by Ben Sira.<sup>66</sup> They alone have kept the תורת עליין (49:4) and proved themselves as Abraham's true descendants (44:20).<sup>67</sup> This proves the above mentioned assumption based on the parallel between Sir 47:18c–19 and Deut. 17:17 that according to Ben Sira's conviction Solomon has despised the Torah. The high priest, Simon, represents Ben Sira's truthful ideal (50:1ff.). He is the pivot of the 'Praise of the Fathers'.<sup>68</sup> Because of his care for Jerusalem and the temple, Simon resembles all those cul-

63 Cf. Sir 2:10–11 (G); 12:6 (G, H<sup>A</sup>); 16:12 (G, H<sup>A</sup>).

64 Cf. the extensive dissertation of Lee (1986); Schmitt (2003), 359–381; id. (2004), 873–896.

65 Cf. the admonition of the leaders of the people (שׂרֵי עַם, μεγιστάνες λαοῦ) in 33:19 (H<sup>B</sup>) / 30:27 (G), the negative design of the kings in 45:3; 46:20; 48:6; 49:4, and the warning of the arbitrariness of the rulers in 4:27; 7:6; 8:1. In 7:5 (H<sup>A</sup>) מלך is likely to refer to God (cf. G, Syr, VL).

66 In 1 Kings 15:11 and 22:43 Asa and Jehoshaphat are still judged positively with reservations.

67 For Abraham as a model of obedience for Jewish religious ethics cf. Mack (1985), 211.

68 Cf. Schmitt (2004), 873–896; Marböck (2006), 155ff.; Beentjes (2006), 141ff., and extensively Mulder (2003).

tural and political virtues which David, Hezekiah and Josiah were praised for. Indeed, the high priest Simon finally appears as the better Solomon and consequently as the better king. He alone can restore Israel's unity, which Solomon, Rehoboam, and Jeroboam have destroyed. He can restore Israel as *one* people gathering around the Torah, coming together around the *one* temple in Jerusalem. According to the covenant which God established with Aaron and Phinehas (cf. Sir 45:15, 24; 50:24 [H<sup>B</sup>]), only the high priest of Jerusalem might secure Israel's continuity and stability. If we consider that Aaron's task was to teach the Torah to Israel (Sir 45:17, cf. 45:5),<sup>69</sup> we can state that the high priest represents the ideal of the deuteronomic 'Law of the King' (Deut. 17:14–20).

## 6. Ben Sira's Identification of Ephraim

It is quite remarkable that Ben Sira calls the Northern kingdom by the name of "Ephraim", both in 47:23g and in 47:21b, while 1 Kings 12 uses the terms *ישראל* or *בית ישראל*. This could be due to Jeroboam's genealogical characterization as an Ephraimite in 1 Kings 11:26 and the note that Jeroboam had built "Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim" (as his residence) in 1 Kings 12:25. However, Ben Sira uses the name "Ephraim" with a negative connotation against the background of the Book of Hosea.<sup>70</sup> In this regard, Ben Sira participates in a special usage of the name "Ephraim" as a cipher for a negative element as it occurs in different scriptures of the Hellenistic-Roman period, e.g. in the Septuagint version of 1 Kings 12:24b,<sup>71</sup> in the Damascus Covenant,<sup>72</sup> in the Qumran-pesher to Psalm 37,<sup>73</sup> and possibly in 4Q381 and in 4Q460.

If the phrase *מאפריים* ("from Ephraim") is included in the gratitude for the redemption of Judah in 4Q381 Frag. 24:5, we have a negative connotation of Ephraim from a Judean-Jerusalemite perspective as in Sir 47:21. 4Q460 Frag. 5:I:8f. certifies explicitly that "no-one in Ephraim has grasped the precepts" of Yhwh. Because 4Q460 is in a miserable condition, it is difficult

69 Cf. Fabry (2003), 274ff.

70 Cf. exemplary Hosea 4:17; 5:9; 9:11–16; 13:12; 14:9. To the Book of Hosea (in its canonical form) as an anti-Samaritan work cf. Levin (2001), 95f.

71 Therefore, Jeroboam appears here first as an *ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ὄρους Εφραιμ*, whereby the accent shifts from "the evil Ephraemite" to "the evil Ephraim", and second as a "son of a harlot" (*γυγὴ ἡσέκω*); cf. Talshir (1993), 51f., 102; Schenker (1996), 217f.

72 CD-A VII:10–14 as a quotation and interpretation of Isa. 7:17; cf. also Zangenberg (1994), 338f.

73 4Q171 II:18f. with a quotation and interpretation of Ps. 37:15; cf. also Zangenberg (1994), 336f.

to decide whether such a verdict of Judah exists. According to Frag. 1:5, Judah might be judged positively.<sup>74</sup>

Like Ps. 78:9 (also cf. v. 67),<sup>75</sup> Ben Sira associates the term "Ephraim" with the Samaritans. Ben Sira shares a perspective which is clearly in favour of Jerusalem. This can be perceived in the passage 1.) where he praises Jerusalem as the Holy city,<sup>76</sup> 2.) of his celebration of the cosmic wisdom, which rests on Zion (Sirach 24), 3.) of his prayer for the salvation of Zion (Sirach 36),<sup>77</sup> and 4.) of his description of the high priest Simon, who practices the worship in favour for Israel's blessings at the temple of Jerusalem and in a continuous line with Aaron and Phinehas (50:13, 24 [H]).<sup>78</sup>

The 'Praise of the Fathers' culminates in Ben Sira's verdict regarding the inhabitants of Seir, the Philistines, and "the foolish people who dwell in Shechem" (50:25–26). The נְבִלִים in Shechem is nothing else but the Samaritan congregation and Ephraim's successor. Ben Sira's *literary background* might be the story of the נְבִלִים of the Shechemites in Gen. 34:7. This is explicitly the case in the Testament of Levi 7:2 (2nd century BCE) which benotes Shechem as "City of the Senseless" (πόλις ἄσυνέτων) because of Genesis 34 (cf. Jub. 30:5). 4Q372, a fragmentary historio-theological text (2nd century BCE), mentions נְבִלִים in the land of Joseph with an anti-Samaritan tendency.<sup>79</sup> Finally, the characterisation of the Shechemites as "godless" (ἄσεβεις) and as "doers of deadly works" (λοιγία ἔργα) in the work of the Judeo-Hellenistic author Theodotus,<sup>80</sup> who wrote at the time of John Hyrkanus I's destruction of the Samaritan temple on the Mt. Gerizim (ca. 110 BCE) and the destruction of Shechem (107 BCE),<sup>81</sup> and as "doers of violence" (עבדי חמסא) in

74 According to Zangenberg (1994), 335f., 4QpNah 2,1ff. also mention Samaria with a negative connotation. But this interpretation is uncertain.

75 Cf. Witte (2006), 22ff.

76 Cf. 47:11; 48:17, 24; 49:6; 49:12–13; 50:1–4; (51:12g–h [H<sup>8</sup>]).

77 Cf. 36:13(18). The prayer in 36:1–17 (G: 33:1–13a; 36,16b–22) might be an integral part of the Book of Ben Sira.

78 Cf. Sir 45:6ff.; 45:16–17; 45:23. For this and for G's modifications of 50:24 regarding the contemporary historical changes cf. Hayward (1996), 81f.; Mulder (2003), 303f.; Fabry (2003), 272ff.; Brutti (2006), 201ff., 280ff.; Corley (2006), 308; Zsengellér (2008), 147; Boccaccini (2008), 32.

79 Frag. 1:10f. (cf. 4Q371,1:10), cf. Schuller (1990), 360, 371ff. (with dating 4Q372 in the time before John Hyrkanus I); Zangenberg (1994), 332ff.; Zsengellér (1998), 174f. Possibly, the term נְבִלִים also refers to Samaria in 11Q14 Frag. 2:1.

80 Frag. IX:22,9, text by Denis (1970), 206, 27ff., translations by Walter (1983), 169f., and by Fallon (1985), 793; cf. also Zangenberg (1994), 35f., and Mulder (2003), 232, 238, 359.

81 For the Samaritan temple on the Mt. Gerizim and its history cf. 2 Macc. 6:2; PsEupolemus (SamaritanAnonymus) 9:17 (text by Denis [1970], 197f.; translation by Walter

the Aramaic Testament of Levi (CTL Cambridge Col. b, 19; 2nd century BCE)<sup>82</sup> belong to this context. Ben Sira's *historical example* is the גוי נבל, who once murmured against God in the desert (cf. Deut. 32:6 as well as Sir 16:6 [גוי חגף] in relation to Num. 11:1–3).<sup>83</sup> According to Ben Sira, Ephraim's next relatives are the Babylonians who destroyed Jerusalem and its temple in 587 BCE (Sir 49:5–6,<sup>84</sup> cf. Deut. 32:21; Ps. 74:18). If the "coins of Jeroboam", minted in the city of Samaria between 350 and 333 BCE, are a witness for the (proto) Samaritan self-consciousness,<sup>85</sup> then Ben Sira's verdict in 47:23 receives an additional historic meaning. On the eve of Antiochus IV Epiphanes' religious crisis, Ben Sira reflects confrontations between the Samaritans and the people of Jerusalem.<sup>86</sup> This becomes clear in the Greek version where "Samaria" substitutes "Seir". This circumstance might be due to a change in the relationship between the inhabitants of Seir/Edom, the Idumeans, and the Judeans respectively between Samaria and Jerusalem at the time of Ben Sira's grandchild after the 38th year of Euergetes (i.e. Ptolemaius II., 132 BCE, cf. Sir prol. 27) and under the rule of John Hyrcan I (134–104 BCE).<sup>87</sup>

Considering the *relecture* in 1 Kings 12, we stick to the fact that Ben Sira has a central interest in Israel's unity.<sup>88</sup> Israel currently finds its unity by receiving instructions from the Torah (45:5, 17) and participating in the worship in Jerusalem as well as in the future instauration of the community of the 12 tribes through Elijah (48:10). Due to the high priest celebrating at the temple of Jerusalem, Israel experiences the saving presence of God who is as the only One (36[33]:5) at the same

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[1976], 141); Josephus, *Ant.*, XI:8, 4 (= XI § 324); XII:1 (= XII § 10); XII:5, 5 (= XII § 257–264); XIII:3, 4 (= XIII § 74–79); XIII:9, 1 (= XIII § 255f.); Bell., I:2, 6 (= I § 63); bYom 69a, and Kippenberg (1971), 57ff.; Zsengellér (1998), 150ff.; Magen/Misgav/Tsfania (2004), 3ff.; Magen (2007), 157ff.

- 82 Cf. Beyer (1984), 188ff., 195. That the expression שנת שניא in 1QpHab VIII:2 also refers to the Samaritans is improbable (cf. Zsengellér [1998], 171).
- 83 In G, this relationship is more distinct, as the grandchild in 16:6 talks about an ἔθνος ἀπειθής and in 47:21 about a βασιλεία ἀπειθής, cf. Ps. 77(78):8 (σ); SibOr. 3:668 (the pagans as λαὸς ἀπειθής).
- 84 G mentions in v. 5 only "a foreign nation" (cf. Sir 29:18; 33(36):3; Song of Sol. 2:2; Bar. 4:3; Josephus, *Ant.*, VIII:7, 5 [= VIII § 191]), in v. 6 Jerusalem is supplementary qualified as the "chosen" city (cf. 1 Kings 8:44, 48; 11:13, 32, 36; 14:21).
- 85 Cf. Spaer (1979), 218; Spaer (1980), 2f., plate 1; Meshorer/Qedar (1991), 13f., 49, nos. 23–27, plates 3–4; Talshir (1993), 285; Eshel (2007), 230, 233 (Jeroboam as a name of a governor of Samaria?); Magen (2007), 180.
- 86 Cf. Purvis (1965), 92f.; Kippenberg (1971), 74ff.; Lee (1986), 208–209; Hayward (1996), 62f.; Mulder (2003), 328; Zsengellér (2008), 147.
- 87 Cf. Zangenberg (1994), 41f.; Hayward (1996), 73–84; Mulder (2003), 221ff., 328, 354–355; Fabry (2003), 278; Marböck (2006), 165f.
- 88 Cf. Sir 36:11 (33:13); 36:12 (33:17); 36:17(22); 37:25; 44:23; 45:5, 11; 46:14; 48:10; 50:13, 19; (51:12f).



time “all” (הכל, 43:27) and the “Holy of Israel” (קדוש ישראל, 50:17)<sup>89</sup>. This means, according to Ben Sira, that the loss of Israel’s unity caused by Solomon, Rehoboam and Jeroboam will be compensated by the *one* Torah, the *one* worship in Jerusalem, and the hope for an eschatological turn through the *one* God.

## 7. Ben Sira and the Share in David – Sir 47:22

If we combine Sir 47:22, which I have held to be secondary at the beginning of my essay, with the interpretation of Ben Sira’s exegesis, we can see, that even 1 Kings 12:16 finds its consideration. Israel’s respectively Ephraim’s voluntary separation from David (מהילנו חלק בודד) appears as a sign of special foolishness if we consider the background of the promised dynastic line to David, which is also evident in Ben Sira (45:25a–b; 47:11–12).<sup>90</sup> To break away from the house of David means to renunciate the participation in the promise given to David. Therefore, Israel surrenders its own existence as 2 Kings 17 and Ben Sira in 47:24–25 and 48:15 confirm. Ephraim is not only a ממלכת חמס but also a גוי נבל. Ephraim has “no share, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem” (Neh. 2:20). With this approach, Ben Sira achieved to bring 1 Kings 12 into his own present time.<sup>91</sup> Ben Sira’s reception of 1 Kings 12 is not only a remembrance of the past and a subject for his instruction but also a means of his political theology.

## 8. Conclusions

In his portrait of Solomon, Ben Sira emphasizes the main important points of the description in 1 Kings 3–11. In this process, Solomon’s ambivalence, being a wise man in his youth and a foolish ruler advanced in years becomes clearer than in 1 Kings. The authors of 1 Kings illustrate the temple construction in four chapters (1 Kings 5–8). Ben

89 G uses the divine title παντοκράτωρ “the Almighty” here, which the Greek version of Ben Sira employs further in 42:17 (κύριος ὁ παντοκράτωρ; H<sup>B</sup> אלהים צבאו; H<sup>M</sup> אדני) and in 50:14 (ὑψιστος παντοκράτωρ; H<sup>B</sup> עלין).

90 Cf. Sir 51:12h. Yet, the originality of the prayer in 51:12a–o (H<sup>B</sup>) is disputable; cf. Pietsch (2003), 174f.

91 See also the historiographical sentences about the Philistines (46:18; 47:7) or the references to the exile of Israel and Judah (47:24–25; 48:15–16; 49:4–6), which are transparent to Ben Sira’s own time, cf. Marböck (1995), 129ff.; Mulder (2003), 86–87, 273–274.

Sira reduces this theme to one verse because he sees David as the actual founder of the worship at the temple as Chronicles or Psalm 78 describes it,<sup>92</sup> and because the current worship at the temple under Simon is important, too.<sup>93</sup>

In the eyes of Ben Sira, 1 Kings 12 is a wisdom- and sin-narrative. However, he does not consider the note on Ahijah in 1 Kings 12:15 and the story of Shemaiah in vv. 21–24, although he really honours the prophets and their prophecies<sup>94</sup> in favour of a compressed and paradigmatic *relecture* of Israel's history. The centre of Ben Sira's interest on 1 Kings 12 is Israel's unity. The kings of Judah and Israel destroyed this unity. Therefore, Ben Sira reads 1 Kings 12 in the light of criticism of kingship. More rigidly than 1 Kings 12, he marks Ephraim that rebelled against the house of David as a 'reign of violence'. Hence, 1 Kings 12 is an 'anti-Ephraim' and an 'anti-Samaritan'-story for Ben Sira.

How can the questions concerning 1 Kings 12, which I posed in my introduction, be answered from Ben Sira's point of view?

1. Ben Sira's *Vorlage* is a Hebrew text and in its essence corresponding to the Masoretic text. However, there are some remarkable points connecting it to the Greek version in 3 Kings 12:24a–z, e.g. the lack of the theological notices in 1 Kings 12:15, 19 or the emphasis on Rehoboam's and Jeroboam's activity.
2. Ben Sira's grandchild translated the Hebrew text of his grandfather into Greek and did not evidently fall back upon a Greek version of 1 Kings 12. The differences in G (e.g. Sir 47:18) are a result of the translator's specific understanding of his *Vorlage* and of his own historical context.
3. In a literary and redaction-historical perspective Ben Sira obviously considers 1 Kings 12 to be one unit. However, he reads selectively and his omission concerning the story of Shemaiah or the theological interpretation in 1 Kings 12:15, 19 illustrate this.
4. It is remarkable but also a characteristic element of Ben Sira how he presents his intrabiblical interpretation of the scripture

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92 Cf. Witte (2006), 37ff.

93 For Ben Sira's temple theology in the shadow of Deuteronomy/Deuteronomism and Ezekiel cf. Zsengellér (2008), 145ff.

94 Cf. Sir 36:16(20); 39:1; 46:1, 13; 48:1ff., 22; 49:7ff., and in that regard cf. Goshen-Gottstein (2002), 250ff. According to the Syriac version of 47:17, Solomon signalized himself as well by the prophecy (ܩܘܨܡܘܬܐ). However, it is disputed whether Syr understood the Hebrew word מליצה (G: ἐν ἐρημησίαις) as a sapiential term like in Hab. 2:6 and Prov. 1:6 and, therefore, uses the term "prophecy" in a broader sense, so van Peursen (2007), 88f., or whether Solomon is regarded as a prophet in the literal sense of the word, corresponding to Syr's esteem of the prophecy (cf. 36:17; 47:1; 48:12; 48:20, 22).

by means of a carefully chosen lexis. Nonetheless, we have to distinguish between the intrabiblical system of Ben Sira's Hebrew work, the Greek translation of his grandchild as well as the Syriac and the Latin version: Each version of Ben Sira has its own intertextuality and its own canonicity.<sup>95</sup>

5. Ben Sira perceives the narrated events in 1 Kings 12 *historically*. At the same time, he sees them as a *paradigm*, as far as they are a proof for the validity of wisdom-sentences. Finally, Ben Sira looks at the events on a *typological* level as far as they reflect his experience of the opposition between Jerusalem and Samaria.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. Witte (2008b), 184ff.

<sup>96</sup> I warmly thank Christian Becker (Frankfurt a. M.) and Niall Hoskin (Bristol) for their support in translating this paper from German into English.

Ben Sira 47:12–25; 48:1 (H<sup>B</sup>)

בן [מ]שכיל שוכן לבטח :	12a [ו] בעבורו עמד אחריו
ואל הניח לו מסביב :	13a שלמה מלך בימי שלוה
ויצב לעד מקדש :	13c אשר הכין בית לשמו
ותצף כיאר מוסר :	14a מה חכמת בנעריך
ותק[לס ב]מרום שירה :	15a ארץ [כסית בבית]ך
ויבואו לשמעך:]	16a] עד איים רחוקים הגיע שמך
עמים הסערתה :	17a בשיר [מש]ל חידה ומליצה
הנקרא על ישראל :	18a נקראת בשם הנכבד
וכעפרת הרבית כסף :	18c ותצבר כברזל זהב
ותמשילם בגויחך :	19a ותחן לנשים כסליך
ותחלל את יצועיד :	20a ו[ת]חן מוס בכבודך
ואנחה על משכבך :	20c [להביא] אף על צאצאך
ומאפרים ממלכת חמס :	21a [להיות העם] לשני שבטים
ולא יפיל מדבריו ארצה :	22a [ואולם א]ל לא יטוש חסד
[וזרע אוה]ביו לא ישמיד :	22c לא [יכרית לבחירי]ו נין ונכד
ול[דוד ממנו שרש] :	22e ויתן ל[יעקב שארית]
ויעזב א[חריו קצין] :	23a וישכב שלמה מן [ש
רחבעם הפריע בע[צתו] עם :	23c רחב אולת וחסר בינה
23e עד אשר קם אל יהי לו זכר {ירבעם בן נבט} אשר ח[טא והחטי]א א[ת ישראל] :	23g ויתן לאפרים מכשול
להדיחם [מ]אדמתם :	24b ותגול חטאתו מאד
25 ולכל רעה הת[מכר] :	48:1 עד אשר קם נביא כאש
ודבריו כתנור בוער :	

- V. 15a: cf. 1 Kings 3:12; 5:9; Segal; Vattioni.  
V. 15b: סלך II "to praise"; Segal; Vattioni.  
V. 16a: G εἰς νήσους πόρρω ἀφίκετο τὸ ὄνομά σου, cf. Isa. 66:19; Segal.  
V. 16b: Syr ܘܢܘܨܝܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ, cf. 1 Kings 5:14; 10:24. G καὶ ἠγαπήθης ἐν τῇ εἰρήνῃ σου cf. V. 13a (Σαλωμων ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν ἡμέραις εἰρήνης).  
V. 20c: G ἐπαγαγεῖν; Segal; Vattioni.  
V. 21a: G γενέσθαι δίχα τυραννίδα; Vattioni.  
V. 22a: G ὁ δὲ κύριος οὐ μὴ; Segal; Vattioni.  
V. 22c: G ἐξαλείψῃ ἐκλεκτοῦ αὐτοῦ; Segal; Vattioni.  
V. 22d: G σπέρμα τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντος αὐτόν; Segal; Vattioni.  
V. 22e–f: G καὶ τῶ Ἰακωβ ἔδωκεν κατάλειμμα / καὶ τῶ Δαυὶδ ἐξ αὐτοῦ ῥίζαν; cf. Sir 44:17c; Segal.  
V. 23a: G μετὰ τῶν πατέρων (αὐτοῦ); Beentjes: מִיָּאֵם "in despair" (cf. Ws 2:20); Vattioni: מְשִׁישׁ "taking root" (cf. Job 5:3); Segal: מְשִׁגַּשׁ "in error".  
V. 23b: G μετ' αὐτόν ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτοῦ; Vattioni; cf. Sir 48:15f. (H<sup>B</sup>).  
V. 23f: cf. 1 Kings 15:30.  
V. 25a: G (pl.) ἐξεζήτησαν, cf. 2 Kings 17:17; Segal; Vattioni.  
V. 25b: G-Plus: ἕως ἐκδίκησις ἔλθῃ ἐπ' αὐτούς.

## Ben Sira 47:12–25; 48:1

- A.1 12a [and on] his account there arose after him  
12b a clever son, who dwelt in security,  
A.2 13a Solomon, ruled as a king in days of peace,  
13b for God gave him rest from around,  
A.3 13c who established a house for His name  
13d and founded a sanctuary forever.
- B.1 14a How wise you were in your youth!  
14b For you overflowed as the Nile with instruction.  
B.2 15a You [covered] the earth with your [understanding]  
15b and you sang a song of pra[ise] on high.  
B.3 16a [Your name reached distant islands,  
16b and they came to hear you.]  
B.4 17a With song, [parab]le, riddle, and proverb  
17b you astounded the nations.  
B.5 18a You were called by the name of the Glorious One,  
18b which was called upon Israel.
- B'.1 18c But you heaped up gold like iron  
18d and multiplied silver like lead.  
B'.2 19a And you gave your thighs to women  
19b and handed over to them the rule of your body.  
B'.3 20a And you [brou]ght corruption upon your glory  
20b and profaned your couch  
B'.4 20c [to bring] wrath upon your descendants  
20d and groaning upon your bed,  
B'.5 21a [thus the people came into being] into two tribes  
21b and from Ephraim a kingdom of violence.
- 22a *[But G]od will not forsake his faithful love*  
22b *nor will he let any of his words fall to the earth.*  
22c *He will not [uproot] the offspring or posterity [of his chosen ones]*  
22d *nor he will destroy the offspring those who [love] him.*  
22e *And he will give [a remnant] to [Jacob]*  
22f *and [a root of his own (root)] to [David].*
- C.1 23a But Solomon died [            ]  
23b and left [behind him a prince]  
C.2 23c broad in folly and lacking in understanding,  
23d Rehoboam, who through his coun[sel] caused the people to riot.  
C.3 23e Until one arose who should not have a memorial,  
23f [Jeroboam, son of Nebat], who sinned and who caused [Israel] to s[i]n,
- 23g And he set a stumbling block before Ephraim,  
24a to drive them [from] their land.  
24b For their sin grew exceedingly  
25 and they so[ld] themselves over to all evil.  
48:1a Until a prophet arose like fire  
48:1b and his words were as a flaming furnace.

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