

# The Validity of the Numbers in Chronicles - Part I

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The books of 1 and 2 Chronicles, and particularly the numbers they contain, have become a front line for recent critical attack in the battle for the Bible. The following illustrations represent four degrees of departure from belief in the validity of Scripture, in a descending order of hostility toward Chronicles. Most extreme is traditional liberalism, as represented by this warning from the late Robert H. Pfeiffer:

It is an error to consider the Chronicler as a writer of history. It is futile to enquire seriously into the reliability of any story or incident not taken bodily from Samuel or Kings. His *f* grandiose pretensions could never have been established by means of a sober assembling of the facts of past history. *f* Of necessity the Chronicler was led to fabricate wonderful evidence to prove his case.<sup>1</sup>

Such “modernism” has now been outdated, particularly by the archaeological evidences that William F. Albright delighted to adduce.<sup>2</sup> But still, as a second illustration, today’s neoevangelicalism continues to invoke Chronicles, and particularly its numbers, as “Exhibit A” for its attack against biblical inerrancy. Thus LaSor argues, “When there are seven or eight places where the number in Chronicles is ten times that given in Samuel or Kings, it strains credulity to believe that textual corruption is the reason for all of the differences.”<sup>3</sup> Less directly skeptical is Pinnock’s proposal, in this same publication, that “Where the Chronicler recounts figures quite different from those in parallel passages, his intention is one of being only to set forth the record as he found it in the public archives.”<sup>4</sup> Yet is the Chronicler intending merely to quote, noncommittally, from faulty sources? Or is he stating what he himself intends? The

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), p. 805.

<sup>2</sup> 2. For example, Albright wrote, “It has been customary for critical scholars to scoff at the reliability of the matter in the two books of Chronicles which is not taken from the earlier books of the Bible. In the past decade or two there has been a healthy revulsion against the attitude of unjustifiable skepticism. A very considerable amount of source-material was salvaged by the Chronicles from oral tradition and neglected documents. A few examples must suffice *f* (“The Old Testament and Archaeology,” in *Old Testament Commentary*, eds. H. C. Alleman and E. E. Flack [Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1948], p. 153). Cf. H. L. Ellison’s guarded comment: “In the few cases where archaeology could pass an opinion, it has tended to be favourable” (“I and II Chronicles,” in *The New Bible Commentary*, eds. F. Davidson, A. M. Stibbs, and E. F. Kevan [London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1953], p. 340).

<sup>3</sup> 3. William S. LaSor, “The Authority of Scripture at Fuller,” *Theology, News and Notes* (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary Alumni, Special Issue, 1976), p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> 4. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

situation seems to parallel one which the present writer decried in a paper in 1960.<sup>5</sup> A fourth illustration is represented by Ellison, who feels constrained to admit the following:

One of the main problems in Chronicles is bound up with the numbers contained in it. Many are impossibly large, some disagree with Samuel and Kings, others are incompatible with the discoveries of archaeology. Yet there are other numbers that will not make sense of the usual suggestion that we are dealing with plain exaggeration. *f* The most obvious solution is that we are dealing with textual corruption. *f* Numbers, however, from a thousand upwards were used not merely as round figures, but also hyperbolically. *f* So in a number of cases, probably only a large, or very large, number is meant.<sup>6</sup>

What then *is* the situation in Chronicles? How numerous are the cases in which impossible numbers over a thousand actually occur? *Are* they quite different from those that appear in parallel passages? How often are they exaggerated so as to be ten times as large? *Can* one inquire seriously into their reliability? The need of the hour is for an objective examination into what Chronicles really contains. This article and another to follow in the next issue summarize this writer's attempt comprehensively to tabulate, and then to evaluate, the numerical nouns and adjectives<sup>7</sup> that are found in the Masoretic text of Chronicles, including those that possess parallels in other parts of Scripture and those that do not. It is hoped that the results may aid others as they in turn seek to analyze the validity of the numbers in Chronicles and their bearing on the inerrancy of Scripture.

### Categories Of Numbered Items

Within the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles one can identify 629 numbers that were used to count various items. Table A on the next page is divided into five categories: persons, things, measures, situations, and times. Most of these have subcategories as well. The numbers are also separated into those with biblical parallels and those without, and both of these columns are subdivided into the instances of small numbers (1–10), medium range numbers (11–1,000), and large numbers (over 1,000).

Viewing the material as a whole, one sees that 66.1 percent of the numbers (416 out of 629) occur in those parts of Chronicles that have no parallels elsewhere in the Old Testament. Yet a count of the lines in Abba Bendavid's harmony of the Masoretic Text<sup>8</sup> shows that 57.8 percent of

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<sup>5</sup> 5. J. Barton Payne, "Hermeneutics as a Cloak for the Denial of Scripture, *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 3 (1960):93–100.

<sup>6</sup> 6. Ellison, "I and II Chronicles," p. 340.

<sup>7</sup> 7. This aim at comprehensiveness is limited only in respect to the adjectives  $\tau\eta\kappa\alpha$  ("one") and ראשון ("first"), which have been included only where they seem to involve an intended numerical counting: for example, in 2 Chronicles 4:15, "the one sea with the twelve oxen under it" (but not 3:17, "the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right and the other on the left") or 1 Chronicles 24:7, "the first lot came out for Jehoiarib, the second for *f*" (but not 15:13, "you did not carry it at the first," or the occurrences of בכור, "firstborn"). If a measure of subjectivity arises in these cases, it does not at least affect those (larger) numbers for which the Chronicler has been most subject to criticism.

<sup>8</sup> 8. Bendavid gives the following summary (*Parallels in the Bible* [Jerusalem: Carta Press, 1968–69], Parts 2–4):

Complete lines of<p> text with parallel:Complete lines of<p> text without parallel:1 Chronicles 1–9 (genealogies)17333810–21 (David)37916422–29 (Temple administration)\_\_\_\_4\_\_3755568772

the total content of Chronicles (i.e., 1,800 out of about 3,115 complete lines) stands likewise without parallel. The relative frequency of numbers is thus only 8.3 percent higher in the nonparalleled portions of the book. Indeed, this is a low figure in light of the many numbered lists that occur in the genealogies and tabulations of these portions. So at the outset it would seem that the overall distribution of numbers does not in itself support Pfeiffer's claims about wonderful evidence for grandiose pretensions.

Table A  
NUMBERS IN CHRONICLES

| CATEGORIES                         | WITH OLD TESTAMENT PARALLELS |      |          |         | WITHOUT OLD TESTAMENT PARALLELS |      |          |         |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|------|----------|---------|---------------------------------|------|----------|---------|
|                                    | TOTAL                        | 1-10 | 11-1,000 | 1,001 + | TOTAL                           | 1-10 | 11-1,000 | 1,001 + |
| <i>Persons</i>                     |                              |      |          |         |                                 |      |          |         |
| Wives (and concubines)             |                              |      |          |         | 6                               | 3    | 3        |         |
| Sons (and daughters or listed kin) | 7                            | 7    |          |         | 73                              | 67   | 6        |         |
| Troops: Groups (e.g., the 3, 100s) | 17                           | 9    | 8        |         | 35                              | 9    | 26       |         |
| Totals                             | 8                            |      |          | 8       | 67                              | 10   | 8        | 49      |
| Captives (or slain)                | 11                           | 1    | 3        | 7       | 7                               |      |          | 7       |
| Population totals                  | 9                            |      | 1        | 8       | 22                              |      | 14       | 8       |
| Miscellaneous groupings            | 3                            | 2    | 1        |         | 15                              | 5    | 10       |         |
| <i>Things</i>                      |                              |      |          |         |                                 |      |          |         |
| Cities                             | 5                            | 1    | 4        |         | 2                               | 1    | 1        |         |
| Tribute (or plunder)               | 2                            |      | 2        |         | 5                               |      |          | 5       |
| Sacrificial animals                | 3                            |      | 1        | 2       | 27                              | 7    | 12       | 8       |
| Temple objects                     | 24                           | 20   | 4        |         | 8                               | 7    | 1        |         |
| Other items                        | 10                           | 7    | 3        |         | 1                               | 1    |          |         |
| <i>Measures</i>                    |                              |      |          |         |                                 |      |          |         |
| Length (cubits)                    | 17                           | 7    | 10       |         | 8                               | 5    | 3        |         |
| Weight: Talents                    | 6                            | 2    | 4        |         | 13                              |      | 5        | 8       |
| Shekels                            | 5                            |      | 5        |         | 2                               |      | 1        | 1       |
| Capacity measures                  | 3                            |      |          | 3       | 4                               |      |          | 4       |
| <i>Situations (or occasions)</i>   | 6                            | 4    | 2        |         | 54                              | 26   | 28       |         |
| <i>Times</i>                       |                              |      |          |         |                                 |      |          |         |
| Reigns, in: Years                  | 24                           | 7    | 17       |         |                                 |      |          |         |
| Months                             | 2                            | 2    |          |         |                                 |      |          |         |
| Days                               | 1                            | 1    |          |         |                                 |      |          |         |
| Dates, in: Years                   | 8                            | 4    | 4        |         | 9                               | 3    | 6        |         |
| Months                             | 3                            | 3    |          |         | 10                              | 10   |          |         |
| Days                               | 1                            |      | 1        |         | 7                               | 4    | 3        |         |
| Age (in years)                     | 20                           | 2    | 18       |         | 9                               |      | 9        |         |
| Other numbers: Years               | 7                            | 4    | 3        |         | 7                               | 7    |          |         |
| Months                             | 2                            | 2    |          |         | 14                              | 12   | 2        |         |
| Days                               | 9                            | 9    |          |         | 11                              | 11   |          |         |
| TOTALS                             | 213                          | 94   | 91       | 28      | 416                             | 188  | 138      | 90      |

The total of the numbers found in Chronicles:

213

629

Furthermore, some of the categories just outlined employ their figures in such an unnoteworthy fashion that they can be summarized at this point and dismissed without further comment. This particularly characterizes the latter categories; hence they are considered in reverse order.

## Times

The initial subcategory listed under “Times” deals with lengths of reigns. Whether stated in years or months or days, each of these countings is quoted from 2 Samuel or Kings. They all correspond exactly and raise no problems against Chronicles.

Concerning dates, all the numbers that give datings in terms of certain years and months and that have biblical parallels, agree with their parallel figures. Of those that have no parallel, question has arisen about three of the time references in 2 Chronicles. These date certain events in terms of particularly numbered years: (a) 15:19 and (b) 16:1 concern Asa of Judah and his war with Baasha in the former’s thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years; but since Baasha died in the twenty-seventh year of Asa’s reign (1 Kings 15:33), these numbers may refer, as Thiele proposes,<sup>9</sup> to the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years after the division of the United Kingdom (which would have been Asa’s fifteenth and sixteenth years); and (c) 29:3 concerns King Hezekiah’s invitation to the northern Israelites to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem in the first year of his reign, but this year date too remains plausible, even if placed as early as 725 B. C.<sup>10</sup> The datings in terms of months that are unique to Chronicles raise no problems. On the dating of a particular day within a month, some commentators have puzzled over the statement in 2 Chronicles 7:10 that after Solomon had dedicated the Temple in Jerusalem, “Then on the twenty-third day of the seventh month, he sent the people to their tents.”<sup>11</sup> First Kings 8:66 mentions what is equivalent to the twenty-second day, when it says of the feast, “On the eighth day he sent the people away and they blessed the king. Then they went to their tents joyful. *f* “ Yet Keil’s explanation remains valid: the royal dismissal was on the twenty-second day and the people’s return “to their tents” was on the twenty-third.<sup>12</sup> And none of these figures, however interpreted, has led to charges of exaggeration against the Chronicler.

A third subcategory concerns references to peoples’ ages at a given point in time. Two such references are noted later in this article (under “Numbered Items with Old Testament Parallels,” paragraphs “r” and “s”): The age of one ruler at his accession is higher than that found in 2 Kings whereas for another it is lower, which illustrates no more than the reality of copyists’ errors. The Chronicler’s only other problematic number involving time occurs in 2 Chronicles 24:15, where the high priest Jehoiada is said to have died at the age of 130. This has led skeptics to accuse the Chronicler of fanciful figures.<sup>13</sup> But Jehoiada’s place in the Aaronic genealogy (1 Chron. 6) is unknown; if he succeeded the priest Amaziah (2 Chron. 19:11, 853 B.C.) at the age of ninety, he

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<sup>9</sup> 9. Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 59. An alternative explanation might involve a scribal corruption of y (“ten”) and l (“thirty”) in the old Phoenician script; cf. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, “Chronology, OT,” by J. B. Payne, 1:839.

<sup>10</sup> 10. As worked out by the present author, *ibid.*, p. 842.

<sup>11</sup> 11. NASB, and so throughout unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>12</sup> 12. C. F. Keil, *The Books of the Chronicles*, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 138.

<sup>13</sup> 13. Cf. Jacob M. Myers, “Apparently a symbolic figure, older than Moses (120 years) or Aaron (123 years)” (*II Chronicles*, The Anchor Bible [Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1965], p. 136).

would have expired long before the death of his protégé Joash (in 796 B.C.). Some have indeed argued against a human life expectancy of more than 113 years;<sup>14</sup> but a 1973 study includes photographs of a woman over 130<sup>15</sup> and a man alleged to be 167.<sup>16</sup> Jehoiada's span of life was unique at this period, but not impossible, particularly for a man blessed of God.

The final subcategory includes various other numbers describing time. Only five of the fifty exceed ten; and these are of medium length, e.g., 2 Chronicles 36:21, the longest, which speaks of the seventy years of exile foretold in Jeremiah 29:10. None seems exceptional.

## Situations

To this basic category have been assigned the figures that are used in Chronicles to enumerate such miscellaneous happenings as feasts, choices, occasions, and frequencies: e.g., in 1 Chronicles 29:22, Solomon's being anointed "a second time." A majority of them are used for numbered sequences in drawing lots (twenty-four each, in 1 Chron. 24 and 25); none involves large figures (over one thousand); and again, none seems exceptional.

## Measures

Chronicles presents a series of figures that measure lengths, weights, and capacities. Lengths are uniformly given in cubits; and the largest number is four hundred, for a portion of Jerusalem's wall (2 Chron. 25:23). Apart from the heights given for the Temple's porch and pillars, only 1 Chronicles 11:23 might raise a question. This verse speaks of an Egyptian five cubits tall (seven and one-half feet), but this is not incredible, particularly when compared with the height given in 1 Samuel 17:4 for the giant Goliath, who was six cubits and a span (over nine feet). But this is *not* mentioned in Chronicles.

To the subcategory of weights belongs the counting of talents and shekels. Apart from certain quantities of tribute and plunder the Chronicler's statistics concerning weights are not unusual, even for the seventy-five pound golden crown (i.e., one talent) that rested on the head of the Ammonite idol Milcam<sup>17</sup> (mentioned in both 2 Sam. 12:30 and 1 Chron. 20:2). But there are two exceptions: the price (in shekels) paid for Ornan's threshing floor (see paragraph "h" later) and the offerings for the construction of the Temple (discussed in the second article in this series.)

The third subcategory, on figures of capacity, involves the Hebrew כֹר ("kor") for dry measure and בַּת ("bath") for liquid. Both are limited to three verses (2 Chron. 2:10; 4:5; 27:5), to be discussed later.

## Things

An initial type of counted object is cities and towns, whose number in the sections unique to Chronicles does not exceed a modest twenty-three (1 Chron. 2:22; cf. the

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<sup>14</sup> 14. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th ed. (1924), "Life expectancy," 13:1, 101, though notation is made of a possible 146.

<sup>15</sup> 15. "Mrs. Lasuria believes she is 143 f; I would expect some age between 131 and 141" (Alexander Leaf, "A Scientist Visits Some of the world's Oldest People," *National Geographic Magazine*, January 1973, p. 99).

<sup>16</sup> 16. S. Lislimov was "acclaimed as the world's oldest living person at an alleged age of 167" (ibid.).

<sup>17</sup> 17. "Milcam" is a better rendering than "their king" in the NASB; the crown was too heavy for a man (George B. Caird, "The First and Second Books of Samuel," *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, 12 vols. [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953], 2:1, 107).

comment later under “Agreements” on verse 23, which does have a parallel). The figures given for tribute and for sacrificial animals are taken up subsequently. The two remaining subcategories raise no real problems: the Temple objects include, for example, the two large cherubim or the two pillars with their four hundred pomegranates (2 Chron. 4:13, the largest number in this grouping); and the “other items” include such artifacts as Solomon’s six throne steps with their twelve lions, the twenty-four fingers and toes on a certain Philistine champion, and David’s one hundred chariots (1 Chron. 18:4, which is the largest figure among these).

## Persons

The items most frequently counted in 1 and 2 Chronicles are people, and these may be organized into five subcategories. Wives (and concubines), when numbered, usually do not exceed two. The highest actual totals are fourteen (2 Chron. 13:21) and eighteen (plus sixty concubines, 11:21); and some critics would reduce these to a symbolic value, “indicating the blessing of the Lord.”<sup>18</sup> Other critics, however, hasten to justify such numbers as “an old tradition,”<sup>19</sup> not a mere fiction of the Chronicler.

Children and kin account for more numbers (seventy-three without other biblical parallels) than any other subcategory in Chronicles. Most of these provide counts of sons (but 1 Chron. 4:27 and 2 Chron. 11:21 and 13:4 refer to daughters, and 1 Chron. 5:13 refers to kinsmen). Only at six points do they exceed ten. The two highest occur in 2 Chronicles 11:21, which describes Rehoboam’s twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters, Yet these appear in conjunction with his previously enumerated seventy-eight consorts (eighteen wives and sixty concubines) and their validity goes unchallenged by Montgomery and Gehman and by Myers.<sup>20</sup>

A third subcategory of numbered persons deals with troops, whether as groups identified by a certain numeral, or as totals mustered, or as quantities captured or slain. Groups range from “the three”<sup>21</sup> or “thirty” of David’s heroes, to captains of hundreds, but they never exceed units of one thousand. For the second, i.e., totalings of troops, the Chronicler’s figures usually agree with those found in Samuel and Kings, when parallels exist. Even 1 Chronicles 19:7, with its sum of “32,000 [Mesopotamian] chariots [with horsemen, v. 6, and footmen, cf. v. 18] and the king of Maacah and his people,” corresponds to 2 Samuel 10:6, with its reference to “Syrians of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers [with charioteers, and horsemen, cf. v. 18], and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and the men of Tob with 12,000 men,” provided the men of Maacah (which Chronicles seems explicitly to except) are not included in the total. Interestingly, when the figures do not agree (as in 1 Chron. 21:5 and 2 Chron. 9:25, which parallel 2 Sam. 24:9 and 1 Kings 4:26), in two out of the three cases it is Chronicles that is lower (see Table B toward the end of this article). The totaling of troops without other biblical parallels, and the third military listing, i.e., of troops captured or slain, are discussed later.

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<sup>18</sup> 18. Myers, *II Chronicles*, p. 81.

<sup>19</sup> 19. W. A. L. Elmslie, “II Chronicles,” *The Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, 12 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954), 3:476.

<sup>20</sup> 20. Curtis and Madsen note only the Greek<sup>B</sup> and Josephus’ variant of “thirty concubines” (Edward Lewis Curtis and Albert Alonzo Madsen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles*, The International Critical Commentary [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901], p. 369).

<sup>21</sup> 21. First Chronicles 11:11 reads “the three” rather than “the thirty,” with Greek<sup>L</sup> and 2 Samuel 23:8.

The two remaining subcategories of counted persons raise no real problems for the Chronicler. In the matter of total populations, some of the passages do involve large numbers—e.g., the seventy thousand who died in the plague that followed David’s census (2 Chron. 21:14), or the seventy thousand plus eighty thousand laborers on Solomon’s Temple (2 Chron. 2:2, 17–18)—but these figures are simply quoted from Samuel and Kings. The totals that are unique, without biblical parallels, concern the head counts for various tribes, especially the Levites (e.g., singers or gatekeepers), and only in four instances do the totals exceed one thousand: 1 Chronicles 9:13, with its 1,760 priests; 1 Chronicles 26:30, with 1,700 Levitical officials; 1 Chronicles 26:32, with 2,700 more; and 2 Chronicles 23:3–5, with 38,000 total Levites (discussed in the second article in this series). The final subcategory consists of such miscellaneous groupings as the four hundred false prophets of 2 Chronicles 18:5 (the largest such number, but paralleled in 1 Kings 22:6) or the 120 priests with trumpets and the eighty who opposed Uzziah, in 2 Chronicles 5:12 and 26:17 (the largest numbers without parallel).

### Numbered Items With Old Testament Parallels

As suggested in LaSor’s initially cited criticism, a primary way for deciding whether the Chronicler is guilty of systematic exaggeration is to compare his figures with those found in other parallel portions of Scripture, especially when the corresponding figures disagree.

### Disagreements

The following paragraphs present a summary of the passages in the Masoretic text of Chronicles, in the order of their occurrence, which contain numbers that differ from those found in the verses that parallel them elsewhere in the Old Testament. An evaluation as to which reading is preferable is included for each.

a. *1 Chronicles 11:11*. This verse says that Jashobeam slew three hundred enemies<sup>22</sup> at one time; whereas *2 Samuel 23:8* says eight hundred.<sup>23</sup> The latter figure is the larger and more extraordinary, but for that very reason it probably represents the original text. Jashobeam, after all, “had the first place” among David’s heroes.<sup>24</sup> The present number in Chronicles may be explained as a scribal corruption: either psychological, perhaps influenced by the number three hundred that is given for Abishai in verse 20,<sup>25</sup> or mechanical, based on the nature of the Egyptian hieratic numerical symbols that archaeology has shown to have been employed on contemporaneous Syrian inscriptions and weights. Specifically, a scribe might have missed the “7” shaped sign for five and copied only the three vertical strokes, thus converting eight (hundred) into three.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> 22. Syriac<sup>A</sup> reads “eight hundred.”

<sup>23</sup> 23. Greek<sup>B</sup> and the Coptic read “three hundred.”

<sup>24</sup> 24. Curtis and Madsen, *The Books of Chronicles*, p. 187. This is preferred also by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (*The Books of Samuel*, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950], p. 493).

<sup>25</sup> 25. This, however, hardly justifies Curtis’s charge that the autograph of Chronicles “seems to have been purposely changed so as not to give f more [to] Abishai” (Henry Preserved Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, The International Critical Commentary [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999], p. 384).

<sup>26</sup> 26. John C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 13; cf. his chart on p. 118. For the hundred the Hebrews used their own stylized *mem*, plus digit

b. *1 Chronicles 18:4*. David took from Hadadezer, literally, “a thousand chariotry and seven thousand horsemen” and twenty thousand foot soldiers. *2 Samuel 8:4*, however, reads, “a thousand *f* and seven hundred horsemen” and twenty thousand foot soldiers. This time it is *2 Samuel* that has the smaller figure, but it is almost certainly corrupt (see the following paragraph). A possible explanation for *Samuel’s* shift from thousands to hundreds, especially once the noun for *chariotry* was lost, may lie in the pre-Christian employment of the Hebrew consonants as arithmetical signs: in this instance, a confusion of the terminal nun (י = 700) for the dotted zayin (ז = 7,000).<sup>27</sup>

c. and d. *1 Chronicles 19:18a and 19:18b*. *1 Chronicles 19:18* states that when David routed the Syrians, he slew seven thousand (either chariots or riders<sup>28</sup>) and forty thousand foot soldiers; *2 Samuel 10:18* reads a lesser sum for the one (seven hundred ככב) but a greater species for the other (forty thousand horsemen). Since the entire passage seems to be elaborating on the same campaign that was described in the preceding chapter in each of the two books, most scholars agree that the original statistics must be those found in *1 Chronicles 18:4–5*, namely, seven thousand horsemen and twenty thousand plus twenty-two thousand foot soldiers. These figures then support the reading of *1 Chronicles 19:18* at this point (cf. the previous paragraph on the basis of the confusion of seven thousand with seven hundred in *2 Samuel 10:18*). As Wenham summarizes it, “*1 Chronicles 18:4–5* is the fullest and most coherent, and it is fairly easy to see how the other texts could have been derived from it.”<sup>29</sup>

e. and f. *1 Chronicles 21:5 and 27:1–15*. The first of these references reports the totals in David’s census: “And *all Israel* [italics added] were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword; and Judah was 470,000.” *2 Samuel 24:9* records “And there were in Israel 800,000 *f* and in Judah, 500,000.” In this case *Chronicles’* first sum is greater, perhaps because “the regular army of 288,000 (*1 Chronicles 27:1–15*) is included”,<sup>30</sup> but its second sum is lesser, probably because of *Samuel’s* more “round numbers.”<sup>31</sup> The nature of the *thousands* will be discussed in the second article in this series, but the differences between *Samuel* and *Chronicles* are not due to either one being “wrong”; the two authors seem simply to have employed different methods in recording.

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strokes to indicate the number of hundreds. But “there is no doubt [that] they too employed the same principles of numerical notation” (H. L. Allrik, “The List of Zerubbabel (Neh. 7, Ezra 2) and the Hebrew Numeral Notation,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 136 [1954]: 24).

<sup>27</sup> 27. John Peter Lange, *Samuel*, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 346; cf. Gesenius’ *Hebrew Grammar*, 2d English ed. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1910), p. 30, section k. Examples of the use of letters as numerical signs are first documented during the Maccabean age, but G. R. Driver presents a case by indirect evidence for their earlier adoption (*Textus 1* [1960]:126–27; and *Textus 4* [1961]: 83), though this is opposed by Allrik (“The List of Zerubbabel,” p. 26).

<sup>28</sup> 28. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1907), p. 939, nos. 1 and 4.

<sup>29</sup> 29. J. W. Wenham, “Large Numbers in the Old Testament,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 18 (1907): 45.

<sup>30</sup> 30. A. M. Renwick, “I and II Samuel,” *The New Bible Commentary*, p. 292; cf. his listing of alternative approaches and his conclusion: “we cannot say with certainty that any of these explanations are [sic] correct, but they clearly prove that an explanation of the apparent discrepancy is possible without questioning the correctness of the figures” (ibid.).

<sup>31</sup> 31. Wenham, “Large Numbers,” p. 34. The multiple assumptions involved, however, in his proposal for the Northern Israel figure render that portion of his discussion less acceptable.

g. *1 Chronicles 21:12*. The first of three options for punishment that God revealed to David were *three* years of famine, whereas the parallel passage (2 Sam. 24:13) reads *seven* years. But in light of the other two options, i.e., *three* months of defeat or *three days* of pestilence, the New International Version, for example, affirms *three* years in 2 Samuel 24:13. It thus reads with the Septuagint and follows most textual authorities in accepting the smaller number in Chronicles as correct and original.<sup>32</sup>

h. *1 Chronicles 21:25*. According to this verse David paid Ornan “600 shekels of gold by weight for the site” on which the Temple should someday be erected. Second Samuel 24:24 says he bought “the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.” A shekel weighed about two-fifths of an ounce; so this means 240 ounces in Chronicles as opposed to twenty ounces in Samuel. But since approximately the same one *ounce* of precious metal appears both in the United States twenty-dollar gold piece and the silver dollar, the value in Chronicles would be about \$5,000 as opposed in Samuel to \$20.00. The point to observe, however, is the differing identifications given to the objects purchased; for Chronicles speaks not only of the *גר* (“threshing floor,” 21:15), but also of the *מקום* (“site”) of the *גר* (v. 22), which was probably acquired subsequently and may have included the whole area of Mount Moriah.<sup>33</sup>

i, j, and n. *2 Chronicles 2:2, 18; 8:10*. Second Chronicles 2:2, repeated in verse 18, reports thirty-six hundred supervisors over the workers on Solomon’s Temple; 8:10 adds 250 chief officers. First Kings 5:16 (5:30, Heb.) reports only thirty-three hundred, but 1 Kings 9:23 has a correspondingly higher number, namely, 550 chief officers. The total is 3,850 in either case. The difference must be in the method of designating “chiefs.” As Wenham puts it, “One group of 300 men has been reckoned with one category in Kings and with another in Chronicles.”<sup>34</sup>

k. *2 Chronicles 2:10*. Solomon was prepared to pay King Hiram’s woodsmen with twenty thousand baths of oil, among other items, for their labor. (One bath contains a little more than five gallons.) First Kings 5:11 (5:25, Heb.), in a parallel context, states that Solomon gave Hiram, “as food for his household,” among other things, “twenty kors of beaten oil *f* year by year.” (One kor contains ten baths.) But the quantity is still one hundred thousand gallons in Chronicles to one thousand gallons in Kings, and the critical verdict is that “Chronicles exaggerates figures most absurdly.”<sup>35</sup> The particular amounts involved are discussed in the second article in this series, but concerning the comparative texts, suffice it at this point to observe that the objects being counted do not claim to be the same: Kings puts a limitation both on the product (a special luxury oil) and on its recipients (the royal house itself), but it speaks of an annually repeated payment rather than a one-time payment. Seen in this light the differing figures suggest no unreasonable proportion.

l. *2 Chronicles 3:15*. This verse, in its present text, says that the two pillars in front of the Solomonic Temple were “thirty-five cubits high, and the capital on the top of each was five cubits.” First Kings 7:15–16 says, “eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar *f* the height of the one capital was five cubits and the height of the other capital was five cubits.” The correctness of the eighteen cubit figure is confirmed by 2 Kings 25:17 and Jeremiah 52:21. Could then the Chronicler’s thirty-five cubits be the sum of both pillars? Keil refers to this possibility yet prefers

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<sup>32</sup> 32. Smith, *The Books of Samuel*, p. 390.

<sup>33</sup> 33. Renwick, “I and II Samuel,” p. 292; cf. J. Barton Payne, “I and II Chronicles,” in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, eds. Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison (Chicago: Moody Press, 1962), p. 384.

<sup>34</sup> 34. Wenham, “Large Numbers,” p. 34.

<sup>35</sup> 35. James A. Montgomery and Henry Snyder Gehman, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1951), p. 136.

an alternative solution: “But this mode of reconciling the discrepancy is improbable and is hardly in harmony with the words of Chronicles. *f* The number 35 evidently arose from confounding the numerical letters ן' = 18 with ה'ל = 35.”<sup>36</sup> Even more so than in the Aramaic square characters would this confusion have been likely in a cursive form of the Phoenician script: u , 18, and u , 35.

m. *2 Chronicles 4:5*. In this verse the molten sea in the Solomonic Temple could hold three thousand baths (more than fifteen thousand gallons) but 1 Kings 7:24 records the figure of two thousand baths. The latter figure has to be the correct one, since a considerable bulge must be postulated to accommodate even two thousand baths. For with its five-cubit height and ten-cubit (fifteen-foot) diameter from brim to brim (1 Kings 7:23) a cylindrical shape would hold only fifteen hundred baths.<sup>37</sup> Negative criticism thus concludes, “The Chronicler, as often, expands the figure.”<sup>38</sup> Is it, however, more credible to assume the deliberate introduction of such a fallacy on the part of the original author (even apart from inspiration by God’s Spirit), or to assume an accidental corruption by a later scribe? Chronicles’ large number could have arisen either through (a) a mistaken reading of the dual (. *alpayim*, “two thousand,” in Kings) as a plural (. *alapim*) and then supplying a “three” (which occurs four times in the preceding verse), or through (b) an unclear reading of numerical symbols (the use of which is demonstrable archaeologically, from the eighth-century Samaria ostraca down to the fourth-century Elephantine papyri), i.e., reading three short vertical strokes for an original two.<sup>39</sup>

o. *2 Chronicles 8:18*. Solomon’s fleet brought back from Ophir 450 talents of gold; the figure in 1 Kings 9:28 is 420 talents (one talent weighing about seventy-five pounds). These are large figures. But when critical commentators conclude that “the enormous quantity of gold (over fifty tons) is probably exaggerated,”<sup>40</sup> they overlook both the extraordinary character of this joint Phoenician-Israelite venture and the parallels recorded elsewhere in Scripture. The Queen of Sheba, for example, coming up by this same route, brought Solomon a *gift* of 120 talents of gold (according to 1 Kings 10:10). In any event, the seven-percent difference between the Chronicles figure at this point and the one found in Kings hardly establishes the Chronicler’s responsibility for the quantity of gold entailed. As to the actual difference in figures, a solution based on “round numbers” appears inadequate: 420 would probably not be rounded off to 450. More to the point is Keil’s suggestion of scribal confusion between the numerical letters for twenty (ϒ), and fifty (Ⓛ), especially in the Old Phoenician: Ū and Ū respectively. Which figure is the more original must remain indeterminate.

p. *2 Chronicles 9:16*. According to this verse Solomon had three hundred small shields of beaten gold and used three hundred shekels worth on each; 1 Kings 10:16 puts it in terms of three minas each. The question resolves itself into the relationship of these two weights. A sixty-shekel mina would reduce the Kings figure to three-fifths that of Chronicles, to 180 shekels instead of three hundred. Yet the two texts agree on the figure for Solomon’s large shields

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<sup>36</sup> 36. C. F. Keil, *The Books of the Kings*, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 97.

<sup>37</sup> 37. Cf. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, s.v. “Sea, Molten,” by G. Goldsworthy, 5:318.

<sup>38</sup> 38. Montgomery and Gehman, *The Books of Kings*, p. 173.

<sup>39</sup> 39. This is Driver’s explanation of this passage (*Textus* 1 [1960]: 123; and *Textus* 4 [1964]: 82–83). Wenham suggests that “a digit may be increased or decreased by one unit” (“Large Numbers,” p. 23).

<sup>40</sup> 40. Myers, *II Chronicles*, p. 51.

mentioned in the preceding verse (9:15), namely, six hundred shekels each. The *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* gives this explanation:

The persistence, side by side, of the two standards, the heavy and the light, explains how the mina might by one writer be taken *f* as containing 100 light shekels. Thus it is that the weight of Solomon's smaller shields is given in 1 Kings 10:27 as three (heavy) minas but in the parallel passage (II Chronicles 9:16) as 300 (light) shekels.<sup>41</sup>

The Chronicles figure may therefore really be no larger (or smaller) than the one in Kings, but equal to it though expressed in a differing unit of measure.

q. 2 *Chronicles* 9:25. Another element in Solomon's prosperity is given in this verse: he had "4,000 stalls for horses and chariots." Myers concludes that "there is certainly a great deal of exaggeration connected with every item";<sup>42</sup> yet others speak more guardedly: "How authentic there is no saying, although documentary specifications of the royal budget may well have survived. The provisioning of the stables in the chariot cities was a particularly important item; cf. 1 Kings 9:19; 10:26ff."<sup>43</sup>

This last verse specifies fourteen hundred chariots, for which the Chroniclers' four thousand stalls are not an inappropriate number, particularly when confirmed by the archaeological discovery of spaces for some 492 horses, as well as for chariots, in Ahab's Megiddo (of the following century), which is not even named as one of Solomon's chariot cities. What Montgomery and Gehman do question, however, as an exaggerated figure is the parallel number found in 1 Kings 4:26 (5:6, Heb.), that Solomon had forty thousand stalls. Cf. the critical note in Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* that in the place of ארבעים ("forty"), one should read with Chronicles ארבעה ("four") thousand (as the original).

r. 2 *Chronicles* 22:20. The Masoretic text of this verse reads, "Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he began to reign." But this figure can hardly be authentic, since 21:5 says that Jehoram his father and immediate predecessor was thirty-two when he became king and ruled only eight years. It is better to read (with a Hebrew MS<sup>mg</sup>, Greek<sup>L</sup> [cf. A, B], Syriac, NASB, NIV, and 2 Kings 8:26) that Ahaziah "was *twenty-two* years old. *f* "

s. 2 *Chronicles* 36:9. On the other hand, the Masoretic text of 2 *Chronicles* 36:9 reads, "Jehoiachin was eight years old" when he became king. This can hardly be correct because he is described in Ezekiel 19:6 as a youth who is like a young lion, tearing apart its prey and devouring men. It is preferable to take the reading of a Hebrew MS<sup>mg</sup>, Greek<sup>A,L</sup> Syriac, NIV, and 2 Kings 24:8, that says he "was *eighteen* years old. *f* "

This above-listed evidence, on those numbers in Chronicles that disagree with their parallels found elsewhere in the Old Testament, may be tabulated as follows in Table B.

So of the 213 numbers that appear in Chronicles and that are paralleled elsewhere in Scripture, 194 agree with their parallels and no more than nineteen exhibit some measure of difference. In eleven of these nineteen (including one repeat: "i" and "j," 2 Chron. 2:2, 18) Chronicles has the higher figure; in seven it has the lower; and in one (2 Chron. 9:16) the values

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<sup>41</sup> 41. *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. "Weights and Measures," by A. R. S. Kennedy, 4:903-4; cf. Keil, *The Books of the Chronicles*, p. 247.

<sup>42</sup> 42. Myers, *II Chronicles*, p. 57.

<sup>43</sup> 43. Montgomery and Gehman, *The Books of Kings*, p. 127; cf. J. M. Schofield, "Megiddo," in *Archaeology and Old Testament Study*, ed. D. Winton Thomas (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 322-23.

are equal. One thus wonders how LaSor obtained his previously cited information on “the seven or eight places where the number in Chronicles is ten times that given in Samuel or Kings.” Apart from “k” (2 Chron. 2:10 = 1 Kings 5:11), with its seemingly separate quantities of oil, in only two instances (“c” and “h”) out of the eleven higher figures is Chronicles actually ten times higher. Moreover, in the first of these it is Samuel which is in error, while in the second, the Moriah property priced in Samuel may constitute but a part of that which is referred to in Chronicles. Perhaps LaSor mistakenly included 2 Chronicles

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Table B

NUMBERS IN CHRONICLES THAT DISAGREE  
WITH THEIR OLD TESTAMENT PARALLELS

| HIGHER  | LOWER             |  | PARALLEL<br>PASSAGE          | EVALUATION<br>OF<br>CHRONICLES      |
|---|-------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a.  | 1 Chron.<br>11:11 | 300 slain by Jashobeam,<br>not 800   | 2 Sam. 22:8                  | Scribal<br>error                    |
| b. 18:4                                       |                   | Hadadezer's 1,000 chariotry<br>and 7,000 horsemen, not 1,000<br>and 700 horsemen | 2 Sam. 8:4                   | Correct                             |
| c. 19:18a                                     |                   | 7,000 Syrian charioteers<br>slain, not 700                                       | 2 Sam. 10:18a                | Correct                             |
| d.  | 19:18b            | and 40,000 foot soldiers,<br>not horsemen  | 2 Sam. 10:18b                | Correct                             |
| e. 21:5a                                      |                   | Israel's 1,100,000 troops<br>not 800,000   | 2 Sam. 24:9a                 | Different<br>objects                |
| f.  | 21:5b             | Judah's 470,000 troops, not<br>500,000   | 2 Sam. 24:9b                 | More<br>precise                     |
| g.  | 21:12             | Three years of famine, not<br>seven  | 2 Sam. 24:13                 | Correct                             |
| h. 21:25                                      |                   | Ornan paid 600 gold shekels,<br>not 50 silver shekels                            | 2 Sam. 24:24                 | Different<br>objects                |
| i., j.<br>2 Chron. 2:<br>2 and 18             |                   | 3,600 to supervise the Temple<br>construction, not 3,300                         | 1 Kings 5:16<br>(Heb., 5:30) | Different<br>method of<br>reckoning |
| k. 2:10                                       |                   | 20,000 baths of oil to<br>Hiram's woodmen, not 20<br>kors (=200 baths)           | 1 Kings 5:11<br>(Heb., 5:25) | Different<br>objects                |
| l. 3:15                                       |                   | Temple pillars 35 cubits,<br>not 18  | 1 Kings 7:26                 | Scribal<br>error                    |
| m. 4:5  |                   | Sea holding 3,000 baths,<br>not 2,000  | 1 Kings 7:24                 | Scribal<br>error                    |
| n.  | 8:10              | 250 chief officers for<br>building the Temple, not<br>550                        | 1 Kings 5:16<br>(Heb., 5:30) | Different<br>method of<br>reckoning |
| o. 8:18                                       |                   | 450 gold talents from<br>Ophir, not 420  | 1 Kings 9:28                 | Correct, or<br>scribal error        |
| p. 9:16<br>(Chron. and Kings<br>are the same) |                   | 300 gold shekels per<br>shield, not 3 minas                                      | 1 Kings 10:16                | Different<br>method of<br>reckoning |
| q.  | 9:25              | 4,000 stalls for horses,<br>not 40,000   | 1 Kings 4:26<br>(Heb., 5:6)  | Correct                             |
| r. 22:2                                       |                   | Ahaziah made king at age<br>42, not 22   | 2 Kings 8:26                 | Scribal<br>error                    |
| s.  | 36:9              | Jehoiachin made king at<br>8, not 18   | 2 Kings 24:8                 | Scribal<br>error                    |

— — —  
10 1 7  
(11)

Total disagreements: 19 ("j" repeats "i") out of 213 paralleled numbers

9:25 (“q”), which is ten times *smaller* than its counterpart in Kings; or could it be that the wish for invalidity becomes the father of the figure?

In point of fact, an evaluation of even these nineteen discernible variations hardly bears out Pinnock’s description of “quite different” numbers. Rather, this evaluation confirms the validity both of Chronicles and of the other Scriptures involved: Four show differing methods for reckoning the same total figures (“i,” four are variations that are due either to a round number (“f,” in Samuel) or to differences in the precise objects being counted (“e,” “h,” “k”); and the remaining eleven constitute recognizable cases of textual corruption (five in Chronicles - “a,” “l,” “m,” “r,” “s”), five in the other parallel books (“b,” “c,” “d,” “g,” “q”), and one (“o”) in which the decision remains indeterminate.

## Agreements

Turning then to the 194 instances where Chronicles presents *the same* figures found elsewhere in the Scriptures, one encounters significant phenomena, in the categories designated as “Persons,” “Things,” and “Measures.” Those designated as “Times” and “Situations” may be disregarded, since they have already been found to present no real problems.

Concerning persons, the largest enumerations in Chronicles for nonmilitary personnel are, as previously noted, the seventy thousand plus eighty thousand alien carriers and stone cutters whom Solomon conscripted for work on the Temple (2 Chron. 2:2, 18). But these figures, totaling 150,000, are identical with what is found in 1 Kings 5:15; so Chronicles remains free from criticism in their regard. Kings, however, does too, because Wenham, for example, justifies the 150,000 on the basis of a population in which “the non-Israelites would slightly outnumber *f* half a million.”<sup>44</sup> Only a little greater is the total military levy of Judah and Benjamin at the time of the division of the kingdom, namely 180,000 (2 Chron. 11:1). This seems to be the Chronicler’s largest single figure of its kind (see the discussion on this verse in the next article in this series), and his military levy also simply reproduces its source that is found in 1 Kings 12:21. Concerning troops captured and/or slain, 1 Chronicles 18:4 says that David took from Hadadezer twenty thousand foot soldiers, seven thousand horsemen, and one thousand chariots. These figures are the highest in Chronicles for a regular battle; and despite the textual problems (see the preceding paragraphs “b,” “c,” and “d”) the verse seems to reproduce the original text behind 2 Samuel 8:4. Moreover, in defense of its numbers Wenham asserts, “These were probably David’s most exacting wars, and there seems no reason to doubt that such losses were inflicted in them.”<sup>45</sup>

Two similar examples will suffice in respect to the category of “Things.” The largest number of counted towns is sixty, as reported in northern Gilead. These were once under Og, but were taken by Jair and Nobah. First Chronicles 2:22–23 distributes them into “twenty-three towns (of Jair) *f* with Kenath and its villages.”<sup>46</sup> This verse again is simply a quotation based on another source, in this instance Joshua 13:30. But could Chronicles and its earlier Old Testament source *both* be exaggerated? Aharoni replies, “Nevertheless the tradition about Og is certainly old; and

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<sup>44</sup> 44. Wenham, “Large Numbers,” p. 34.

<sup>45</sup> 45. *Ibid.*, p. 45,

<sup>46</sup> 46. Cf. Numbers 32:41–42 and Keil, *The Books of the Chronicles*, p. 65.

his sixty cities *f* correspond to the existence in this region of ancient Canaanite cities.”<sup>47</sup> He adds later that “Bashan is noted for its many cities.”<sup>48</sup>

Under “Things,” the most frequently enumerated subcategory in Chronicles that lacks Old Testament parallel is concerned with animals. There are twenty-seven such citations, and eight involve numbers over one thousand (see the asterisked references in the Appendix, to appear in the second article in this series). The occasion for the smallest of these eight was Hezekiah’s rather sudden reform at the outset of his reign. Wenham observes, without criticism, “At Hezekiah’s hastily prepared re-consecration of the temple, there was difficulty in dealing with 3,970 offerings (2 Chronicles 29:32–36).”<sup>49</sup> Of the remaining numbers, only two exceed seven thousand (which was the number of sheep from the booty left by Zerah, which were sacrificed at a special festival [2 Chron. 15:11] called by his whole nation [15:9]): namely, the ten thousand sheep donated by Judah’s princes for Hezekiah’s passover, as described in the next chapter (30:24), and the thirty thousand contributed by Josiah for his (35:7). In reference to both of these occasions, however, and despite their advance planning, Wenham becomes more critical: “One suspects that the figure for Josiah’s reign is too big, and quite possibly also that of Hezekiah’s reign.”<sup>50</sup> Yet the former was prepared for “all Judah and Israel who were present” [הַנְּמֹצָה “all that could be *found*”] (35:18); and it was unprecedented: “nor had any of the kings of Israel celebrated such a passover as Josiah did.” Furthermore, as far as the quantity of sacrificial animals is concerned, those numbers that the Chronicler quotes from other Scriptures far outstrip his own (unique) ones. Second Chronicles 7:5 thus reaffirms from 1 Kings 8:63 that Solomon dedicated the Temple by sacrificing twenty-two thousand oxen and 120,000 sheep,<sup>51</sup> figures which cause those cited in 35:18 to pale into relative insignificance.

A final numbered item in which Chronicles’ validity is supported by a somewhat parallel passage concerns the category of “Measures.” Second Chronicles 2:10 mentions, among other agricultural products that Solomon paid to Hiram’s woodsmen, twenty thousand kors of crushed wheat (one kor = 5.16 bushels).<sup>52</sup> First Kings 5:11 (5:25, Heb.) comes in a similar Solomonic context; and though it does not report the identical incident (see the earlier paragraph “k” on the oil) it does speak of the king’s paying to Hiram himself the same amount (more than one hundred thousand bushels) of wheat. Skeptics have criticized the reference in 1 Kings 5:11 as “indeed an extravagant figure;”<sup>53</sup> but it does remove the onus from the Chronicler, particularly

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<sup>47</sup> 47. Yohanan Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 191, 278.

<sup>48</sup> 48. *Ibid.*, p. 278.

<sup>49</sup> 49. Wenham. “Large Numbers,” p. 49.

<sup>50</sup> 50. *Ibid.* Cf. Myers’s comment on the former: an “enormous number highly exaggerated” (*II Chronicles*, p. 212).

<sup>51</sup> 51. Wenham naturally objects to this number also, as requiring “nearly 20 sacrifices a minute, for 10 hours a day, for 12 days” (“Large Numbers,” p. 49); yet Keil explains that this is “a magnificent sacrifice *f* in accordance with the magnitude of the manifestation of divine grace” (*The Books of the Kings*, p. 135), and he proceeds to cite, in the New Testament, the slaughter of twenty-five thousand Passover lambs and the sprinkling of the blood on the altar in just three hours of one afternoon (p. 136). He also mentions the number of people involved in Josiah’s celebration (estimating one hundred thousand heads of households) and the numbers of Levites and priests available to serve (pp. 136–37).

<sup>52</sup> 52. *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. “Weights,” by O. R. Sellers, 4:835.

<sup>53</sup> 53. Montgomery and Gehman, *The Books of Kings*, p. 136.

since the payment recorded in Kings was repeated annually and the Chronicles record was only a one-time measure.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [\*Bibliotheca Sacra: A quarterly published by Dallas Theological Seminary\*](#). (1955–1995). Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary.